



Cabinet

Date:	Thursday, 23 June 2011
Time:	6.15 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

Contact Officer: Brian Ellis
Tel: 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. FINANCIAL OUT-TURN 2010/11

4. CAPITAL OUT-TURN AND FINANCING 2010/11

5. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11 (Pages 1 - 12)

6. INSURANCE FUND ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 13 - 18)

7. DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS 2011/12 (Pages 19 - 54)

8. COLLECTION SUMMARY 2010/11 (Pages 55 - 62)

9. AUTHORISATION OF OFFICERS FOR RECOVERY AND APPEALS (Pages 63 - 66)

10. ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

SYSTEM (Pages 67 - 74)

11. **CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (Pages 75 - 80)**

CULTURE, TOURISM AND LEISURE

12. **MUSEUM LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES REVIEW OF WIRRAL LIBRARY SERVICE (Pages 81 - 100)**
13. **RADIO FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION OF LIBRARY BOOKS (Pages 101 - 104)**

CORPORATE RESOURCES

14. **REVISION OF CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULE 16 (Pages 105 - 112)**
15. **WIRRAL WAR MEMORIALS (Pages 113 - 118)**

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

16. **LIVERPOOL CITY REGION APPRENTICESHIPS STRATEGY (Pages 119 - 134)**
17. **PLAYING FOR SUCCESS UPDATE (Pages 135 - 152)**
18. **TRANSFER OF INTEGRATED TRANSPORT UNIT AND TENDER EXERCISE FOR THE PROVISION OF ADULT TRANSPORT SERVICES (Pages 153 - 158)**

COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

19. **EXTENSION OF VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS (Pages 159 - 162)**
20. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS AND AREA FORUM FUNDING (Pages 163 - 172)**

ENVIRONMENT

21. **GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REPORTS (Pages 173 - 186)**

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

22. **HOUSING STRATEGY 2011-2026 (Pages 187 - 254)**
23. **REVIEW OF HOMELESS SERVICES IN WIRRAL (Pages 255 - 260)**

REGENERATION AND PLANNING STRATEGY

24. **INVESTMENT SUPPORT SERVICES FRAMEWORK (Pages 261 - 268)**

SOCIAL CARE AND INCLUSION

- 25. PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SHADOW HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD FOR WIRRAL (Pages 269 - 278)**
- 26. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 1)**

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

- 27. 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

- 28. SOCITIM - REVIEW OF ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (Pages 279 - 302)**
- 29. SOCITIM - REVIEW OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (Pages 303 - 332)**
- 30. NON DOMESTIC RATE HARDSHIP RELIEF (Pages 333 - 340)**
- 31. NNDR DISCRETIONARY RELIEF (Pages 341 - 348)**

STREETSCENE AND TRANSPORT SERVICES

- 32. CONTRACTUAL REVIEW OF GREEN WASTE PROCESSING CONTRACT (Pages 349 - 360)**

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

- 33. TRANSFER OF INTEGRATED TRANSPORT UNIT AND TENDER EXERCISE FOR THE PROVISION OF ADULT TRANSPORT SERVICES (Pages 361 - 362)**
- 34. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 2)**

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

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT	TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER	COUNCILLOR STEVE FOULKES
KEY DECISION	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents a review of Treasury Management activities in 2010/11 and confirms compliance with treasury limits and prudential indicators. It has been prepared in accordance with the revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the revised Prudential Code.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2010/11 be agreed.
- 2.2 That the transfer of additional investment income of £1 million and the saving of £2 million from capital financing activities in 2010/11 to the General Fund balance be agreed.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Wirral has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management ("the Code"), which includes quarterly reports to Members of treasury activity. This report is the year end review for 2010/11.
- 3.2 Under Council financial regulations any surplus resources are returned to balances and so used to support the delivery of other Council services.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Treasury management is defined as: "The management of the local authority investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

- 4.2 The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. This requires public sector authorities to determine an annual Treasury Management Strategy and as a minimum, formally report on their treasury activities and arrangements in mid-year and after the year-end. These reports enable those tasked with implementing policies and undertaking transactions to demonstrate that they have properly fulfilled their responsibilities. They also enable those with responsibility/governance of the treasury management function to scrutinise and assess its effectiveness and compliance with policies and objectives.
- 4.3 Cabinet approves the Treasury Management Strategy at the start of each financial year. This identifies how it is proposed to finance capital expenditure, borrow and invest in the light of capital spending requirements, the interest rate forecasts and the expected economic conditions. During the year Cabinet receives a quarterly monitoring report on treasury management activities and at the end of each financial year this Annual Report. Scrutiny of treasury policy, strategy and activity is delegated to the Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

- 4.4 At the time of determining the Treasury Management Strategy for 2010/11, interest rates were expected to remain low in response to the state of the UK economy. Spending cuts and tax increases seemed inevitable after the General Election, if the Government had a clear majority. The markets had, at the time, viewed a hung parliament as potentially disruptive, particularly if combined with a failure to articulate a credible plan to reduce Government borrowing. The outlook for growth was uncertain due to consumers and organisations reducing their spending and financial institutions exercising restraint in new lending.
- 4.5 The two headline indicators moved in opposite directions. The economy grew by 1.3% in 2010 and the forecast for 2011 was revised down to 1.7% by the Office of Budget Responsibility in March 2011. Higher commodity, energy and food prices and the increase in VAT to 20% saw the February 2011 annual inflation figure at 4.4%. The Bank Rate was held at 0.5% as the economy reflected uneven growth and the austerity measures in the Spending Review (SR) in October 2010 reduced public expenditure.
- 4.6 The US Federal Reserve kept rates on hold at 0.25% and the European Central Bank maintained rates at 1%, with the markets expecting a rate rise in early 2010. The credit crisis migrated from banks to European states. The ratings of Ireland and Portugal were downgraded to the 'triple-B' category whilst Greece was downgraded to sub-investment grade. Spain was also downgraded but remained in the 'double-A' category. The results from the EU Bank Stress Tests, co-ordinated by the Committee of European Banking Supervisors, highlighted that only 7 out of the 91 institutions failed the 'adverse scenario' tests. The main UK banks' (Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds and RBS) Tier 1 ratios all remained above 9% under both the 'benchmark scenario' and the 'adverse scenario' stress tests.

- 4.7 Gilts benefitted from the Spending Review plans as well as from their relative 'safe haven' status in the face of European sovereign weakness. Five year and ten year gilt yields fell to 1.44% and 2.83% respectively. However, yields rose in the final quarter across all gilt maturities amid concern that higher inflation would become embedded and greatly diminish the real rate of return for fixed income investors.
- 4.8 During the year money market rates increased marginally at the shorter end (overnight to three months) whilst six to twelve month rates increased between 0.25% to 0.30% over the year reflecting the expectation that the Bank Rate would be raised later in 2011.

INVESTMENT ACTIVITY

- 4.9 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued revised Investment Guidance which came into effect on 1 April 2010 and reiterated the need to focus on security and liquidity, rather than yield. It also recommended that strategies include details of assessing credit risk, reasons for borrowing in advance of need and the use of treasury advisers.
- 4.10 The opening and closing investment portfolio for 2010/11:-

INVESTMENTS	Balance at 1 April 2010 £m	%	Balance at 31 March 2011 £m	%
<u>Current Assets (Cash Equivalents)</u>				
Loans and Receivables - Specified	21	20	12	9
Available for sale financial assets - Specified	6	6	50	37
<u>Current Assets (Short Term Investments)</u>		-		
Loans and Receivables - Specified	68	63	60	44
Available for sale financial assets - Specified	-	-	2	1
<u>Long Term Investments</u>		-		
Loans and Receivables - Non Specified	3	3	4	3
Available for sale financial assets - Non Specified	8	8	8	6
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	106		136	

- 4.11 Security of capital remained the main investment objective. This was maintained by following the counterparty policy as set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2010/11. Investments included:-
- Deposits with other Local Authorities.
 - Investments in AAA-rated Stable Net Asset Value Money Market Funds.
 - Call accounts and deposits with UK Banks and Building Societies.
 - Bonds issued by Multilateral Development Banks.
 - Pooled funds (collective investment schemes) meeting the criteria in SI 2004 No 534 and subsequent amendments.
- 4.12 Counterparty credit quality was assessed and monitored with reference to credit ratings (minimum long-term counterparty rating of A+ across all three rating agencies, Fitch, S&P and Moody's); credit default swaps; GDP of the country in which the institution operates; the country's net debt as a percentage of GDP; any potential support mechanisms and share price. Counterparty credit quality has progressively strengthened throughout the year.
- 4.13 In keeping with the DCLG Guidance on Investments, the Council maintained a sufficient level of liquidity through the use of Money Market Funds and the use of call accounts.
- 4.14 The Council sought to optimise returns commensurate with the objectives of security and liquidity. The UK Bank Rate was maintained at 0.5% through the year. Short term money market rates remained at very low levels which had a significant impact on investment income. Income earned on longer-dated investments made in 2009/10 provided some cushion against the low interest rate environment. New longer-term investments were made by purchasing bonds issued by multilateral development banks providing excellent security and an enhanced yield over the equivalent SONIA (Sterling Overnight Index Average) rate.
- 4.15 In respect of Icelandic investments the Council had £2 million deposited with Heritable Bank, a UK registered Bank, at an interest rate of 6.22% which was due to mature on 28 November 2008. The Company was placed in administration on 7 October 2008. Members have received regular updates regarding the circumstances and the latest situation. In March 2009 an Audit Commission report confirmed that Wirral Council had acted, and continues to act, prudently and properly in all its investment activities.
- 4.16 The latest creditor progress report issued by the Administrators Ernst and Young, dated 28 January 2010, outlined that the return to creditors is projected to be 85p in the £ by the end of 2012 and the final recovery could be higher. To date, £1.1 million has been received with a further £0.7 million expected before Autumn 2012. However, it should be noted that the amount and timing of future payments are estimates and are not definitive. Favourable changes in market conditions could lead to higher than estimated repayments.

- 4.17 In summary the budgeted investment income for the year had been estimated at £0.7 million and the actual interest earned was £1.7 million with this additional £1 million principally due to:-
- Average investment balances during the year being higher than originally budgeted which was mainly due to slippage in capital expenditure;
 - Continuing proactive daily cash flow management by the Treasury Management Team.

Summary

- 4.18 The average return on investments for 2010/11 was 1.26%. To place this in context, in 2010/11 the average Bank of England base rate was 0.5% and the average rate of return achieved by the Local Authorities advised by the Treasury Management consultants, Arlingclose, was 0.95%. It should also be noted that Wirral Council's credit risk rating is also lower than the average of these other Local Authorities.

BORROWING ACTIVITY

- 4.19 The underlying need to borrow as measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) as at 31 March 2011 was estimated at £390 million. This compares with the total external debt of £339 million.

	Balance on 31-Mar-10 £m	Debt Maturing £m	New Borrowing £m	Balance on 31-Mar-11 £m
CAPITAL FINANCING REQUIREMENT (CFR)	385			390
PWLB borrowing	106	16	10	100
Market borrowing	174	0	0	174
Total Borrowing	280	16	10	274
Other Long Term Liabilities	68	3	0	65
TOTAL EXTERNAL DEBT	348	19	10	339

- 4.20 Following the Spending Review on 20 October 2010, on instruction from HM Treasury, the PWLB increased the margin for new borrowing to average 1% above the yield on the corresponding UK Government Gilt. Premature repayment rates did not benefit from the increase in the margin which potentially makes future rescheduling of PWLB loans more challenging.
- 4.21 The PWLB remained the preferred source of borrowing given the transparency and control that this continues to provide. In total £10 million of new loans were raised which included the replacement of maturing debt. Both new loans were taken out prior to HM Treasury increasing the borrowing rates. The interest rates payable on these loans represents excellent value for money as rates this low are unlikely to be seen in the near future.

Loans Borrowed during 2010/11	Principal £m	Fixed/ Variable	Rate %	Final Maturity	Terms
PWLB	5	Fixed	3.92	15 March 2060	Maturity
PWLB	5	Fixed	1.89	15 June 2020	E I P
Total New Borrowing	10				

4.22 Given the significant cuts to local government funding putting pressure on Council finances, the strategy followed was to minimise debt interest payments without compromising the longer-term stability of the portfolio. The differential between the cost of new longer-term borrowing and the return generated on the temporary investments was significant (between 2% - 3%). The use of internal resources in lieu of borrowing was judged to be the most cost effective means of funding capital expenditure. This lowered overall treasury risk by reducing both external debt and temporary investments. Whilst this position is expected to continue in 2011/12, it will not be sustainable over the medium term and there will be a need to borrow for capital purposes in the near future.

4.23 During the year the five loans which matured have been repaid and two loans as per the terms of the loans, have been partially repaid.

Loans maturing in 2010/11	Principal £m	Fixed/ Variable	Rate %	Final Maturity	Terms
PWLB	1.5	Fixed	4.5	15 June 2010	Maturity
PWLB	1.5	Fixed	4.7	25 Sept 2010	Maturity
PWLB	5	Fixed	4.6	7 Nov 2010	Maturity
PWLB	3	Fixed	4.6	7 Nov 2010	Maturity
PWLB	4	Fixed	10.4	15 Dec 2010	Maturity
PWLB	0.5	Fixed	3.0	19 Dec 2019	E I P
PWLB	0.5	Fixed	2.9	19 Dec 2019	E I P
Total Maturing Borrowing	16				

4.24 Debt rescheduling is used to reduce the overall exposure to the risk of interest rate movements, to lower the long-term interest charges paid on debt and to smooth the maturity profile without compromising the overall longer-term stability or to alter the volatility profile (i.e. exposure to variable rate debt). This has become more challenging due to the factors discussed in paragraph 4.20 therefore no debt rescheduling took place in 2010/11. The portfolio continues to be reviewed by the Treasury Management Team for debt rescheduling opportunities.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

- 4.25 The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 (SI 2008/414) place a duty on local authorities to make a prudent provision for debt redemption. Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision has been issued by the Secretary of State and local authorities are required to “have regard” to such Guidance under section 21(1A) of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 4.26 There are four MRP options available namely Option 1: Regulatory Method; Option 2: CFR Method; Option 3: Asset Life Method and Option 4: Depreciation Method.
- 4.27 Options 1 and 2 may be used only for supported expenditure. Methods of making prudent provision for self financed expenditure include Options 3 and 4 (which may also be used for supported expenditure if the Council chooses).
- 4.28 The MRP policy for 2010/11 was approved by Cabinet on 22 February 2010 when it was agreed that Option 1 would be adopted for Supported Borrowing and Option 3 for Unsupported Borrowing. When Option 3, the asset life method, is applied to the funding of an asset with a life greater than 25 years a default asset life of 25 years is applied. Estimating assets lives over 25 years is difficult to achieve accurately; therefore, using a default of 25 years is considered the most prudent approach and is in keeping with the Regulations. MRP in respect of PFI and leases brought on Balance Sheet under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) is also calculated using Option 3 and will match the annual principal repayment for the associated deferred liability.

Summary

- 4.29 In 2010/11 the decision to use internal resources in lieu of borrowing for capital purposes and the beneficial timing of the new borrowing has helped generate savings of £2 million in complying with the Regulations.
- 4.30 The average interest rate payable on borrowings in 2010/11 was 5.8% and the average life of the loans is 18 years.

COMPLIANCE WITH PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

- 4.31 In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice this report provides Members with a summary report of the treasury management activity during 2010/11. The report also confirms compliance with the Prudential Indicators for 2010/11 that were set on 22 February 2010 as part of the Treasury Management Statement.

4.32 Capital Financing Requirement

Estimates of the maximum external borrowing requirement for 2010/11 to 2012/13 are shown in the table below:

	31 Mar 11 Estimate £m	31 Mar 12 Estimate £m	31 Mar 13 Estimate £m
Capital Financing Requirement	390	395	395
Less:			
Existing Profile of Borrowing	274	259	243
Other Long Term Liabilities	65	62	60
Cumulative Maximum External Borrowing Requirement	51	74	92

4.33 (a) Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to set an Affordable Borrowing Limit, irrespective of the indebted status. This statutory limit should not be breached and was set at £484 million for 2010/11.

The Operational Boundary is based on the same estimates as the Authorised Limit but reflects the most likely prudent but not worst case scenario without the additional headroom included within the Authorised Limit. For 2010/11 this was set at £469 million.

During the year; borrowing at its peak was £355 million.

4.34 (b) Upper Limits for Fixed and Variable Interest Rate Exposure

These allow the Council to manage the extent to which it is exposed to changes in interest rates. The upper limit for variable rate exposure allows for the use of variable rate debt to offset exposure to changes in short-term rates on the portfolio of investments.

Interest Rate Exposure	Fixed Rate of Interest	Variable Rate of Interest	Total
Borrowings	£274m	£0m	£274m
Proportion of Borrowings	100%	0%	100%
Upper Limit	100%	50%	
Investments	£11m	£125m	£136m
Proportion of Investments	8%	92%	100%
Upper Limit	100%	100%	
Net Borrowing	£263m	£-125m	£138m
Proportion of Total Net Borrowing	191%	-107%	100%

The table shows that borrowing is mainly at fixed rates of interest and investments are mainly at variable rates. This was considered a good position when interest rates were rising as the cost of existing borrowing remained stable whilst investments, at variable rates of interest, generated increasing income. As the position has changed to one of low interest rates, the Treasury Management Team continues to seek to adjust this but is restricted by a number of factors:

- the level of uncertainty in the markets make investing for long periods at fixed rates of interest more risky and, therefore, the Council continues to only invest short term at variable rates of interest;
- many of the loans have expensive penalties for early repayment or rescheduling which makes changing the debt position difficult.

4.35 **(c) Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing**

This indicator is to limit large concentrations of fixed rate debt needing to be replaced at times of uncertainty over interest rates.

Maturity structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Actual Fixed Rate Borrowing as at 31 Mar 11	% of Fixed Rate Borrowing as at 31 Mar 11
	%	%	£m	%
under 12 months	100	0	15	5
12 months and within 24 months	100	0	17	6
24 months and within 5 years	100	0	49	18
5 years and within 10 years	100	0	26	10
10 years and above	100	0	167	61
			274	100

4.36 **(d) Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days**

This indicator allows the Council to manage the risk inherent in investments longer than 364 days and for 2010/11 the limit was set at £30 million.

The response since the onset of the credit crunch in 2007 has been to keep investment maturities to a maximum of 12 months. No investments were made for a period greater than 364 days during this period.

4.37 **Summary**

During 2010/11 none of the Prudential Indicators have been breached and a prudent approach has been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 The Council is responsible for treasury decisions and activity and none of these decisions are without risk. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk are important and the main risks are:-

- Liquidity Risk (Inadequate cash resources).
- Market or Interest Rate Risk (Fluctuations in interest rate levels).
- Inflation Risk (Exposure to inflation).
- Credit and Counterparty Risk (Security of investments).
- Refinancing Risk (Impact of debt maturing in future years).
- Legal and Regulatory Risk.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 There are no other options considered in this report.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 There has been no consultation undertaken or proposed for this report. There are no implications for partner organisations arising out of this report.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 There are none arising out of this report.

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

9.1 In the financial year 2010/11 the treasury management activities resulted in £1 million of additional receipts from investment income and a saving of £2 million from the capital financing activities. These sums can be returned to the General Fund balances.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. This requires the annual production of Prudential Indicators and a Treasury Management Strategy Statement and the reporting of treasury management activities at least twice per year.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising out of this report and an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are none arising out of this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are none arising out of this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Mark Goulding
Group Accountant (Treasury Management)
telephone: (0151) 666 3415
email: markgoulding@wirral.gov.uk

FNCE/124/11

REFERENCE MATERIAL

DCLG Local Authority Investment Guidance, 2004

DCLG Changes to the Capital Financing System Consultation, 2009

Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services (Fully Revised Second Edition), CIPFA 2009.

Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (Fully Revised Second Edition), CIPFA 2009.

SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet - Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2010 to 2013	22 February 2010
Cabinet – Treasury Management Annual Report 2009/10	24 June 2010
Cabinet - Treasury Management Performance Monitoring	22 July 2010
Cabinet - Treasury Management Performance Monitoring	14 October 2010
Cabinet – Treasury Management Performance Monitoring	3 February 2011

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	INSURANCE FUND ANNUAL REPORT
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR STEVE FOULKES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a review of the Risk and Insurance activity during 2010/11 and the plans for 2011/12. It also details the current status of the liability, fire and motor claims Insurance Fund and the impact of measures taken to improve the management of risk.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the transfer of £946,654 from the Insurance Fund to General Fund balances at 31 March 2011 be agreed.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Officers assessment is that the sum represents the excess over that needed to meet losses and its release will not present a risk to the stability of the Insurance Fund.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

Approach to Risk Financing

- 4.1 Since 1988 the Council has self-insured a significant proportion of legal liability both to members of the public and to other organisations for injury or damage to property that it may cause in carrying out its business. The Council also self-insures damage to Council buildings, motor accidents involving Council vehicles, damage to equipment, and a range of minor risks.
- 4.2 Self-funding losses to a certain level is part of the overall Risk Management Strategy as it provides a greater incentive to deal with risk more effectively given that any reduction in claims directly benefits the Authority. The level of self insurance is set with reference to both the availability of a stable long term Insurance Fund and with regard to the appetite for risk.

- 4.3 Claims are met from the Insurance Fund with the Fund being maintained through annual contributions from all departments.

Review of Liability Reserves and Provisions

- 4.4 To help ensure that the Fund is sufficient to meet the cost of liability claims every two years a review is undertaken by an external actuary who assesses the amount needed to fund anticipated liabilities for previous years.
- 4.5 The outcome of the formal study carried out in 2010 was reported to Cabinet on 2 September 2010. With the actions taken to prevent claims arising, progress in mitigating / resolving claims and the consequent reduction in potential liabilities Cabinet agreed to the release of the £3.4 million surplus from the Insurance Fund to General Fund balances.
- 4.6 In the intervening years a self-evaluation is undertaken as was the case for liabilities incurred as at 31 March 2011. The figure required was calculated by taking the sum recommended by the actuary for losses as at 31 March 2010 adjusted for the premium received and losses met by the Fund in 2010/11.
- 4.7 The self-evaluation indicated that a sum of £7,278,000 was required as at 31 March 2011 to meet outstanding liabilities:-

Class	Actual Provision 31/03/11	Revised Provision 31/03/11	Difference
	£	£	£
Combined Liability	7,878,337	7,278,337	600,000

- 4.8 The surplus of £600,000 can be returned to the General Fund Balance.

Review of Other Reserves and Provisions

- 4.9 The Insurance Fund underwrites a number of other classes of business and holds sums in respect of uninsured risks and to pay for risk improvement measures. These figures are also reviewed each financial year.
- 4.10 The 2011 review identified that these elements of the Fund contained £346,654 above that which was needed to fund claims. Again as a consequence of actions taken to reduce the potential for losses and the continuing improvements in claims management, the cost of claims had reduced faster and to a greater degree than forecast.
- 4.11 The surplus of £346,654 in respect of the other sections of the Insurance Fund can also be returned to the General Balance.

Insurance and Risk Management 2010/11

- 4.12 Throughout 2010/11 regular progress reports on Risk and Insurance Management were presented to the Audit & Risk Management Committee.
- 4.13 Improvements reported in claims management in previous years have been sustained through the continuing efforts of departments to manage their liability risk. Allied to this are the 'firm but fair' stance on liability; the continuing active involvement in claims handling; and the counter-claims fraud strategy. The claims handling and legal services contracts continue to assist in reducing both claims numbers and the overall cost to the Council of this area of risk.
- 4.14 Severe winter weather in 2009/10 and 2010/11 resulted in a sharp increase in the number of liability and property claims and a large cluster of Employers Liability claims also created a significant workload.
- 4.15 In association with Zurich Municipal risk ranking surveys were conducted on all primary schools, special schools and Early Years Centres. This programme has been of great benefit with each school given an individual report on good practice and areas where improvements could be made.
- 4.16 Consequent to involvement in the Lord Justice Jackson Review during 2010, one of my officers was invited by the Ministry of Justice to meet with the Justice Minister to represent the views of local authorities in connection with the consultation process on proposed reforms to civil litigation funding and costs. The issues under consideration have the potential for a negative impact on the performance of the liability element of the Insurance Fund. Wirral Council maintained a prominent role throughout the consultation process with further meetings and discussions taking place and, with the consultation process now closed, the outcome is awaited from the Ministry of Justice.
- 4.17 The Insurance Fund Budget 2011/12 was approved by Cabinet on 25 November 2010. Cabinet noted the savings to the General Fund of £588,000 and to Schools of £285,000. The latter is a consequence of more effective procurement by the team and sustained improvements in the claims experience.
- 4.18 The contract for Insurance Broking and Advice was reported to the Audit & Risk Management Committee on 17 January 2011. The annual cost is approximately £7,000 lower than for 2009/10. Liverpool City Council has expressed interest in joining this contract which was issued on a collaborative basis.
- 4.19 In relation to partnerships enhanced risk management arrangements were introduced to support the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). Improved processes for producing and managing risk registers for individual thematic partnerships and for the LSP as a whole were introduced.
- 4.20 Following the refresh of the Corporate Plan work began with Chief Officers to review the Corporate Risk Register. This work continues and a draft version of the updated register will be the subject of a report to Cabinet.

4.21 Guidance for officers on the inclusion of information on risks and opportunities in reports to Members was revised. Regular quality checks on reports presented to Cabinet have been undertaken and feedback provided to departments to help ensure continuous improvement.

Insurance and Risk Management 2011/12

4.22 Regular reports on the progress of Insurance and Risk Management will continue to be presented to the Audit and Risk Management Committee. There will also be regular updates on significant risks as part of the quarterly Performance and Financial Review reports presented to Cabinet.

4.23 A significant area of work will be improvements to the Risk Management Strategy and framework. Some of the tasks listed below relate directly to this initiative and the table outlines the principal areas and the target dates for completion.

Task	Target Date
Conduct market-testing exercise for Academy Schools insurance	May 2011
Support Chief Officers in reviewing Corporate Risks	May / June 2011
Review of funding for insured liabilities	May 2011
Discuss priorities for future risk management with Executive Team	June 2011
Negotiate annual renewal of Property, Money, Fidelity Guarantee & Personal Accident insurance contracts	June 2011
Develop risk management training for Members	July/August 2011
Audit of external liability claims handlers' performance	August 2011
Negotiate annual renewal of Marine Insurance contract	September 2011
Present the Insurance Fund Budget 2012/13	November 2011
Review of key departmental risks for 2012/13.	March 2012
Negotiate annual renewal of Liabilities insurance contract	March 2012
Review Motor, Computer and Engineering insurance contracts Option to extend each contract for a further 2 years. Officers will take a view prior to expiry as to whether extensions would represent good value.	March 2012

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 The release of money from the Insurance Fund could potentially leave it exposed in the event of a series of major losses. However, liability is limited by aggregate excesses and for some policies the Fund reflects the maximum liability for that risk in any one year. In respect of other risks the amount within the Fund is influenced by the Risk & Insurance Team understanding of claims patterns and costs. Expenditure on major losses would be incurred over several years allowing time to supplement funding should it be necessary.

5.2 Insurance charges (including those for schools) are calculated six months before the start of each financial year. Schools converting to Academy status can no longer be covered by the Council insurance arrangements. Uncertainty over which schools will convert and the date of conversion presents a risk that the Insurance Fund will not recover sufficient premiums to meet claims from schools. This is mitigated by ensuring that developments are known as early as possible and by using the Fund to help off-set some of the potential shortfall.

5.3 The growing number of Academies does present a potential opportunity for the service. The Team has created an insurance facility for Academy schools through which insurance would be provided by the insurance market and the Team would run procurement exercises, provide support on renewals and claims, and give general insurance advice. This enables schools to continue to contract with a service they value whilst providing a modest source of income for the Authority.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1. The balance in the Insurance Fund over that needed to meet claims could have been retained.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Secondary Schools have been closely involved in the development of the insurance facility for Academy Schools.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

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

9.1 The continuing effective and pro-active approach to managing insured risk is reflected in the assessment of the amounts required in the Insurance Fund to meet current and future claims.

9.2 During 2010/11 Cabinet agreed to the release of £3.4 million from the Insurance Fund to the General Fund balance following the Actuarial Review. The Insurance Fund Budget 2011/12 resulted in a reduction in contributions from departments and schools of £0.9 million. This Review now seeks Cabinet agreement to the transfer of a further £0.9 million from the Fund at the end of the 2010/11 financial year.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no carbon usage implications arising from this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no planning implications. Actions taken as a result of the Risk Ranking Surveys will assist with the safety of staff pupils and visitors in schools.

FNCE/115/11

REPORT AUTHOR: Mike Lane
Designation Risk and Insurance Officer
Telephone (0151) 666 3413
Email mikelane@wirral.gov.uk

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Insurance Fund Budget 2011/12 - Cabinet	25 November 2010
Insurance Fund Actuarial Review - Cabinet	2 September 2010
Insurance Fund Annual Report - Cabinet	24 June 2010
Insurance fund Budget 2010/11 - Cabinet	14 January 2010
Insurance Fund Annual Report - Cabinet	25 June 2009
Insurance Fund Budget 2009/10 - Cabinet	27 November 2008
Insurance Fund Annual Report - Cabinet	9 July 2008

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT	DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS 2011/12
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER	COUNCILLOR STEVE FOULKES
KEY DECISION	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides details of the departmental revenue budgets following the setting of the Budget 2011/12.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the revised departmental budgets which take account of the decisions by Council on 1 March 2011 be agreed.
- 2.2 That Chief Officers and the Director of Finance monitor and report to Cabinet as part of the quarterly Performance Report and that the monthly Financial Monitoring Statement be sent to all Members.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council Constitution and the statutory responsibilities placed upon the Director of Finance require that the Authority operates under robust budget management procedures. The financial regulations within the Constitution include the responsibilities of Chief Officers for financial management:-

3.2.17. Budget management is the preparation, monitoring and control of budgets. It ensures that allocated resources are used for their intended purpose and are properly accounted for. Budgetary control is a continuous process, enabling the Authority to review and adjust its budget targets during the financial year. It provides the mechanism that makes managers responsible for defined elements of the budget.

3.2.18. By continuously reviewing and explaining variances against budgetary targets, the Authority can identify changes in trends and resource requirements at the earliest opportunity. The Authority operates within an annual cash limit, approved when setting the overall budget. Each service is required to manage its own expenditure within the budget allocated to it.

3.2.19. Chief Officers are expected to exercise their discretion in managing their budgets responsibly and prudently.

3.2.25 It is the responsibility of Chief Officers:-

(i) to maintain budgetary control within their departments, in adherence to the principles outlined above, and to ensure that all income and expenditure is properly recorded and accounted for;

(ii) to ensure that an accountable budget manager is identified for each item of income and expenditure under the control of the Chief Officer. Budget responsibility should be aligned as closely as possible to the decision making which commits expenditure;

(iii) to ensure that spending remains within the service's overall cash limit, and that individual budget heads are not overspent, by monitoring the budget and taking appropriate corrective action where significant variations from the approved budget are forecast;

(iv) to ensure that an effective monitoring process is in place to review performance levels/levels of service in conjunction with the budget;

(v) to prepare and submit to the Cabinet, reports on the service's projected expenditure compared with its budget, in consultation with the Director of Finance.

3.2 The Budget 2011/12, and supporting Departmental budgets, ensure resources are directed to achieve the aims and objectives in the Corporate Plan. Regular monitoring of both the financial position and performance assesses progress against the Corporate Plan.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 Council agreed the Revenue Budget for 2011/12 on 1 March 2011. This has been analysed across Departments including the policy options for one year only and the agreed savings:-

4.2 The detailed revenue budget for each Department is as follows:-

Department	Base Budget 2011/12	Policy Options 2011/12	Savings 2011/12
	£	£	£
Adult Social Services	63,431,500	20,000	16,906,600
Children and Young People	74,753,300	392,000	7,954,200
Corporate Services	25,407,400	757,500	3,486,600
Finance	26,637,700	250,000	7,811,900
Law, HR, Asset Management	16,224,500	314,400	2,896,300
Technical Services	59,972,500	1,032,000	2,813,600
Departmental Totals	266,426,900	,2,765,900	41,869,200

- 4.3 The Appendix includes the Summary of General Fund Estimates (Gold Sheet), Savings Agreed 2011/12, the Policy Options 2011/12 (one year options) as well as the Departmental budgets 2011/12 showing Budget Changes from 2011/12, the Subjective Summary and the Objective Summary.
- 4.4 The Estimates 2011/12 ('the blue book') has been produced post Budget Council this year to reflect the final agreed revenue budget. Consolidating the supporting reports, it has been placed within the Library and is available on the Council internet site. The Estimates include:-
- **Revenue Budget:** Funding of regular day-to-day spending on Council Services.
 - **Capital Programme:** Funding of the purchase, upgrading or improvement of assets such as buildings and roads.
 - **Schools Budget:** Funding specifically provided for Wirral schools.
 - **Insurance Fund Budget:** Funding of external and internal risks relating to Council services and responsibilities.
 - **Carbon Budget:** Details carbon targets to assist the achievement of the carbon reduction targets.
- 4.5 The approved budgets will be subject to regular monitoring as detailed in the Delivering the Corporate Plan report agreed by Cabinet on 14 April 2011.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 The identification of Departmental budgets helps to ensure that services are delivered in accordance with Council priorities and within the overall budget.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 This report provides a summary of the agreed Departmental budgets for 2011/12 with additional information available in the Estimates 2011/12 ('the blue book') in the Council Library.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Budget 2011/12 was informed by the outcomes of the Wirral's Future - Be A Part of It consultation exercise.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 This report provides details of the agreed Council Budget 2011/12 analysed over the departmental budgets. There are no additional financial implications and this contributes towards the key controls of budget planning and monitoring.

9.2 There are no staffing or IT implications arising from this report.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

FNCE/100/11

REPORT AUTHOR: Peter Molyneux
Chief Accountant – Financial Services
telephone: 0151 666 3389
email: petemolyneux@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDIX

The Appendix includes:-

- Summary of General Fund Estimates (Gold Sheet)
- Savings Agreed 2011/12
- Policy Options 2011/12 (one year options)
- Departmental budgets 2011/12 showing Budget Changes from 2011/12, the Subjective Summary and the Objective Summary.

REFERENCE MATERIAL / SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet – Council Budget 2011/12	21 February 2011
Council – Council Budget 2011/12	1 March 2011

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SUMMARY OF GENERAL FUND ESTIMATES

	BASE ESTIMATE 2010/11 £	CURRENT ESTIMATE 2010/11 £	BASE ESTIMATE 2011/12 £
EXPENDITURE			
Adult Social Services	85,896,500	83,104,400	63,431,500
Children & Young People	78,215,000	79,113,400	74,753,300
Schools	493,200	308,200	0
Corporate Services	33,865,000	29,488,200	25,407,400
Finance	33,925,300	28,463,400	26,637,700
Law,HR, Asset Management	15,874,800	17,966,300	16,224,500
Technical Services	60,992,500	62,355,000	59,972,500
Departmental budgets	309,262,300	300,798,900	266,426,900
Merseytravel	27,344,000	27,344,000	28,817,000
Local Pay Review	1,130,800	956,300	956,300
LABGI & LAA Grants	(1,600,000)	0	0
Council Tax Freeze Grant	0	0	(3,285,000)
Contribution to fund EVR / VS Scheme	0	4,048,300	5,794,700
Net budget	336,137,100	333,147,500	298,709,900
Contribution from balances	(4,354,000)	(3,919,400)	(2,765,900)
Contribution from balances (EVR / VS)	0	(2,600,000)	(4,400,000)
BUDGET REQUIREMENT	331,783,100	326,628,100	291,544,000
INCOME			
Revenue Support Grant	20,016,300	20,016,300	37,498,000
National Non Domestic Rate	137,844,200	137,844,200	121,312,000
Area Based Grant	42,725,000	37,570,000	0
Council Tax Income	131,197,600	131,197,600	131,434,000
Collection Fund Surplus	0	0	1,300,000
TOTAL INCOME	331,783,100	326,628,100	291,544,000
STATEMENT OF GENERAL BALANCE			
General Balance at 1 April	10,723,000	10,723,000	14,070,600
Adjustment (following 2009/10 outturn)	0	3,035,000	0
Contribution from Insurance Fund	0	3,400,000	0
Contribution from Reserves / Provisions	0	3,432,000	0
Budgeted contribution	(4,354,000)	(6,519,400)	(7,165,900)
GENERAL BALANCE AT 31 MARCH	6,369,000	14,070,600	6,904,700

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SAVINGS AGREED 2011/12

Department and scheme	£
Adult Social Services	
Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	10,550,400
Market Management Review	5,368,000
Reprovision Respite and Interim Care	487,700
Area Based Grant	50,000
Transport	130,000
Car allowances, office supplies, overtime and consultancy costs	320,500
Children and Young People	
Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	5,100,000
Area Based Grant / Early Intervention Grant	2,390,200
Transfer Extended Schools	87,000
Contribution to Healthy Schools	94,000
Family Group Conferencing	70,000
Car allowances, office supplies, overtime and consultancy costs	212,500
Corporate Services	
Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	892,000
Area Based Grant	2,483,000
Working Neighbourhood Fund	239,000
Car allowances, office supplies, overtime and consultancy costs	111,600
Finance	
Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	3,510,800
Procurement (to be allocated over departments)	2,000,000
Contracts Review (to be allocated over departments)	500,000
Printing Review (to be allocated over departments)	250,000
Electronic Payment Development	200,000
Discretionary Rate Relief	337,000
Insurances	526,000
Reduction in Capital Financing	370,000
Car allowances, office supplies, overtime and consultancy costs	118,100
Law, HR and Asset Management	
Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	1,651,700
Transfer and disposal of Assets	479,000
Office Rationalisation	368,700
Energy Efficiency	80,000
Area Based Grant	2,000
Car allowances, office supplies, overtime and consultancy costs	75,900

Technical Services	
Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	2,096,200
Parks Procurement	200,000
Traffic Management	150,000
Highways Asset Management System	100,000
Street Lighting	50,000
Area Based Grant	66,000
Car allowances, office supplies, overtime and consultancy costs	151,400
Total Savings	41,869,200

WIRRAL COUNCIL

POLICY OPTIONS 2011/12

The following have been agreed for 2011/12 only as part of the 2011/12 Budget.

Department and scheme	£	Actions
Adult Social Services		
Armed Forces Veterans Support	20,000	Establishment of Armed Forces Community Welfare Pathway
Children and Young People		
Sure Start	32,000	Additional support and equipment grant for every centre
Children in Care Conference	20,000	Communication and engagement services.
Youth Hub	50,000	Support for On-side organisation to develop a hub in Birkenhead.
Anti-Social Behaviour Team	290,000	Funding for 12 months whilst full review of Council / partner services takes place
Corporate Services		
Child Poverty Action Plan	10,000	Development of plan and engagement with communities.
Empty Shops	192,500	Funding for Area Forums to address empty shop issues
Business Support	500,000	£250,000 for 2011/12 & 2012/13 on dedicated support and 'Wirral Business Angels' scheme.
Area Forums	55,000	To assist forums with community consultation
Finance		
Library Engagement	20,000	A campaign to communicate about library services
Library Equipment	120,000	Installation of wi-fi, information screens and an e-book services.
Get Into Reading	100,000	Further year funding for the project

Fair Trade	10,000	Wirral Fair Trade project
Law, HR and Asset Mgt		
Pacific Road Theatre	250,000	For retention of the facility whilst review of options is undertaken
Community Energy Efficiency Fund	57,000	Top up funding made available to support community groups.
Dog Kennels	7,400	Improvements to dog kennels
Technical Services		
Car Parking	482,000	Free after three campaign
Allotments	50,000	Improvement and investment fund for allotments.
Street Cleansing	500,000	Programme of cleansing in local and district shopping areas
Total	2,765,900	

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

BUDGET CHANGES	Base Estimate 2011/12	
	£000	£000
BASE ESTIMATE 2010/11		85,896.5
<u>Adjustments To Base</u>		
Pay Inflation 1% in 2010/11	(325.1)	
Personal Care	(2,600.0)	
Assistive Technology Grant	(400.0)	
		(3,325.1)
<u>Transfers Between Departments</u>		
Corporate – Marketing	(25.0)	
		(25.0)
<u>Inflation</u>		
Pay	372.4	
Income	(592.3)	
		(219.9)
<u>Increased Expenditure</u>		
Capital Charges	162.4	
Energy Contracts	31.2	
		193.6
<u>Reduced Expenditure</u>		
Social Care Reform Grant	(1,872.8)	
Support Services	(415.4)	
Insurance	(66.7)	
		(2,354.9)
<u>Increased Income</u>		
Emergency Duty Team	(267.9)	
		(267.9)
<u>Reduced Income</u>		
Social Care Reform Grant	1,872.8	
Aids Support Grant	48.0	
		1,920.8

Policy Options

One Year Policy Option:

Armed Forces Veterans Support 20.0

Permanent Policy Options:

Increasing Older People Demand 2,000.0

Learning Disabilities Transitional Arrangements 800.0

DASS Restructure 600.0

3,420.0

Health Care Grant (4,900.0)

(4,900.0)

Savings

Employees under EVR/VS Scheme (10,550.4)

Market Management Review (5,368.0)

Reprovision Respite and Interim Care (487.7)

Area Based Grant (50.0)

Transport (130.0)

Car Allowances, Office Supplies, Overtime and Consultancy Costs (320.5)

(16,906.6)

ESTIMATE 2011/12

63,431.5

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY

**Base Estimate
2011/12
£**

Expenditure

Employees	21,631,000
Premises	1,207,500
Transport	109,400
Supplies and Services	75,083,400
Third Party Payments	4,483,400
Transfer Payments	104,500
Support Services	17,418,200
Financing Costs	1,155,100
	126,192,500

LESS Income

Government Grants	(6,367,800)
Other Grants and Reimbursements	(10,505,000)
Customer and Client Receipts	(20,896,900)
Recharge to Other Revenue Accounts	(24,991,300)
	(62,761,000)

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES TOTAL

63,431,500

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

OBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Base Estimate
2011/12
£

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE

Management	-
Property Management	56,300
Savings	(540,000)
Finance Support	-
Service Manager	-

INTEGRATED COMMUNITIES & WELLBEING

I C and W Support	98,600
Service Manager	-
Assessment and Care Management	2,158,700
Community Care	4,152,500

ACCESS & ASSESSMENT

Service Manager	(4,300,000)
Bebington and West Wirral Locality	11,866,100
Birkenhead Locality	15,151,100
Wallasey Locality	9,017,400
Mental Health	5,217,600
Learning Disabilities	10,525,300
Equipment and Adaptations	1,295,300
Home Care	266,600
Emergency Duty Team	259,400
Other Services	717,400

DIRECT LOCALITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Service Manager	-
Day Care	5,663,100
Residential Homes	2,514,800
Supported Employment	1,028,800
Supported Living	(404,000)
Transport	(1,313,500)

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES TOTAL

63,431,500

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

	Base Estimate	
	2011/12	
BUDGET CHANGES	£000	£000
BASE ESTIMATE 2010/11		78,215.0
<u>Adjustment To Base</u>		
Pay Inflation 1% in 2010/11	(352.4)	(352.4)
<u>Transfers Between Departments</u>		
Finance –2009/10 Early Retirements	(62.7)	
Law, HR, Asset Mgt – Union Staff	(65.4)	
Efficiency Investment Budget Reallocation	(100.0)	(228.1)
<u>Inflation</u>		
Pay	356.4	356.4
<u>Increased Expenditure</u>		
Capital Charges	1,975.6	
Further Education - Learning and Skills Council	369.2	
Local Pay Review	163.2	
Private Finance Initiative	305.0	
Energy Contracts	11.1	
Finance – Family Group Conferencing	138.1	
Fostering National Minimum Allowance	90.0	
Teachers Pensions	60.0	3,112.2
<u>Reduced Expenditure</u>		
Further Education- Services returned	(17,237.6)	
Support Services	(27.9)	(17,265.5)
<u>Increased Income</u>		
Young Peoples Substance Misuse Grant	(72.0)	(72.0)
<u>Reduced Income</u>		
Further Education- Services returned	17,237.6	17,237.6

Policy Options

One Year Policy Options:

Anti Social Behaviour Team	290.3
Onside Youth Hub	50.0
Sure Start	32.0
Children In Care Conference	20.0

Permanent Policy Options:

Early Intervention Grant activities	1,000.0
Foster Care Fees	130.0
Independent Care Inflation	95.0
Stop Gap play outside	87.0

1,704.3

Savings

Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	(5,100.5)
Transfer Extended Schools	(87.0)
Contribution to Health Schools	(94.0)
Family Group Conferencing	(70.0)
Area Based / Early intervention Grants	(2,390.2)
Car Allowances, Office Supplies, Overtime and Consultancy Costs	(212.5)

(7,954.2)

ESTIMATE 2011/12

74,753.3

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Base Estimate
2011/12

	£	£
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Employees		42,613,300
Premises		2,187,900
Transport		1,164,300
Supplies and Services		26,450,200
Third Party Payments		11,099,000
Transfer Payments		2,406,100
Support Services		24,339,000
Financing Costs		17,696,500
		127,956,300
<u>LESS</u> Income		
Government Grants		(25,097,100)
Other Grants and Reimbursements		(5,243,000)
Customer and Client Receipts		(892,300)
Recharge to Other Revenue Accounts		(21,970,600)
		(53,203,000)
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE TOTAL		74,753,300

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

OBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Base Estimate
2011/12

	£	£
<u>CHILDREN'S SERVICES</u>		
Looked After Child Educational Services		119,300
Adoption Services		1,586,700
Assessment and Care Management		24,831,200
Commissioning		1,350,100
Children's Homes		1,715,400
Family Centres		2,876,400
Foster/Family Placements		1,466,600
Home Care		562,500
Leaving Care		1,126,100
Social Care Management & Training		-
Youth Offending Service		937,200
Carers Grant		224,700
Multi Disciplinary Area Teams		546,000
<u>LEA SCHOOL COSTS</u>		
Regulation		2,067,300
Premature Retire Costs		3,562,600
Other SEN Costs		106,800
School Improvement		2,210,900
Asset Management		3,148,600
Home to School Transport		5,140,400
Pupil Support		-
Oaklands Centre		78,400
Social Welfare Service		687,000
Psychology Service		1,070,400
Curriculum Advice	-	-
<u>MANAGEMENT & SUPPORT SERVICES</u>		
Inspect & Advisory Service		-
Building Cleaning DSO		-
Debt Management		14,808,500
Professional Development Centre		-

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**Base Estimate
2011/12
£****OBJECTIVE SUMMARY
(continued)****NON SCHOOL COSTS**

Adult & Community Learning	72,000
Youth Service	2,210,800
Community Services	583,300
Positive Activities for Young People	625,800
16-19 Education & Training	-
Instrumental Music Services	-
LEA Initiatives	48,600
Safeguarding Board	-
Merseyside Connexions	460,300
Integrated Youth Support	497,400

EARLY INTERVENTION GRANT

Children's Centres	32,000
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CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE TOTAL**74,753,300**

CORPORATE SERVICES

	Base Estimate 2011/12	
BUDGET CHANGES	£000	£000
BASE ESTIMATE 2010/11		33,865.0
<u>Adjustments To Base</u>		
Pay Inflation 1% in 2010/11	(78.5)	(78.5)
<u>Transfers Between Departments</u>		
Technical – Planning and Building Control	591.0	
Technical – Marketing	23.5	
DASS – Marketing	25.0	
Finance –2009/10 EVRs	(129.2)	
		(510.3)
<u>Inflation</u>		
Pay	62.0	
Income	(5.2)	
		56.8
<u>Increased Expenditure</u>		
Your Economy Task Force recommendations	2,845.0	
Winter Resilience Funding	55.0	
Home Insulation	1,049.0	
Insurance	35.3	
		3,984.3
<u>Reduced Expenditure</u>		
You Decide Option 2010/11	(55.0)	
Promotion CRED Scheme Option 2010/11	(30.0)	
BME Strategic Post Option 2010/11	(30.0)	
New Apprenticeships Option 2010/11	(500.0)	
Working Neighbourhoods Fund (net)	(8,228.8)	
Capital Charges	(636.0)	
Support Services	(589.7)	
		(10,269.5)
<u>Increased Income</u>		
European Social Fund Grant	(740.0)	
		(740.0)
<u>Reduced Income</u>		
Regeneration departmental recharges	808.1	
		808.1

Policy Options

One Year Policy Options:

Business Support	500.0
Empty Shops	192.5
Area Forum Development of Local Plans	55.0
Child Poverty Action Plan	10.0

757.5

Savings

Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	(892.0)
Area Based Grant	(2,483.0)
Car Allowances, Office Supplies, Overtime and Consultancy Costs	(111.6)
Digital Infrastructure re-phasing	-

(3,486.6)

ESTIMATE 2011/12

25,407.4

CORPORATE SERVICES**SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY****Base Estimate
2011/12
£**Expenditure

Employees	8,218,400
Premises	329,100
Transport	108,300
Supplies and Services	5,978,700
Third Party Payments	8,263,800
Transfer Payments	3,984,300
Support Services	6,562,100
Financing Costs	14,837,100
	48,281,800

LESS Income

Government Grants	(15,521,400)
Other Grants and Reimbursements	(607,700)
Customer and Client Receipts	(2,217,000)
Interest	(4,500)
Recharge to Other Revenue Accounts	(4,523,800)
	(22,874,400)

CORPORATE SERVICES TOTAL**25,407,400**

CORPORATE SERVICES

OBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Base Estimate
2011/12

£	£
<u>CENTRAL SERVICES</u>	
Central Support Administration	-
<u>CORPORATE POLICY</u>	
Grants to Voluntary Bodies	540,300
Performance Management & Consultation	1,582,700
Merseyside Information Service	101,600
<u>Departmental Savings</u>	
Departmental Savings	(31,300)
<u>STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT</u>	
Economic & Strategic Development	2,539,300
West Wirral Schemes	200,000
<u>TOURISM AND MARKETING</u>	
Graphics PR Tourism	1,295,000
Tourism Events	116,400
Corporate Marketing Strategy	18,500
<u>HOUSING & REGENERATION SERVICES</u>	
Housing Market Renewal Initiative	155,200
Housing Strategy	608,000
Private Sector Housing	2,417,800
Regeneration Implementation	630,000
Rehousing Services	738,100
Supporting People	10,679,200
Working Neighbourhoods Fund	3,225,600
Management & Support	-
<u>PLANNING & BUILDING CONTROL</u>	
Building Control	591,000
CORPORATE SERVICES TOTAL	25,407,400

FINANCE

	Base Estimate	
	2011/12	
BUDGET CHANGES	£000	£000
BASE ESTIMATE 2010/11		33,925.3
<u>Adjustments To Base</u>		
Pay Inflation 1% in 2010/11	(295.0)	
		(295.0)
<u>Transfers Between Departments</u>		
Law, HR, Asset Mgt – Libraries Maintenance	-	
Law, HR, Asset Mgt – Planned Maintenance	(200.0)	
Law, HR, Asset Mgt – Libraries	(777.6)	
Technical Services – Change Team	(310.8)	
Efficiency Investment Budget – From Depts	190.0	
All Departments – 2009/10 Early Retirements	432.3	
		(666.1)
<u>Inflation</u>		
Pay	314.5	
Income	(36.4)	
		278.1
<u>Increased Expenditure</u>		
Efficiency Investment Budget	2,000.0	
Housing Benefits	6,146.7	
Capital Finance Costs	1,900.0	
Support Services	844.0	
Energy Contracts	16.0	
Discretionary Rate Relief	190.0	
		11,096.7
<u>Reduced Expenditure</u>		
Capital Charges	(3,855.0)	
Efficiency Investment Budget – To Depts	(138.1)	
Libraries Maintenance Option 2010/11	(1,200.0)	
Libraries Option 2010/11	(100.0)	
Insurance	(58.5)	
		(5,352.6)
<u>Increased Income</u>		
Housing Benefits Grant	(5,828.6)	
Recharge to Pension Fund	(8.0)	
		(5,836.6)

Reduced Income

Housing Benefits Admin Grant	152.8	
		152.8

Policy Options

One Year Policy Options:

Library Equipment	120.0	
Get Into Reading	100.0	
Library Engagement	20.0	
Fair Trade	10.0	
		250.0

Savings

Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	(3,510.8)	
Discretionary Rate Relief	(337.0)	
Procurement (to be allocated to departments)	(2,000.0)	
Contracts review (to be allocated to depts)	(500.0)	
Printing (to be allocated to departments)	(250.0)	
Electronic Payment Development	(200.0)	
Car Allowances, Office Supplies, Overtime and Consultancy Costs	(118.1)	
		(6,915.9)

ESTIMATE 2011/12

26,637.7

FINANCE

SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Base Estimate
2011/12
£

Expenditure

Employees	30,031,900
Premises	894,800
Transport	215,100
Supplies and Services	5,398,300
Third Party Payments	11,507,100
Transfer Payments	164,945,900
Support Services	18,646,550
Financing Costs	28,156,150
	259,795,800

LESS Income

Government Grants	(162,754,300)
Other Grants and Reimbursements	(986,800)
Customer and Client Receipts	(3,279,400)
Interest	(1,300,000)
Recharge to Other Revenue Accounts	(64,837,600)
	(233,158,100)

FINANCE TOTAL

26,637,700

FINANCE

OBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Base Estimate
2011/12
£

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial Services

-

INTERNAL AUDIT

Internal Audit

-

IT SERVICES

IT Services

750,000

Printing

-

IT Quality Services

-

IT Technical Support Services

-

Infrastructure

-

Superstructure

-

Business Architecture

-

Central Telephones

-

OTHER OPERATIONS

Efficiency Fund

5,500,000

Pensions and Funding Costs

3,419,000

Strategic Change Programme Savings

-

(2,950,000)

PENSION FUND

Pension Fund

-

SUPPORT SERVICES

Information Management

579,800

Pay & Tax Control

-

Central Administration

-

Procurement

-

Management

-

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

Treasury Management

(2,248,450)

CUSTOMER SERVICES & LIBRARIES

Call Centre

(71,200)

One Stop Shops & Libraries

7,127,900

Customer Services Development

329,600

BENEFITS AND REVENUE SERVICES

Benefits

9,319,500

Income

190,600

Council Tax

4,690,950

FINANCE TOTAL

26,637,700

LAW, HR, ASSET MANAGEMENT

	Base Estimate	
	2011/12	
BUDGET CHANGES	£000	£000
BASE ESTIMATE 2010/11		15,874.8
<u>Adjustments To Base</u>		
Pay Inflation 1% in 2010/11	(134.9)	(134.9)
<u>Transfers Between Departments</u>		
Technical – Design Consultancy	(86.5)	
Finance – Libraries	777.6	
Technical – Cultural Properties	5,565.4	
Finance – Libraries and Culture	200.0	
Technical – Birkenhead Town Hall	1,313.1	
Finance –2009/10 Early Retirements	(137.1)	
All Departments – Union Staff	158.7	
		7,791.2
<u>Inflation</u>		
Pay	63.8	
Income	(20.2)	
		43.6
<u>Increased Expenditure</u>		
Re-instate Leasowe and Guinea Gap	1,172.4	
Carbon Reduction Initiative	532.0	
Energy Contracts	131.5	
Re-engineering Reallocation Regeneration	782.7	
Capital Charges	827.2	
Trade Union Representation	32.0	
		3,477.8
<u>Reduced Expenditure</u>		
Community Asset Transfer Option	(1,362.0)	
Energy Efficiency Grants Option 2010/11	(66.0)	
Prevention of Underage Sales Option 2010/11	(40.0)	
Support Services	(560.0)	
Insurance	(71.6)	
		(2,099.6)

<u>Increased Income</u>		
Support Services(operational Buildings)	(6,326.5)	
		(6,326.5)
<u>Policy Options</u>		
One Year Policy Options		
Pacific Road Theatre	250.0	
Community Energy Efficiency Fund	57.0	
Dog Kennels	7.4	
Permanent Policy Options:		
Prevention of Under Age Sales	40.0	
Daytime Staff CCTV Control Room	60.0	
Dog Fouling Enforcement	80.0	
		494.4
<u>Savings</u>		
Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	(1,651.7)	
Office Rationalisation	(368.7)	
Asset Rationalisation	(479.0)	
Funding change on grants	(239.0)	
Energy Efficiency	(80.0)	
Area Based Grant	(2.0)	
Car Allowances, Office Supplies, Overtime and Consultancy Costs	(75.9)	(2,896.3)
ESTIMATE 2011/12		16,224.5

LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY

**Base Estimate
2011/12
£**

Expenditure

Employees	13,010,900
Premises	9,738,600
Transport	462,700
Supplies and Services	3,628,300
Third Party Payments	1,764,300
Transfer Payments	(215,500)
Support Services	10,784,300
Financing Costs	6,802,500
	45,976,100

LESS Income

Government Grants	(283,600)
Other Grants and Reimbursements	(84,100)
Customer and Client Receipts	(6,586,700)
Interest	(10,000)
Recharge to Other Revenue Accounts	(22,787,200)
	(29,751,600)

**LAW, HUMAN RESOURCES AND
ASSET MANAGEMENT TOTAL**

16,224,500

LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Base Estimate
2011/12
£

AGREED SAVINGS

Strategic Asset Review (216,300)

ASSET MANAGEMENT

Corporate Assets	61,900
Industrial & Commercial Props	(311,100)
Estates Management	426,000
Managed Properties	(275,400)
Property Maintenance	1,610,000
Disabled Access	100,000
Administrative Buildings	1,308,900
Community Buildings	57,000
Halls	666,300
Community Services	980,800
Property Maintenance - Cultural Assets	-
Property Maintenance - Libraries	-
Property Maintenance - Sport & Culture	-
Allotments	137,400
Design Consultancy	(86,500)

CENTRAL SERVICES

Central Support Administration	-
Wallasey Complex Management	85,500

HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources	191,000
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LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC

Coroners	485,900
Electoral & Member Services	496,900
Legal Services	-
Registrar	70,500

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Departmental Management and Administration	-
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LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**OBJECTIVE SUMMARY
(continued)****Base Estimate
2011/12
£**REGULATORY SERVICES

Community Safety	2,248,900
Environmental Health	2,026,100
Licensing	(3,600)
Neighbourhood Nuisance	17,400
North Western and North Wales Sea Fisheries Committee	45,000
Port Health Authorities	128,500
Trading Standards and Consumer Advice	780,900

Departmental Savings

Departmental Savings	(69,000)
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CORPORATE AND DEMOCRATIC CORE

Democratic Representation and Management	2,120,000
Corporate Management	3,141,500

**LAW, HUMAN RESOURCES AND
ASSET MANAGEMENT TOTAL****16,224,500**

TECHNICAL SERVICES

	Base Estimate 2011/12	
BUDGET CHANGES	£000	£000
BASE ESTIMATE 2010/11		60,992.5
<u>Adjustments To Base</u>		
Pay Inflation 1% in 2010/11	(251.2)	(251.2)
<u>Transfers Between Departments</u>		
Finance – Change Team	310.8	
Law, HR, Asset Mgt – Birkenhead Town Hall	(1,313.1)	
Law, HR, Asset Mgt – Cultural Properties	(5,565.4)	
Law, HR, Asset Mgt – Union Staff	(93.3)	
Law, HR, Asset Mgt – Design Consultancy	86.5	
Corporate – Planning and Building Control	(591.0)	
Corporate – Marketing	(23.5)	
Finance –2009/10 Early Retirements	(103.3)	
Finance – Consultants	(90.0)	
		(7,382.3)
<u>Inflation</u>		
Pay	319.5	
Income	(323.4)	
		(3.9)
<u>Increased Expenditure</u>		
Culture Property Recharge	5,825.0	
Capital Charges	2,725.2	
Car Parking and Related Charges	100.0	
Waste Collection to additional properties	12.0	
Energy Contracts	178.0	
Support Services	8.5	
		8,848.7
<u>Reduced Expenditure</u>		
Waste Disposal Levy	(1,057.0)	
Insurance	(443.3)	
		(1,500.3)
<u>Reduced Income</u>		
Waste Infrastructure Grant	202.0	
Free Swimming	293.6	
		495.6

Policy Options

One Year Policy Options

Street Cleansing	500.0	
Car Parking Charges	482.0	
Allotments	50.0	

Permanent Policy Options:

Waste Inflation	400.0	
Recycling Project Officers	95.0	
Football Pitches – Cleaning and Inspection	40.0	
Football Pitches – Equipment	20.0	

1,587.0

Savings

Employees under EVR/VS Scheme	(2,096.2)	
Parks Procurement	(200.0)	
Traffic Management	(150.0)	
Highways Management	(100.0)	
Street Lighting	(50.0)	
Car Allowances, Office Supplies, Overtime and Consultancy Costs	(151.4)	
Area Based Grant	(66.0)	(2,813.6)

ESTIMATE 2011/12

59,972.5

TECHNICAL SERVICES

SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY

**Base Estimate
2011/12
£**

Expenditure

Employees	20,774,700
Premises	12,199,100
Transport	2,145,000
Supplies and Services	5,144,800
Third Party Payments	31,363,200
Transfer Payments	23,100
Support Services	15,849,700
Financing Costs	4,356,000
	91,855,600

LESS Income

Government Grants	-
Other Grants and Reimbursements	(20,000)
Customer and Client Receipts	(16,583,000)
Recharge to Other Revenue Accounts	(15,280,100)
	(31,883,100)

TECHNICAL SERVICES TOTAL

59,972,500

TECHNICAL SERVICES

OBJECTIVE SUMMARY

**Base Estimate
2011/12
£**

CULTURE & HERITAGE

Art Galleries and Museums	714,600
Theatre, Arts and Culture	957,200
Tramway	169,100

PARKS & OPEN SPACES

Beach Lifeguards	348,900
Birkenhead Park	580,600
Cemeteries and Crematorium	(341,800)
Golf	(152,500)
Parks and Open Spaces	3,745,100
Ranger Service	710,100

SPORT & RECREATION

Health & Sports Grant Funded Initiatives	-
Sports Centres	8,504,100
Sports Development	260,000

PLANNED MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT

Planned Maintenance and Support	900,000
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TRANSPORT

Transport	(96,800)
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ENGINEERS

Emergency Planning	370,200
Change Management and Administration	490,700
Levies & Financing	2,893,500
Traffic	2,326,700
Car Parks	(1,200,900)
Drainage & Sea Defences	784,100
Street Lighting	2,343,400
Highway Maintenance	5,885,800
Departmental Savings	(350,000)

WASTE

Waste and Environmental Services	14,141,900
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WASTE DISPOSAL AUTHORITY LEVY

Waste Disposal Authority Levy	15,988,500
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TECHNICAL SERVICES TOTAL

59,972,500

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	COLLECTION SUMMARY 2010/11
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR STEVE FOULKES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. This report details the collection of Council Tax, Business Rates, Sundry Debtors and Housing Act Advances. It highlights key collection indicators and trends with regard to irrecoverable sums and the sums written off under delegation.

2.0. RECOMMENDATION

2.1. That the report be noted.

3.0. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1. For Members to be aware of the collection activity undertaken in these revenue areas,

4.0. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1. Council Tax Collection

4.1.1. The following statement summarises 2010/11 collection of Council Tax.

	£	£
Arrears Brought Forward at 1 April 2010		12,702,145
Total Charge		<u>178,798,665</u>
		191,500,810
Less Credits Brought Forward at 1 April 2010		<u>882,657</u>
		190,618,153
Less Allowances:		
Exemptions	6,003,880	
Disabled Persons Relief	155,330	
Discounts	18,414,611	
Benefits	31,033,768	
Write-offs	<u>718,446</u>	56,325,735
		134,292,418
Add Refunds Made		1,178,552

Add Costs	<u>520,479</u>
	135,991,449
Less Cash Received	<u>122,717,449</u>
Arrears Carried Forward at 31 March 2011	<u>13,270,000.</u>

Number of properties at 31 March 2011	145,427
Number of Benefit Recipients at 31 March 2011	42,226

4.1.2. During 2010-2011 a total of 52,062 reminder notices and 14,262 summonses were issued leading to the Courts issuing 12,707 Liability Orders. 1,974 Attachment of Earnings Orders and 3,981 Deductions from Job Seekers Allowance / Income Support were commenced and 8,426 cases were referred to Bailiffs.

4.1.3. Despite the continuing economic downturn in 2010-11 Council Tax collection improved with an increase from 96.8% in 2009-2010 to 97% in 2010-11. This is against the backdrop of issuing 13,000 less reminder notices, 5,500 less summonses and referring 1,200 less cases to the bailiff. I am attempting further collection improvements this year to further reduce coercive recovery practices.

4.2. Council Tax Irrecoverables

4.2.1. There is no specific power to write off Council Tax debts, which are covered by the general power of administering the financial affairs of the Authority. Examples of suitable cases for write off are: deceased persons with no estate, persons not traced, Insolvency and minimal sums. All other debts are actively pursued.

4.2.2. The write-off provision for 2010/2011 was £4.0m. Trace and recovery work is ongoing for Council Tax arrears. In 2010/11 £1,326,565 has been written off and is categorised as follows:

	£
Deceased	44,886
Insolvency	172,568
Miscellaneous	19,546
1998-2000	608,419
Non-traceable	<u>481,146</u>
	<u>1,326,565</u>

Miscellaneous write-offs include small debits/credits which are uneconomic to pursue, committal sums remitted, recovery costs cancelled, and debts that are statute barred.

4.2.3. The Council Tax computer system was replaced in December 2006 and is designed to hold all old accounts. With the previous system the eighth year debts were archived to a residual collection system. This no longer occurs. However as in previous years the year 2004-2005 accounts were analysed for collection purposes. This resulted in £481,146 of the debt being written off as unable to be traced. The remaining £455,442 will continue to be collected for another six years.

4.2.4. The balance on the residual system as at 1 April 2009 was £608,310, which covers the period from 1 April 1998 to 31 March 2000. £38,498 was collected against residual debts on this system. The cash receipts were reduced by £38,607. This was refunded to taxpayers due to successful Council Tax banding appeals. Many of the appeals resulted in repayments as far back as April 1993. There was in effect a negative collection of £109.

4.2.5. I have under delegated powers, written off the balance of the 1998-2000 debt during 2010/11. The debt is 11-12 years old and this practice is in line with that used for General Rates and Poll Tax debts of that age. £608,419 was written off. By writing off 2 years debt the old system was retired saving £5,000 per annum in licence fees. The final collection performance for 1998-99 Council Tax was 99.13% and for 1999/2000 99.26%.

4.3. Council Tax Statistics

4.3.1. Number of Dwellings

1 April 2010	145,753
1 April 2011	145,427
Number of Dwellings as an Equivalent of Band 'D'	
1 April 2010	106,283
1 April 2011	106,476

4.3.2. Year on Year Volume Comparisons

	31.03.09	31.03.10	31.03.11
Direct Debit Payers	85,995	86,739	87,863
Discount Recipients	70,130	71,686	72,105
Inc Pensioners discounts	7,193	8,797	8,910
Exempt Persons	3,835	4,116	4,072
No. of Amended/Copy Accounts	125,092	160,696	109,191
No. of Returned Direct Debit Payments	10,441	10,779	11,472
Payments: Direct Debits	861,591	865,047	873,033
Cash/Cheque	124,395	77,036	71,566
Salaries/Wages	20,492	17,113	16,315
Debit/Credit Card	45,915	52,012	55,994
Paypoint		33,203	32,367
Post Office		75,889	69,654
Dept Work + Pensions		8,599	27,422
Bailiff		21,393	27,957

BUSINESS RATES (NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES)

4.4. Collection

4.4.1. The following statement summarises 2010-11 collection.

	£	£
Opening Debit		74,622,093
Plus Balance Brought Forward		6,860,339
Plus Costs		<u>27,664</u>
		81,510,096
<u>Allowances</u>		
Assessment changes in year	-2,775,613	
Transitional Relief	-883,171	
Empty relief	22,528	
Empty relief exemptions	-4,978,448	
Part Occupation relief	-225,094	
Void property relief	-108,719	
Charitable Organisations	-4,567,740	
Hardship	-3,000	
Small Business rate relief	-3,136,299	
Write-Offs	-768,717	
		<u>-17,424,273</u>
		64,085,823
Refunds made		<u>4,283,967</u>
		68,369,790
Less Cash Received		-61,386,180
Less Prepaid March 2009		-182,632
Plus 2010-11 Prepaid		409,946
Less net Interest		<u>-81,031</u>
Balances Carried Forward		7,129,893
Rateable Value 1 April 2010		180,402,653
Number of Properties 1 April 2010		7,898

4.4.2. The Business Rates system is based on a nationally set charge collected locally. In 2010/11 Wirral paid £63.5m into the National Pool from which Wirral received £137.8m. The Government re-distributes the contents of this Pool to all Authorities based on their respective populations.

4.5. Irrecoverables

4.5.1. Within the collection target is an allowance for irrecoverables or losses on collection. This is calculated as a percentage of anticipated yield and was £775,057 in 2010/11 as compared to £608,602 in 2009-10.

4.5.2. The Government sets these allowances for Authorities. Write-offs above these levels may need to be audited and, if accepted, collection levels are amended.

4.5.3. A breakdown of 2010/11 write-offs is given below:-	Amount £
Absconded/Irrecoverable	154,054
Insolvency (including adjustments)	614,380
Miscellaneous (including deceased)	<u>283</u>
TOTAL	<u>768,717</u>

4.5.4. Statistics

Property	2010-11	2009-10
Number of Properties on Valuation List	7,898	7,922
Rateable Value	£180,402,653	£155,877,636
New and Altered Property Notifications	430	430
 Recovery Action		
Summonses	783	980
Liability Orders	615	833
Chargepayers on Direct Debit	2,532	3,036

4.5.5. The substantial increase in the aggregate rateable value was the result of the five yearly national revaluation of all non domestic rate assessments which took effect from 1 April 2010.

4.5.6. The drop in the average number of direct debit payments was due to the extension of the Small Business Rate Relief scheme which meant that some ratepayers were not required to pay instalments later in the financial year

4.6. SUNDRY DEBTOR ACCOUNTS

4.6.1 The collection statement for 2010-11 is shown with the 2009/10 comparison:

	2009/10	2009/10
	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	25,730,282	27,650,600
Net Amount of Invoices	<u>93,647,046</u>	<u>90,452,390</u>
	119,377,328	118,192,990
Less Write-Offs	<u>0</u>	<u>364,773</u>
	119,377,328	117,828,217
Payments Received	<u>91,744,046</u>	<u>92,097,935</u>
Balance Carried Forward at 31 March	27,633,282	25,730,282

4.6.2. The number of invoices and their value raised over the last five years is as follows:

	Invoices	£m
2006-07	32,720	44.0
2007-08	39,480	69.7
2008-09	38,156	80.4
2009-10	34,230	90.4
2010-11	51,507	93.6

Irrecoverables

4.6.3 A focus on collection against recent invoices during 2010/11 resulted in no write offs being processed during 2010-11. This has no impact on collection. Write offs will recommence during 2011-12.

4.7. HOUSING ACT ADVANCES

4.7.1. The collection statement for 2010-11 is shown with 2009-10 comparison and a five years arrears trend.

	2010/11	2009/10
	£	£
Arrears Brought Forward	2,448	2,953
Charges	<u>32,035</u>	<u>61,043</u>
	34,483	63,996
Cash Collected	<u>33,101</u>	<u>61,548</u>
Arrears Carried Forward	<u>1,382</u>	<u>2,448</u>

Five Year Collection Details

Year	Amount Collectable £	Arrears £	Number of Accounts
2006-2007	138,806	2,102	73
2007-2008	76,343	4,025	50
2008-2009	73,748	2,953	38
2009-2010	63,996	2,448	28
2010-2011	34,483	1,382	22

Total of loans outstanding at 31 March 2010	£100,796
Total of loans outstanding at 31 March 2011	£78,074

4.7.2. No new advances were made in 2010/11. The number of mortgage accounts continues to decrease as more are redeemed or transferred to other institutions. The caseload retained continues to be monitored to prevent arrears increasing.

4.8. IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS

4.8.1. Under delegated powers I have written off as irrecoverable the following:-

	£
Council Tax	1,326,565
Business Rates	768,717
TOTAL	2,095,282

5.0. RELEVANT RISKS

5.1. If debts are not written off they have the potential to inflate what might be thought collectable. Debts are only written off after a number of stringent checks.

6.0. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1. No other options considered.

7.0. CONSULTATION

7.1. Relevant officers of the Council have been consulted in preparing this report.

8.0. IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1. There are none arising from this report.

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

9.1. There are no financial and staffing implications beyond the statements of accounts contained in this report

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1. There are none arising from this report.

11.0. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1. There are none arising from this report.

12.0. CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1. There are none arising from this report.

13.0. PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1. There are none arising from this report.

FNCE/116/11

REPORT AUTHORS: **Malcolm Flanagan**
Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services
Telephone: 666 3260
Email: Malcolmflanagan@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Cabinet	24 June 2010
Cabinet	25 June 2009
Cabinet	26 June 2008

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	AUTHORISATION OF OFFICERS FOR RECOVERY AND APPEALS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR STEVE FOULKES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks authority for named staff to initiate and conduct recovery of local revenues and business rates through the Magistrates' Court and to represent the Authority at Valuation Tribunal Hearings and Housing Benefits Tribunal Hearings.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That in accordance with the provisions of Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972, the following Officers of the Council be authorised to institute and conduct proceedings on behalf of the Council in the Magistrates' Court for the recovery of unpaid Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates and the enforcement of associated regulations:

Mrs S Hutchison	Assistant Council Tax Manager
Mrs. K. Chan	Assistant Council Tax Manager
Mrs. J. Farrell	Council Tax Team Leader
Mr. J. Fisher	Rating Officer
Ms. J. Monks	Appeals Officer
Mr. B. Nulty	Council Tax Team Leader
Mr. N. Powell	Revenues Manager
Mr. I. Williams	Senior Rating Officer
Mr. P Macfarlane	Appeals Officer
Mrs. L. Roddan	Court Officer

- 2.2. That in accordance with the provisions of Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972, the following officers of the Council be authorised to attend Valuation Tribunals and represent the Authority in appeals relating to Council Tax and Community Charge:

Mrs. K. Chan	Assistant Council Tax Manager
Mrs S Hutchison	Assistant Council Tax Manager
Ms. J. Monks	Appeals Officer

Mr. N. Powell	Revenues Manager
Mr. P Macfarlane	Appeals Officer
Mrs. L. Roddan	Court Officer

- 2.3. That in accordance with the provisions of Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972, the following officers of the Council be authorised to attend the Benefits Appeals Tribunals and represent the Authority in such appeals.

Mr. M. Bailey	Appeals and Debt Recovery Team Leader
Mr. J. Cowan	Housing Benefits Team Leader
Ms. N. Dixon	Benefits Manager
Mrs. D. Eusooif	Benefits Operational Manager
Ms. I. Hughes	Housing Benefits Team Leader
Mrs. P. Hughes	Benefits Operational Manager
Mrs. S. Jones	Housing Benefits Team Leader
Mrs. W. Neil	Housing Benefits Team Leader
Mrs. K. Woods	Benefits Operational Manager
Mrs. V. O’Leary	Benefits Operational Manager
Mrs. H. Rostron	Housing Benefits Team Leader
Mr. S. Rostron	Benefits Intervention Manager Leader
Mr I. Abbinnett	Appeals Officer

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That appropriate officers be authorised to undertake the detailed actions in respect of revenues and benefits recovery work.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Legal proceedings for the recovery of Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates are initiated and conducted in the Magistrates’ Court by officers authorised by Council. The Housing Benefit Review Board function is administered by the Appeals Tribunal run by the Appeals Service. Officers present appeals to this independent service and it is appropriate that they are authorised to appear at these appeals.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 The main risk is that if periodic updating of these authorisations is not undertaken then there will not be sufficient authorised officers to deliver the service.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 None as this is a statutory requirement.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 None has been required in the context of this report.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 None

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

9.1 There are none arising directly from this report

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Without these updated authorisations the ability to undertake recovery and benefits appeal work could be challenged.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? No

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None

FNCE/98/11

REPORT AUTHOR: **Malcolm Flanagan**
Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services
Telephone: 666 3260
Email: Malcolmflanagan@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	13 March 2008

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT & RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR STEVE FOULKES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report informs Members of the conclusions and recommendations contained within the review of Documentum, the Electronic Document & Records Management System (EDRMS), carried out by the Society of IT Managers (SOCITM). It primarily concludes that the system is fit for purpose as a corporate EDRMS solution, key to the success of the office rationalisation and agile working programmes and will contribute to savings realised from these, and subsequent, projects.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members endorse the continued use of Documentum as the corporate EDRMS system wherever practicable.
- 2.2 That the attached list of potential projects, shown in the Appendix be rolled out to departments.
- 2.3 That the alignment of retention policies for paper and electronic documents, be approved, to be carried out by the Information Management Team, the Business Architecture Team and IT Services.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To comply with the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts the Council must manage the lifecycle of unstructured information effectively. It must be collected fairly, stored securely and disposed of when no longer required. There is therefore a need to align the retention policies for paper and electronic documents to ensure they are effectively managed and disposed of at the end of their useful life. The EDRMS can be configured to fulfil this function.

- 3.2 To deliver the benefits of the office rationalisation and agile working programmes there is a need to reduce office space, dependency on paper based documents and to give staff access to information electronically from a variety of locations. Documentum can fulfil this function, providing the ability to ensure that the latest version of a document is used; that information is securely held; only accessible by those staff that have legitimate need; and destroyed at the end of its useful life.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Council is progressively more reliant on computer applications to deliver services. These applications store structured information in databases, which are accessible by a range of devices, from desktop PC to hand held devices, depending on the system. Associated with the structured data is an increasing amount of unstructured information, which typically takes the form of reports, e-mail, correspondence, identity papers and other documents that can be either in electronic or paper form. Some of this information is highly sensitive and must be effectively secured and managed. Specific records may have to be retained for the life of the subject.
- 4.2 The most effective way of managing this information is to hold it once within an EDRMS system, which allows staff to retrieve it using the same devices as described above and replaces the need for access to paper copies. Depending on the legal requirements for retention, the paper copies can either be destroyed or stored in a low cost archive rather than filing systems within office accommodation. Once within the EDRMS repository automated life cycle management can be used to control and ultimately delete the information. Electronic work flow can be used to build business processes that automatically control the flow of data and retrieve and present it to staff at the relevant point within the process.
- 4.3 Fujitsu introduced Documentum into the Council 2005. It is a highly configurable complex system used by a number of multinational companies to manage their unstructured documents and records. It is also increasingly in use by Government departments and other local authorities. Due to its flexibility it is suitable as a corporate EDRMS that can be configured to potentially meet the needs of all departments.
- 4.4 Following implementation, IT Services took over the maintenance and development of Documentum. However due to its size and complexity it has taken a significant time for staff to become conversant with the system. This has led to some frustration within departments needing EDRMS solutions, which was picked up by SOCITM during their review of IT services within the Council. The report recommended a separate review of the suitability of both Documentum and the Oracle CRM system, which is the subject of a separate report.

- 4.5 A copy of the SOCITM report detailing the findings of their review of Documentum is included in the exempt section of this agenda. A summary of the conclusions and recommendations is provided below.
- 4.5.1 Increased digital working via EDRM will offer significant benefits and support key programmes and initiatives of the Council. It will particularly support office rationalisation and agile working.
- 4.5.2 EDRM can act as a fundamental enabler to remove wastage in accommodation; reducing the need for access to paper files and facilitating hot-desking, mobile and home working.
- 4.5.3 Documentum has been successfully deployed in a number of areas for electronic document management, specifically:
- Adult Social Services (for the Electronic Social Care Record, ESCR)
 - Corporate HR
 - Children's Services (CYPD) HR
 - Asset Management
- 4.5.4 The system is liked by its users and receives good feedback on usability. Space saving and efficiency gains have been achieved in areas where it has been deployed. The value of naming conventions, metadata and searching, security and audit trails are understood and the importance of joining up information silos and working across teams is recognised. Users would not go back to paper.
- 4.5.5 Implementation of the system for document management has taken a considerable period of time, which has frustrated service areas awaiting deployment. There is a perception that the system went into "hibernation". This resulted from lengthy specification discussions; 12 months spent developing the HR solution for Law HR and Asset Management and CYPD, the development of the core configuration model and client user interface, the acquisition of in house skills and particularly the need to upgrade the version of Documentum in use to enhance the applications being developed.
- 4.5.6 There is a business appetite and demand to use EDRM across the Council (e.g. in Technical Services, elsewhere in CYPD, Legal Services, Environmental Health and Financial processes) and an urgent need to reduce paper volumes and increase agile working in order to deliver the office rationalisation project.
- 4.5.7 Documentum is viewed as fit for purpose in providing a corporate EDRM solution. However, in order to satisfy business demand and need the Documentum deployment programme, as outlined in the Appendix, should be approved.

- 4.5.8 Work can now commence following the upgrade to version 6.5 of Documentum and the current level of both staff skills and design of the core system repository. In order to make this successful and sustainable, particularly in achieving a rapid yet robust deployment, the following areas must be addressed:
- The current de facto good practice and thinking must be incorporated within a structured methodology
 - There must be suitable governance
 - There must be a formal programme for managing change and facilitating adoption
 - Resource capacity must be in place to meet demand (both for new deployments and wish list developments), particularly in terms of business analysis, information management expertise, delivery management and systems administration
- 4.5.9 There is a need for two dedicated staff to progress the business analysis, provide suitable information management and act as the interface between the users and the technical team. This requires specific expertise in designing both the system specification (around the file plan, metadata, security and retention rules) as well as the business processes around document capture and processing. These should also ensure that deployment and adoption is viewed as a strategic business requirement rather than just a technical solution; also that deployment progresses at an appropriate pace to meet need and demand.
- 4.6 As stated in the report, ITS staff have developed the knowledge and skills required to develop solutions using Documentum that deliver significant business benefit to the Council. Technical resources have been identified to deliver the programme of work identified in the Appendix but additional resource is required to provide the interface between the users and the technical staff and to carry out some of the business analysis.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 Risks to the delivery of the identified programme of work include the loss of key technical staff or changes in the priority of work to be delivered by ITS.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Consideration was given to replacing the system with either another corporate EDRMS, an open source system or by a series of point solutions. These were discounted on the basis of the cost of change, including the redevelopment of the applications already in place.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 As part of the review, consultations were held with the Knowledge Manager, IT Services and representatives from departments. Departmental representation included both existing users and those wishing to use the system.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 None

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

9.1 The cost of two additional posts in the Information Management Team will be £80,000 subject to job evaluation. There should be a reduction in Documentum licences of £20,000. The balance of the cost will be met from savings from the implementation of the projects listed in the Appendix. Each of these projects is proceeding on the basis of a business case showing that it will deliver, or enable the delivery of, savings.

9.2 IT implementation can be met from within existing resources.

9.3 There are no asset implications.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None

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 None

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None

REPORT AUTHOR: **Geoff Paterson**
Head of IT Services
telephone: (0151) 666 3029
e-mail: geoffpaterson@wirral.gov.uk

FNCE/111/11

APPENDICES

SOCITM Report – Review of Electronic Document & Records Management System - Exempt Report
Proposed programme of Documentum solutions deployment.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet ~ ICT Strategic Review	14 October 2010

Summary List of Business Cases

Summary List of Business Cases

All factors are graded low-high (L, M or H), or Yes / No (Y/ N) as appropriate.

- 'Complexity' - In relative terms, how difficult is the project to achieve overall?
- 'Integration' – Is integration with a third party application required?
- 'Development' – Is additional technical development over and above the existing available functionality, required?
- 'Benefit' – In relative terms, how much does the authority, its partners or the wider public, seek to benefit from the project?
- 'Priority' – Taking into account the relative complexity and benefit, and any additional drivers / dependencies which exist, what is the relative priority of this project over other potential projects?
- 'Resource' – In relative terms, how great is the level of resource required?
- 'Timescale' – In relative terms, how long will the project take to complete?

Project Name	Dept/s	Complexity	Integration	Development	Benefit	Priority	Resource	Timescale
<i>Architects</i>	<i>LHRAM</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>
<i>Archives Digital Preservation</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>H</i>
<i>Colas</i>	<i>TS</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>
<i>CRM Streetscene</i>	<i>TS</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M-H</i>	<i>M-H</i>	<i>M-H</i>
<i>CYPD ESCR & DASS ESCR Refresh</i>	<i>CYPD & DASS</i>	<i>L-M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>M-H</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>L-M</i>	<i>L-M</i>
<i>E-Invoicing</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>M-H</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M-H</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L-M</i>
<i>Electronic Signatures</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>L-M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>L-M</i>	<i>L</i>
<i>ESW & SEN</i>	<i>CYPD</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>
<i>Internal Audit</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>
<i>OSS</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>L-M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>L-M</i>	<i>L-M</i>	<i>L-M</i>	<i>L-M</i>
<i>Planning & Building Control</i>	<i>Corporate Services</i>	<i>M-H</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>M-H</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M-H</i>	<i>M</i>
<i>ScanFile Assets & Energy</i>	<i>LHRAM</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>L-M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>
<i>Schools HR</i>	<i>CYPD</i>	<i>L-M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>
<i>Schools Pupil Files</i>	<i>CYPD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Y/N</i>	<i>Y/N</i>	<i>M-H</i>	<i>M-H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
<i>Wirral Research & intelligence Group</i>	<i>Corporate Services</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>L</i>

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR STEVE FOULKES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report informs Members of the conclusions and recommendations contained within the review of the Customer Relationship Management System (Oracle CRM), carried out by the Society of IT Managers (SOCITM). It primarily concludes that the system is fit for purpose as a corporate CRM solution; can significantly assist the Council in understanding citizen service requirements, is key to managing the relationship between the Council and service users; and can assist in reducing service costs by driving automatic processes that assist staff in delivering those services or enabling self service via the Internet. To be effective it must manage service delivery across all delivery channels, that is, One Stop Shops, Call Centre and the internet. It suggests that, where possible, the system is extended from its current position to manage all service delivery and maintain a holistic view of services delivered to individuals, which further assists in the understanding of service users needs. The report also concludes that replacement would be difficult, expensive and severely impact on services being delivered by current users.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet support the existing practice of developing the CRM system to encompass additional areas of service delivery, where a business case has identified that either service improvements or cost saving can be made and to extend the system across as many service areas as practicable.
- 2.2 That Cabinet endorse the enhancement of the system to provide a holistic view of the facilities provided to each citizen.
- 2.3 That Cabinet approve the migration to Oracle Release 12 if an investigation into the application functionality and business benefits show that the advantages outlined in the SOCITM report can be delivered.
- 2.4 That the cost of the upgrade (£100,000) be met from the Efficiency Investment Fund.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As stated in the report, the current CRM system is delivering significant benefits to the Council in terms of service quality and cost reduction. It can facilitate the channel shift to self service delivery via the Internet to further reduce cost and can be developed to guide service users through the processes.
- 3.2 Development of the system to provide a holistic view of a citizen's use of Council services can highlight links between those services and enable business processes to be developed that lead the service user through the range of services available that meet their particular circumstances.
- 3.3 To ensure that users can only access information pertinent to themselves when using self service channels, there is a need to reinforce citizen authentication. This is already in place on some systems but different methods are in use. As the range of services delivered via the Internet increases it is unrealistic to expect users to remember different user names and passwords. The CRM system can provide a single point of authentication to all Council services and, by use of the Government Gateway, can extend the use of the same authentication to Government systems.
- 3.4 Oracle has superseded Release 11 of the CRM system with Release 12. This improves the usability of the system and introduces some additional functionality that SOCITM feel would be beneficial. These will be investigated in more detail before committing to upgrade the system. Remaining on Release 11 will cost the Council an additional £40,000 each year in extended support costs and Oracle will eventually withdraw support altogether, forcing the Council to move to a later version. It is estimated that the cost of the upgrade will be in the region of £100,000.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Both the Gershon (2004) and Varney (2006) reports emphasised the need to manage existing service delivery channels and engineer a shift to service delivery via the Internet to reduce costs. Being able to authenticate citizens was seen as key to Internet based service delivery that involved personal or sensitive data. CRM systems were recognised as an effective way of achieving this and linking Government and Local Government service delivery.
- 4.2 Oracle CRM was introduced into the Council by Fujitsu following which the IT Section took over the support and development of the system, which has proved problematic due to the size and complexity of the system. The Oracle CRM system is in use by a number of other local authorities but usually with support from an external organisation.
- 4.3 The SOCITM review of IT Services carried out during 2010, and reported to Cabinet on 14 October 2010, recognised the difficulties being experienced and questioned the validity of using the Oracle CRM as a corporate solution. It recommended a separate review of the system, which has been completed. The resulting report is included as an exempt report on this agenda.

- 4.4 Subsequent to the 2010 review Council staff within IT Services and the Customer Service Development Team have developed the skills required to maintain and develop the system. In addition a support contract has been negotiated with Mokum, a specialist Oracle support provider, to provide advice and guidance where required.
- 4.5 A summary of the Conclusions and Recommendations contained within the report is given below.
- 4.5.1 CRM is currently deployed to support One Stop Shops and the Call Centre to process service requests for geographically based services such as Highways, Street Scene and some Environmental Health (e.g. Pest Control).
- 4.5.2 It is also used to manage the service provision by these departments including the facilitation of mobile working and subcontractor management. Integration developed by IT Services has allowed these departments to dispense with a number of business applications which has delivered an ongoing cost saving.
- 4.5.3 The Oracle CRM solution is now so embedded into the working practices of these departments which currently use the solution that it would be impossible to discontinue its use without deploying alternative applications which would incur considerable expense.
- 4.5.4 If Oracle were to be replaced by an alternative CRM solution the integration work required to bring a replacement system to the standard currently provided in the Oracle CRM implementation would be very substantial. Whilst it would theoretically be possible to retain the Oracle back-end functionality and use the replacement system as a front-end, such an arrangement would be complex and increase ongoing support costs.
- 4.5.5 This report concludes that Oracle CRM should remain in use for the existing Departments for the medium to long term whatever the outcome for other users.
- 4.5.6 Oracle CRM has been successfully deployed to create some customer based services for Complaints, Information formats, Family information, General Enquiry, School Travel, DASS services and Parking Tickets.
- 4.5.7 These are implemented as “freestanding” services which keep no holistic view of the overall portfolio of services delivered to the customer or a complete record all of a customer’s interactions with the Council.
- 4.5.8 The lack of creation of the 360° view of the customer is the primary weakness of the current implementation of CRM.
- 4.5.9 Building CRM as the repository for all customer interaction can provide a valuable corporate resource to provide this 360° view which will then allow a better understanding of patterns of customer contact and to plan and predict future service requirements.

4.5.10 The 360° view will help Customer Services better understand each customer's circumstances and thus ensure that all of the customer's requirements across a range of services can be addressed during a single contact.

4.5.11 This report recommends that Wirral develops CRM to provide this consolidated 360° view of all customer interactions with the Council no matter which service is requested or access channel used.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 Loss of key IT or Customer Service Development staff, changes in Council ICT priorities or changes in Government ICT or service delivery strategies are the main risks to the successful development of the system and deployment of solutions.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 During the review, consideration was given to replacing the system with another corporate CRM system, an open source system or by a series of point solutions. These were discounted on the basis of the cost of change, including the redevelopment of the applications already in place, and the disruption this would cause to the services delivered by existing users.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 As part of the review, consultations were held with existing system users.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 None

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

9.1 To remain with Oracle version 11 will incur additional annual support costs of £40,000. The estimated cost of migrating to version 12 is £100,000, breaking even in two and a half years. Oracle will eventually cease support for version 11, forcing the Council to migrate to a later version.

9.2 It is recommended that the cost of the upgrade be funded from the Efficiency Investment Fund.

9.3 IT and staffing requirements can be met from within existing resources, assuming current priorities do not change. The position of Data Custodian will be created as part of the restructure of the Information Management Team.

9.4 There are no asset implications.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None

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 None

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None

FNCE/113/11

REPORT AUTHOR: **Geoff Paterson**
Head of IT Services
telephone: (0151) 666 3029
email: geoffpaterson@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

SOCITM Report – Review of Customer Relationship Management System - Exempt Report

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet ~ ICT Strategic Review	14 October 2010

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	MUSEUMS LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES COUNCIL REVIEW OF WIRRAL LIBRARY SERVICE
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>DIRECTOR OF FINANCE</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR CHRIS MEADEN</i>
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises the findings from the Museums Libraries and Archives (MLA) Council consultancy report on the stakeholder review of the Wirral Library Service. It discusses Libraries as a service and a place and details a number of actions for the Authority to consider which will be used in the development of the Library Strategy and the development of co-located Libraries and One Stop Shops which the MLA report acknowledges as a positive way forward.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. That Members note the MLA report and also the progress being made in the adoption of the report findings in linking Libraries and One Stop Shops together.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Officers will now be able to use this consultation as part of the development of the Library Strategy that will be linked to the Customer Access Strategy as the two services become linked in providing a key community placed service.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 As part of the outcome of the Wirral Library Review it was identified that an updated Library Strategy was required that would take account of all Library users interests. As part of the process the Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) agreed that it would help and support Wirral in a consultation review that would assist the consequential strategy development.

- 4.2 The MLA appointed and paid for consultants Torkildsen Barclay who met a number of external organisations such as NHS, Connect, Pentra and the Reader Organisation, along with community representatives and individuals such as Friends bodies and campaigners as well as staff, managers and Members.
- 4.3. At the same time responsibility for the Library service moved to the Finance Department as part of the plan to co-locate Libraries and One Stop Shops to maximise the use of all Council sites.
- 4.4. The April 2011 report is attached as the appendix to this report.
- 4.5. The key strengths of the Library service are the buildings themselves seen as the Council in the community and the breadth of support for the service. The key weaknesses are the need for vision and leadership of the service and that the service is seen in some regards as dated. The report then discusses the issue facing Libraries as a Place and as a Service in some detail.
- 4.6 The key findings were that the recent issues had affected staff morale and led to uncertainty as to future direction. It acknowledged the clear support the service now has and for the next step to be a clear view of its role and purpose, how it communicates that and undertakes that role including its statutory duty. It gave clear indications of how the Wirral Libraries as a Place is important and that linkages with other complementary services is the way forward as exemplified by the One Stop Shop co-location. The service itself is seen to need to expand beyond the traditional buildings and recommends functions to focus on such as; Reading for Pleasure, Information for Study, development of individual literacy and a key role as an information service.
- 4.7. The specific actions the report suggests are:
 - To agree or amend the functions proposed to be delivered, and then to set out a vision and strategy for the service, including who are the priority target groups and identify performance indicators to measure the outcomes.
 - Review the Library structure and the skills required. Appoint staff accordingly taking account of the changes likely to their roles including the focus on a strategic and commissioning base.
 - Prepare a strategic development plan and a local plan for each building to meet local need.
- 4.8. Whilst there is still much to do, the report acknowledges the proactive work now ongoing to take the service forward with investment and support and its linking to One Stop Shops. The strategy it proposes will help to maximise Library service delivery in Wirral.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 The risk is that without a developed strategy then long term service delivery will not be efficiently focused on the key requirements of the service.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 None.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation with internal and external groups and individuals was the substantive part of this work.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 These groups will be consulted on the development of the strategy for Libraries as well as the linkages this has with the Customer Access Strategy.

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

9.1 There are none arising directly from this report although and the development of the Library service will have resource implications.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Library service undertakes a statutory duty in the provision of a comprehensive Library service as prescribed under the Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The strategy is an important requirement to ensure that the legal requirements are met.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? Not specifically as part of this report but one will be undertaken within the development of the Library Strategy.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None.

FNCE/117/11

14.0 REPORT AUTHOR: Malcolm Flanagan

Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services

Telephone: 666 3260

Email: Malcolmflanagan@wirral.gov.uk

15.0 APPENDICES

15.1 Wirral Library Service Review - Torkildsen Barclay - April 2011

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	9 December 2010

Wirral Library Service Review

Engagement with Stakeholders

April 2011

Torkildsen Barclay
Wrest Park
Silsoe
Beds MK45 4HS
Tel: 01525 754898
Fax: 01525 754366
Email: office@torkbarc.com
www.torkbarc.com

Wirral
Library
Review
Stakeholder



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I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Over the past few years the Wirral Library Service has been subject to significant upheaval and uncertainty. Organisationally its location within Wirral Council has changed a number of times with responsibility for the service being shifted between three different Directorates. More traumatically, similar to many Councils seeking financial savings, the closure of around half of its 24 library buildings was proposed.
- 1.2 The proposals, however, resulted in a community backlash and, prior to the first tranche of closures, a Public Enquiry was announced. The inquiry report, published in November 2009, found that Wirral Council's plan to close the libraries was "in breach of its statutory duties under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964." The report stated that the council "failed to make an assessment of local needs" before deciding to rationalise its library service. The Council retracted its proposed closures before the Enquiry results were announced, making it technically not in breach of its duties as a library authority.
- 1.3 The *concept* of what the Council was trying to do was not the issue, but its failure to demonstrate that it understood (from evidence) the library needs of its residents and act logically in response to them was.
- 1.4 Clearly this provided further uncertainty for the service with financial savings required but no closures permitted.
- 1.5 Since this point there has been a change in political administration and the Library Service has been located within the Council's Finance Directorate – not an obvious or natural bedfellow, but in fact one where there are considerable synergies with other services also within the Directorate's remit.
- 1.6 Furthermore there is now significant political and officer support for the Library Service, with both capital and revenue investment having been approved for the forthcoming financial year, and a clear current commitment that no libraries will be closed.
- 1.7 On the flip side the Service is losing a large number of staff through voluntary redundancy – both at senior and site level. This could be viewed as both an opportunity and a threat, but the irrefutable fact is that with so many changes having occurred and so much uncertainty as to the Service's future, with some stability now in sight it is essential that the opportunity is taken to establish a clear vision to shape and drive the Service forward.
- 1.8 To assist in this process the Museums Libraries and Archives Council commissioned Torkildsen Barclay to undertake consultations with key political, professional and organisational stakeholders in order to obtain an understanding of their views on the Library Service and how they see it developing in the future.
- 1.9 The intention was that this would help inform, and be integrated with, a new Library Service Strategy. However, the Strategy is still some way from completion, so this study stands in its own right and its discussions, conclusions and views should be considered in this light.

2. CONSULTEES

2.1 Face to face consultations were undertaken with the following stakeholders:

- Members of the senior **Library Management Team**;
- Key **senior Council Officers** – acting Chief Executive, Finance Director;
- Key **Councillors** – Leader, Portfolio Holder, Libraries Champion;
- **Other Council Officers** with a management, support or partnership involvement with the Library Service – Culture, one stop shop, asset management, children and young people, lifelong learning, IT, press and PR;
- **External organisations** with a partnership involvement with the Library Service – NHS Wirral, Pentra Services, Age Concern, Connect Solutions, the Reader Organisation;
- **Community representatives**/individuals with an interest in the service – West Kirby Friends, libraries campaigner.

2.2 It must be stressed that there are a raft of stakeholders not included within these consultations – non users of the Library Service, specific local communities, and so on. These findings should assist in focussing any subsequent consultations with these groups.

3. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Introduction

3.1 The discussions held with the stakeholders were wide ranging and undertaken in confidence. As such the overall views on the Wirral Library Service have been pulled together under the four headings of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Inevitably there was not always consensus on all items although the summary does its best to reflect the predominant view. It also needs to be stated that these are the *perceptions* of the stakeholders, not necessarily the reality; although where perception and reality are at odds the question needs to be asked as to why this is the case.

Strengths of the Wirral Library Service

3.2 These fell under two main categories.

The Library Buildings

3.3 This was a clear thread throughout the discussions, although a number of people also identified that the library *building* was not the same as the library *service*, and we will explore this later. The key comments were:

- Libraries are the hub of the community, non discriminatory, non didactic;
- Libraries are safe, known, trusted, respected;

- Libraries are “the Council in the Community”;
 - Libraries are relaxed, comfortable, informal places;
 - Libraries are venues for the development of the individual.
- 3.4 It can be argued that other buildings fulfil at least part of the above criteria – community centres, leisure centres, learning centres – but in Wirral there is a very strong stakeholder attachment to the library “brand” as somewhere safe, not exclusive, not stigmatised with negative associations (as opposed perhaps to more specialist facilities such as Job Centres and Health Centres). Politically the library is one of the more obvious manifestations of the Council at a local level with strong positive associations.

Expressed Support for the Service

- 3.5 This is an undoubted current strength. Whereas local authorities elsewhere in the UK are closing library buildings in order to achieve savings, this is not the case in Wirral. There is clear:
- Political Support;
 - Community Support;
 - Directorate and Officer Support;
 - Investment – both capital and revenue, including:
 - The re-location/integration of the Council's One Stop Shops within the Libraries;
 - Investment in public WiFi;
 - Investment in eBooks;
 - Continued support for Library Service projects such as *Get into Reading*;
 - Investment in publicising and promoting the Libraries and the wide range of services they provide through the *Wirral Libraries – More Than Books* campaign.
- 3.6 There is therefore a great deal of positivity towards the concept of the library service and the library buildings. For a service that has largely been left to its own devices in the past it is important to maximise the opportunities that such goodwill and attention bring. In order to do so requires a clear vision as to what the service represents and where it needs to go. Which brings us onto the perceived weaknesses.

Weaknesses of the Wirral Library Service

Lack of Vision and Leadership

- 3.7 Vision and leadership come from a variety of directions and sources: national, political, community, Directorate, and the library management itself. It is perhaps not surprising, given the recent history of the service in Wirral, that clarity as to its future direction has been lacking, and this cannot be laid solely at the

door of the library management. However, as we have seen, the climate is now right to address this, and it will require strong and focussed leadership to maximise this opportunity and drive the Library Service forward.

3.8 Specific comments on vision and leadership can be summarised as follows:

- Lack of vision - particularly amongst librarians themselves;
- The Library service can be enhanced, it doesn't serve enough of the community – the service needs to identify what the communities want;
- The service has not understood its potential, libraries are not proactive enough;
- There is a lack of vision, staff morale, and leadership;
- There is a need to separate the service from the building - the buildings are a millstone to the development of the service;
- Libraries are trying to be too many things to too many people;
- The performance indicators for libraries are no longer relevant – it is not about the number of books lent but the *outcomes* achieved as a result of providing the service;
- The service has been poorly promoted, both within the Council and to the public.

3.9 Much of the above is also reflected in the feedback regarding the perceptions of the service itself.

A “Dated” Service

- Delivers moderately well, but is stuck in the '60s and '70's;
- The service is old hat - a bit like a Hovis advert, it generates a sense of nostalgia but hasn't changed with the times;
- The principles of libraries remain, but the method of delivery has moved on;
- The traditional role of lending books and providing resources is in decline;
- There is an in built resistance to change;
- Demand for the traditional adult library service is declining – the future has to be more than books on shelves.

3.10 In truth the above comments could refer to many local authority library services across the UK, not just in Wirral. Nor should they mask the many good things that are provided through the service and the buildings, and also the new initiatives Wirral is planning. Nonetheless it is true that the way in which the customer consumes the service is changing, and that libraries and librarians need now to react to those changes. This is discussed later under the Discussion and Implications section.

Opportunities for the Wirral Library Service

3.11 The future opportunities partly reflect the identified Strengths and partly the changes that are beginning to occur as a result of both investment and cut backs:

- To reiterate once again, there is now strong political and officer support, making change more likely and easier to deliver;
- There is a clear opportunity to regenerate and redefine libraries as social and learning hubs, and as information, advice and guidance centres;
- Similarly there is the opportunity to redefine the library service and its role within the Council and the community;
- Part of this is perceived as including clear “targeting” of services, with the focus on vulnerable people, young people, the unemployed and the elderly;
- There is the opportunity to define a “core” library offer, then add to and adapt this according to the needs of the local community the service and building provides for – not a “one size fits all” concept, but a range of options such as used by Tesco with the different offerings of the Metro, Express, and Extra brands;
- Loss of staff – this is an opportunity in that it provides the chance to redefine the role of the library staff in light of any refocusing of the service and appoint people with the skill sets to deliver this, rather than necessarily “more of the same”.

Threats

3.12 The main threats are perceived to be:

- Loss of staff – the mirror of the opportunity, as it means a lot of experience and local knowledge may disappear;
- Staff morale – with so much change and previous history, it may be difficult to re-enthuse the staff that remain;
- Inability to drive change – identifying the future vision and route forward is one thing, having the people and leadership to make it happen is another.

4. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 So what can we take from the stakeholder feedback, and how can this help shape a vision and practical actions to move the service forward?
- 4.2 Probably the most important fact to recognise is that there are two quite clear perceptions of libraries arising from the discussions:
 - The Library as a “Place”
 - The Library as a “Service”
- 4.3 We will examine each of these in turn.

The Library as a Place

The History of Libraries

- 4.4 Generally in many people's minds the library *building* has been synonymous with the library *service*. There are good historical reasons for this, which are worth touching briefly on here.
- 4.5 The advent of the written word as a way of storing and communicating knowledge led to the desire and need to collect and store such knowledge where it could be accessed and referred to. Such practices have continued for thousands of years. Some 30,000 clay tablets found in ancient Mesopotamia date back more than 5,000 years. Collections of papyrus scrolls from ancient Egyptian cities date back to 1300-1200 BC, and many other examples of such repositories of information can be found.
- 4.6 In time the term for these repositories – the buildings in which such collections were kept – became the word we know today, the “library”.
- 4.7 It is generally accepted that the surge in growth of libraries occurred throughout the 1600's and 1700's, although these were mostly academic or private collections not accessible to the general public.
- 4.8 The real development of the free, accessible and open public library in the UK took place from 1850 onwards, when the *Public Libraries Act* allowed all cities with populations exceeding 10,000 to levy taxes for the support of public libraries. Development was subsequently fuelled by the 1870 Public School Law, which led to an increase in general public literacy. By 1877, more than 75 cities had established free libraries, and by 1900 the number had reached 300.
- 4.9 In 1964 the *Public Libraries and Museums Act* placed a duty on every library authority to “provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof..”. The Act also emphasised the *desirability* of providing access to not only reference materials and literature, but to “pictures, gramophone records, films and other materials..”, and specifically to “encourage both adults and children to make full use of the library service”.
- 4.10 Today there are an estimated 3,500 public libraries provided by local authorities in the UK.
- 4.11 The library *building* has therefore always been synonymous with the *service* as – since Mesopotamian days – the medium for conveying information, knowledge

and literature has been a tangible, physical product. Whether this has been a clay tablet, papyrus roll or - more recently - a book, they have all needed to be collected and stored in a building for people to be able to access their content.

- 4.12 This situation is now changing as the advent and exponential growth of the internet means increasingly that the “repository” of knowledge and information is not a physical one. It is the World Wide Web. To obtain such information a person still needs a physical medium, but this medium is increasingly a computer or phone or laptop or eBook reader, rather than a reference book. More crucially the user can access such information on those media without moving from their chair. They no longer have to physically visit a building such as a library to obtain what they want.
- 4.13 These changes are inevitably reflected in the usage of public libraries. The Government’s Department for Culture, Media and Sport quotes a decline in the number of visits to library premises of around 20% over a 16 year period, and a steady decline in the loans of adults’ books over the decade prior to 2008/09 by more than a third. Interestingly the loan of children’s books has increased for each of the previous five years, although it is still lower than it was 10 years ago.
- 4.14 The DCMS Taking Part Survey measures the percentage of the population using libraries (the term “use” includes remote access and communication as well as physical visits to library buildings), and shows a significant year on year decline in adult use of from just under 50% in 2005 to around 37% in 2009.
- 4.15 None of the above means there is no longer a need for a public library service or for public libraries. Whilst usage may be declining, it is still substantial; not everyone has (or can afford) access to the internet or to the devices on which to download information, although the mobile phone is becoming increasingly ubiquitous; books in their own right are still a hugely popular medium, particularly for recreational reading. However this may change in the future with changes in the book market already beginning to happen. Recently released commercial results from Pearsons who own the book publishing firm Penguin, showed that the book retail market remained “tough” but was offset by strong publishing and rapid growth in its eBook operation, which has seen a 300% year on year increase in sales.
- 4.16 If we consider just how quickly and dramatically the delivery of music has evolved over the past 10 years – from LP, to cassette, to CD to digital downloads – then we cannot ignore the potential revolution that will occur in a rapidly changing world, and the traditional library service has to be delivered in a relevant and contemporary way to keep abreast of those changes.
- 4.17 The main implication, however, is that the original primary function of libraries as repositories for books is becoming increasingly irrelevant (but certainly not yet redundant). It is why many local authorities find it acceptable to close library buildings in order to make financial savings.
- 4.18 This is not, however, Wirral’s way. Wirral has a different vision for the library buildings. Whether or not it has been clearly articulated or expressed in a strategic way, and whether or not in some instances the perceived distinction between the building and the service is still blurred, the “Wirral way” has come across strongly in the consultations, and we will do our best to explain it here.

Wirral's Approach to Library Buildings

- 4.19 Wirral is considered by many of the stakeholders to comprise a mix of quite distinct and discreet communities, encompassing both urban and rural, affluent and deprived.
- 4.20 The libraries are seen to have a very strong “brand image” in that they are trusted, respected, non discriminatory, neutral PLACES where most people feel comfortable and have generally positive feelings about. This image has been built up over many years, and is stronger than, say, that of a community centre or neighbourhood centre. The subtle association with free, non compulsory self improvement, information and learning is one of the reasons for this.
- 4.21 As such, the Library is seen as:
- A good vehicle for discreetly promoting the Council within the community;
 - The main hub and focal point for each distinct community that comprises Wirral;
 - A good PLACE to deliver other appropriate community based services.
- 4.22 The Council has made a clear commitment not to close any Library buildings in the foreseeable future and, in the sense that “we are where we are”, it is therefore sensible to make the best use of the buildings and the library brand in the pursuit of the Council's objectives and local community need.
- 4.23 In reality many of the Library buildings no longer house just the Library Service. The Council is committed to integrating One Stop Shops within the library buildings – the One Stop Shop is *not* a library service, but has a natural synergy with the service and with the concept of the Library building as a community resource. Life Long Learning uses many Library buildings to deliver its activities because they are relaxed, informal environments frequently situated at the heart of local communities (and therefore accessible). But Life Long Learning is *not* a library service, although it fits with the original purpose of libraries as places for self improvement and the pursuit of knowledge. It was indeed stated that some of the best adult learning facilities elsewhere come through the integration of Life Long Learning and Libraries. There are other examples where services such as health and employment have found the Library ethos and atmosphere appropriate for the delivery of some of their outcomes.
- 4.24 The Library as a *Place* is therefore becoming increasingly more than a venue for delivering the *Library Service*, but a building from which a range of complementary and sympathetic services can be provided. As such (and odd though it may sound) a Library Building does not necessarily have to be run by librarians, but by staff who can attract appropriate services and ensure they operate in an integrated and complementary way within the Library.
- 4.25 By “appropriate” we mean services that are needed within the local community that the library serves AND will not dilute or damage the library brand.

Implications of the “Library as a Place” for Wirral

- 4.26 If it accepted that Libraries in Wirral are more than a venue for the delivery of the *Library Service* – and there does appear to be a strong Council commitment to develop them as community hubs – then there are a number of key questions to answer:

- What should these “new” libraries look like?
 - How will they be managed?
- 4.27 It is beyond the scope of the report to answer these in depth, but the following touches upon some of the points to consider.
- 4.28 With regard to the future “look” of the Wirral libraries, physical changes are already being implemented to integrate One Stop Shops into a number of the sites. Other factors that need to be taken account of are:
- **Trends** – as we have discussed the way in which information and reading materials are being accessed is changing. This means that the space needed for reference books, and even lending materials will not be as great as it was in the past. This can free up space for other complementary uses. The need for local authorities to change the layout of its buildings to meet evolving need is not new. Up to the early 1990's sports and leisure centres had small multigyms and large bars. With the growth of demand for fitness provision and the more responsible approach to drink driving there was a complete reconfiguration of leisure centre layout, with the bars often being removed and being replaced by large fitness facilities. Similarly squash courts were converted to a range of other uses. A leisure centre designed now would have little resemblance to one designed in the '80's. Such changes have already started to happen in libraries with the provision of IT suites, but a more radical and imaginative approach is now required when designing for the future.
 - **The Needs of the Local Community** – the mix of services provided within a library (e.g. lifelong learning, one stop shops, library service) will be specific to the local community that it serves and - referring back to the Enquiry – it is essential that these are accurately identified. For instance, the level of IT provision or quiet spaces for study may be greater in libraries serving less affluent communities where access to the internet within homes is limited and children having to share bedrooms makes homework difficult, than in affluent areas where this is less likely to be the case.
 - **Public Expectation** – public expectation in terms of the quality of facilities and services is much higher now than in the past. The design and layout of a library building needs to reflect this. Public views of what a “good” library should look like (cafe, the need for different zones – quiet, children, PC, WiFi, activity etc.) is beginning to be documented. A recent focus group study by Blackburn with Darwen of users and non users is enlightening in this respect, and no doubt the Council would be happy to share this with Wirral.
 - **Council Policy** – the design and layout of the “new” libraries should take account of Council target groups and overall policy. So, if the key groups are for instance the elderly and young people, the design and facility mix needs to reflect this.
 - **Physical Limitations** – it is of course axiomatic that you cannot fit a quart into a pint pot. If the size and configuration of the library building limits its potential for change, a degree of pragmatism is required. However, if the building cannot meet the identified needs of the community it may be sensible to examine what other local Council assets can, and re-locate the library and re-brand whatever that asset is as the local Library. This is not in contravention of the political promise not to close libraries, just replacing an outdated building with a better equivalent to serve the same community.

- 4.29 In order for a strategic approach to be taken as to the future of individual libraries, their future role and potential for development should be identified taking into account the above factors. It is fully accepted that this may be a strategy to be delivered over a period of time, depending on available resources, but it is better to have a clear vision for each and every library in Wirral rather than adopt an ad hoc and piecemeal approach.
- 4.30 Lastly - whilst on Libraries as a Place - for those Library buildings that host a multiplicity of functions, it is not essential that they are managed directly by librarians. The day to day responsibility for ensuring integrated services, cleaning, building maintenance, opening and closing, staffing of generic areas, allocation of space, could be undertaken by a non librarian – provided they fully understood the ethos and service expectations generated by the Library brand. This would free up librarians to concentrate on the development of the library service itself.

The Library as a Service

The Issues

- 4.31 It is essential that the Wirral Library Service defines what its core functions and purposes are, what its unique role is within the Council. Historically the service has been so closely linked to the buildings, this is not easy for library staff to do, and this is not an issue solely restricted to Wirral.
- 4.32 By defining its core functions outside of the context of a building it is easier for the Council, its partners, and its users to understand the Library Service's role and how it contributes to Council policy. The buildings are only one avenue through which the service can be delivered, and by defining the functions outside of this context more imaginative and creative ways of delivering service outcomes can be developed.
- 4.33 As a comparison Life Long Learning knows what its core role is as a service, and whilst it delivers some of this service within buildings it runs, much of its service is delivered within buildings that it does not – schools, libraries, community centres, day care centres etc. The service is separate from the building. Similarly sports development can take place in leisure centres, schools, local parks, or through other agencies or bodies such as clubs or County Sports Partnerships. The role of sports development to increase participation in sport is clear, but it can do this through a wide range of mechanisms and organisations.
- 4.34 The impression we have received is that the library service has struggled to clearly define its role outside of the provision of books and buildings. Whilst it does many other worthy and valuable things they are often not within a strategic context. There is no focus, no prioritisation. As a result of the many challenges and changes the service has faced it is now almost reactive in its approach – “tell us what we should do” – rather than being proactive and clearly spelling out its vision – “this is what we do, this is where we want to go, this is how it helps meet Council objectives”. Services and schemes that could also be construed as providing library services, such as the outreach project *Get into Reading*, are viewed as competition rather than as a strategic tool and partner that forms part of the overall delivery of the library service. Whether the Library staff are directly delivering the service or not is irrelevant, providing they are ensuring the appropriate services are delivered – directly, through partnerships, through outsourcing, through enabling work, through grant aid.

Defining the Service

- 4.35 Stakeholders had many views on the role of the library service, often integrating this with the role of the library buildings. Not all views were similar. For instance, some stakeholders believed the role of a library service as a provider of information was in decline, whereas others considered it to be a key function.
- 4.36 Taking the views overall, and also taking account of the historical function of the library service to provide free and accessible resources for self improvement, the following are recommended as the core functions and/or objectives of the service:
- To provide free, comprehensive and accessible resources for **reading for pleasure** – this could be through books in libraries, books distributed from a central point to care homes/post offices/individual houses, ebooks and so on (much of which is already done). As technology changes the method of delivery will change, and the service will need to be innovative and creative as to how it responds to these changes - but the *function* always remains the same.
 - To provide accessible portals and guidance for those seeking **information for study, research, self improvement and knowledge** – this has always been a primary function of the library service, and the traditional reference libraries and reference librarians have been key to helping adults, students and pupils to find the right sources of information and materials. Even in the age of Google this does not need to change, although the mechanisms for doing so will – from people visiting the libraries to be shown where to find relevant information on the internet, to the possible provision of a single central reference library, to remote support either from the library service itself or through national portals.
 - To facilitate **the development of individual literacy**, specifically for those outside of a full time learning environment – this encompasses early years reading, children's libraries, book clubs, the outreach programmes such as *Get into Reading*. It can entail partnership working with Life Long Learning and other agencies.
 - To be a primary source of **local community information** – this is a key but often overlooked function. The coordination of information on clubs, societies, events, activities, local facilities, local history, attractions and so on. Particularly with Wirral's expressed intention of retaining each community library building, there is a focal point for each community's information, as well as the potential for more online based provision. This can also encompass local talks, guided tours using volunteers, YouTube lectures. Once the function is agreed the only restrictions are imagination and budget.
 - To be a primary source of **public service information**, including the Council's and other agencies – once again an important function, although one that may now cut across a range of services in the Council. Who coordinates what, and what role the Library Service plays would need to be clearly defined.
- 4.37 In reality, the library service already does many things mentioned above, but not within a clear strategic framework. Once clear functions are agreed then the library service can start thinking about how best to deliver them, irrespective of library buildings. Where the Council has clear target groups – the young, unemployed, elderly – then the priority in terms of actions taken and the focus of particular functions can be developed to meet their needs. This does not

change the function, which remains constant, but will impact on where available resources are channelled – so, for instance, work on “the development of individual literacy” may ignore the affluent, middle class user and focus solely on areas of deprivation, long term unemployed, and so on. Specific PI’s for each can function can then be developed relevant to the outcome desired (rather than simply how many books have been issued).

5. SUMMARY AND ACTIONS

- 5.1 The Wirral Library Service has been through some traumatic changes over the past few years which has affected staff morale and provided uncertainty as to its future direction.
- 5.2 There is now clear political and officer support for the service, and in order for the full benefit of this to be achieved the service needs to establish a clear view of its role and purpose within the years to come. This needs to follow through in both the functions it focuses on and the actions it takes. The service needs to communicate its role clearly within the Council and to external stakeholders and the broader community. It has clear statutory duties, and the service needs to proactively lead on the future delivery of those duties, coordinating, planning, and working in partnership to ensure those duties are fulfilled.
- 5.3 It is clear that, within Wirral, there are two quite clear perceptions of libraries:
- The Library as a “Place”, and
 - The Library as a “Service”.
- 5.4 The Library as a Place is about more than being simply a venue for the Library Service. It maximises the benefit of the library “brand” by encompassing other complementary services and functions that meet the needs of the local community it serves. A potential definition or vision for the library could be:
- “A Wirral Library is a friendly, accessible place that provides a safe, trusted and welcoming resource aimed at meeting the needs of the local community. Its focus is on providing information, knowledge and reading for self improvement and enjoyment.”
- 5.5 The Library as a Service extends beyond the boundaries of the Library buildings, and should not be constrained or restricted by four walls. It should have clearly defined functions that are largely unique and specific to the service, but accept that the way in which those functions are delivered will evolve within a rapidly changing world. It is recommended that those functions focus on:
- Reading for pleasure;
 - Information for study, research, self improvement and knowledge;
 - The development of individual literacy, specifically for those outside of a full time learning environment;
 - Provision of local community information;
 - A source of public service information.

5.6 There are a number of actions that Wirral now needs to take:

- To agree or amend the functions proposed and turn them into both an overarching vision and a strategy that sets out how each function will be delivered (both now and in the long term), the priority target groups, and the PI's required to measure the successful achievement of the outcomes required.
- A review of the structure of the Library Service and the skills required to deliver these functions. Where practical appoint staff accordingly. This needs to take into account that librarians may not need to manage library buildings, and that their roles may become more strategic and commissioning based.
- Prepare a strategic development plan for each of the Library buildings, taking into account which services are required to meet local need, and the range of factors discussed earlier in this report.

5.7 There is much yet to be done, but the Council is now proactively moving the service forward with investment and support. The provision of a strategic framework with clearly defined goals will ensure that the benefit of such investment and support is fully maximised.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	RADIO FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION OF LIBRARY BOOKS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR CHRIS MEADEN
KEY DECISION	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report details the current position with regard to the installation and use of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) for Library books and how it will help improve the service by automating the issue and discharge of books. This is currently being installed at New Ferry Library with proposals for use at other sites where a business case for efficiency can be made. This report details the timescales and the likely savings and efficiencies that will be realised by these changes.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** That Members note that the contract has been awarded to Intellident (Specialist Computer Centre) and the commitment to install the RFID system in New Ferry Library.
- 2.2.** That RFID be installed in all Libraries where a business case for efficiency can be made.
- 2.3.** That the total cost of installation, which could be upto £1m, be funded from reserves.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** The use of RFID will improve the facilities on offer in Libraries, release staff to perform other duties and reduce book loss.
- 3.2.** The installation of RFID forms one element of the implementation of new technology to enable the strategy for the merger of Libraries and One Stop Shops. The overall strategy will deliver savings of £1.7m with no reduction of facilities or services.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The current system for the public to take out and return books to a Library is the TALIS Library Management System which is an IT system to keep track of stock, maintain customer records and requests, and manage the catalogue. Books are still stamped in the traditional way with a return date and the system is used to update the status of both lender and book.
- 4.2. The RFID system can automate much of this system. It is a self service issue and discharge system where the Library user can check out and return items by themselves in a simple and user friendly way. The system has a tag in each book which has a computer chip and antenna which identifies each individual book. When the Library user places the book on the receiver pad and inserts their library card into the card reader the TALIS system is updated and a receipt is produced for the customer. There is also a payment facility available with the system which allows payment of fines or other charges.
- 4.3. Automation will free up Library staff from a routine and time consuming task without any adverse impact on the service. Staff can then engage fully with customers requiring a more in depth response which is a major step forward for the service.
- 4.4. The system has the advantage of allowing multiple book issues to be completed quickly and allows confidentiality for the user when issuing or returning books.
- 4.5. It also has the potential to improve the security of the book stock, which represents a significant investment, as the tags act as an alarm system if books are removed without being properly issued. The security system is unobtrusive and less of a barrier to use than the large security gates used previously thus allowing a more open aspect. The tags do not emit radio frequencies and so there is no harm to staff or customers. For customers who cannot use the system staff will always be available to help. Initially there will be a staff member situated by the self service unit to guide and encourage customers, who should appreciate the freedom this gives and I expect that over a short period, the system will be found to be easy to use and become increasingly accepted by users as has been the case at other Library sites around the country.
- 4.6. The Authority has already tendered for this system and Intellident has been awarded the contract over a four year period under the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Framework. Installation will proceed on a site by site basis where the business case provides a reasonable return on investment in a timescale of up to four years.

- 4.7. Initially the system is being installed into the remodelled New Ferry Library based at the Grove Street Junior School, Grove Street, New Ferry. The RFID equipment on this site has been funded from the Merseyside Improvement and Efficiency Partnership. This will enable the Library service, working with the Children's Centre, to offer a better service than the twelve hours per week previously opened with little additional staffing input.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 If not developed then staff will continue to spend time on routine tasks instead of extending the service.
- 5.2. There is a risk that users may not use the system and therefore it could become under utilised and not cost effective. This will be addressed by ensuring that staff engage with users to maximise the use and understanding of the system by utilising the release of time it gives staff to engage with users.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1. No other options were considered.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1. In June/July 2009 Intellident and other RFID companies demonstrated their systems as part of the tender process and consulted staff and customers about the equipment and process. Initial feedback was positive.
- 7.2 Consultation has included outcomes from other Library services where this has been welcomed positively and once installed there will be ongoing consultation with users to understand their issues and comments about the system.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

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

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 9.1. **FINANCIAL** – The cost of the New Ferry development is £21,000 which is being met by a grant from the Merseyside Improvement and Efficiency Partnership.
- 9.2. The cost of installation in all Libraries would be about £1m which could be funded from existing reserves.
- 9.3. Annual costs for linking self service options to TALIS and maintenance and upkeep of equipment will be contained within the current budget. The additional cost of the RFID tags will be contained within the overall cost of book purchase.

- 9.4. The ongoing savings that this system can bring include an overall reduction in staff numbers which has been achieved through EVR/VS and will be reflected in the co-location project and a reduction in stock loss at each site based on a 4% reduction of this type of loss. The system will give a return on investment by year four at sites where it is installed.
- 9.5. The overall saving from the co-location of Libraries and One Stop Shops is £1.7m of which the implementation of RFID forms one element.
- 9.6. **STAFFING** – The system will allow staff to move to more direct public engagement by allowing the system to do the simple transactions, leaving staff free to engage with customers who do need support.
- 9.7. **IT** – The system is installed and maintained by the manufacturer and links with the TALIS IT system. Sufficient bandwidth and awareness of system support for Library outcomes will be required to maximise the efficiency the system provides.
- 9.8. **ASSETS** – There are no implications arising directly from this report.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

FNCE/99/11

REPORT AUTHOR: **Malcolm Flanagan**
 Head of Revenues Benefits & Customer Services
 Telephone: (0151) 666 3260
 Email: malcolmflanagan@wirral.gov.uk

REFERENCE MATERIAL

NONE

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	9 December 2010

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	REVISION OF CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULE 16
WARD/S AFFECTED:	'ALL'
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR STEVE FOULKES, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
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 invites Cabinet to recommend to Council that it approves an additional Contract Procedure Rule 16A. This will ensure that significant variations to term contracts which may result in reduced value for money or diminished outcomes for local people are reported to Members.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 That Council is recommended to revise the Council's Contract Procedure Rules by the inclusion of an additional Rule 16A in the form set out in paragraph 4.9 of this report.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 To ensure that significant variations to term contracts which may result in reduced value for money or diminished outcomes for local people are reported to Members.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Over recent years the Council, like most local authorities in England, has increasingly become a commissioner of services, rather than a direct provider. Major contracts are in place with firms such as Biffa (for waste collection) and COLAS (following the Highways and Engineering Services Procurement Exercise ('HESPE')). Currently the Council is engaged in the Parks and Countryside Services Procurement Exercise ('PACSPE'). All these contracts must comply with the Contract Procedure Rules ('the CPRs') set out in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution. Indeed, Article 14.2 of the Constitution which is headed 'Contracts' stipulates that every contract made by the Council will comply with the CPRs, unless it conflicts with statutory requirements.

- 4.2 Major contracts will often be highly complex and run for a number of years. Both these factors mean it is almost inevitable that there will need to be agreed variations to such contracts during the contract period. There is nothing inherently wrong with this. Indeed, quite the contrary. It makes no sense to continue inflexibly with a contract provision after changes in circumstances have occurred which render the term no longer fit for purpose. Equally, however, when Members approve the letting of a contract, they are entitled to expect that the contract will deliver the anticipated benefits at the expected price. In other words, that the promised value for money will be achieved. Where there are significant changes to contracts members are entitled to expect that they will be apprised of those variations. Within the CPRs, Rule 16 was intended to ensure this occurs. CPR 16 provides as follows:

16 Variation Orders and Extra Work Orders

16.1 The responsible Chief Officer shall record every Variation Order or extra works order immediately it is raised. If the issue of Variation Order(s) would at the date of the order cause the final contract price to exceed the original contract sum by more than £50,000 or 10%, whichever is the lower, the Chief Officer must immediately inform the Director of Finance. This rule applies to all contracts as defined in Contract Procedure Rule 4.1, including those based on an 'Agreed Maximum Price'.

16.2 If the supervising officer considers in his or her professional opinion that it is necessary for the works specified in a contract to be varied for technical reasons to ensure the successful delivery of the contract (for example; dealing with unforeseen ground conditions) , the officer shall be authorised to consent in writing to the necessary variations to the contract. He shall subsequently submit a written report to the next meeting of the Cabinet or relevant regulatory committee in order to explain the reasons for the action taken if the agreed variations are likely either singly or cumulatively to result in the contract price exceeding the tender total by a sum calculated as 10% of the tender total including contingencies or £50,000 whichever is lower.

16.3 Any other variations to a contract which are not technically necessary for the successful delivery of the contract for example variations which increase or enhance the approved scope of the contract, shall be in writing and shall require the prior approval of the relevant Cabinet portfolio holder or relevant regulatory committee after consideration of a written report but only if the supervising officer estimates that the variations are likely either singly or cumulatively with previous variations to result in an increase of expenditure of more than £20,000.

16.4 Where the contract sum fluctuates in accordance with an index linked to measure of inflation, the £50,000 or 10% relates to the original tender sum as adjusted under the terms of the contract.

16.5 Where the contract price includes a sum for contingencies, the limits in paragraph 16.1 shall relate to the total contract price inclusive of contingencies.

- 4.3 As part of the pre-planned work of the Council's External Auditors, they are undertaking a review of the operation and 'benefits realised' of the HESPE contract with COLAS. This work and officers' development of the PACSPE contract documentation has made it clear that CPR 16 is not really fit for purpose (in terms of ensuring Members are kept apprised of any changes in value for money, as opposed to changes in price) for contracts such as that with Biffa; or the HESPE contract; or the contemplated PACSPE contract. This is because all three contracts are 'term contracts'.
- 4.4 Term contracts are awarded on the basis of a fixed period of time (the 'term'). During the term a schedule of approved rates or prices will apply in relation to a large number of discrete activities. An example would be a fixed price for installing a new lighting column. Such contracts are likely to have within them mechanisms for dealing with inflation. This might be by reference to an agreed inflation index. Alternatively; the contract might be on the basis of 'cost plus', where the contractor will be paid a fixed sum, or percentage, on top of the cost actually incurred to undertake a given task.
- 4.5 Term contracts are managed by reference to an available annual budget. If the budget is reduced from that set for the previous year, then officers will instruct the contractor to undertake fewer tasks under the contract. To use the previous example of installing a new lighting column, if the Highways budget is reduced by 10 per cent and 50 columns were replaced last year; then only 45 lamps are likely to be installed this year. Such budgetary changes will be taken by Members and no issues of transparency arise: less money means a reduced level of service provision.
- 4.6 There is also another scenario; one where officers agree price variations within a contract. This might arise where there is an ambiguity, or error, in the contract specification and/or tender submission. In large, complex contracts, sometimes comprising thousands of individual items, this is unavoidable. If this results in a price increase, say a doubling in the sum to install a new lighting column, then the contract can be kept 'in budget' by halving the number of lamps replaced. As CPR 16 is drafted, this would not require the change to be reported to Members as the activity will be constrained within the approved budget. However, there has clearly been a markedly detrimental change in terms of value for money (the unit cost has doubled) and materially diminished outcome (a halving in the number of new lighting columns installed).
- 4.7 Historically, term contracts have been managed through effective monitoring and reporting of the approved budgets for the relevant works and services, in accordance with Financial Regulations; and any variations in costs have been absorbed within the approved budget. In essence, as long as the budget has been successfully managed, there has been no financial impact to report to Members under CPR 16. Whilst this may be technically correct, it is recommended that a more transparent approach is adopted in order that Members are given a fuller appreciation of cost changes which have proved necessary on these large and complex contracts.
- 4.8 Accordingly, Cabinet is invited to consider recommending Council to adopt an additional CPR (as CPR 16A) to address specifically cost variations within term

contracts. This will ensure that clear auditable records of variations are maintained; and that those variations with a significant financial impact (individually or cumulatively) over the term of the contract are reported to Cabinet. It is recommended that this should not apply to variations to schools contracts where those variations are instigated by the schools, whether for term contracts or other contracts.

- 4.9 Accordingly, it is recommended that Council be requested to adopt an additional CPR 16A in the following form:

16A Variations to Prices/Rates – Term Contracts

- 16A.1 Term Contracts (e.g. those in place for waste collection and highway maintenance) are awarded on the basis of a fixed period of time ('term'); utilising approved rates or prices to deliver services through approved budgets rather than an approved contract total.*
- 16A.2 The Chief Officer responsible for every term contract shall record in writing every change in the works or service information which results in a variation to the prices or rates (including the deletion or provision of new rates), immediately it is raised; recording the estimated financial impact of the variation over the life of the contract (the 'whole cost') based, where appropriate, on the latest complete year's quantities to assess future year's quantities. If the whole cost of the variation exceeds £50,000 or 10% of the estimated value of the contract over its term (whichever is the lesser); the Chief Officer must immediately inform the Director of Finance. This rule applies to all contracts as defined in Contract Procedure Rule 4.1, including those based on an 'Agreed Maximum Price'.*
- 16A.3 If the Supervising Officer considers in their professional opinion that it is necessary for the works or services information in a term contract to be varied for technical reasons to ensure the successful delivery of the contract (for example, unforeseen sub-surface or drainage conditions, or an omission or ambiguity in the contract), the officer shall be authorised to consent in writing to the necessary variations to the contract. He shall subsequently submit a written report to the next meeting of the Cabinet, or relevant regulatory committee, in order to explain the reasons for the action taken if the whole cost of the variation is likely to exceed £50,000 or 10% of the estimated value of the contract over its term (whichever is the lesser).*
- 16A.4 Any other variations to a term contract which are not technically necessary for the successful delivery of that contract (for example, variations which increase or enhance the approved scope of the contract (such as improved gritting routes, a modified park management plan or a change in the number of car parks)) shall be in writing and shall require the prior approval of the relevant Cabinet portfolio holder, or regulatory committee, after consideration of a written report; but only if the Supervising Officer estimates that the whole cost of the variation is likely to exceed £50,000 or 10% of the estimated value of the contract over its term (whichever is the lesser).*

16A.5 This Rule 16A and Rule 16 shall not apply in relation to variations to works or prices or rates (including the deletion or provision of new rates) for the provision of goods or services to schools where the variation is requested in writing by a school; but the Chief Officer responsible for every term contract relating to schools shall keep a written record of all such variations requested by schools.

- 4.10 To assist Members and officers in assessing the probable impact of introducing an additional CPR in the suggested form of CPR 16A, the Interim Head of Technical Services has undertaken a retrospective analysis of the effect it would have had if applied to the HESPE contract with Colas. This analysis has shown that there have been 50 variations ordered which have changed the contract prices since the HESPE contract commenced in April 2009. These variations range in value from an increase of £54.00; for a new rate for a belisha beacon flasher unit; to an increase of £855,000 for a change to address an ambiguity in the contract documents to allow the contestable works on street lighting to be achieved through a Tripartite Agreement.
- 4.11 The latter variation is an example that would be addressed by the proposed revision to the CPRs. In this case, whilst the overall cost of the service to the Council has reduced and the timescales for completing such works have improved significantly (both compared with the situation pre-HESPE), it has technically resulted in a significant increase in the costs payable under the contract. In addition this variation has had the effect of reducing the overall cost advantage of the Colas tender compared with those of the other tenderers. However, this variation (and the other agreed variations) still mean that the Colas tender was the most economically advantageous for the Council to accept.
- 4.12 Three further significant increases to date; assessed as being greater than £50,000 over the life of the contract are shown in Table 1:

Variation	Estimated cost over the contract term
Shared cost of a depot clerk for the purpose of extracting utility plans relating to highway maintenance works to be carried out.	£75,000
New item for filling of grit bins with salt from Council salt stocks	£92,000
Resolving an ambiguity in cold milling (planing) of pavements rates. This item, too, has no overall effect on the cost of the services, as the variation is offset by reduced use of other bill of quantities items.	£118,000

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 If the recommended amendment to the CPRs is not adopted, then future variations to term contracts that may materially affect value for money and contract outcomes will only be reported to Members if the overall budget for the contract is significantly exceeded.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Legal Services and Procurement are currently undertaking a wider ranging review of all CPRs. The proposed new CPR 16A could be dealt with as part of that review. However, the Council's External Auditors have expressed their preference for this lacuna in the CPRs to be addressed as a matter of high priority. Accordingly, it is recommended to deal with this matter as a stand alone item.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 As indicated, the views of the Council's External Auditors have been sought on this matter.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 None

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

- 9.1 The recommended addition of CPR 16A will result in significant variations to term contracts within budget being reported to Members.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 These are set out in the report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Significant variations to term contracts within budget may result in reduced outcomes for local people.

- 11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

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

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 None.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 None

REPORT AUTHOR: **Bill Norman**
Director of Law, HR and Asset Management
telephone: (0151) 6918498
email: billnorman@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

The Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	WIRRAL WAR MEMORIALS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL WARDS
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ADRIAN JONES CORPORATE RESOURCES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet Members of the proposals to install war memorial plaques at the Cenotaph at Hamilton Square and to seek approval for a single tender action.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members note the contents of this report.
- 2.2 That Members endorse the proposals contained in this report.
- 2.3 That Cabinet approve the award of contracts for memorial masonry works to Birkenhead Monumental, pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 5.1.1.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Whilst not a statutory duty of the Council, it is generally considered to be very important that all the people of Wirral who have given their lives in the service of their country are properly remembered. The completion of all the proposed phases of improvements at the Cenotaph will be a fitting tribute in advance of the 100 year anniversary of World War One in 2014.
- 3.2 The proposed monumental masonry works including the cutting, inscribing, supply and installation of stone plaques will be carried out by Birkenhead Monumental, whose services will be procured by a number of purchase orders at appropriate stages of the scheme implementation. Birkenhead Monumental is the only known local supplier of the necessary specialist masonry services with sufficient capacity to deliver the works to the required quality and timescales. The total value of monumental masonry for the Phase 2 works described below is approximately £33,000. Birkenhead Monumental has performed satisfactorily and at reasonable cost when previously engaged in similar activities for the Council. Nevertheless, prior to award of any Phase 3

works contracts the market will be re-tested and discussions will be held with the Corporate Procurement team to ensure there are no other suitable alternative suppliers.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 There are 12 district war memorials in the borough, including the Cenotaph at Hamilton Square. The memorials at Eastham; Magazine Promenade, New Brighton and the Cenotaph are currently Grade 2 listed. The memorial at Grange Hill, West Kirby, is Grade 2* listed. Representations are being made to English Heritage by the Council's Conservation Officer for them to consider listed status for additional memorials and enhanced status listing for the Cenotaph.
- 4.2 The memorials and Cenotaph generally contain names of the fallen in the two world wars from the districts in which they are located. The memorial at Grange Hill, West Kirby does include some names of Wirral's fallen from post-1945 conflicts. However, this memorial has difficult access issues as described in section 11 below. There are known to be a large number of fallen who are not currently commemorated at any the borough's memorial sites.
- 4.3 The Cenotaph at Hamilton Square is the location where the borough's official civic act of Remembrance takes place each year in November. The Cenotaph itself was originally dedicated to the fallen from World War One (WW1). There are only a few World War Two (WW2) names and, with little room for further inscriptions, it is therefore appropriate that separate memorials are provided.
- 4.4 Phase 1 of the improvements at the Cenotaph took place in 2009 when the various regimental plaques in the grassed area each side of the Cenotaph were re-set to make them more prominent.
- 4.5 As Phase 2 of the improvements, the current proposals involve the installation of low level memorial plaques which will be laid to a slightly sloping angle across the existing edging kerbs around the paved area along the entrance and left hand side of the Cenotaph. The plaques will be manufactured from large slabs of Portland stone and carved in relief with multiple names. It is proposed that these plaques will include the names of all the following: any WW2 Wirral fallen not currently recognised on district memorials elsewhere in the borough (1100 number), including those only recognised on plaques inside the Birkenhead Town Hall, and all the Wirral fallen from post-1945 conflicts, including Iraq and Afghanistan (currently 17 number). It is also intended to install plaques in this phase in honour of all the borough's recipients of both the Victoria and George Cross (currently 24 in total), which will be carved with a copy of their medal inscriptions. It is proposed that all Phase 2 works be implemented prior to Remembrance Day in November 2011.
- 4.6 Phase 3 of the proposals involve the installation of further Portland Stone plaques laid around the edging to the right hand side of the Cenotaph, which will include the names of all Wirral fallen from the Boer War (approximately 12 number); any WW1 names not currently commemorated elsewhere (550 number), and all Merchant Navy personnel who have fallen in conflicts during WW1 and WW2. Merchant Navy personnel are not currently commemorated at

any memorial locations in the borough and relevant names will be confirmed in consultation with the Merchant Navy. This phase will proceed in 2012/13, subject to available funding as described in section 9.6 below.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 There is a minor financial risk that additional works may be required to the paved areas around the Cenotaph.
- 5.2 Where possible, families and military records will be consulted to ensure names and details are accurately recorded.
- 5.3 Risks will be managed appropriately and all critical project risks will be identified and monitored on a regular basis by the project team.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 The addition of supplementary plaques to the existing memorial at Grange Hill, West Kirby was discounted for the reasons outlined in section 11 below.
- 6.2 A 'do-nothing' option has been discounted since there would appear to be widespread support to include missing names at the Cenotaph and improve the memorials to all of Wirral's fallen.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 English Heritage have been consulted and support the proposals, which was a pre-requisite for the planning consent granted on 28 March 2011.
- 7.2 A number of relatives of the fallen from recent conflicts have been consulted and have expressed their approval for the location of memorials at the Hamilton Square Cenotaph. Some of the families of those remembered on plaques situated within Birkenhead Town Hall have complained about the difficult access in the building and support the proposal to re-create these memorials at the Cenotaph.
- 7.3 The proposals have received support from The Rt Hon Frank Field MP in a letter dated 24 November 2009. A number of former service personnel have also been consulted and have expressed their support for the proposals.
- 7.4 Details of the Council's war memorials are communicated to the public via a page on the Council's website under the Community and Living section. This page will be updated with further details on each of the borough's memorials once the current proposals are approved.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 There are no implications in this report for voluntary, community or faith groups.

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

- 9.1 The Department of Law, HR and Asset Management will provide all professional services for the design and procurement of the construction

activities necessary to deliver the proposals, with assistance from the Council's Corporate Procurement team.

9.2 The Director of Technical Services in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 will carry out the role of CDM Coordinator.

9.3 There are no additional staffing implications with these proposals.

9.4 The total estimated cost of the proposals (Phases 2 and 3) is:

• Ground works:	£2,000
• Monumental masonry:	£68,000
• Departmental charges, including Professional fees CDM Coordinator Other charges (Planning fees etc.):	£10,000
Total	<u>£80,000</u>

9.5 There is an annual budget for the repair and maintenance of war memorials, cenotaphs and historic clocks in the Property Maintenance Programme, managed by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management. In 2010/11 £25,000, of the available £50,000, has been used for materials for Phase 2. The remaining funding for Phase 2, and Phase 3 totalling £55,000, will be from the Heritage budget managed by the Director of Technical Services.

9.6 In 2010/11 a contract amounting to a value of £9,500 was awarded to 1 Call Business Solutions for general maintenance of war memorials from 2011 to 2013. It is proposed that an order be raised under this contract for the ground works elements associated with these proposals. Future general maintenance and tidying of the Cenotaph area will be procured through this contract.

9.7 There are no IT implications arising from this report.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Currently the names of all Wirral's fallen from post-1945 conflicts are included on a memorial plaque on Grange Hill, West Kirby. This location is reached by means of a steep, narrow, rough sandstone path with very difficult access for those with disabilities and the elderly. There are also some existing memorial plaques in Birkenhead Town Hall, which has access issues, as described in 7.2 above. The addition of these names, together with all previously missing names from earlier conflicts, at Hamilton Square will significantly improve access for people with disabilities and the elderly. However, the current name plaques at West Kirby and Birkenhead Town Hall will not be removed.

11.2 The siting of the proposed memorial plaques has been designed to afford close easy viewing and access for all, and has followed the principles of the Council's generic Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for Highway Design.

11.3 There are no other specific equal opportunities implications in this report.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The availability of good access to Hamilton Square by public transport, when compared to monuments elsewhere, could lead to a potential reduction in carbon emissions from vehicles as a result of the proposals described in this report. However, specific estimates have not been quantified.

12.2 The contractor will be encouraged to employ local labour and source materials from local suppliers as far as possible in accordance with Council procurement procedures.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Full planning permission for the formation of new edging war memorial plaques to replace the existing stone edging around the Cenotaph in Hamilton Square was granted on 28 March 2011.

13.1 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Simon Fox**
Design Consultancy Manager
telephone: (0151 606 2334)
email: simonfox@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

The information used in the preparation of this report was obtained in consultation with The Department of Law, HR and Asset Management and with reference to their asset database and register information. No other background papers have been used in the preparation of this report.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet report – PPM Programme	23 July 2009

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	LIVERPOOL CITY REGION (LCR) APPRENTICESHIP STRATEGY
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR CHILDREN SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANN MCLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend the adoption of The Liverpool City Region (LCR) Apprenticeship Strategy by Wirral Council and to seek permission for Council officers to work with Liverpool City Region colleagues to develop the Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy Implementation Plan. The Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy will support the council's objective 'to create more jobs, achieve a prosperous economy and regenerate Wirral'. The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Bill (ASCL) 2009 provide a statutory framework for apprenticeships and create a right to an apprenticeship for suitably qualified 16-18 year olds. Under The Bill the Council has responsibility for planning and commissioning education and training for all 16-19 year olds.

The Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy and Action Plan are detailed in Appendix 1.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 That the Council adopts The Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy.

That the council authorises officers on behalf of the Council to continue to work with Liverpool City Region colleagues to develop the Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy Implementation plan.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 To support the council's statutory duties under the ASCL Bill 2009 to secure appropriate provision for 16-19 year olds including apprenticeship provision.

To support the delivery of the Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Strategy.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Strategy identified the development of an Apprenticeship Strategy for the City Region as a priority.

In the autumn of 2010 The Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Board tasked the Liverpool City Region Sub Regional Group (SRG) with developing the Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy.

A task and finish group, comprising LA 14-19 representatives from the six Liverpool City Region Merseyside Authorities was set up to develop the draft apprenticeship strategy.

The draft strategy was presented to the six Liverpool City Region Children and Young People's Directors of Children's Services and the Employment and Skills Board (ESB) in December 2010. The ESB members agreed for the strategy to be signed off by Alan Walker (Chair) and Damien Allen (Director of Children's Services for Knowsley Council) following a short consultation. Wirral informed the ESB members that prior consultation was required and that Wirral would require time for elected member sign-off, prior to launch.

- 4.2 In January 2011, Wirral submitted a comprehensive response to the draft Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy and Action Plan. Wirral response was considered by the working group developing the strategy, led by 14-19 teams from each local authority.

Wirral had particular concern regarding the following areas:

- Identification of resource and joint investment across city region without member approval;
- Synergy and coherence in the financial subsidies paid to employers to recruit apprentices. I.e. Wirral Apprentice Programme. Wirral argued strongly that we would not support an approach to impose a maximum ceiling on the level of financial support to employers across the Liverpool City Region and that an alternative approach should be to develop and agree minimum criteria;
- Launch of an Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Academy – lack of clarity regarding model;
- Lack of clarity regarding the timescale of the strategy, age cohort (is this a young person or adult strategy).

A final version of the strategy has now been received and has been amended as follows:

- Action Plan has been removed and will be developed at a later stage;
- Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Academy confirmed as a "virtual" Academy;
- Reference to resource and joint investment removed, and many actions have been identified as "pilots". However Wirral may not be in a position to deliver against some of the actions. i.e. embedding the Apprenticeship

“offer” into the broader business support offer – i.e. dedicated apprenticeship specialists co-located in Invest Wirral.

- The strategy still refers to local authorities working together for synergy and coherence regarding financial subsidies to employers.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 Important to note that the development of the implementation plan will determine actual delivery of the strategy and The Employment and Skills Board should build in the appropriate time for officers to consult and seek member approval where required. If this does not occur then delivery of the strategy by all Liverpool City Region Boroughs may be at risk.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 None.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The draft Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy was tabled at the Wirral Economic Development Steering group (WEDs) meeting in January 2010. WEDS partners tasked the WEDS operation group to prepare a response to the consultation on their behalf. This response was fed into the Apprenticeship Task and Finish group at the end of January 2011.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 None.

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

- 9.1 There has been no financial commitment to the strategy by Wirral to date other than the time of relevant officers given to the initiative.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None at this stage.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None apply at this stage.
- 11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)
Not at this stage

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 None apply at this stage.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 None apply at this stage.

REPORT AUTHOR: Vivian Stafford
Strategic Service Manager
0151 346 6630
Email: vivianstafford@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

1. Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy and Action Plan.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Nil

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy and Action Plan

Introduction

The Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Strategy identified the development of an Apprenticeship Strategy for the City Region as a priority. Partners in the City Region regard Apprenticeships as providing a high quality route through which:-

- Young employees can secure the skills they need to succeed in their working lives; and
- Employers can ensure that they have the highly trained staff they need to secure their business success.

It is for these reasons that the Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Board is ambitious to secure high levels of employer adoption of, and young people's participation in, Apprenticeships. This ambition is reflected in this Strategy and Action Plan and in the levels of commitment of the private and public sectors in the City Region to realise this. We invite Government, the National Apprenticeship Service and the Skills Funding Agency to join us in that ambition.

The Policy Context

World-class apprenticeships: Unlocking Talent, Building Skills for All (July 2008) set out the previous Government's plans for the expansion and strengthening of the apprenticeship programme. It also indicated a Government aspiration that by 2020 at least one in five young people will access apprenticeship provision on leaving school. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act (November 2009) stated clearly the Government's proposals to support these targets. It included the requirement for all young people to be in education or training until the age of 18 by 2015, and an entitlement to an apprenticeship place for each suitably qualified young person who wants one from 2013.

Apprenticeships are at the heart of the Government's recently published Skills Strategy '*Skills for Growth*'. Government see Apprenticeships as bringing together individuals, who are motivated and working hard to develop themselves; with employers, investing in their own success but supporting a programme with wider social, environmental and economic value; and with Government, providing public funding and building prestige and reputation of the programme.

By 2014/15 the number of adult Apprenticeships available will expand by up to 75000, leading to more than 200,000 people starting an Apprenticeship each year. To meet this Government will increase investment in Apprenticeships by up to £250 million over the spending review period. There will be investment of £650 million in 2011/12 and an indicative budget of £648 million in 2012/13.

It is expected that not only will the numbers of Apprentices increase, but that the programme too will change in line with the need for advanced skills required to meet future economic needs. Apprenticeships will be reshaped so that technician Level 3 will become the level to which learners and employers aspire. To widen access there will be clear progression routes from level 3 apprenticeships to higher level skills, including Level 4 Apprenticeships or higher education. As this approach works the lifetime earnings that flow from a Level 3 Apprenticeship will be comparable to those flowing from a degree and employers will typically recoup their investment within two to three years. Sitting alongside apprenticeships will be a wider, more flexible system of vocational qualifications that also meets the needs of the economy.

Apprenticeships are a highly successful and respected programme and nationally participation has increased threefold over the last decade. Apprenticeships are a key component in the drive to increase economic prosperity, and a main route to increasing participation in education and training.

Liverpool City Region Strategic Priorities for Apprenticeships

The Liverpool City Region Strategic Priorities for Apprenticeships are as follows:-

- 1. To stimulate increased employer adoption of Apprenticeships*
- 2. To ensure that Apprenticeships meet the needs of the Liverpool City Region economy, including in the Transformational Sectors*
- 3. To promote Apprenticeships as a quality route to young people and to support their increased participation in Apprenticeships*
- 4. To ensure that Apprenticeships delivered in the Liverpool City Region are of the highest possible quality.*

Each of the Strategic Priorities will be supported by Key Actions. Partners will want to undertake a range of activity to support the Apprenticeship agenda. In addition to this activity, the Key Actions are those things that can and should be done together at the level of the City region or across the City region. The Strategic Priorities and the 20 Key Actions we will take to deliver them are set out below. These key actions will form the basis of a detailed implementation plan to be developed.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: TO STIMULATE INCREASED EMPLOYER ADOPTION OF APPRENTICESHIPS

The success of the apprenticeship programme is dependent on demand from employers and an effective employer engagement plan is a critical success factor in ensuring that the Liverpool City Region ambition for Apprenticeships is delivered. There are currently a large number of employers in the Liverpool City Region using the apprenticeship programme as an effective means of developing and capacity building their workforce; however, there is still some work to do to ensure that all employers in the Liverpool City Region are aware of the business benefits of the apprenticeship programme.

The drive to increase employer engagement in the apprenticeship programme will be achieved by the taking forward the following Key Actions:

Key Action 1: The development and implementation of a City Region campaign to promote Apprenticeships to employers

The Liverpool City Region 16-19 Sub-regional Group (SRG) will oversee the development of an LCR-branded campaign to promote Apprenticeships. At the core of this campaign will be the key message that Apprenticeships provide a high quality route through which:-

- Young employees can secure the skills they need to succeed in their working lives; and
- Employers can ensure that they have the highly trained staff they need to secure their business success.

The campaign will generate and support a range of resources (sector information packs, the LCR Apprenticeship Ambassador network, employer case studies etc) and be delivered through a range of media utilising a variety of marketing techniques. The primary focus of the campaign will be to promote the business benefits of Apprenticeships to employers.

The campaign will draw on and further develop existing arrangements, resources and networks already in place. In particular, it will seek to build on the work and resources developed by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and NAS will be a key partner in taking the campaign forward.

Arrangements will be put in place to ensure that the employer interest stimulated across the City Region is referred to the most appropriate business support arrangements and apprenticeship providers in the relevant Local Authority.

Key Action 2: Embedding the Apprenticeship 'offer' into the broader business support and recruitment offer.

There is a broad range of employer support activity across the City Region. This activity is variable in relation to the emphasis on, understanding, and promotion of apprenticeships. Therefore we will capacity build staff with an employer facing role - NAS have a key role to play in this.

Learning from previous national best practice developed during the integration of Skills Brokerage with the wider Business Link Service, we will seek to pilot apprenticeship specialists who will work with and, where possible, be co-located with broader business support and recruitment practitioners. These specialist staff will:-

- Act as a resource that can be drawn on in work with individual employers where specialist knowledge of apprenticeships is required in the development of a recruitment process or a workforce development strategy;

- Work with other generic recruitment and business support practitioners to develop the knowledge and capacity of these staff.

Key Action 3: Systematically embedding apprenticeship requirements in public/private procurement.

It is proposed to promote the building of Apprenticeship recruitment requirements into public/private procurement processes. Work will take place within the major public, third sector and private sector employers in the Liverpool City Region. We will seek to promote best practice in public/private procurement with a view to increasing the volume of Apprenticeship starts.

As part of this we will look to pilot a procurement framework for jobs and skills aimed at ensuring that local people benefit directly from region-wide strategy that places specific requirements on contracts to provide more training and job opportunities, as part of their contractual commitments. Through the use of a toolkit, to be developed, the pilot framework will be aimed at placing jobs and skills at the core of fair and open procurement and contracting procedures, not just for capital and construction projects, but for goods and services too. Doing so offers the prospect of significantly reducing the high level of worklessness in the Liverpool City region, ensuring a far greater proportion of employment and training provision is linked directly to sustainable job opportunities, including apprenticeships, and is designed to deliver the skills that employers demand.

Key Action 4: Promote the conversion of existing staff to Apprenticeships.

Very significant growth in Apprenticeships can be secured if we are able to persuade employers that an Apprenticeship is the right workforce development solution for their existing staff. The approach taken will be determined by the individual's age. Where there are young people aged 16-18 in employment without training, the relevant Local Authority will work with Connexions to target these young people and their employers to convert to apprenticeships. As part of this, we will explore the extent to which there may be unmet demand for work-based provision that delivers a Foundation Learning curriculum for young people with low levels of prior attainment who are in low skilled jobs. For older employees, conversions to apprenticeships will be promoted as part of the LCR campaign. Apprenticeship conversions by older workers will be promoted as a key opportunity for employers to secure co-investment from the Government in the development of their workforce.

Key Action 5: Targeting employers engaged with Education Business Partnerships/Work-related Learning to secure new Apprenticeship Opportunities.

The approach proposed for the City Region seeks to build upon a project that has been developed through partnership working between Sefton Education Business Partnership, Sefton Provider Network and the National Apprenticeship Service. Partner organisations will have training and development to ensure all employer facing staff are knowledgeable and understand the apprenticeship programme and offer.

Employer interfaces by partners, where appropriate, will include information and detail on the apprenticeship offer in an appropriate medium and format (developed by the LCR-branded Apprenticeship Campaign as described above). Employer events and employer forums that are being organised by partners will be used to raise awareness on apprenticeships focusing on priority sectors. One to one interventions with employers are the most effective and the employer conversation will be maximised to include reference to the apprenticeship offer.

The development of this key action will need to be informed by the outcome of the Wolfe review which will inform the future development of vocational provision and of organisations who are currently delivering this activity.

Key Action 6: Mitigating the financial risk of employers by offering subsidies and financial incentives as available resources allow.

A range of different financial incentives currently exist for employers to start Apprentices in the City Region. These initiatives have been, and are, very effective in driving up the level of take up of apprenticeships by employers. They have been instrumental in helping to maintain levels of Apprenticeship participation through the labour market downturn. Over time, however, the resources available to Local Authorities to promote Apprenticeships are likely to come under pressure. Despite this, our ambition is to maintain the current levels of impact that we have been successful in securing in the past. To do this Local Authorities will seek to work together to secure greater synergies and coherence in their offer to employers and in the customer journey.

It is also likely that there will be further national initiatives to provide financial incentives to promote employer take up of Apprenticeships. When these are launched, partners will be mobilised to maximise employer take up and impact in the City Region.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: TO ENSURE THAT APPRENTICESHIPS MEET THE NEEDS OF THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION ECONOMY, INCLUDING IN THE TRANSFORMATIONAL SECTORS

Skills are one of the key drivers of competitiveness. Increasingly the forces of globalisation mean that employers need to continuously update skills if they are to retain market share. This is of importance in all parts of the city region economy and is of particular importance in the four transformational sectors that have been identified as the key drivers of growth and prosperity in the Liverpool City Region. The Apprenticeship programme provides employers with a means of developing both their existing workforce and new staff, ensuring they develop the skills that underpin competitive performance. Apprenticeships are therefore central to growing the Liverpool City Region Economy.

To ensure that apprenticeships meet the needs of the Liverpool City Region economy, including the transformational sectors the following Key Actions will be progressed:

Key Action 7: Drive up the volume and share of Level 3 Apprenticeship programmes

It is proposed to work with providers to ensure that:-

- Where an apprentice is able to undertake and benefit from a Level 3 programme, they do so; and,
- Where Apprentices start on a Level 2 Apprenticeship, there is a well-defined progression route to Level 3 at the outset.

Key Action 8: Link Apprenticeships to Higher Education

Further work will be undertaken to develop the promotion of apprenticeships linked to Higher Education, including:-

- Work with local HEIs to agree Apprenticeship pathways into specified HE qualifications with the development of linked admission policies;
- fast track routes;
- L4/L5 into teaching and routes that allow specific sectors to ‘grow’ their own teaching staff.

Key Action 9: Development of high quality flagship initiatives to support the development of Apprenticeships in the LCR Transformational Sectors

We will support the National Apprenticeship Service in developing flagship initiatives that respond to and lead to sustainable progression pathways and employment in the Transformational Sectors. In particular:-

Super Port

Exploring links with Peel Ports and Cunard, Langton Cruise Terminal.

Knowledge Economy

Development of links into University, Universities as a deliverer of Higher Apprenticeships.

Low Carbon

Potential to develop a Sustainable Construction Academy with Balfour Beatty.

The development of a Renewable Energy academy with EON. EON are proposing to establish an energy efficiency academy which will train up to 1000 apprentices as energy efficiency advisors and pv installers over the next few years.

Visitor economy

Work with Devere/Alternative Hotel Group to launch ‘The Devere Academy of Hospitality’.

The Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Campaign described above will have, at its focal point, the key transformational sectors with the action, and the resources produced, targeting these sectors. It is also proposed to work with NAS to identify the range of apprenticeships on offer to ensure employer demand is being met particularly in new and non traditional occupational areas and the transformational sectors by focusing any future procurement on specific sectors. In addition a programme of work will be agreed with the Greater Merseyside Learning Providers Federation to support providers in exploiting and responding to any new growth opportunities.

Key Action 10: Grow the volume of Level 4 Apprenticeship Frameworks being delivered in the City Region

The number of Level 4 frameworks is currently quite limited. However work will be undertaken with the Greater Merseyside Providers Federation and National Apprenticeship Service to identify opportunities to grow this area of work. The position will be kept under active review as further Level 4 Apprenticeship Frameworks are rolled out.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: TO PROMOTE APPRENTICESHIPS AS A QUALITY ROUTE TO YOUNG PEOPLE AND TO SUPPORT THE PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN APPRENTICESHIPS

The government continues to see the apprenticeship programme as an important offer to young people as well as a key mechanism to delivering full participation by 2015. During 2009/10 there was a growth in apprenticeship starts compared to 2008/9 (based on period 9 trend data), with the volume of starts returning to pre-downturn levels. It is important that the indicative trend in 2009/10 continues if the Liverpool City Region ambition is to be achieved. Central to this will be ensuring that all young people have the opportunity to access the programme and that any barriers that may prevent this are removed, including awareness of the programme by both young people and their parents or carers. It is also important that young people with significant barriers that may prevent them from retaining on an apprenticeship programme are supported to overcome these barriers.

To promote Apprenticeships as a quality route to young people and to support the participation of young people in Apprenticeships the following Key Actions will be progressed:

Key Action 11: The development of a City Region programme of support to help young people (including vulnerable young people) in accessing Apprenticeships, and to help employers recruit young people.

The key support that appropriately qualified vulnerable learners require to help them access, and remain on, apprenticeships, is as follows:-

- Coaching and personal development support to enable young people to prepare for, and present at, interviews for Apprenticeships with confidence;
- Mentoring and coaching for vulnerable learners to support their continued participation in apprenticeships;
- Additional support for LLDD Apprentices and learners from under-represented groups (e.g. BME); and,
- Support to remove any financial barriers associated with starting in employment.

It is proposed that, in each Local Authority, arrangements are put in place to ensure that young people are supported in the process of applying for apprenticeship opportunities and in preparing for interviews, and where necessary can participate in structured programmes designed to boost personal confidence. If resources allow, mentors will support the most vulnerable Apprentices.

Support arrangements for young people and employers are configured differently in each Local Authority area. However, where an Apprenticeship opportunity has been generated as a result of workforce development/recruitment support, or as a result of financial incentives, or in response to the LCR-branded Apprenticeship campaign, we hope to be able to offer a menu of support to employers. Typically such support to an employer could include:-

- Advertising the opportunity;
- Pre-sifting of applicants;
- Organisation and servicing of the interview process; and
- Support with induction where required.

Key Action 12: Develop curriculum pathways from schools to apprenticeships

Local authorities will look to work with schools to map the current vocational qualification offer being delivered by schools at Key Stage 4 (i.e. 14-16) and identify links and progression opportunities to an Apprenticeship Framework with a mechanism to link those learners to relevant Apprenticeship Providers. This approach will be particularly important where schools are offering parts of an Apprenticeship Framework as qualifications delivered in the Key Stage 4 phase.

For post 16 students we will seek to implement progression pathways into apprenticeships from 'learner responsive' provision.

Key Action 13: Employers to be encouraged to engage with union learning reps to provide support for apprentices and agree named mentors in the workplace.

One of the strengths of the Liverpool City Region is the existence of a strong network of Union Learning Representatives (ULRs). The Government, in its recent skills strategy, has signalled its intent to support the development of ULRs through continued support for Union Learn from BIS. Work will be undertaken with Union Learn/TUC to help mobilise ULRs to promote Apprenticeships to employers and to act as mentors to Apprentices in the workplace.

Key Action 14: Deliver pre-apprenticeship pathways in every Local Authority from YPLA-funded 16-19 provision into Apprenticeship programmes.

Every Local Authority in the Liverpool City Region has identified the need to commission learner responsive provision that either ensures progression into an apprenticeship programme where a young person is not 'apprenticeship ready' or alternatively delivers part of an Apprenticeship Framework (often the Technical Certificate) as a routeway into an Apprenticeship with an employer. The current accelerated pre-apprenticeship provides the young person with the underpinning knowledge required to achieve an apprenticeship prior to them being employed by the employer. This approach provides the young person with a recognised vocational qualification and provides assurance to the employer that the young person is capable of understanding their business. Local authorities will work with colleges and other providers to ensure delivery of such provision.

It is understood that government and NAS are currently considering the introduction of a new access to apprenticeship programme. Once introduced, LCR partners will work to ensure rapid implementation.

Key Action 15: To support schools in discharging their responsibility for independent and impartial careers advice and guidance.

All LCR schools will receive a copy of the (NAS) Apprenticeship Resource Pack and teachers will be made aware of how to use it to deliver and support IAG to young people. Building on work undertaken in St Helens and Sefton, resources such as lesson plans will be provided to teachers to support them in their work. Work will be undertaken with the Greater Merseyside Learning Providers Federation to help develop work-related learning opportunities that prefigure Apprenticeships. Local authorities will seek to raise parents and carers' awareness of apprenticeship programmes by ensuring they form a part of all communication to parents about the choices and entitlements on offer to young people.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: TO ENSURE THAT APPRENTICESHIPS DELIVERED IN THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION ARE OF THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE QUALITY

Apprenticeships have developed credibility with employers and the public. This credibility is hard earned but easily lost. With the unit rate paid for Apprenticeships due to decrease and the Liverpool City Region labour market expected to be depressed for the foreseeable future, the context for Apprenticeship delivery will become increasingly more challenging. There have been year on year increases to the success rates secured by providers of Apprenticeships, but these increases have been secured alongside year on year increases to unit rates paid. That context has now changed.

The ongoing labour market downturn may create an environment which makes opportunist and exploitative practice by some providers and some employers more likely. It is important that the Liverpool City Region partners celebrate and promote quality in the delivery of Apprenticeships. We will seek to build a coalition of employers, providers and other partners in the City Region committed to the continued delivery of a quality Apprenticeship offer. This coalition will challenge poor and unacceptable practice, should it arise. A quality Apprenticeship offer will support and endorse that the programme is vital in the development of the skills and economy base within the Liverpool City Region.

These ambitions will be achieved by the following Key Actions:-

Key Action 17: Launch a Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Academy.

The LCR Apprenticeship Academy will act as an umbrella for the development and delivery of quality services to employers and learners in the City Region. In the first instance the academy will be virtual and will build on the strength of existing partnerships and Apprenticeship Sector Networks in the City Region. The Academy will bring providers, employers, unions and other partners together to:-

- Promote the adoption of best practice;
- In particular, promote the LCR Apprenticeship Charter (see below);
- Work with employers to address barriers to starting Apprentices;
- Work to support existing, and establish new, Sector Networks;
- Work with Sector networks to develop sector-based apprenticeship delivery models where these are appropriate (e.g. GTAs);
- Support the development of accelerated pre-apprenticeship and access to apprenticeship programmes; and,
- Celebrate the achievements of Apprentices and their employers (e.g. Apprenticeship graduation events).

Key Action 18: The development of a Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Charter

The development of a City Region Apprenticeship Charter will be central to our work on Apprenticeships. The Charter will be a collective statement of the partnership's commitment to high quality Apprenticeship provision in the Liverpool City Region.

The Charter is likely to encompass a number of areas: - e.g. rates of pay, employment rights, access to pastoral/mentoring support for apprentices, the quality of the training on offer, the expected duration of the apprenticeship, post-Framework achievement sustained employment outcomes etc

The Charter will require a wide ranging consultation prior to sign off.

Key Action 19: Promoting Quality Provision

In their capacity as strategic commissioners of all 16-19 learning, LCR Local authorities will wish to ensure that where provision is withdrawn by the SFA because of failure to meet Minimum Levels of performance, that broadly the same volumes of provision in broadly the same occupational areas (but of higher quality) are subsequently negotiated by NAS/SFA for delivery in LCR. Provision will need to be in place that reflects and meets employer demand.

Key Action 20: Protecting Quality Niche Provision

We will seek to work with providers to ensure that high quality/niche provision is not lost to the City Region as a consequence of the SFA introducing a Minimum Contract Value regime.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	PLAYING FOR SUCCESS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANN MCLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out the current position in respect of the Playing for Success initiative, based at Tranmere Rovers Football Club and managed by the Children and Young People's Department. The initiative started in 2004 and funding ended in March 2011. At the Cabinet meeting dated 23 September 2010 it was agreed to fund the initiative from the centrally managed SEN/behaviour budget until 31 August 2011. This report is to provide an update on the present situation and sets out options for the future of the initiative.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to approve funding the facility and staffing for a period of one year to give the Centre time to move nearer to self finance for the September 2012 – August 2013 period. This will be at a cost of £45,000.
- 2.2 The Centre to produce a further report in June 2012 to update members on progress.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 To allow the Playing for Success Centre to continue to make the best use of the £200,000 capital investment made by the Council in 2005.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 At the Cabinet meeting held on 23 September 2010 the following recommendations were made :-

The Playing for Success initiative is funded in 2011/12 from the centrally managed SEN/behaviour budget and at the same time the Playing for Success Manager is asked to:-

- hold discussions with schools using the centre to develop a possible basis for part or full funding of the centre costs and
- carry out a review of the costs of running the centre and identifies areas for cost reduction
- explore alternative sources of support funding including any additional direct or in-direct support available from the football club.

Outcome:

1. Cabinet approved the proposal for Wirral to fund the Playing for Success Centre but with the amendment that this would only be until August 2011.
2. Schools Forum agreed with the decision.

Development since the last report

- 4.2 Although the capital investment was to build a Playing for Success Centre mainly for the use of schools, the facility is now used by a wider age range of the community including providing opportunities for the most vulnerable groups.
- 4.3 Both full time staff employed by the Local Authority to run the Centre have accepted Early Voluntary Retirement. The Centre Assistant left in December 2010 and the Centre Manager is to leave at the end of June 2011. From September it is intended to hire a tutor on a sessional basis to cover the ICT needs at a cost of @ £22,800 per annum. Administrative support will also be paid on a sessional basis at a cost of @ £7,300 per annum. It is intended to appoint a development officer for one day a week to secure future income at a cost of @ £6,650 per annum. A student mentor will be employed at a cost of £1,900 per annum. The total staffing costs will be @ £38,650 which will be a saving of £77,350 on September 2010 – August 2011 costs.
- 4.4 The Playing for Success, Learning through Football and After School Programmes, have continued to take place. The funded daytime activities for schools have also continued (e.g. Football Journalism and Narrowing the Gap initiatives). See Appendix 1 for impact.
- 4.5 Other Grant Funded programmes for the community have also continued to take place. These include Active Rovers and Looked After Children programmes organised by Tranmere Rovers in the Community coaches. See Appendix 1 for impact.
- 4.6 Regular Centre hire has been developed and the following very successful initiatives named in 4.7 and 4.8 mean that the Centre is full from 9 – 6 on four days a week and 9 – 4 on one day a week. There are also two 6 – 8pm sessions each week.
- 4.7 The Rovers Return to Work initiative aimed at those not in employment or education (NEET) has expanded. Six 10 week courses have taken place. The initiative is funded by Job Centre Plus. The aim of the course is to provide motivational training for 18-24 year old unemployed young people. The course is designed to give participants confidence, motivation and the skills needed to seek and progress into full time employment. The courses have been extremely successful. There has been an average 90% attendance on the

courses with an 86% success rate in participants going into full time employment and sustaining the work. Each course caters for 16 young people and all have completed the full course. The initiative has created an additional income of £12,000 to the Centre. See Appendix 1 impact..

- 4.8 Following negotiations the De Vere Hotel Group has set up a hospitality academy at the Centre. The academy offers 12 and 16 week apprenticeships in Customer Service and Professional Cookery for 16-24 year olds. A 'drop-in' kitchen has been placed next to the Centre to be used as part of the training. De Vere has agreed to fund 4 cohorts a year. There are 4 groups of 12 participants in each group. The first cohort finished in April 2011. Of the 46 apprentices on this first cohort 36 completed the course giving a 75% completion rate. 40% have already secured full time employment. The De Vere group hire the PPS Centre facilities during the week providing an annual income of £6,000. See Appendix 1 for impact.
- 4.9 The funded daytime activities for schools including the after school Playing for Success scheme and the Football Journalism project have continued to take place. Consultations have been taking place with schools regarding continuing the programmes.
- 4.10 From September 2011 schools will pay £1,000 per 10 week Playing for Success after school course. Five schools can be included in the programme each term – 15 in total during the year generating an income of £15,000 p.a. 10 schools have already agreed to be included in the scheme. See Appendix 1 for impact.
- 4.11 From September 2011 schools will be charged £600 for the 5 day Football Journalism programme. Ten schools will be involved during the year creating an income of £6,000 p.a. Eight schools have already agreed to be included in the scheme. See Appendix 1 for impact.
- 4.12 From September 2011 schools will pay £900 per 6 week course for the Learning through Football programme. Four schools can be included in the programme each term – 12 in total during the year generating an income of £10,800 pa. See Appendix 1 for impact.
- 4.13 Other grant funded programmes will continue to take place and provide income to the Centre including Looked After Children Project (£1,500 p.a.), Active Rovers – for the Over 40's (£750 p.a.), Princes Trust (£750 p.a.) See Appendix 1 for impact.
- 4.14 Consultations with Headteachers have taken place regarding the future of the Playing for Success and Football Journalism projects as outlined in 4.10 and 4.11. Course costs were agreed. However the transport costs to and from the centre from the school was an area of concern. The transport was stated as being vital to the success of the project but schools were not willing to pay for both course costs and transport costs. The transport costs double the cost to schools. The total annual transport costs for both programmes are @ £14,000 per annum. The Development Officer will look at ways of reducing this cost in future years.

- 4.15 Equipment costs are a bigger than normal expenditure cost than previous years. Due to the age of the computers and the need to purchase new laptops the ICT Hardware expenditure will be @ £17,500 for academic year 2011/12. This is expected to be a much reduced payment in 2012/13.
- 4.16 The difference between Expenditure Costs and Income for the period September 2011 – August 2012 is @ £46,900. Of this total the transport costs @ £14,000 and ICT hardware costs @ £17,500 accounts for £31,000. It is fully expected that these costs will be greatly reduced – and hopefully eliminated for the September 2012/2013 academic year.
- 4.17 The proposed total saving on 2010/11 academic year costs on 2011/12 academic year will be @ £54,500.
- 4.18 The cost of funding the Centre until August 31st 2011 from the SEN/Behaviour budget as agreed at the Cabinet meeting held on 23rd September 2010 will be @ £15,000.
- 4.19 It is proposed that the Centre links in more closely with the Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre. As part of the Rovers Return NEET programme a day visit to Oaklands will be included, generating £2,400 a year to the outdoor centre. The first trip took place on Thursday 19th May. As previously stated it is also proposed to appoint a development officer for one day a week with the remit of increasing the income at both Centres. This will be a one year appointment which will be reviewed in 12 months. The development officer will ensure the Playing for Success centre's school slots are full and explore ways to reduce the expenditure especially the transport costs. The development officer will also work to increase bookings especially day and weekend courses at Oaklands and explore ways to fund the remission costs which will cease in September 2011. The development officer will have the minimum target of raising sufficient funds to the cover the costs of the post.
- 4.20 The activities taking place at the Centre supports areas of Priorities 2, 3, 6 and 7 of the Children and Young People's Department, Learning and Achievement Branch Plan as detailed in Appendix 1.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 The key risk is that the initiative will come to an end in August 2011 unless alternative funding arrangements are put in place.
- 5.2 If the initiative did not continue the Council could lose access to a facility that cost £200,000 of capital investment in 2005.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 (i) Cease the initiative and hand the facility back to Tranmere Rovers.
(ii) Seek financial support from other areas including the football club and other sports/study grants towards the running costs of the initiative.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultations have taken place with schools, Job Centre Plus, Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre, Children in Care Officers, Not in Employment or Education Officers, Apprentices Officers, De Vere Officers, the local community – especially the over 40's, Officers from Tranmere Rovers Football Club, and Officers from the Children and Young People's Department.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 The Centre offers the local community the opportunities to develop their skills and improve their health through the programme of courses as detailed in Appendix 1.

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

9.1 The Playing for Success initiative employed two staff. Both staff will have left by June 30th 2011 under the Councils Early Voluntary Retirement Scheme.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The centre provides individual support to school pupils to develop Literacy, Numeracy and ICT skills and knowledge and links these activities to the health and fitness aspects of games and sport. In addition it provides support to Over 40's, Apprentices, Children in Care and those not in employment or education as detailed in Appendix 1.

11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? No

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The centre operates beyond the normal school day and thereby contributes to the provision of positive activities for young people outside of the school setting.

REPORT AUTHOR: Bob Saunders
Principal Manager (PE & Outdoor Education)
telephone: (0151 346 6503)
email: bobsaunders@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Impact Statements

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	23 September 2010

APPENDIX 1

Impact Statements

The activities taking place at the Centre will support the following priorities stated in the Children and Young People's Department Learning and Achievement Branch Plan.

Priority 2 – Improve the outcomes for young children and families, especially the most vulnerable, through effective early years support and intervention.

Continue to develop support for the most vulnerable children especially those who are Looked After and those with Special Educational Needs.

Priority 3 - Implement the outcomes of the Wirral Future's consultation and review/redesign services to ensure they are cost effective whilst maintaining and further improving the quality of those services.

Review the Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre so that it generates sufficient income to fully cover all costs.

Priority 6 – Increase the number of young people who are participating and achieving their potential.

Support vulnerable groups to access post-16 learning opportunities, including, further education and apprenticeships.

Work with the National Apprenticeship Service to create a more diverse range of apprenticeship opportunities.

Priority 7 - Reduce numbers of 16-18 vulnerable young people NEET in line with LA target.

Extend the employability programmes for NEET young people (subject to a successful ESF bid) and specifically vulnerable groups and implement the Wirral Apprenticeship Programme.

Playing for Success



Impact File

Wirral PE & Sport

Name of Project: Playing for Success
School: St. Joseph's Primary School (Birkenhead)
Point of contact: Andy Heywood



Parent: "The idea of teaching subjects in a fun and friendly environment has been a very positive and enjoyable experience for my child."



Playing for Success



Background:

The Playing for Success scheme provides out of school hours study support to Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils in Wirral schools, focusing on raising standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT and uses the medium and environment of football to motivate and encourage underachieving pupils to fulfil their potential academically. At St. Joseph's Primary School, a mixed ability group of 18 Year 6 pupils were invited to attend a 10 week programme with a view to raising their self-esteem as well as raising academic standards.

What we did:

Pupils participated in ten 2-hour sessions held at the Learning Centre at Tranmere Rovers, with transport provided by Centre. They participated in a range of computer-based activities that combined development of literacy and numeracy skills with fun, motivational ICT projects. This included working with Apple Mac

programmes, introducing them to animation, music and video. Pupils accessed online learning resources such as GridClub and Education City to support their learning while individual data enabled Centre staff to work with small groups on particular areas of literacy and numeracy highlighted as areas of concern by the school.

In addition, the group were able to take part in sessions in and around the Prenton Park stadium, such as pitch measuring, a historical treasure trail and Maths in the Club Shop. Pupils took part in a penalty shoot out on the indoor pitch and a player visit to school took place during which time the pupils could participate in a question and answer session with two of the Tranmere first team squad. The players also presented certificates to the pupils at the end of the course.

The difference it made:

Pupils were highly motivated by the experience and Centre staff noted a marked improvement in their confidence. Class teachers commented on how this impacted on their attitude in school and in one case, a marked improvement in attendance was also noted. SAT results a term later indicated that percentages of PfS pupils making progress of at least one level in both Maths and English during Year 6 was higher than the percentage in the year group as a whole (Maths: PfS 79%, Year Group 68%. English: PfS 85%, Year Group 76%)

It worked because:

A small group was targeted which had an impact on each pupil's motivation and self-esteem. Attending sessions at the Learning Centre and in the football ground itself provided a stimulating learning environment and pupils were able to take part in fun activities with learning often taking place in a covert manner.

Wirral PE & Sport

Name of Project: Playing for Success / The Whole Game (LACES)
 School: Various, KS 2 – KS4
 Point of contact: Andy Heywood



“The young people have had a great time doing these sessions. It’s really made a difference to her attitude in school and her teachers are very impressed with her progress this term” (Foster Carer)



Playing for Success



Background:

Following the success of the “Step into Leisure” programme, a partnership between Tranmere Rovers in the Community (TRiC) and Wirral LA, the Playing for Success scheme teamed up with these agencies as part of a Comic Relief bid to set up a series of after-school study support sessions for Looked After Children in Wirral. The funding enabled the project to run one evening a week for 2 hours during term time from January to July 2010 and will continue for a further 2 years.

What we did:

10 week blocks of after-school study support sessions were offered to groups of 16 targeted pupils each term. The aims of these were:-

- to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy through a range of stimulating, personalised ICT-based activities

- To raise the motivation, self-esteem and confidence of pupils through participation in the programme
- To raise awareness of healthy eating through cookery sessions and improve personal fitness levels of young people through participation in sporting games and activities

PfS, TRiC and LA staff delivered the sessions with groups of mixed age (9 – 16) pupils with a range of activities on offer each week including ICT, Maths, English, Cookery and Sports. Pupils received help with homework and had the opportunity to work and read one-to-one with staff and volunteers. PfS staff liaised with schools to find out which areas of support individual pupils required. Each 10 week block was followed by a presentation evening with carers invited to attend.

The difference it made:

100% of Reading Ages improved.
 67% of KS2 and 60% of KS3 pupils' Maths test scores improved
 83% of KS3 pupils' Science test scores improved
 95% of pupils' fitness test scores improved.

Attendance shows that the young people involved are highly motivated and enjoy the learning, sporting and cookery sessions. This has impacted on their confidence and self-esteem and also, therefore, indirectly on their attainment in school.

It worked because:

Targeting small groups raised self-esteem. Attending sessions at the Learning Centre provided a stimulating learning environment and pupils were able to take part in many varied, fun activities linked to health, sport and education. Individual learning opportunities were created with high staff-pupil ratios leading to accelerated learning taking place.

Wirral PE & Sport

Name of Project: Playing for Success Football Journalism
School: Greasby Junior School
Point of contact: Andy Heywood



“Thanks for the high quality input. You have, without doubt, had a very positive impact on the group’s writing skills as well as their motivation and self-confidence.” Headteacher, Adrian Martin.



Background:

Following a successful pilot in 2008, aimed at raising attainment in boys’ writing at KS3, a 5 day KS2 programme was trialed with two Wirral primary schools. This had a measurable impact on pupils’ writing so more schools were invited to take part in the Football Journalism project throughout 09-10, paid for either by NtG funding or by the schools themselves. Greasby Juniors targeted a group of 11 Year 6 children who were identified as needing additional support with writing in order to achieve level 4.

What we did:

Pupils participated in five half day sessions held at the Learning Centre at Tranmere Rovers, with transport provided by Centre. They attended two sessions prior to watching a match, to analyse existing match reports and discuss language features used such as emotive language, similes and metaphors, alliteration, etc.

In addition, the group were able to take part in a tour of the Prenton Park stadium and a penalty shoot out on the indoor pitch. Pupils and accompanying adults were then provided with match day tickets and again transported to and from Prenton Park by Pfs staff. The match visit was followed up with two more Learning Centre sessions, giving the pupils the opportunity to write and redraft their own match reports. Finally, a player visit to school took place during which time the pupils could discuss the match and participate in a question and answer session with two of the Tranmere first team squad. The school followed up the player visit with non-chronological writing, compiling player profiles and a stimulating classroom display was created.

Narrowing the Gap funding was used to make the programme more financially viable for the school.

The difference it made:

Pupils displayed excellent understanding of language devices and used this knowledge to produce very good written work. Of the 11 pupils, 6 made progress of +4APS in writing during the school year (average progress is +3APS), 2 made progress of +6APS (equivalent to 2 year’s progress) and one pupil +10APS (over 3 year’s equivalence). This indicates outstanding progress made by these children. 82% of the pupils achieved level 4+ in writing in the end of year SATs (one Level 5) while reading results were even better.

It worked because:

A small group was targeted which had an impact on each pupil’s motivation and self-esteem. Attending sessions at the Learning Centre and in the football ground itself provided a stimulating learning environment and having a real-life event to write about encouraged the children to produce stimulating factual match reports.

Wirral PE & Sport

Name of Project: Playing for Success Football Journalism

School: St. Alban's Primary School

Point of contact: Andy Heywood



Year 6 Teacher: "The scheme was highly motivating and had a very positive impact on the boys' attainment and also on their attitude to writing. They were kept focussed with a range of interesting activities and were really enthusiastic about the writing task which was 'real life' and had clear purpose."



Playing for Success



Background:

Following a successful pilot in 2008, aimed at raising attainment in boys' writing at KS3, a 5 day KS2 programme was trialed with two Wirral primary schools. This had a measurable impact on pupils' writing so more schools were invited to take part in the Football Journalism project throughout 09-10, paid for either by NtG funding or by the schools themselves. St Alban's Primary School targeted a group of 10 Year 6 boys who were identified as needing additional support with writing in order to achieve either level 4 or 5 and already attended an English booster class in school.

What we did:

Pupils participated in five half day sessions held at the Learning Centre at Tranmere Rovers, with transport provided by Centre. They attended two sessions prior to watching a match, to analyse existing match reports and discuss language features used such as emotive language, similes and metaphors, alliteration, etc.

In addition, the group were able to take part in a tour of the Prenton Park stadium and a penalty shoot out on the indoor pitch. Pupils and accompanying adults were then provided with match day tickets and again transported to and from Prenton Park by PfS staff. The match visit was followed up with two more Learning Centre sessions, giving the pupils the opportunity to write and redraft their own match reports. Finally, a player visit to school took place in the form of an assembly incorporating a question and answer session with two of the Tranmere first team squad. The players then presented the targeted group with certificates and their success was acknowledged in front of the whole of upper Key Stage 2.

Narrowing the Gap funding was used to make the programme more financially viable for the school.

The difference it made:

Pupils were highly motivated and stimulated by the experience as a whole. They worked with confidence displayed excellent understanding of language devices, producing very good written work indeed.

NC progress from beginning of Year 6 to end of year SAT results shows that:-

- 2 pupils moved from 3c to 4
- 4 pupils moved from 3b to 4
- 1 pupil moved from 4c to 5
- 2 pupils moved from 4b to 5
- 2 pupils moved from 4a to 5
- 1 pupil moved from 4c to 4

It worked because:

A small group was targeted which had an impact on each pupil's motivation and self-esteem. Attending sessions at the Learning Centre and in the football ground itself provided a stimulating learning environment and having a real-life event to write about encouraged the children to produce stimulating factual match reports.

Wirral PE & Sport

Name of Project: Respect Anti-Social Behaviour Programme
School: Various, KS 2
Point of contact: Andy Heywood



92% of pupils have said that information they have been given during this programme has made them think about their behaviours in school.



Playing for Success



Background:

The Respect programme was established in 2006 by Wirral's Multi-Agency Anti-Social Behaviour Team. It is a modular interactive package providing education and awareness to children about ASB and its consequences. The aim of the 6-week programme is to raise awareness of the implications of being involved in criminal and anti-social behaviour, ensure children and young people understand the consequences of their actions, and that children understand how their actions impact on the community.

What we did:

Since 2008, the Learning Centre at Tranmere Rovers has been the venue for schools' events as part of the ASB six-week education programme. Each school attended a half day event at the Learning Centre with a whole year group participating in workshops including:-

- Show racism the Red Card, anti-racism delivered by TRFC
- Use of CCTV in stadium for detection and safety delivered by TRFC
- British Transport Police
- Merseyrail – rail safety
- Arriva – anti-social behaviour on buses
- Council Dog wardens. Police dog handling team
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

Groups were able to get hands-on experience in a range of activities to enhance the sessions already delivered in school by the Anti-Social behaviour Team. In addition, they were able to participate in a penalty shoot out on the indoor pitch during the morning break as well as seeing the stadium at close quarters.

Where possible, player visits were arranged in schools as a follow up, either as part of a question and answer session or to present certificates.

The difference it made:

430 pupils benefited from the programme during 2009/10 92% said that information they have been given during the programme has made them think about their behaviours in school. 316 pupils said that they really enjoyed the TRFC part of the programme. 258 pupils said that they would change none of the programme. All pupils complete a questionnaire at beginning of the programme and end of programme. Average scores for each class changed from 51% to 72%

It worked because:

Attending sessions at the Learning Centre and the football ground provided a stimulating learning environment and pupils were able to take part in many varied, fun activities linked to ASB. This, combined with high-quality classroom sessions delivered in school by Wirral's ASB Team, led to an excellent all round learning experience.

Wirral PE & Sport

Name of Project: De Vere Academy

Users: 16 – 24 year olds

Point of contact: Liz Dicastiglione, TRFC



“The chef course is great – the facilities for cooking are really good and the classroom sessions are also really well delivered.” (18 year old participant)



Playing for Success



Background:

The De Vere Hotel Group launched their first hospitality academy in 2010 which offers 12 and 16 week apprenticeships in Customer Service and Professional cookery, for 16 – 24 year olds. Due to the success of the first one they have opened up more academies across the country.

They were going to open in Liverpool to service all of Merseyside but we encouraged them to set up a separate academy to service the Wirral young people at Tranmere Rovers.

What we did:

We established that we were able to facilitate 4 cohorts per year with 4 groups x 12 participants in each cohort. We were able to provide training facilities in the Study Support Centre, the recreation centre and any additional rooms around the stadium.

There was a need for training kitchens for 12 students at a time. We sourced part funding for a 'drop-kitchen' to be put in our compound, which is used by De Vere 3 days a week and Tranmere have the facilities for the other 4 days.

The difference it made:

The first cohort started March 2011 and has just completed end April 2011. Again, the emphasis on training at the football stadium has made a big impact on the participants.

Out of 46 apprentices on the first cohort they expect 36 to complete giving a 75% completion rate. And out of the 36 completing 40% have already secured full-time employment.

It worked because:

Tranmere Rovers have embraced the De Vere apprentices and have included them as part of the team and not just facilitating the services. Studying within the professional environment of a football club/stadium gives something for them all to aspire to. The second cohort started w/c 9 May 2011 and it is very positive that the success rates will improve.

Wirral PE & Sport

Name of Project: Active Rovers Over 40s Health Programme

Users: Men Over 40

Point of contact: Steve Williams, Tranmere Rovers in the Community



Quote from a participant.....



Playing for Success



Background:

The Active Rovers programme has been funded by the Football Foundation and the NHS in order to address health inequalities of men over 40 on the Wirral peninsula. The main means of engaging participants is through sporting activity and also other programmes linked to mental health and well-being.

What we did:

Tranmere Rovers in the Community set up a range of weekly sports and health classes including football, circuit training, yoga and tai chi. In addition, a mixed "Computers and Healthy Living" class was established aimed at developing basic skills in IT using health-related themes.

A mixed group of over 55 year olds already existed from a previous programme funded by Awards for All so this formed the basis of the weekly group. In addition, men over 40 participating in sporting activities were signposted towards the sessions in order to increase numbers.

Skills taught on the course include Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Publisher, developed through writing letters and healthy recipes, making cards and sporting calendars and creating exercise timetables. Participants were also taught how to use internet and email, carrying out research tasks into health and leisure facilities in Wirral.

The group also took part in health walks, initially around the stadium, then further afield, taking photographs and inserting these into their work afterwards.

The difference it made:

All members of the computer group felt their confidence and ability with IT improved enormously, while many commented on how useful it had been to use computers to improve their own knowledge of health issues.

The Active Rovers programme as a whole is engaging large numbers of men over 40 in regular sport with a detailed evaluation due in the Autumn.

It worked because:

The programme has attracted men because it is hosted by the Football Club and sessions are at suitable times for those in work or not.

The IT programme has worked because each participant is given one-to-one support as often as possible and is able to follow their own flexible programme to suit their needs and interests rather than being too prescriptive. The impact on health issues has succeeded through covert teaching of these themes whilst developing IT skills.

Wirral PE & Sport

Name of Project: Rovers Return to Work Programme

Users: 18 – 24 year olds (NEET)

Point of contact: Liz Dicastiglione, TRFC



“The course really helped with my confidence and helped me to develop new skills. I was able to apply for jobs and go to interviews well-prepared afterwards and ended up with a good job. That would not have happened without the course.” (Luke Morgan, participant)



Playing for Success



Background:

The Return to Work 10 week programme was set up in March 2010 by Tranmere Rovers and funded by Jobcentreplus and came from the idea that four of the Premiership clubs were currently running.

The purpose of the course was to provide a motivational training course for 18-24 year old unemployed people on Wirral, designed to give them confidence, motivation and skills they needed to seek and progress into full-time employment.

What we did:

We looked at the 10 week course that was being used at the other clubs and the amount of funding that was being provided and devised a new programme that would use all the skills of the staff/coaches in the club, the college tutors and key personnel at the Jobcentreplus.

The programme uses sport as a lever to engage participants on the 10 week course, which helps them apply soft skills that are directly transferable to the working environment – such as teamwork, communication and motivation. It also helps them to develop job search techniques, CV preparation and interview skills, as well as their overall health and fitness. As part of the course we also engage local employers to take the participants on a two week work trial/placement. The course also involves a day visit to the Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre to help develop team work and to raise self esteem in a challenging environment.

From March 2010 – June 2011, there have been 6 courses. Course six is currently still running – 18.05 2011.

The difference it made:

All participants have seen a difference in their confidence and motivation. They all have a CV that can be given to any employer. Most have commented that their family and friends have said that they have seen a remarked difference in their attitudes. All have said that their sleep patterns have changed and they felt that they had a purpose to getting up in the mornings.

We have had an average of 90% attendance on all courses and 86% success rate in participants going into full-time employment and sustaining the work.

It worked because:

It worked because the participants, were being coached by employers, in the main, and were treated as part of the club. They never felt they were at school/college studying and enjoyed coming to the ground and interacting with players and coaching staff, even participants that were not that keen on football. Also, we worked closely with Jobcentreplus which was crucial as they were the link with the employers and organised all the work placements.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23RD JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	TRANSFER OF THE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT UNIT AND TENDER EXERCISE FOR THE PROVISION OF ADULT TRANSPORT SERVICES
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANN MCLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the transfer of the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) from the Department of Adult Social Services (DASS) to Children and Young People's Department (CYPD) and the Transfer of Technical Services (TS) Transport Team to CYPD to form an Integrated Transport Unit.
- 1.2 It also informs Cabinet Members of the results of the tendering exercise for private provider transport for vulnerable adults and requests the approval of the award of the individual contracts to the recommended tenderers. These contracts will follow the temporary contracts awarded in March 2011 operating from April to July 2011 and ensure continuation of service. The new contracts are proposed to operate from 1 August 2011 to July 2012 with a one year optional extension. The contract has been scrutinised and all detail including the proposed awarding of contracts agreed by the Corporate Procurement Unit.
- 1.3 Commercially sensitive information related to this report is set out in Appendix 1 as an exempt item on the agenda (Category 3a).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That members note the transfer of DASS and TS Transport functions to CYPD creating an Integrated Transport Unit.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approves the transfer of gross budgets of £2.8m from Technical Services and £5.7m from DASS to CYPD.
- 2.3 That members approve the recommended tenders set out in Appendix 1 to come into effect on the 1 August 2011.

- 2.4 That the additional re-provision cost of £340,000 set out in section 10 is funded from balances in the current year and provision is made for growth in future years.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 Identification of transfer of budgets between departments as per the Council Constitution.
- 3.2 The award of contracts to allow the continuation of the transport of vulnerable adults.
- 3.3 There is insufficient provision to meet these costs from within the revenue budget.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 In 2009 the Council undertook a review of transport function and recommended that an ITU was established from 1 April 2010. The Strategic Change Project recommended that the transport functions of CYPD and DASS were merged to create an ITU, managed by DASS. The decision was taken to include TS transport functions in the unit at a later date, taking account of the anticipated reduced transport function arising from the Colas contract and the proposed PACSPE.

It was anticipated at that time that savings of £600,000 in 2010/11 would be made through re-scheduling routes, new joined up contracts, procurement savings and reduced fleet costs (more children would be transported on fewer vehicles). Further savings were also expected in future years, resulting in an overall reduction in transport costs of 25%.

- 4.2 In summer 2010 a major retendering exercise was carried out for the provision of SEN home to school transport. The tenders specified a number of route and journey changes that would potentially reduce costs. The contracts were for 3 years. Whilst this has had some limited success, these savings have been offset by other increases. Some routes were handed back by providers who were unwilling or unable to provide the range of services at the specified rates. In addition complaints from schools about journey times and behavioural problems meant that some routes had to be re-scheduled.
- 4.3 Further consideration of transport has resulted in service provision transferring to CYPD (the major user of the service). On the 1st of April 2011 the existing ITU was transferred from DASS to CYPD along with the transport function in TS establishing a new ITU residing in CYPD with a gross budget of £8.5m.

In the year ended 31.3.2011 transport costs exceeded the budget provision by £1.3m. The current indications are that in 2011-12 the shortfall will increase to £1.5m. This is broken down as follows:

	£
Under-provision of transport costs, SEN, LAC and Adults	630,000
Unachieved savings target 2010-11	600,000
Savings target 2011-12	130,000

Re-provision costs – transport for vulnerable adults	340,000
Extended Rights to Free travel Grant (Cabinet 2.6.11)	<u>200,000cr</u>
Total	1,500,000

4.4 In January 2011 as a result of EVR / severance the Councils transport fleet workforce was reduced by 20 from 42 drivers and attendants to 22. This secured a staff saving of £507,000. Due to the timescales involved in allowing staff to leave the Council temporary contracts were tendered and awarded for three months January to March 2011 to provide a continuing service for the transport of vulnerable adults. These contracts were subsequently extended and will end in July 2011. The long-term re-provision costs were uncertain in January; some costs would be absorbed in existing rotas. Therefore consideration was deferred until the actual costs in the current tendering round were known. The re-provision costs are:

	£
New contracts	563,000
Less previous fleet operating costs	<u>223,000cr</u>
	340,000

This will change the indicative budget position as follows:

	£
Shortfall	1,500,000
Less re-provision	<u>340,000</u>
	1,160,000

4.5 The budget position outlined requires focused and considered attention. A full review and analysis is underway and will be the subject of future reports. Key areas under consideration are:

- Review of current Wirral transport policies in relation to statutory duties and other local authority policies.
- Transport route evaluation and review of computerised mapping tools.
- Discussion with other local authorities where transport savings have been effectively made.
- Review of the in-house fleet and vehicle replacements.

The outcome of the transport strategic change project highlights the complexity of this service area. In addition passenger transport of vulnerable people in Wirral is a vital service. Any proposed changes will require careful consideration, full consultation and approval.

5.0 DETERMINATION OF CONTRACTS

5.1 The new contracts for the transport of vulnerable adults are planned to be in operation from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012 with an optional one year extension. There are twelve contracts determined by geographical location of destinations.

5.2 The award of the contracts will not commit the Council to a particular level of purchase. It will allow for changes in demand for the service that may arise as a result of policy changes, personalisation and self directed support. The conditions of the contract will enable new routes to be covered as and when

they are needed. It will also provide options on both sides to terminate the contract by giving one month's notice should any contracts prove problematical or unsustainable.

- 5.3 The contracts will be monitored and contract penalties will be issued against contractors who fail to perform the contract in accordance with the conditions of the contract. If a contractor accrues one hundred points against an individual contract over the period of a contractual year then that contract will be terminated.
- 5.4 The procurement exercise was carried out through the Council's procurement system. Thirteen pre-qualifying questionnaires (PQQ) were completed and nine organisations notified to submit tenders. Three completed tender documents were evaluated.
- 5.5. Analysis of tender submissions were weighted in accordance with agreed criteria with regards to price (80%) and quality (20%) which incorporated service delivery standards, service user understanding, service transition and value added.
- 5.6 A summary of the tender results together with recommendations for the award of contracts are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 5.7 The award of the contracts will be subject to the European Court of Justice 'Alcatel' ruling, which allows tenders the provision to challenge the award of contract. In effect, once Cabinet award the contracts there will be a 10 day 'standstill' period.

6.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 6.1 The PQQ and tendering process have been utilised to reduce risks associated with delivery of the contracts.

7.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 None.

8.0 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 None.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 9.1 There are no implications arising from this report.

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

- 10.1 The transfer of Council Transport functions require budgets of £2.8m from Technical Services and £5.7m from DASS to be transferred to CYPD.
- 10.2 The new transport contracts will cost £563,113 pa. The reduction in fleet operating costs is estimated to be £223,000. There is a net additional revenue

cost of £340,000 which is not provided within the revenue budget and will need to be met from balances, with a provision for growth in future years.

Comparing this contract (£563,113 pa) with the current temporary arrangement (£554,753 pa) there is an increase in cost of £8,360. This increase is related to a current provider not submitting a tender for one route which is priced substantially higher by those tendering.

10.3 The overall position regarding transport will be the subject of further reports.

11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The council is entering into a contract for purchase of transport.

12.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The services covered by these contracts are provided to vulnerable people in the borough.

12.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| (a) Is an EIA required? | Yes |
| (b) If 'yes', has one been completed? | Yes (May 2011) |

13.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The Council's commitment to Carbon reduction is emphasised in the tender specification and the environmental policies of organisations submitting tenders are requested during the process.

14.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are no implications arising from this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Nancy Clarkson**
Head of Planning and Performance
telephone: (0151 6664329)
email: nancyclarkson@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Tender results summary and recommendations.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

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

Cabinet	16 March 2011
Cabinet	4 February 2011
Cabinet	22 July 2010

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23RD JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	EXTENSION OF VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR JEAN STAPLETON
KEY DECISION:	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request the approval of Cabinet to extend a number of existing voluntary sector grant arrangements (set out in table 1 below) for the rest of the current financial year. These contracts are currently extended to the end of June 2011 as agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on December 9 2010 (minute 248 refers).

1.2

Service procured	Organisation	Cost for 2011/12
The provision of an infrastructure support service to promote and develop the effectiveness of voluntary and community action in Wirral	Voluntary and Community Action Wirral (VCAW)	£103,000
The provision of a Community Legal Advice service including casework where appropriate	Wirral Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)	£260,000
The provision of shopmobility services for the Birkenhead and Liscard shopping areas	Wirral Information Resource for Equality and Diversity (WIRED)	£20,000

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves the extension of the grant arrangements for these services from July 1st 2011 to 31st March 2012 to ensure continuity of service whilst a wider review of commissioning and grant arrangements with the voluntary, community and faith (VCF) sector is undertaken.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The grant arrangements set out above relate to the core costs of the organisations that provide these services. Any proposed changes to this funding would require a sufficient notice period to enable the organisations to appropriately plan for any impact on service delivery.
- 3.2 The Council is in the process of undertaking a wider review of contracting and commissioning services with the VCF sector. This review will support the development of a VCF commissioning strategy that will lead to consistency and good practice in terms of commissioning across Council departments. The commissioning strategy will be based on a social investment model with an emphasis on outcomes and the impact these commissioned services have on the lives of service-users. A separate report in relation to outcome funding was tabled at the Cabinet meeting on 2nd June (minute 9 refers).

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Each of the grant arrangements has a relevant funding agreement and service specification. This document sets out the nature of the service procured, key service objectives, payment and monitoring arrangements. Funding agreements are reviewed and updated annually as required.
- 4.2 The grant to Voluntary and Community Action Wirral (VCAW) relates to a contribution to the organisation's core revenue costs. This funding enables VCAW to provide a range of information and support services to voluntary and community groups across the borough.
- 4.2 The Grant to Wirral Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) relates to a contribution to the organisation's core revenue costs. This funding enables Wirral CAB to provide a community legal service which includes information, advice and representation to eligible residents throughout the borough.
- 4.3 The Grant to Wirral Information Resource for Equality and Diversity (WIRED) relates to a contribution to the organisation's core revenue costs. This funding enables WIRED to provide a shopmobility service for the Birkenhead and Liscard areas including the loan of equipment and assistance to enable people with mobility impairments to shop for themselves.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 Any changes to these funding arrangements would require a sufficient lead-in time to enable the organisations to appropriately plan for any impact on service delivery.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Consideration was given to re-tendering these services, but this was rejected due to a lack of sufficient time to complete a tendering exercise and the context of the wider review of commissioning being undertaken during the current financial year.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Voluntary, community and faith sector organisations make an important contribution to the provision of local services, both in terms of quality and value for money.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 These grants relate to the core funding of key organisations providing a number of valued services. The extension of funding arrangements for the rest of this financial year will provide continuity of service individuals and groups that benefit from these services.

8.2 The grant that supports VCAW's core costs is in direct support of developing the borough's voluntary, community and faith sector.

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

9.1 The funds in relation to these grants have been allocated in the Council's Corporate Services budget.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no legal implications in relation to this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The funding agreements in relation to these grants require organisations to adhere to the Council's commitment to equal opportunities.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no carbon reduction implications in relation to this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no planning and community safety implications in relation to this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Mike Callon**
Project Coordinator
telephone: (0151) 691 8063
email: michaelcallon@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
No previous reports	

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23RD JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	Neighbourhood Plans and Area Forum Funding
WARD/S AFFECTED:	All
REPORT OF:	Chief Executive
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr Jean Stapleton, Community and Customer Engagement
KEY DECISION:	No

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed approach for the development of a 'Neighbourhood Plan' for each forum area. It details a proposed consultation programme to involve local residents in the development of these plans.
- 1.2 This report also sets out an approach for distributing forum funding in consultation with the Council's area forums together with proposals for developing the Council's approach to participatory budgeting.
- 1.3 The report finally outlines proposals for the branding and positioning of the area forums, funding and 'Neighbourhood Plans'.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to endorse the approach to developing a 'Neighbourhood Plan' for each of Wirral's area forums and the proposed consultation programme.
- 2.2 Cabinet notes the funding streams that will be subject to consultation through the forums, and is requested to approve the broad principles set out in this report for the use of participatory budgeting to distribute funding at the October 2011 area forum meetings.
- 2.3 Cabinet is requested to approve the essential criteria for allocating funds through the area forums together with the specific aims of the funding streams set out in appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.4 Cabinet is requested to approve the proposed branding and positioning of Wirral's area forums.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 The recommendations are to support and enhance Wirral's 11 area forums and to influence the investment of Council resources through the development of 'Neighbourhood Plans'. The recommendations will also increase the transparency and simplify the distribution of funding through the area forums.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

4.1 Wirral's 11 area forum meetings were established in 2001 and are an important mechanism that the Council uses to engage with local residents. In order to continue and support the important role that area forums play, each area forum will be assisted to develop a 'Neighbourhood Plan' through community consultation. Key principles of these plans will be to:

- Accurately reflect the real challenges for the area based on engagement and consultation with local communities
- Set out a vision for a community and identify local priorities within the area
- Robustly influence the way the Council invests resources and delivers services in a local area
- Determine the future distribution of forum funding

4.2 Neighbourhood profiles will be developed for each forum area in discussion with ward councillors and will include overall demographic information, places of interest, information about Council services and an outline of key challenges within the area. The information used within the reports will be drawn from a range of sources including the Council's local development framework and Corporate Plan. Other intelligence available to the Council including Wirral's Child Poverty needs assessment will be included where appropriate.

4.3 Community consultation will be at the core of developing the neighbourhood plans and the June 2011 area forums will be used to inform and engage local residents in the development of the plans. The June area forums will receive a presentation to both inform and involve local residents in the development of 'Neighbourhood Plans', and to ask attendees to identify opportunities for the Council to consult with local residents during the consultation period. Departments will also be asked to identify community events and consultation activities that can be utilised to develop the neighbourhood plans.

4.4 An allocation of £5,000 per area forum has been provided to assist with the development of the 'Neighbourhood Plans' through community consultation. This funding will enable a wide scale programme of consultation and engagement to take place in each forum area between July and September 2011 led by the Council's Community Engagement Team. One Stop Shops, libraries and leisure centres will also be designated places where local residents can provide their views. Consultation plans are currently being drawn up and will be discussed with ward councillors to ensure that the consultation is as inclusive as possible.

4.5 The results of the consultation will be reported to the October 2011 forums and meetings with departments will take place to develop action plans in response to these findings. 'Neighbourhood Plans' will be in place by December 2011.

Activity	Timescale
Launch of 'Neighbourhood Plan' consultation at June area forums	June 2011
Programme of community consultation events	July to September 2011
Findings to be collated	September 2011
Findings reported to area forums and local action plans developed in response to the findings	October / November 2011
Neighbourhood plans in place	December 2011

4.6 It is proposed that 'Neighbourhood Plans' will inform the future agenda setting for the area forums under the four theme areas; Your Council, Your Neighbourhood, Your Economy and Your Family. Agenda items will be included under those titles to allow the agendas to be much more locally focused than at present. Agendas will take into account what is happening in the local area, upcoming events and other items of interest to the forums. The Community Engagement Team will work with the ward councillors and also use intelligence from Council officers to develop these agendas.

5.0 AREA FORUM FUNDING

5.1 Since 2003, the forums have distributed over **£1,470,707** funds to local community and voluntary groups through initiatives such as Funds for You and Big Lunch. The forums have also allocated **£660,000** through consultation with local residents to deliver additional council services through the Council's You Decide initiative.

5.2 The following funding streams will be advertised through Wirral's 11 area forums:

Lead Department	Funding Stream	Description
Corporate Services	Funds for You	Small grants programme for projects and activities led by voluntary and community groups
Corporate Services	You Decide	Funding available for additional Council services or service improvements.
Corporate Services	Empty Shops	Funding to provide financial help to re-open or re-use empty shops. (As part of the Government's national Empty Shops initiative, a further £17,500 is also available for empty shops within three specific centres: Bromborough, New Ferry and King Street / Brighton Street This funding will also be allocated through the relevant Area Forums
Corporate Services on behalf of NHS Wirral	Public Health	Funding available for voluntary and community groups to improve the health and wellbeing of Wirral residents
Technical	Winter	Funding available for extra grit bins. This funding has

Lead Department	Funding Stream	Description
Services	Resilience	been fully allocated for 2011/12 through consultation at the February 2011 area forums.
Technical Services	Promoting Active Travel and Health, Improving Road Safety	Funding available to promote active travel and health, and improving road safety
Law, HR and Asset Management	Community Energy Efficiency Fund	Funding to support the long term sustainability of community groups running community buildings by investing in energy-efficient technologies to reduce energy costs, climate change levy payments and the impact of climate change

5.3 In addition to the above amounts, there is a £500,000 allocation to make Wirral's 27 local and district shopping centres more attractive places to visit, shop and do business through a focussed programme of street cleansing including deep clean, gum removal, repairs and environmental enhancements. Consultation is underway with local traders in the forum areas.

5.4 The funding identified within this report has been allocated for two purposes; 1) to fund projects and activities which will have a positive impact within Wirral's communities, and 2) to deliver additional Council services or service improvements that residents would like to see happen in their local forum area.

6.0 FUNDING AVAILABLE TO DELIVER COMMUNITY PROJECTS / ACTIVITIES

6.1 It is proposed that the following 2011/12 funding will be available for allocation using participative budgeting events at the October 2011 area forums:

Funds for You:	£15,500 per forum
Public Health:	£4,577 per forum
<u>Empty Shops:</u>	<u>£17,500 per forum *</u>
Total:	£37,577 per forum

* Cabinet on 13th January 2011 (minute 279) agreed that funding from the Government's National Empty Shops initiative should be allocated to three specific centres through the relevant area forums as follows:

- Liscard and Seacombe Area Forum: King Street / Brighton Street £17,500
- Bromborough and Eastham Area Forum: New Ferry £17,500, Bromborough £17,500

6.2 It is proposed that the process will be taken forward as follows:

- The funding is allocated at an annual budget setting event hosted by each area forum in October 2011;
- Funding will be advertised at the June area forums with applications invited from July to September 2011 using a simple and transparent application process against a set list of criteria included at appendix 1 of this report;

- The applications will be reviewed by an officer panel which will include representation from the lead department to ensure the essential criteria and required aims set out in appendix 1 of this report are met. Applicants will be informed if they do not meet the criteria and aims of the funding streams and there will be no right of appeal;
- Successful applicants will then be invited to attend and present their proposed project at the October area forum meetings, with local residents attending the meeting given the opportunity to vote for the projects which they would like to see funded;
- The recommendations of the area forum meetings will be reported to Cabinet in November 2011 for approval.

6.3 The Community Energy Efficiency fund will also be advertised at the June area forums with applications from voluntary and community groups invited from June to September 2011 in line with the other funding streams available through the area forums. Applications for this fund will be subject solely to a review by an officer panel against the criteria set out within appendix 1 of this report. Applicants will be informed if they do not meet the criteria and aims of the funding streams and there will be no right of appeal. Recommendations will be reported to Cabinet in November 2011.

6.4 Funding available through the area forums will be widely advertised with publicity for funding events in place to enable maximum attendance. The advertisement and publicity of all forum funding will be led by the Council's Community Planning, Engagement and Communications Team who will also lead on the administration of all forum meetings. Terms of reference for the funding events and protocols for voting will also be drawn up.

6.5 A consistent approach will be developed for the performance and financial monitoring of any funding awarded through the area forums. Standard documentation will also be created including funding offer letters and progress reports.

7.0 FORUM FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR COUNCIL SERVICES OR SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

7.1 The 'Neighbourhood Plan' will help identify the local issues and proposed actions that residents want to see addressed in their local areas. The plans will also help inform the allocation of the following funding during 2011/12 for additional Council services and service improvements: In addition to the £37,577 per forum outlined in section 6.1 of this report, the following funding will be consulted upon through the area forums for local residents to decide how the money is spent on additional Council services or service improvements:

You Decide:	£20,000 per forum
Promoting Active Travel & Health,	£10,000 per forum
<u>Improving Road Safety:</u>	<u>£10,000 per forum</u>
Total:	£40,000 per forum

8.0 ADVERTISEMENT OF AREA FORUMS, NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS AND FUNDING

- 8.1 The Area Forums are one of the Council's key mechanisms for a resident to make their voice heard, make a complaint, speak to their local Councillor, get involved in how the Council delivers and designs services and, most importantly, to play a real role in the future of their local community. Forums are also a venue for residents to either play a part in deciding which community projects are funded, and also on certain occasions to bid for funding themselves.
- 8.2 It is proposed that following the June 2011 meetings the forums be advertised as 'Neighbourhood Committees' to tie in with the forums two key engagement priorities for the coming year: neighbourhood plans and funding opportunities. The 'Neighbourhood Plan' project is currently being progressed as outlined in section 2 of this report and will be launched at the June forums alongside the various funding streams outlined in section 5 of this report. All marketing and promotional activity currently undertaken for each individual funding stream will be combined into one major campaign for all funding opportunities and advertised as 'Neighbourhood Funding'.

9.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 9.1 Project and risk planning is in place in relation to the approach set out in this report and will be regularly reviewed to ensure that key risks are addressed through mitigating action.

10.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 10.1 Not applicable

11.0 CONSULTATION

- 11.1 The approach set out in this report has been developed to initiate the widest possible consultation and engagement with local communities. Consultation plans will be drawn up for each forum area and will include consultation events and a targeted programme for engagement with Wirral's Communities.
- 11.2 Appropriate measures will be taken to avoid duplication and maximise consultation responses through aligning engagement with local residents to other consultation activity including Wirral's Child Poverty Strategy.

12.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 12.1 Funding will be available to voluntary, community and faith groups to submit applications through their local area forums.

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

- 13.1 There is a £5,000 policy option allocation per forum area to develop the neighbourhood plans. Existing staffing resources will be used during the consultation and development of the local plans.

14.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

15.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

15.1 Funding identified within this report will be advertised widely to enable all groups across Wirral to apply for funding. The 'Neighbourhood Plans' will be developed in consultation with all of Wirral's diverse communities. The plans will have an equalities assessment informed by the consultation programme referred to in this report. The consultation will include targeted actions to engage minority communities and target groups.

16.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

16.1 The distribution of the Energy Efficiency fund to Wirral's community groups will have a positive impact to address the impact on climate change in Wirral.

17.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

17.1 The report outlines proposals to enable communities to develop a vision for their community through the development of a 'Neighbourhood Plan'. An important influence on this work will be the take-up of Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders introduced by the coalition Government in autumn 2010 and to be brought into law through the Localism Bill, currently in Parliament. Neighbourhood Development Plans in this context is to give Parish Councils and constituted Neighbourhood organisations (such as Residents' or Business Associations) the right to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order for their area, which goes beyond the provisions made in the Council's Local Development Framework. It will therefore consider town planning controls over development in the local area and may also propose sites on which new development will come forward. The Plan or Order will have to comply with national planning policy and be consistent with strategic policies of the Local Development Framework.

17.2 The 'Neighbourhood Committees' are also an ideal opportunity for Neighbourhood Planning Frontrunners to communicate and engage with local residents about planning development, and where appropriate provide further support to groups considering submitting proposals. In Wirral Devonshire Park Residents' Association (Prenton Ward) and Hoylake Village Life (Hoylake and Meols) have been accepted by Government and funding of £20,000 per proposal has been granted to the Council to support the Front Runners and fund the referendum for each proposal.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Emma Degg**
Interim Head of Corporate Planning, Engagement and
Communications
telephone: (0151) 691 8688
email: emmadegg@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Funding criteria and aims

Appendix 1

Essential criteria for funding applications

- Be from an organisation that has a bank account in the name of the group applying for the Fund;
- The activity must be accessible to the general public and not restricted to closed groups or membership organisations;
- The activity must meet one or more of the aims of the Fund being applied for;
- The activity must comply with any relevant legislation and with Council policies and Corporate Plan priorities

Funding cannot be used for the following purposes:

- Religious or party political activities (faith groups are eligible if the activities are available for the general community use and not restricted by affiliation to the faith group/organisation)
- Core staff salaries or core administration costs
- Activities or services that schools have a statutory duty to provide (schools and groups operating from within schools are eligible to apply for funding for additional activities to the statutory provision)

Specific aims by funding streams

Funds for You

Funds for You is available to voluntary, community or faith sector groups and 'not for profit' organisations.

The aim of Funds for You is to:

- Fund projects and activities that will have a positive impact in Wirral's communities

Public Health

Public Health funding is available to voluntary, community or faith sector groups and 'not for profit' organisations.

The aims of the Public Health fund are to deliver one or more of the following outcomes:

- To raise awareness of mental health/mental wellbeing
- To increase physical activity opportunities for adults in the local community
- To increase physical activity opportunities for under five year olds in the local community
- To Increase access to healthy food choices
- To increase healthy cookery training opportunities
- To increase opportunities for young people to access activities that reduce harm and risk taking behaviour related to alcohol misuse

- To increase opportunities for activities to improve mental wellbeing for adults in the local community
- To develop opportunities for self help in the local communities in relation to the above issues

Empty Shops

The Empty Shops fund is available to businesses, voluntary, community or faith sector groups and 'not for profit' organisations. Applications must be State Aid compliant and reflect Wirral Council's local competitiveness protocols.

The Empty Shops fund seeks to deliver activities that contribute to one or more of the following aims:

- Lead to the re-use of empty shops as a result of the grant;
- Increase the vitality of a local shopping centre;
- Encourage more people to visit a local shopping centre;
- Lead to the provision of local employment opportunities.

Energy Efficiency

The Energy Efficiency Fund is available to community groups.

The aim of the Energy Efficiency fund is to:

- Support the long term sustainability of community groups running community buildings by investing in energy-efficient technologies to reduce energy costs, climate change levy payments and the impact of climate change.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REPORTS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR BRIAN KENNY
KEY DECISION	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to publish the information on Wirral Council's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions in the format requested by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) as part of the Single List of Central Government requirements from Local Government (2011/12), for data reference 067-00 "Emissions from Local Authority own estate and operations".
- 1.2 This report does not contain exempt information.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Cabinet are requested to note this report and to:
- (i) approve the publication of the attached Greenhouse Gas reports (please refer to Appendix A and B) online as requested by DECC.
 - (ii) approve the publication of future Greenhouse Gas reports online as requested by DECC.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To allow the Council to comply with DECC's request for publication of GHG data for the periods 2009/10 and 2010/11 on the Council's website no later than the 29 July 2011, and to comply with DECC's request in future years.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 NI 185, "Percentage CO₂ reduction from LA operations" was first reported in mid August 2009. The NI reported emissions of CO₂ on a DECC pre-formatted spreadsheet. Calculations were based on energy and fuel use in buildings and transport. The first year, 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 was set as a baseline. At the request of DECC, years two and three were not reported but the information was to be collected and stored until further notice.

- 4.2 As part of the Single List of Central Government requirements from Local Government (2011/12), DECC have now replaced NI 185 with a requirement to report GHG Emissions (data reference 067-00) "Emissions from Local Authority own estate and operations". The information will be published in the format requested by DECC, based on the guidance document "Guidance on how to measure and report your greenhouse gas emissions"
- 4.3 Although the annual GHG Emissions report is described as the successor to National Indicator (NI) 185 "Percentage CO₂ reduction from LA operations", it does not report precisely the same measure. NI 185 reported emissions in terms of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) alone, as does the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRCEES) and the Council's Carbon Budget. The new DECC requirement covers all Greenhouse Gases and reports in Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e).
- 4.4 DECC will no longer be asking for data to be 'submitted' to central Government. Instead each Local Authority is being asked to publish a Greenhouse Gas report locally online. Each Local Authority must then notify DECC of the data's location on the Council's website by email.
- 4.5 To ensure that all of the information is readily available, DECC is planning to collate the total figures for each Local Authority's emissions in tonnes of CO₂e together with a short description of what the Local Authority has included and excluded in their report plus a Council email address which will allow visitors to the DECC website to contact a Council if they choose to enquire further about the figures.
- 4.6 DECC has requested that the outstanding former NI 185 data for 2009/10 and 2010/11 be published in the new format at the same time after the 2010/11 Financial Year concludes, and that this should take place no later than the 29 July 2011 (please refer to Appendix A and B - Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report 2009/10 and 2010/11 respectively). DECC's request is also covered by the first milestone in the Annex of the Memorandum of Understanding between DECC and the Local Government Group signed on 9 March 2011.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 A risk associated with the production of Greenhouse Gas Emissions reported in CO₂e is that they are confused with the Carbon Budget and CRCEES figures that are measured as CO₂. The two indicators are superficially similar, but do not report the same measure.
- 5.2 As stated by DECC, when the data from the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reports is collated and published, entries from different Local Authorities will not be directly comparable. There is a risk that comparing results from different Local Authorities could lead to erroneous conclusions.
- 5.3 Although DECC have stated that producing a GHG Emission report is not a statutory requirement, it does form part of the DCLG single list data and so is expected to be reported. If the Greenhouse Gas Emissions figures are not made available and subsequently excluded from DECC's collated report, there is a risk associated with loss of reputation.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 No other options have been considered due to the specific nature of DECC's request.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 No consultation was required.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 The publication of annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reports has no direct implications for voluntary, community and faith groups.

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

9.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report. Data will be collated and reported using existing resources.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Annual reporting of Greenhouse Gas Emissions does not have direct implications for carbon reduction. However, reporting of environmental performance indicators is normally associated with best practice and ensures that the Council is seen to actively pursue its environmental goals and corporate objectives.

12.2 Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions reporting also has relevance to Environmental Management (ISO14001) accreditation. Copies of the reports may be presented as evidence for the annual independent assessment.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no planning or community safety implications arising from this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Andrew Snow, Energy Conservation Engineer.
Tony Dodd, Energy Manager.

Telephone: 0151 606 2348

Email: andrewsnow@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report 2009/10

Appendix B: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report 2010/11

REFERENCE MATERIAL

“Guidance on how to measure and report on your greenhouse gas emissions”
(DECC/DEFRA September 2009)

“2010 Guidelines to Defra / DECC's GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting”, DECC/DEFRA Microsoft Excel spreadsheet version 1.2.1 FINAL
(updated 06/10/2010) downloaded 31/03/2011

Memorandum of Understanding between the LG Group and the Department of Energy and Climate Change, 9 March 2011.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
This is the first report to Cabinet which initially informs Members.	23 June 2011

APPENDIX A – DECC GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REPORT 2009/10

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL COUNCIL'S GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REPORT 2009/10

23 JUNE 2011

Background

The purpose of this report is to allow information on Wirral Council's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions **to be published in the format requested by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)** as part of the Single List of Central Government requirements from Local Government (2011/12), for data reference 067-00 "Emissions from Local Authority own estate and operations".

One of Wirral Council's Corporate Priorities is to 'Reduce Wirral's Carbon Footprint' through the delivery of a Council Carbon Budget. The Climate Change Strategy, approved by Cabinet in June 2007, commits the Council to tackling climate change. This requires a reduction in emissions of Greenhouse Gases and adaptation to the changes in climate that will occur. Wirral Council has developed a Climate Change Policy, an Action Plan and a Carbon Reduction Programme that focuses on awareness, energy, adaptation and transport.

Wirral Council achieved its target of a 20% reduction in carbon emissions by 2010 in 2007. In 2008, the Council adopted the CRed target of a 60% reduction by 2025. The Council works with residents, communities and both the public and private sectors to encourage them to achieve their own reductions.

Wirral's Carbon Reduction Strategy coordinates all related Council activities through a Wirral Carbon Reduction Programme. This enables Wirral Council to plan, monitor and report progress. Partnership working has also underpinned Wirral's Climate Change Strategy and information on the various carbon reduction initiatives is monitored and reported to the Council's Sustainable Communities Committee.

Wirral Council have introduced a Carbon Budget from April 2011. This will help achieve both local and national carbon reduction targets. The Carbon Budget will enable service managers to plan for CO₂ reductions at a Departmental and operational level and ensure that financial and carbon budgeting is fully integrated into mainstream financial management and business planning activities.

Wirral Council signed up to the Nottingham Declaration in 2001 and reaffirmed its commitment to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide in 2006. Proposals for quantifying CO₂ emissions as part of the procurement process for new Council contracts and other spend from April 2011 are currently being developed.

Wirral Council is a full participant in the Government's Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRCEES).

Scope of Report & Specific Exclusions

This report is based on the sites and transport figures that were reported for the National Indicator (NI) 185 years 2008/09 (Baseline) and 2009/10. Elements excluded in 2008/09 are similarly excluded from the 2009/10, as per the NI Guidance. The reasons for exclusion generally includes instances in which data were either unreliable or not available for the NI baseline year. This approach ensures that the two years are consistent in scope.

The report covers all Wirral Council owned and operated buildings over which it exercises direct control and Schools. Social housing is excluded.

Fleet Transport is included, as is Business Travel based on private vehicle mileage. Business travel by other means (Bus, train, aircraft etc.) is excluded as the information was not available in a consistent form. Commuting and Contractor emissions are also excluded for this reason.

GHG emissions data for period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010			
	Global tonnes of CO₂e		
	Current Year 2009/10	Prior Year 2008/09 (see Base Year)	Base Year 2008/09
Scope1	21,158		20,606
Scope 2	27,584		27,598
Scope 3	7,420		7,514
Total gross emissions	56,162		55,718
Carbon Offsets	0		0
Green tariffs	(11,916)		(28,902)
Total annual net emissions	44,246		26,816
Intensity measurement 'Tonnes of CO₂e per £m Total Income'	151.79		157.30

1. Company Information

- 1.1. Wirral Council is the ninth largest Metropolitan district in the country, and the third largest in the north west of England.
- 1.2. Wirral Council is based at: Town Hall, Brighton Street, Wallasey, Wirral, CH44 8ED

2. Reporting Period

- 2.1. The reporting period is the financial year from 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010.
- 2.2. This report includes information derived from data prepared for National Indicators 185 & 194 for the 2009/10 and 2008/09 financial years.

3. Change in Emissions

- 3.1. Scope1 emissions have increased. The principal reason is the increased use of natural gas during the cold weather that occurred over January and February 2010.

3.2. Year on year net emissions have risen due to contractual changes that significantly reduce the amount of electricity supplied from green source.

4. Approach

4.1. The Government publication “Guidance on how to measure and report on your greenhouse gas emissions” (DECC/DEFRA September 2009) has been used to prepare this Greenhouse Gas Emissions report.

4.2. The DECC/DEFRA Microsoft Excel spreadsheet version 1.2.1 FINAL (updated 06/10/2010) downloaded 31/03/2011 was used to calculate emissions in kg CO₂e (Carbon Dioxide Equivalent).

5. Organisational Boundary

5.1. The organisational boundary has been established using the financial control approach for all sites that were reported for National Indicators (NI's) 185 & 194 to ensure consistency.

6. Operational Scopes

6.1. Scope 1, Scope 2 and significant Scope 3 emissions have been measured and are reported.

	GHG emissions 2009/10 in tonnes CO₂e	State specific exclusions and % this represents for relevant scope (excluding geographic exclusions)
Scope 1		
Oil Consumption	2,015	
Natural Gas Consumption	17,800	
Owned Transport	1,343	
Process emissions	0	Not applicable – Wirral Council operates no industrial processes as describes in the guidance.
Fugitive Emissions	Not reported	Emissions from air-conditioning and refrigeration units are excluded due to the cost of data collection. These type of units are not installed in all buildings.
Total scope 1	21,158	
Scope 2		
Purchased electricity	27,584	
Total scope 2	27,584	
Significant Scope 3		
Purchased energy and fuels	5,970	
Business travel	1,098	
Water	352	
Total significant scope 3	7,420	

7. Geographic Breakdown

7.1. All Wirral Council's activities are UK based.

Geographical breakdown			
2010	Tonnes of CO₂e		
	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
Total Global	21,158	27,584	7,420
UK	21,158	27,584	7,420

8. Base year

- 8.1. A base year of 2008/09 (01/04/08 to 31/03/09) has been selected. This was the baseline year for NI 185 & 194 for which energy data was submitted to DECC, verified by their agents and returned to the Council.
- 8.2. The Energy consumption information for 2008/09, previously used to calculate CO₂ emissions has been used to calculate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions expressed as CO₂e (carbon dioxide equivalent).
- 8.3. The base year recalculation policy is to recalculate our base year and the prior year following significant structural changes or improvements to measuring methods. The initial significance threshold is 5% of total gross base year emissions.

9. Targets

- 9.1. Wirral Council is committed to reducing its CO₂ emissions by 60% by 2025 and to adapt to the changes in climate that will occur.
- 9.2. In order to ensure this target is met, the Council produces a Carbon Budget to set annual reduction targets and to measure progress. The current annual CO₂ reduction target is 5%.

10. Intensity Measurement

- 10.1. The intensity measurement used is "Tonnes of CO₂e per £m Total Income". The income figure is obtained from the Summary of Accounts for 2009/10.
- 10.2. The intensity measurement has fallen for 2009/10 as the total income for the Council has risen.

11. External Assurance Statement

- 11.1. No external independent assurance statement has been commissioned to cover the reporting period.

12. Carbon Offsets

- 12.1. Wirral Council has not purchased any carbon credits over the reporting period.

13. Green Tariffs

- 13.1. Over the 2009/10 financial year Wirral Council purchased electricity for 409 metered supply points and for 6 un-metered MPAN's (Meter Point Administration Numbers).
- 13.2. Over the reporting period, all 6 un-metered MPAN's were supplied with 10% electricity from renewable sources by EDF Energy as specified in their contract document.
- 13.3. Over the reporting period, all 24 Half Hourly Metered (HHM) sites were supplied with 100% electricity from renewable sources by EDF Energy as specified in their contract document.
- 13.4. Over the reporting period, all non half-hourly sites supplied by British Gas Business under the OGC Buying Solutions framework agreement were supplied with 10% electricity from renewable sources by British Gas Business as specified in their contract document.

Report Author: Andrew Snow, Energy Conservation Engineer.

Telephone: 0151 606 2348

Email: andrewsnow@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDIX B – DECC GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REPORT 2010/11

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL COUNCIL'S GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REPORT 2010/11

23 JUNE 2011

Background

The purpose of this report is to allow information on Wirral Council's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions **to be published in the format requested by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)** as part of the Single List of Central Government requirements from Local Government (2011/12), for data reference 067-00 "Emissions from Local Authority own estate and operations".

One of Wirral Council's Corporate Priorities is to 'Reduce Wirral's Carbon Footprint' through the delivery of a Council Carbon Budget. The Climate Change Strategy, approved by Cabinet in June 2007, commits the Council to tackling climate change. This requires a reduction in emissions of Greenhouse Gases and adaptation to the changes in climate that will occur. Wirral Council has developed a Climate Change Policy, an Action Plan and a Carbon Reduction Programme that focuses on awareness, energy, adaptation and transport.

Wirral Council achieved its target of a 20% reduction in carbon emissions by 2010 in 2007. In 2008, the Council adopted the CRed target of a 60% reduction by 2025. The Council works with residents, communities and both the public and private sectors to encourage them to achieve their own reductions.

Wirral's Carbon Reduction Strategy coordinates all related Council activities through a Wirral Carbon Reduction Programme. This enables Wirral Council to plan, monitor and report progress. Partnership working has also underpinned Wirral's Climate Change Strategy and information on the various carbon reduction initiatives is monitored and reported to the Council's Sustainable Communities Committee.

Wirral Council have introduced a Carbon Budget from April 2011. This will help achieve both local and national carbon reduction targets. The Carbon Budget will enable service managers to plan for CO₂ reductions at a Departmental and operational level and ensure that financial and carbon budgeting is fully integrated into mainstream financial management and business planning activities.

Wirral Council signed up to the Nottingham Declaration in 2001 and reaffirmed its commitment to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide in 2006. Proposals for quantifying CO₂ emissions as part of the procurement process for new Council contracts and other spend from April 2011 are currently being developed.

Wirral Council is a full participant in the Government's Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRCEES).

Scope of Report & Specific Exclusions

This report is based on the scope for reporting stationary and transport figures that specified for National Indicator (NI) 185 years 2008/09 (Baseline) and 2009/10. Elements excluded in 2008/09 are similarly excluded from the 2010/11 report, as per the NI Guidance. The reasons for exclusion generally includes instances in which data were either unreliable or not available for the NI baseline year. This approach ensures that the three reported years are consistent in scope.

The report covers all Wirral Council owned and operated buildings over which it exercises direct control and Schools. Social housing is excluded.

Fleet Transport is included, as is Business Travel based on private vehicle mileage. Business travel by other means (Bus, train, aircraft etc.) is excluded as the information was not available in a consistent form. Commuting and Contractor emissions are also excluded for this reason.

GHG emissions data for period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011			
	Global tonnes of CO₂e		
	Current Year 2010/11	Prior Year 2009/10	Base Year 2008/09
Scope1	18,581	21,158	20,606
Scope 2	26,294	27,584	27,598
Scope 3	6,943	7,420	7,514
Total gross emissions	51,818	56,162	55,718
Carbon Offsets	0	0	0
Green tariffs	(12,773)	(11,916)	(28,902)
Total annual net emissions	39,045	44,246	26,816
Intensity measurement 'Tonnes of CO₂e per £m Total Income'	137.39	151.79	157.30

1. Company Information

- 1.1. Wirral Council is the ninth largest Metropolitan district in the country, and the third largest in the north west of England.
- 1.2. Wirral Council is based at: Town Hall, Brighton Street, Wallasey, Wirral, CH44 8ED

2. Reporting Period

- 2.1. The reporting period is the financial year from 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.
- 2.2. This report includes information derived from data prepared for National Indicators 185 & 194 for the 2009/10 and 2008/09 financial years. Data for 2010/11 was derived in an identical manner.

3. Change in Emissions

- 3.1. Gross emissions have reduced despite harsh winter conditions at the end of 2010. The principle reason is the disposal of a number of Council properties.

3.2. The amount of electrical energy supplied from green sources rose due to contractual.

4. Approach

4.1. The Government publication “Guidance on how to measure and report on your greenhouse gas emissions” (DECC/DEFRA September 2009) has been used to prepare this Greenhouse Gas Emissions report.

4.2. The DECC/DEFRA Microsoft Excel spreadsheet version 1.2.1 FINAL (updated 06/10/2010) downloaded 31/03/2011 was used to calculate emissions in kg CO₂e (Carbon Dioxide Equivalent).

5. Organisational Boundary

5.1. The organisational boundary has been established using the financial control approach for all sites that were reported for National Indicators (NI's) 185 & 194 to ensure consistency.

6. Operational Scopes

6.1. Scope 1, Scope 2 and significant Scope 3 emissions have been measured and are reported.

	GHG emissions 2010/11 in tonnes CO₂e	State specific exclusions and % this represents for relevant scope (excluding geographic exclusions)
Scope 1		
Oil Consumption	2,313	
Natural Gas Consumption	15,234	
Owned Transport	1,033	
Process emissions	0	Not applicable – Wirral Council operates no industrial processes as describes in the guidance.
Fugitive Emissions	Not reported	Emissions from air-conditioning and refrigeration units are excluded due to the cost of data collection. These type of units are not installed in all buildings.
Total scope 1	18,581	
Scope 2		
Purchased electricity	26,294	
Total scope 2	26,294	
Significant Scope 3		
Purchased energy and fuels	5,545	
Business travel	1,063	
Water	336	
Total significant scope 3	6,943	

7. Geographic Breakdown

7.1. All Wirral Council's activities are UK based.

Geographical breakdown			
2010	Tonnes of CO₂e		
	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
Total Global	18,581	26,294	6,943
UK	18,581	26,294	6,943

8. Base year

- 8.1. A base year of 2008/09 (01/04/08 to 31/03/09) has been selected. This was the baseline year for NI 185 & 194 for which energy data was submitted to DECC, verified by their agents and returned to the Council.
- 8.2. The Energy consumption information for 2008/09, previously used to calculate CO₂ emissions has been used to calculate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions expressed as CO₂e (carbon dioxide equivalent).
- 8.3. The base year recalculation policy is to recalculate our base year and the prior year following significant structural changes or improvements to measuring methods. The initial significance threshold is 5% of total gross base year emissions.

9. Targets

- 9.1. Wirral Council is committed to reducing its CO₂ emissions by 60% by 2025 and to adapt to the changes in climate that will occur.
- 9.2. In order to ensure this target is met, the Council produces a Carbon Budget to set annual reduction targets and to measure progress. The current annual CO₂ reduction target is 5%.

10. Intensity Measurement

- 10.1. The intensity measurement used is "Tonnes of CO₂e per £m Total Income". The income figure is obtained from the Council Budget 2011/12 report dated 21 February 2011.
- 10.2. The intensity measurement has fallen for 2009/10 as the total income for the Council has risen by 1.7% whilst gross emissions reduced by 7.7%.

11. External Assurance Statement

- 11.1. No external independent assurance statement has been commissioned to cover the reporting period.

12. Carbon Offsets

- 12.1. Wirral Council has not purchased any carbon credits over the reporting period.

13. Green Tariffs

- 13.1. Over the 2009/10 financial year Wirral Council purchased electricity for 404 metered supply points and for 6 un-metered MPAN's (Meter Point Administration Numbers).
- 13.2. Over the reporting period, all 6 un-metered MPAN's were supplied with 10% electricity from renewable sources by EDF Energy as specified in their contract document.
- 13.3. Over the reporting period, all 24 Half Hourly Metered (HHM) sites were supplied with 100% electricity from renewable sources by EDF Energy as specified in their contract document.
- 13.4. Over the reporting period, all non half-hourly sites supplied by British Gas Business under the OGC Buying Solutions framework agreement were supplied 10% electricity from renewable sources and 15% electricity from good quality CHP (Combined Heat and Power) as specified in their contract document.

Report Author: Andrew Snow, Energy Conservation Engineer.

Telephone: 0151 606 2348

Email: andrewsnow@wirral.gov.uk

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23RD JUNE 2011 6.00 PM

SUBJECT:	<i>HOUSING STRATEGY 2011 - 2026</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR GEORGE DAVIES</i>
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 The purpose of this report is to:
- a) seek member's approval and endorsement of Wirral's Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 including a strategic housing plan (Appendix one to this report) and:
 - b) that Cabinet recommends to Council that the strategy be approved as part of the authority's Capital Programme and Policy Framework.
- 1.2 Members will be aware that although the development of a Housing Strategy statement is no longer a statutory requirement, it is important that locally Wirral sets the strategic framework for future housing policy and investment requirements. The draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 therefore has been developed to be reflective of this as well as aligning with the Councils' Sustainable Community Strategy and the outcome of both the Wirral wide consultation 'Wirral's future' and the specific consultation undertaken as part of the development of the Strategy.
- 1.3 At Cabinet on 14th October 2010, Members approved the draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 for public consultation. The initial stage of the consultation process, to test the draft strategy and obtain specific views on all of the key issues which inform housing policies and initiatives for the future, commenced on 22nd October 2010 and ran for a six week period ending on 10th December 2010.
- 1.4 The consultation process involved a wide range of key stakeholders, members of the public, formal Partnerships and Forums, with initially over 340 stakeholders formally contacted directly to ask for their views. The Strategy and a short questionnaire requesting views and comments on the vision, the key issues identified and any issues that people felt needed to be included in the strategy was also made available on the Councils web site for completion. With the help of staff in the Council's One Stop Shops and Libraries, members of the public were able to complete the questionnaire either on line or in paper format providing key feedback detailing their views and comments on the strategy and the issues identified.
- 1.5 Over the six week consultation process, 1,369 responses were received, providing a significant amount of feedback to be considered when developing the strategy further. Significantly, 94% (out of the 1263 respondents) answered that they

strongly agreed/agreed with the overall long term vision for housing. There was also a significant majority of respondents who agreed that the seven key issues and priorities identified in the strategy were either very important or important.

1.6 Officers in the Housing Strategy Team have subsequently collated and reviewed all of the responses received and have adapted and developed the strategy further to incorporate and respond to the issues the consultation process has raised.

1.7 A report was presented to Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14th March 2011, following their request on 24th November 2010 for a further report on the outcome of the consultation and draft Housing Strategy.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 It is recommended that:

a) Members approve and endorse Wirral's Housing Strategy Statement 2011-2026 including its strategic housing plan and;

b) Cabinet recommends to Council that the strategy be approved as part of the authority's Capital Programme and Policy Framework.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 That Wirral's Housing Strategy 2011-2026 is approved by Members as the strategic framework for delivering housing locally in Wirral aligned to Government policy and local priorities and needs.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 The Council's current Housing Strategy is approaching the end of its lifespan and to ensure that locally Wirral sets the strategic framework for future housing policy and investment requirements, a new long term Housing Strategy which will run up to 2026 has been developed. The new Housing Strategy has been drawn together using a variety of evidence to establish housing needs and demand, challenges Wirral faces such as tackling empty properties and reviving the local economy and housing market. It also encompasses a range of comments and has been amended to respond to the suggestions and views identified through the consultation process undertaken during the latter part of 2010. This has ensured the final Housing Strategy is reflective of issues which matter most to local people and that these link to key policy and investment opportunities.

4.2 As highlighted in 1.4, the consultation process involved key stakeholders and members of the public being asked to complete a short questionnaire which requested views and comments on the long term vision for the Housing Strategy, the key issues identified as priorities which need to be addressed and gave the opportunity for local people to raise any other issues which they felt needed to be included in the strategy.

4.3 Analysis of responses indicated that 94% agreed with the long term vision for the Borough '*To make sure all areas in Wirral are attractive places where people can access a home that meets their need*'. Feedback did however highlight a number of issues including concerns that the vision in its existing format was too challenging and it was not realistic to make all areas in Wirral attractive places to live through the work of the Housing strategy alone however the vision should be

one about housings contribution to making Wirral an attractive place. It was also highlighted that the vision is too simplistic in trying to ensure all people can access a home that meets their needs and this should be more about being appropriate to their needs rather than aspiration.

4.4 The Housing Strategy team has taken on board and considered all of these comments and the vision whilst remaining challenging, has now be revised to take account of local peoples views as follows: ***‘to contribute to making Wirral an attractive place by ensuring people can access quality housing that is affordable and appropriate to their needs’.***

4.5 The draft strategy contains seven key issues which were initially identified as priorities to take forward throughout the life time of the strategy, all of which were developed from a robust evidence base which are detailed in a Technical Appendix to Housing Strategy document. Feedback from the consultation on each of the seven issues has recognised that overall the majority of people agree that these issues were important. This is further broken down by each of the key issues as follows:

80% agreed that *“Responding to changes in the long term population makeup of Wirral, in particular older people”* is important.

86% agreed that *“Increasing the availability of new homes including affordable homes”* is important.

90% agreed that *“Making better use of existing stock to meet the housing need”* is important.

90% agreed that *“Making areas more attractive as places to live through improving homes and providing greater choice”* is important.

83% agreed that *“Reducing fuel poverty in the borough particularly reducing the gap between the borough average and those areas with higher rates of fuel poverty”* is important.

91% agreed that *“Meeting the housing and support needs of vulnerable people”* is important.

82% agreed that *“Supporting the economy through housing programmes”* is important.

4.6 The consultation process also identified a number of key issues which people felt needed to be included or developed further. Specifically these related to:

- the general use and understanding of terminology in the strategy being further simplified for example use of language such as fuel poverty. We have responded to this by both changing language used in the document to be more user friendly and also have included a glossary of terms.
- the provision of supported housing available and that this should be where people want to live. We have recognised in the strategy that supported housing should not solely be about new provision but that this should be part of a wider response to support vulnerable people. We will utilise a range of options alongside new provision and existing supply including carrying out home adaptations and providing low level support to help people to maintain independent living.

- the future of social housing in relation to length of tenancies. Since the consultation on the housing strategy commenced the government has launched its approach to social housing reform and the use of fixed tenancies on the basis that a social tenancy should not necessarily be for life. We have included within the strategy our commitment to produce a strategic tenancy policy for the use and review of fixed tenancies by registered providers to influence how this will be managed locally in Wirral.
- the ability of young people being able to access affordable homes irrespective of tenure. The Strategy has been strengthened to take advantage of opportunities such as the potential for shared tenancies and the use of the private rented sector to give wider choice to young people.
- the development of new homes in relation to the quality of open space, landscaping and space standards. We have included a new section within the strategy that focuses on the work housing undertakes with development control, the Homes and Communities agency, registered providers and private developers in relation to ensuring new developments deliver to quality standards and that housing and planning policies are closely aligned.

All of these issues raised have been incorporated into the strategy to reflect local opinion.

4.7 The Strategy statement is supported by a Strategic Plan. The Strategic Housing Plan has been developed to be a high level overarching plan which is measurable, realistic and achievable. The actions contained within it have been developed to meet the long term objectives of the strategy but will be flexible and responsive to changes in market conditions, new opportunities and also introduce new perspectives as they arise, such as changing legislation and government policy. It is intended that the Plan will be reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure it is responsive to change and also to reflect on what milestones have been achieved in respond to our seven objectives for housing.

4.8 We consider the actions and targets developed to be cross cutting in terms of our strategic themes and as such the plan has been designed with this in mind. Strategic actions, baselines and targets whilst placed under specific themes for ease of understanding and future monitoring, should be considered within the context of each of the seven strategic themes. The Plan includes actions that are short, medium and long term and are supported by targets and timescales. Targets include :-

- Implementing a pilot project to address under-occupation and respond to the population needs of the borough;
- Reviewing existing services such as the Disabled Persons Housing Register, services for people with learning disabilities, young people at risk to both support vulnerable people and make better use of existing stock available;
- Reducing energy consumed by households and making homes warmer through implementing in the region of 120,000 insulations measures through the Borough Wide Insulation Programme;
- Bringing back into use 200 empty homes per year to improve neighbourhoods and delivering 300 units of affordable homes by 2013 to

assist in meeting local needs and contribute to increased income generation via the New Homes Bonus Scheme;

- Preventing and alleviating homelessness by proving support and assistance to 450 per annum.
- Commissioning a review of Homeless Services in Wirral to meet legislative requirements and inform a new Homeless Strategy. (This is the subject of a separate report to Members)

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 Without a long term Housing Strategy and Strategic Housing Plan, there is an increased risk of not taking full advantage of new housing policy and investment opportunities to develop and make best use of existing and new housing in Wirral.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 There were no other options considered.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The development of a new 15 year Housing Strategy Statement has involved a two stage consultation process. This report focuses' on the results of the main part of this consultation which specifically tested if the draft housing strategy captured all of the key issues which affect housing policies and initiatives for the future.

7.2 We are publishing the results of the consultation and the revision to the finalised Housing Strategy 2011 – 26 and strategic housing plan on the Council's web site following approval by Cabinet . This will give the opportunity for people to see how the strategy has been shaped and changed to reflect their opinion and for people to continuously be able to provide comments to help shape future policies and strategy updates.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 The housing strategy consultation process was developed to be as inclusive as possible of a wide range of stakeholders, voluntary, community and faith organisations and members of the general public. The Housing Strategy 2011-2026 will as it is delivered, continue to be inclusive.

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

9.1 The development of the Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 has been lead by officers from the Housing Strategy team, who will also carry out the ongoing monitoring and review of actions in the strategic housing plan.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Housing Strategy 2011-2026 recognises the needs of vulnerable people, and reinforces the need to address inequalities in the housing market and improve access for all.

11.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required?

Yes – this is currently being completed

(b) If 'yes', has one been completed?

No, this is currently being completed.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Housing Strategy is a key document supporting the delivery of housing in Wirral. The strategy recognises the need to ensure that both new and existing homes are in the borough are of good quality and provides the evidence base for setting policy and innovative ways of working to address the key housing issues identified.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no specific planning implication arising from this report, however the housing strategy will need to be closely aligned with the councils emerging Local Development Framework to further support the delivery of the Boroughs housing priorities.

REPORT AUTHOR: Lisa Newman
Housing Strategy Manager
telephone: (0151) 691 8197
email: lisanewman@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Economic & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee report ' <i>Housing Strategy 2011-2026 Consultation</i> '	14 March 2011
Economic & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee report " <i>Draft housing strategy and update on consultation process</i> ".	22 Nov 2010
Cabinet report " <i>Wirral strategic housing market assessment update & affordable housing viability assessment – key findings and policy implications for Wirral</i> "	14 Oct 2010

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A Vision for Wirral

The vision for housing in Wirral by 2026 is to ***‘contribute to making Wirral an attractive place by ensuring people can access quality housing that is appropriate and affordable to their needs’.***

We will achieve this vision through targeted housing investment in markets where it is most needed, through the delivery of a Strategic Housing Plan which is measurable, realistic and achievable. This will enable us to deliver our key priorities, respond to changes in market conditions, new opportunities and also introduce new perspectives as they arise, such as changing legislation and government policy. Our Strategic Housing Plan will be delivered alongside other investment priorities outlined in Wirral’s Sustainable Communities Strategy. This approach will also ensure that we continue to engage and work with a wide range of organisations and communities to ensure shared outcomes around health, social care, education, community safety and the economy are addressed and developed.

We will continuously monitor the Strategic Housing Plan activities and publish on an annual basis the outcomes and progress achieved. We will further review and update the evidence base annually to ensure the strategy continues to focus on the current needs of the borough and is aligned with budget allocations. 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. The original evidence base used to formulate the priorities for this strategy is set out in the technical appendix.

We have developed the objectives set out in the Strategy based on key evidence collated which demonstrates the housing issues faced in the borough. These strategic objectives are overarching and set out the Council’s aspirations for the future with the strategy broadly outlining how they’ll be achieved through the Strategic Housing Plan. The detailed operational activities needed to meet our key strategic targets and objectives will be delivered by the housing division along with our partners and will enable the vision for Wirral to be fully achieved.

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 2010 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 Development Plan Document (DPD), and Sustainable Community Strategy. Wirral's population has been reducing over many years and the Sustainable Community Strategy has an objective of limiting this trend by retaining population, supported by the economic development objectives of the Council's Investment Strategy, to reduce economic out-migration.

Narrowing the inequalities gap in Wirral for housing both within and between communities is a real challenge. In order to deliver this 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 and developer confidence for all sectors of the market.

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. More recently it has been reported that the country is officially out of recession. In particular in Wirral there has been a 2.27% increase in median house price and a 1.32% increase in sales between 2008/09 and 2009/10 along with a continued recovery into 2010/11 with house prices increasing by a further 1.1% in the first two quarters of the year. It is important to recognise that the housing market has still not fully recovered and demand for flexible affordable housing is still strong.

Generally, the majority of homes sold in Wirral still tend to be in and around the regeneration priority areas in Birkenhead, Seacombe, Liscard and parts of Tranmere and Rock Ferry, indicating their 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 2010, indicates a clear need for the Council and its partners to do more. A clearer picture of the need for affordable housing is the 897 (6.34%) applicants who are registered as of December 2010 who have an urgent need for rehousing resulting from their current accommodation being unsuitable.

Wirral Council as a strategic enabling authority has a strong role to play in terms of working with partners to respond to these issues through existing and new initiatives including:

- The proposed Wirral Waters development at Birkenhead and Wallasey docks has planning permission for over 15,000 homes to be built up to 2050 across a range of housing types. At each stage of the development the need for affordable housing will be assessed and its potential delivery considered, whether within the development site or by the developer providing funds to build affordable housing in other areas. This could

contribute a high percentage of Wirral's affordable housing in future years as well as providing wider economic benefits for neighbouring areas.

- As part of the Government's "Big Society" agenda, there will be a role for communities in assisting local authorities to deliver affordable housing through tools such as "Community Right To Build". This intends to provide communities with the powers to lead on and approve new housing developments. The Government also wishes to see a proportion of the Community Infrastructure Levy spent in the neighbourhood in which it was raised however this cannot be used to provide affordable housing but to improve facilities such as transport links, schools and hospitals, which will assist in retaining and growing the population.
- In addition to new housing providing more appropriate accommodation to suit people's needs, the Council also has a strong role to play in maximising the use of existing stock. This ranges from returning empty properties back to use, to focussing of financial assistance towards poor quality homes where improvements to properties wouldn't happen without the Council's intervention. The Government has acknowledged the role of bringing empty property back into use and in response to this, the Council's Empty Property strategy has enabled previously vacant property to be brought back into use, improving the local environment, restoring confidence, reducing carbon use from new building and reducing the demand for new building.

We do however recognise that whilst it is a key challenge to continue to deliver housing that is appropriate and affordable to meet people's needs, this needs to be placed into context. Not all people are in a position of needing assistance and the reality is that many Wirral residents have access to a decent home and enjoy an excellent quality of life and life expectancy. There is however still a stark gap between the most affluent and most deprived areas, particularly in life expectancy which housing can have 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 projected to decrease by 4,800 people or by 1.6% between 2008 and 2033, the population aged 65 and above is expected to increase by 24,600 people to almost a third of the local population by 2033¹. Whilst the population of the Borough will reduce, the number of households will continue to increase, with more people living alone or in smaller households.

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 will need to increasingly concentrate on the homes we already have in Wirral focusing on:

- maximising the use of existing homes and buildings 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.

¹ ONS 2008 population projections

- tackling and bringing back into use those homes which are empty, particularly as 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 high quality homes are provided, aligned with opportunities for training and employment. The Council will need to provide clear leadership to ensure the right conditions are created to provide the right types of homes in Wirral, to compliment regeneration and growth at the core of the urban area.

To achieve this we will need to continue to ensure that housing and planning policies are closely aligned.

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 of Wirral, in particular an increase in the number of older people and an increase in the number of smaller households.
2. A need to make better use of the existing stock across all sectors and make homes accessible to meet current and future local housing need.
3. A need to encourage people to stay within the borough through improving the quality and mix of stock, providing greater housing choice where appropriate to local needs, supported by the Council's economic development objectives.
4. A need to increase the availability of housing to respond to changes in household projections and deliver affordable homes.
5. A need to make homes warmer and reduce the energy consumed by households.
6. Meeting the housing and support needs of vulnerable people.
7. Supporting employment, learning and skills through the delivery of housing programmes

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 more diverse population in the future.

Responding to changes in the long term population of Wirral, in particular an increase in the number of older people and an increase in the number of smaller households

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.

Wirral's overall population is projected to decrease over the next 25 years, the opposite of what is predicted to happen to the United Kingdom (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 or being added through natural change, while the projected UK increase in population is 16.6% over the same period.

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.

Population change whilst important is not, however, the biggest issue for housing policy in Wirral. More importantly, the make up of households is changing with household sizes becoming smaller. For example, our most recent assessment estimates the biggest decrease expected will be in non-pensioner households without children, an 8.3% increase in the number of households with one child with a decline in all other types of household to 2029. There will however still be a need to address the changing housing requirements of families, single people and couples. There is therefore an ongoing 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 support a realistic target for new building that will support the best use of the housing stock as a whole.

It is important and recognised throughout this strategy that Wirral and its partners need to respond to people living longer, whilst at the same time trying to reduce population decline by improving services to maintain both the borough's existing population and attract new households to the Wirral area. It is therefore important to improve the mix of housing stock and tenures throughout Wirral to offer a greater choice of homes.

The current ethnic mix in Wirral consists mainly of white British (95%²) and the proportion of people with other ethnic origins is less than half the English average³. It has been predicted there will be an increase from 8% in 2001 to 20% in 2051 in UK households of non-white British origin⁴ with households with a European, US and Australasian ethnic background growing fastest but those of a south Asian background will grow also.

Unfortunately no population projections by ethnic group are currently available for Wirral area however, 9% of respondents to our Housing Strategy consultation were of Black and Minority Ethnic origin. Issues raised by members of the BME population who confirmed their ethnic origin reflected those of the wider Wirral population particularly in relation to access to housing and use of land for development. Wirral responds currently to the diverse needs of our communities directly for housing through the Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Support Team who reduce barriers to housing and support clients to accessing services. The team continues

² ONS 2007 Mid-Year Population By Ethnic Group

³ Non White British in Wirral consist of 5% of the population and in England 13% - 2001 Census, ONS.

⁴ Ethnic Population Projections for the UK and Local Areas, 2001 – 2051, University of Leeds, July 2010.

to be flexible enough to adapt its housing services to assist more households with different cultures, religions and languages accordingly.

Older People

As population projections are indicating that the highest estimated increase is for older people, older people feature in one of the key 'super groups' identified as a target priority for the Council and its partners. This is of particular importance as the number of older people who have a physical and / or mental frailty is increasing as life expectancy continues to increase.

In responding to an older population and delivering appropriate services, this strategy takes account of the following:

Types of homes

It is currently estimated that over a third of the new homes that will need to be provided by 2029 (34.4%, 3922 dwellings) will need to be "specialist" housing⁵, i.e. sheltered or supported.

Between April 2006, and March 2011 256 homes have been developed specifically for older people through partnership working between the Council and Housing Associations at a cost of over £24.82 million (£13.80 million of which has been provided through government grant funding). We still have work to do, but 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 still required to deliver further accommodation. 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 currently expected that about half of all one and two bed homes (excluding "specialist" housing) will be occupied by older people by 2029, up from 39% in 2009⁶. There will be a need to increase the numbers of 2 bedroom homes to accommodate older people who may wish to move into smaller homes from larger properties.

A key strategic aim of the Council is to look at the potential to support older people who are under occupying larger homes in Wirral, to move where possible, to alternative homes more suited to their housing needs. The freeing up of these larger homes will simultaneously enable the Council to maximise the use of existing and future housing provision in the borough to support the housing needs of families who require this type of accommodation. It is also important to look at the types of housing that will be needed for the future with household make ups changing.

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.

New homes should also, wherever possible be "future-proofed", whether or not they are to be immediately occupied by older people, 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

⁵ Wirral's SHMA 2010, page 71.

⁶ Wirral's SHMA 2010, page 82.

homes for as long as possible and ensure those who can't, have access to a suitable home to meet their needs.

A need to make better use of the existing stock across all sectors and make homes accessible to meet current and future local housing need

Wirral is committed to making the best use of all existing homes available in the borough, to support our vision to enable people to access quality housing. We recognise that there is the potential within the borough's existing housing stock to try and help meet local housing need and the focus for the future is to target those properties which offer the greatest potential for offering an increased housing choice for local people.

Research has identified that there are a number of people who are under occupying their home, regardless of tenure, whilst at the same time we recognise that many people wish to stay in their homes as long as possible. To this end the Council will seek to help people by offering a range of services including the Handyperson Service, domiciliary care, floating support, access to sheltered and extra care housing to name a few. We will also continue to help those people who are owner occupiers or who privately rent, to consider the options available to them in respect of moving to more suitable housing, and also sign post where relevant to other appropriate support agencies. The focus of the Government's new Under Occupation Programme funding will be to help target and assist those people who are under occupying in the social rented sector. This will help make best use of the existing social stock and release properties to help meet the increasing pressures on the Wirralhomes Choice Based Letting system, particularly for those households who are overcrowded.

Alongside a programme that will help people who are under occupying their home, (and therefore may no longer need to occupy a larger property), the Council over the next four years, is focusing on working with our local housing associations to develop the new affordable rent product. This will include consideration of social housing vacancies as they arise over the next four years and provide the flexibility to convert these properties to an affordable rent, a low cost home ownership product or a conversion for outright sale, when they are re-let. This approach will allow a more diverse offer to be developed for the wide range of people accessing social housing.

The Council, working with its partners will ensure that the conversion of re-let social homes will be balanced. This will ensure appropriate existing social housing stock is targeted, sufficient social housing stock remains, and the income generated from the conversions is used to maximise delivery of new affordable housing supply to help those people on the waiting list; many of whom have had no realistic chance of accessing a home before through this route. We will work to develop innovative solutions such as greater mobility between tenures, house shares for young people, having more than one tenancy option within the same home, helping people to stay in their own property when circumstances change and offering flexible tenancies.

Whilst there are options to maximise the use of the existing social stock there are also significant opportunities available to make better use of long term empty properties in the private sector.

Tackling long term empty properties will help to improve the quality and desirability of many neighbourhoods, especially in east Wirral. It is estimated that a run-down empty home can reduce neighbouring house prices by 18%⁷ which, besides being a wasted asset for the owner, could be brought back into use to help meet the housing needs of the borough.

⁷ 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 especially in areas where long term vacancy rates are currently above the Wirral average and are impacting negatively on neighbourhoods.

We will continue to focus in the future on how our population and household make up is changing, linking this with targeting work to support owners to bring their empty properties back into use, through innovative ways of working and complimenting these where appropriate with the Councils enforcement powers. We will develop new opportunities to address vacant homes in conjunction with our housing association and private landlord partners including acquiring and refurbishing empty homes, further developing private sector leasing and developing local authority property shops. Our goal for the future is to make a significant impact and a real difference to local neighbourhoods.

Tackling empty homes can also make a significant contribution to Wirral's local economy through income generation for the Council and the increased use of local labour and supplies through improvement works.

Whilst tackling empty properties across all sectors will be important, the biggest challenge lies within the private sector. We will continue to work closely with housing associations to better understand the reasons why there are still a number of long term empty properties in the social housing sector and to address this through targeted programmes including the refurbishment and clearance of unsuitable high rise flats.

A need to encourage people to stay within the borough through improving the quality and mix of stock, providing greater housing choice where appropriate to local needs, supported by the Council's economic development objectives

Decent, good quality, well designed homes are an essential part of creating attractive and desirable neighbourhoods where people will choose to live. In order to encourage people to stay within the borough and to attract new households to move in, the Council will work hard to maximise opportunities for regeneration in areas most in need. This will incorporate those matters which have been identified as important to local people, including making the best use of surrounding green space, ensuring homes and neighbourhoods are safe and good space standards are achieved. Alongside this it is important the Council secures as much funding as possible from external sources to help improve existing stock conditions, offer homes that are decent and wherever possible make use of energy efficiency and renewable energy measures to reduce household's energy bills and make homes warmer.

Although the responsibility for maintaining privately owned and privately rented housing rests first and foremost with the homeowner, the Council has a key role to play in supporting people to maintain their homes and neighbourhoods. We recognise that intervention and assistance is necessary particularly in those priority neighbourhoods where we are trying to stabilise and reverse housing market decline. These are often areas where people are living in financial hardship, where landlords refuse to undertake essential repairs or improvements, alongside other neighbourhood issues impacting on the attractiveness of the area as a place to live.

An essential aspect of this is the provision of financial assistance where possible to home owners through products such as equity release and home repair assistance in extreme cases. We will also offer support to more vulnerable residents to help them maintain their homes and gardens through the Wirral Home Improvement Agency. This offers home owners and private tenants who are elderly or disabled, access to advice and practical assistance on home repairs, improvements and adaptations and is therefore a key priority for the future.

Wirral has also already embarked on a bold programme to strengthen housing markets 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 housing in these neighbourhoods, leveraging in £17 million private sector funding with a further £64 million committed from Lovell our developer partner for the Rock Ferry and Tranmere areas. Activity since 2003 in priority areas has been to selectively clear sites ready for the development of high quality, well designed multi tenure housing and commercial units together with improving existing homes through group repair and improvement grants.

Although a lot of work has already been done to improve some of the poorer quality homes, there is still a lot more to do and Wirral is well equipped to meet this challenge with dedicated staff in place with the necessary skills and expertise to deliver. Looking forward, the focus of delivery will be towards the redevelopment of Birkenhead and Wallasey. Resources will need to be targeted to make an impact on the same scale as has been seen in Rock Ferry and Tranmere, where neighbourhoods have been transformed by these improvements.

The Council will ensure that whenever the quality of existing homes is to be improved, opportunities for installing energy efficiency and renewable energy measures are identified and implemented and funding from external sources is maximised. This will assist with the Council's Housing Strategy's objective of reducing energy bills and making homes warmer.

We will, in the future, need to be more innovative in how we address issues and look at new delivery models such as Community Land Trusts, given the reduction in future funding

anticipated to be available to improve housing stock and the housing offer. 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, is desirable and affordable, as well as flexible enough to allow people to move when necessary. The Council also needs to provide people with advice and support to enable them to access suitable homes where they are available.

Our homes in the social housing sector continue to be well regulated and improved to ensure they meet specific quality standards. We will continue to work with housing associations who own these homes to make sure that 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 and to ensure the right types of homes are available and sustainable to meet the housing needs of the borough. We will also be working closely in the future, following the enactment of the Localism Bill, to publish a tenancy strategy. Wirral's tenancy strategy will identify the broad objectives that housing associations should have regard to when formulating their own tenancy management policies and will set out our high level objectives around creating and sustaining mixed communities, tackling overcrowding. This will be delivered alongside the introduction of the new affordable rent product.

As is the case both regionally and nationally, the private rented sector continues to slowly increase due to a number of factors including the lack of affordable homes to buy, which has not been made easier by the economic downturn, an increased demand for a flexible tenure that is easy to access and a previously thriving 'buy to let' market which had arisen 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 many vulnerable households, has the least security of tenure and housing conditions on average are around 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 increased housing choice, Wirral recognises that the private rented sector in particular will need to be considered as a key partner in this process. Pressure on the availability of social rented sector homes and the impact of the economic downturn means that supporting people to consider all available housing options is essential.

Subject to sufficient continued investment, by 2026, it is expected that the gap in house prices, the proportion of properties in different council tax bands and the tenure breakdown between the rest of Wirral and the regeneration priority neighbourhoods in the east of the borough will have narrowed. The aspiration in the longer term is a borough with a wider variety of accommodation which is better balanced to ensure that communities can have a greater choice in where they live and wherever possible move up the housing market rather than move out. These aspirations will need to be supported by other economic initiatives related to increasing skills and employment.

A need to increase the availability of housing to respond to changes in household projections and deliver affordable homes

Whilst existing housing can be improved and made more flexible to meet our populations changing needs, it is recognised that new housing is also needed to take account of household projections to enable the provision of a wide range of housing options to meet different income levels and needs. Increasing the supply of different housing types, in various locations assists to improve movement in the local housing supply to meet our changing population needs, helps support people moving into the borough and supports future economic growth.

The term 'affordable housing' can mean different things to different people depending on their circumstances. Some people may choose and be able to pay more than others for their home either in relation to a mortgage or a rental amount and therefore their perceptions of homes which are 'affordable' may be very different.

For the purposes of this strategy however, the term 'Affordable Housing' relates to the following official definition local authorities use and is taken from the current Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing:

Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specific eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:

- Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.
- Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative housing provision.

Government has proposed a revision to Planning Policy Statement 3, clarifying that the new affordable rent model is considered to fall under the definition of affordable housing for planning purposes. This strategy therefore, in terms of affordable housing, also relates to the affordable rented housing model, which has the same characteristics as social rented housing. It is outside the national rent regime but subject to other rent controls that require it to be offered to eligible households at a rent of up to 80% of local market rents.

Housing, irrespective of tenure, can be an important contributor to key outcomes for residents in Wirral, such as health, the economy, and reducing inequalities and as such is a key driver of change in the borough.

Future Supply of Homes

The Government has recently announced the intention to abolish Regional Strategies, to remove "top down" targets and allow greater local choice. In response, the Liverpool City Region authorities have been proactive in producing a Local Investment Plan (LIP) in 2010. The LIP is linked to the planned Local Enterprise Partnership, which will be used to inform the key housing priorities for the Liverpool City Region. The LIP provides the framework for directing future investment in housing markets, including funding to deliver affordable homes and demonstrates the important role that housing investment can have in improving the economic prosperity of the City Region.

Whilst the LIP sets out how the Liverpool City Region will work with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), housing associations and other partners particularly in relation to the new affordable housing framework, the LIP is also a prospectus for investment.

It is important to clarify that the Housing Strategy does not directly control new development. This is undertaken through the planning system however, the strategy provides evidence of housing needs based on key research findings. As such it will influence how the authority responds to meeting those identified needs and influence the assessment of local housing requirements.

The annual average housing requirement figure for Wirral until the Regional Spatial Strategy is revoked, is 500 new homes per year. The Council has already consulted on a revised figure as part of the preparation of a Core Strategy Development Plan Document but a final figure will not be available until the Core Strategy is adopted in 2012. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), which is also in the process of being updated, shows a significant capacity for additional housing to be delivered, much of which already has planning permission. The findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) will also be used as a guide to the number and type of new homes that may be needed in Wirral, if local housing needs are to be satisfied.

Linked to this, we will seek to maximise affordable housing supply and maintain our long term aspirational target of 40% affordable housing on suitable sites based on the scale of need however our recent Housing Viability Study indicates that 10% or 20% of affordable housing, is more achievable, subject to area, on all qualifying sites.

A large amount of additional future housing will be delivered through the planned Wirral Waters development, which has received planning permission (subject to a Section 106 agreement) for over 15,000 residential units, alongside significant new commercial development. This is a long-term development, which will provide new units over the period up to the year 2050, with a maximum delivery of 500 dwellings per year. The need for affordable housing will be considered at each stage of development, along with the decision on whether to deliver new affordable housing on or off-site. Wirral Waters will have a positive economic impact on the surrounding area and the Council has prepared an Integrated Regeneration Study to provide a planning context for North Birkenhead and South Wallasey which considers this.

Elsewhere, the Core Strategy is expected to direct new development to previously developed land (brownfield sites) and regeneration sites in east Wirral, before greenfield sites (including garden land) and sites elsewhere. In line with the findings of the SHMA, one in five new homes will initially be required to be affordable, rising to two in five as the market recovers, but this may need to be reduced if the value of the development cannot support them. There is no intention to alter the boundaries to the Green Belt.

Key issues emerging from the initial phases of the Housing Strategy consultation highlighted concerns about design, heritage and access to shops, schools and public transport, which will need to be dealt with as part of the Core Strategy. The mix of house-types on each site will be expected to follow the pattern of needs identified in the SHMA and the character of the local area.

Key to meeting future housing provision will see the Council working with both housing associations and private developers in terms of the type, location and quality of their new homes. Although the Government has postponed the compulsory implementation of the Lifetime Homes Standard for social housing and is unlikely to introduce the standard for private developers, we will work with housing associations to continue to ensure that their new homes meet key standards such as the Code for Sustainable Homes. The Council will also over the long term, continue to work to ensure standards for all housing, irrespective of tenure, are more closely aligned, working with private developers to make sure that standards are as high as possible within the constraints of national policy.

Market Housing

The economic downturn and the problems first time buyers are facing have impacted on Wirral's housing market. Although house prices in our housing priority areas are still lower than the west of the borough, evidence indicates there is still a 44.4%⁸ affordable housing need in that area. There is therefore still a need to make areas of the borough more affordable, attractive and to narrow the housing and inequalities gap.

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 become unemployed, and have little or no savings to support them to move.

The reality is that in Wirral, being able to afford a home is still a major issue, which is worsening particularly for first time buyers who are becoming increasingly restricted in choice. 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%⁹) 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.

Affordable Homes

In Wirral, over two thirds of newly forming households (63.4%¹⁰) are currently unable to afford general open market homes for sale. The number of smaller one and two person households is projected to increase, further contributing to Wirral's increased need for additional affordable housing, particularly for older people, single persons and households with no children.

With the number of applicants registering on the Wirralhomes Choice Based Lettings (soon to be Sub-regional Choice Based Lettings) 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 affordable and social 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 important that social housing continues to be seen as a tenure of choice for local people, which will need to be delivered by improving the quality, type and choice of social rented sector accommodation in the borough.

There are significant changes to how affordable housing will be delivered in the future with wide ranging proposals to reform social housing¹¹ including how homes are allocated, the tenancy length and types offered. The reforms do not affect existing social housing tenants but if implemented will have implications for new tenants. The social housing reform does however

⁸ Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2009 Update – P60 para 6.48 – RSS Inner Area equivalent to HMRA

⁹ Council of Mortgage Lenders ([press release 15 June 10](#))

¹⁰ Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2009 Update – P47 para ii

¹¹ Local Decisions: a fairer future for social housing- Consultation 2010

offer an opportunity through the emergence of a new model of affordable housing tenancy. This will offer tenancies whose rents are up to 80% of market rents and potentially offer a stepping stone to those households that could be economically active, however at present cannot afford to access traditional open market housing. The income generated from the new affordable rents model will provide the potential for re-investment for new affordable homes for the future.

Locally the LIP will now provide the framework for directing investment in new social housing in the Liverpool City Region. This will assist us to meet housing need and we will work with our partner authorities and housing providers to develop the required mix of affordable housing as set out in our SHMA.

We will work with our local housing provider partners to identify the appropriate level of conversions for social rented properties to support a range of affordable housing alongside other affordable housing models such as Homebuy.

Private Rented Housing

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 that provides choice. This ease of access, coupled with supporting tenants to sustain existing tenancies, is something Wirral continues to use as both an aid for homelessness prevention and in meeting housing need. This is being achieved and will continue to be delivered through linking services ranging from housing advice and information, tenancy support and assistance with bonds, alongside increased access to accredited private rented homes through a social lettings agency or property shop.

We will work closely with the private rented sector to promote access to, and ensure homes offered meet high property and management standards. We will achieve this through working with landlords to meet accredited status for their properties. The same approach will be carried out in relation to Homes in Multiple Occupation where a licence will be granted by Wirral Council where appropriate to operate. This type of accommodation offers a low cost housing option.

Where the Council is unable to successfully work alongside the private rented sector and where appropriate we will use enforcement powers to improve the quality and management of privately rented housing. This includes addressing issues around housing disrepair, harassment and illegal eviction.

Whilst there are opportunities within the private rented sector, a challenge for the future which will impact on people's ability to afford a private rented home, are the Government's changes to welfare benefits, including Housing Benefit/ Local Housing Allowance (LHA), to be introduced in 2011/12 and 2012/13. It is estimated that in the North West, 49% of people claiming assistance with housing costs will have their allowance reduced, with the average loss being £11¹² per week. This is coupled with the planned reductions to other income, such as Job Seekers Allowance which will be reduced by 10%, once claimed for 12 months or longer. This may leave some households having to choose between reducing their housing costs, making up the shortfall from other income (and lowering their general standard of living) or falling into rent arrears if they are unable to secure employment.

As of February 2011, there were 29,214 housing benefit claimants in Wirral of which 9426 were receiving Local Housing Allowance (LHA). Particularly as some of these changes are being introduced from 1st April 2011, the authority has been proactive in trying to gauge the impact of the LHA cuts which will affect residents when they renew their claims, however the extent of the

¹² DWP Impacts of Housing Benefit proposals: Changes to the Local Housing Allowance to be introduced in 2011-12

changes won't be known until fully introduced by 2015. Issues that may impact range from the excess payment being removed, single room rate being extended to under 35 year olds, and a reduction in LHA for 5 bedroom properties, although these claimants do have transitional protection.

The Government changes to LHA will have a significant impact on young people in Wirral. Feedback from consultation with young people highlights that over 85% of 16-24 year olds who responded thought it was important to increase the availability of affordable homes. Many young people with low incomes are struggling to access housing that's suitable for their needs. It is intended to raise the age threshold of the current single room rate in 2012, a special low rate of housing benefit, which is available to single people under 25 years to the new age threshold of 35 years. The single room rate in Wirral is set at £64.50 per week for 2010/11. The changes will mean that young people, up to the age of 35 years, will face greater challenges to access affordable accommodation.

We will need to work with our partners to minimise the impact of the changes on reducing people's income by looking at a range of initiatives including new ways of letting accommodation. This could include shared tenancies and financial inclusion initiatives such as working with organisations such as Wirral Money Line to provide financial advice, particularly for people who are at risk of losing their home because they cannot afford it.

Maximising Affordable Housing through the Planning System

We commissioned a study of the viability of affordable housing¹³ in Wirral in 2010. The study indicated what percentage of affordable housing should be achieved on private developments as part of a Section 106 affordable housing agreement. Results showed that for the outer parts of Wirral a target of 20% was appropriate, with a target of 10% in the Inner or Housing Market Renewal area. These targets are negotiated with private developers as part of the planning process, to increase the supply of affordable homes and offer mixed tenure housing developments.

We will seek to maximise the amount of affordable housing which can be achieved via Section 106 affordable housing agreements. These agreements can also be negotiated with developers to provide a 'commuted sum' which can be used for affordable housing or other site related improvements. However in light of the recent economic climate and the impact this is having on the housing market, it is essential that our policies and targets for affordable housing are realistic and take into account current circumstances.

Through rigorous analysis we will continue to review what affordable housing targets and housing standards can be achieved however, this needs to be done without undermining site viability, preventing sites from coming forward and stifling new development. To this end we will respond to Wirral's diverse housing needs by influencing private developments to continue to ensure this is one of a range of housing options available.

¹³ Affordable Housing Viability Study –September 2010

A need to make homes warmer and reduce the energy consumed by households

Following consultation it was evidence that the term ‘fuel poverty’ was difficult for some people to understand. The Government’s definition of fuel poverty is when a household needs to spend more than 10% of its disposable income to adequately heat their home. Throughout this strategy we will talk about fuel poverty in terms of reducing energy consumption within homes and making homes warmer. This has two elements:

1. to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions which will help stop climate change; and
2. to reduce “fuel poverty”, where a household is unable to afford to heat their home to an adequate temperature.

The installation of home insulation, improvements to heating systems and making use of “renewable energy”, amongst other measures, can all reduce CO₂ emissions and reduce energy bills. This can occur through Council-led schemes to improve the energy efficiency of housing, as well as housing associations’ work to improve the energy efficiency of their tenants’ existing properties and ensuring new homes are built using standards to keep fossil-fuel consumption to a minimum.

Although improving the energy efficiency of existing and new homes is an excellent way to reduce energy consumption, it is not the only factor in reducing fuel poverty. This is due to:

- 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.

As 17.1% of Wirral households are estimated to be in fuel poverty¹⁴, which is above the average for England (15.6%) it is a key priority of the Council to address this for the future. 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 levels¹⁵. 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 people’s 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 year¹⁶. The main reason for this fall was increasing household income¹⁷. The introduction of Pension Credit and Tax Credits and the continuation of Winter Fuel Payments have played an important part in this increase.

¹⁴ 2008 Fuel poverty sub-regional statistics, published 2011, DECC, http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/fuelpov_stats/regional/regional.aspx

¹⁵ Wirral Private Sector Stock Condition and Home Energy Survey 2008

¹⁶ UK Fuel Poverty Strategy – 7th Annual Progress Report – 2009, DECC, page 7.

¹⁷ Annual Report on Fuel Poverty Statistics 2009, DECC, page 11.

There is however a large number of unclaimed benefits. Nationally, up to £10.5bn in means-tested benefits and up to £6.2bn in tax credits currently goes unclaimed every year¹⁸. 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 Cosy Homes¹⁹. 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 £650m²⁰ and therefore we need to look at how we can work with our partners to target these homes.

The Government's Green Deal will be available to households from autumn 2012. It will enable homeowners and private tenants to receive energy efficiency measures (but not renewable energy measures) with no up-front costs. The cost of the measures will be paid for by households through savings on their energy bills. If the house is sold or the tenancy changes, the "loan" will stay with the property. The final detail on the Green Deal is not expected until Spring 2012 and the potential impact upon Wirral's energy efficiency schemes will be analysed throughout the Green Deal's development.

In addition to the loans, there will be a new Energy Company Obligation (ECO). Currently, the main obligation is the "Carbon Emissions Reduction Target" (CERT); this sets CO₂ reduction targets for the energy companies within their licence agreement. It is the main driver behind the heavy subsidies for loft and cavity wall insulation and provides Wirral's Free Insulation Programme with its funding from British Gas. CERT will continue until December 2012 when the new ECO will begin.

The new ECO will be directed at households on certain welfare benefits and to homes with solid walls. For households on welfare benefits, it is thought the majority will not be suitable for the Green Deal loan and instead there will be subsidies for both insulation and heating. It is thought this aspect of the ECO will be similar to Warm Front (which is due to end in March 2013). For households with solid walls, there will be a subsidy for solid wall insulation due to the high expense of this measure; the remainder of the cost could then be met by a Green Deal loan. The Council will investigate providing subsidies to reduce the cost further, perhaps to communities which experience the greatest level of failure of thermal comfort and the highest number of Category 1 hazards. It may also be possible for local authorities to become Green Deal providers; Wirral Council will look at the costs and benefits of this as more detail is released.

¹⁸ Fuel Poverty Advisory Group Eighth Annual Report, 2009, published July 2010 by DECC, page 17.

¹⁹ 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.

²⁰ Wirral Private Sector Stock Condition & Home Energy Survey 2008, page 74, using an average of £10k / property.

The Council realises the positive impact “renewable energy” can have on reducing CO₂ emissions and fuel poverty. Renewable energy is that produced from sources such as the sun, wind or wood. The high cost of renewable energy systems compared to the CO₂ saved from their installation has traditionally been prohibitive to most households installing them and has prevented the Council from subsidising them on a large scale. However, with the introduction of the “Feed-in Tariff” and “Renewable Heat Incentive” which both provide annual income streams where heat and electricity generating renewable energy systems are installed, the Council will fully explore an increased role (financial or otherwise) in facilitating installations.

Fuel costs

From a low point in 2003, in real terms gas prices have risen by 77% and electricity prices by 60% to 2009²¹. 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 2009²². 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 bills²³.

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’ “Warm Home Discount” 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 from 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.

Areas are prioritised for activity based on intelligence of poor housing standards and low incomes, however wider awareness raising to target other groups who may be more susceptible to fuel poverty will also be delivered. For example, although there is no local data on the levels of fuel poverty in different ethnic groups, we will ensure new methods are developed for identifying the need for assistance including those in the Black and Minority Ethnic Community.

²¹ UK Fuel Poverty Strategy – 7th Annual Progress Report – 2009, DECC, page 19.

²² UK Fuel Poverty Strategy – 7th Annual Progress Report – 2009, DECC, pages 7 to 8.

²³ Fuel Poverty Advisory Group Eighth Annual Report, 2009, published July 2010 by DECC, page 8.

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.

The Council will also ensure energy efficiency and fuel poverty assistance is built in to other new initiatives, such as with Wirral Healthy Homes. This initiative is an excellent example of several agencies and Council departments working together to improve housing, health, fire safety, community safety and the general welfare of an area using intensive, awareness-raising methods such as door-knocking, attendance at community events and setting up referral networks with local health agencies.

Health Impacts of Poor Quality Housing

Where a home has poor heating, poor insulation, damp or mould, there is an increased risk of illness amongst the occupants. Low temperatures within a home can lead to a decreased resistance to respiratory diseases, increase in blood pressure and increased cardio-vascular disease. At its most extreme it can lead to hypothermia. It is during the winter that most people die (known as “Excess Winter Deaths”) and in part this can be attributed to the cold temperatures people experience in their homes. By improving insulation and heating, “affordable warmth” can:

- increase life expectancy and reduce inequalities in health
- improve householders’ mental health and well being
- improve children’s educational achievements and school attendance, and reduce the incidence of childhood asthma
- promote social well-being and independent living, with older people able to use the whole house following central heating installation. This potentially reduces/delays admission to hospitals and care homes.

Initiatives such as the Wirral Healthy Homes pilot which targets hot spots for Excess Winter Deaths and the npower Health Through Warmth pilot for working with doctors surgeries where there are high incidences of COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) will be examined to learn good practice and to explore the potential for future health intelligence based fuel poverty schemes. The Council will also continue to work with public health colleagues and the NHS to build referral mechanisms for clients to receive energy efficiency and fuel poverty alleviation measures.

Meeting the Housing and Support Needs of Vulnerable People

Most 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 including older people, people with learning or physical disabilities, to people who are homeless and teenage parents.

Overall there are an estimated 29,741 (20%)²⁴ 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 or sensory disability, frail older people and a high number of people with a mental 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 so far by looking at a range of opportunities which help improve access to different types of housing, deliver services to people's homes and where appropriate develop purpose built specialist accommodation to meet needs. The Supporting People programme has enabled low level housing support to be delivered for clients such as older people and 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.

A key issue emerging from the initial phase of the Housing Strategy consultation, highlighted the fact that young people in particular are having difficulty in accessing a home of their own. Clearly this issue is not limited to vulnerable young people but in fact needs to be considered and addressed across all the key areas we have identified in this strategy. Although in Wirral, there are currently a range of services and initiatives operating which young people can and do access, some of which are linked to accommodation, we need to ensure that we work with our partners to look at young people in the wider sense and access new opportunities to ensure they can access a home of their own to meet their needs and where appropriate, access support to maintain independent living.

The current focus of our work in relation to vulnerable people is around three key 'super groups' which are:

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

Although these 'super groups' are our focus, a strategic review of supported housing provision for all clients will be carried out over the first three to five years of this strategy. This review will

²⁴ Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007

enable Wirral Council to identify and ensure there are appropriate services available in Wirral which reflect changing local needs and where appropriate existing and new services are developed further. As such, over the lifetime of this strategy these 'super groups' may change and therefore we will continue via our Strategic Housing Plan, to monitor needs of vulnerable groups and refocus services towards those most in need.

As we have already considered older people earlier in this strategy, the focus of this section will be on the remaining two super groups, which cover a wide range of issues.

The key challenge for the future, however is to ensure the needs of these groups of individuals are met by providing access to both existing and new good quality homes and appropriate support services.

People in receipt of care with support

This client group covers a wide range of people across all ages, including those with physical or sensory disabilities and people with learning disabilities. Wirral's SHMA indicates that in Wirral, there are approximately 26,179 households with learning, physical or sensory disability (across a range of age groups) with these groups representing 88% of all vulnerable households in the borough. Further evidence identified through the Regional Needs Analysis estimates that 400 people with Learning or Physical / Sensory disabilities require assistance from housing related support services, with Wirral's Supporting People programme currently providing services to 265 clients²⁵.

There is a lot of work to do in respect of meeting the accommodation and associated support needs of these individuals. Providing homes for these individuals will focus in the main on accessing existing suitable accommodation in the borough, however where appropriate and recourses are available, may include new purpose built homes. It must be stressed that this is just one aspect of what needs to be done, therefore a partnership approach to addressing both the accommodation and support needs of this client group needs to continue to be developed, recognising that all partners have a role to play. We will therefore continue to work with our partners to develop a range of flexible options to meet the needs of these individuals, recognising that a significant amount of appropriate support can be provided ranging from carrying out home adaptations to providing low level support to people to help them maintain independent living.

It is important to recognise however that this approach needs to be put in the context of future funding and other opportunities available, particularly when considering analysis of Wirral's Disabled Person's Housing Register (DPHR). Of the 1,298 households accepted onto the DPHR between 1st April 2007 and 31st March 2011, 673 (i.e. 51.8%) were successfully rehoused into general needs homes, however only 208 of those were rehoused to an existing adapted home.²⁶

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 with limited housing options, to name a few.

Single homeless people with support needs, people with drug or alcohol problems and young people are the largest users of short term supported housing services, so we need to focus in the future on how we can work with our partners to help these people develop a greater stake in

²⁵ Supporting People data 21st April 2011

²⁶ Wirralhomes Data 4th May 2011

society. The strategic review of supported housing provision for all clients will support this approach ensuring that we identify and provide appropriate services which reflect changing local needs and where appropriate existing and new services are developed further. However alongside this, we need to ensure that when these people are ready to move on and live more independently either without or with little support, they can access a home that is suitable for their needs. This means ensuring that we work with our partners to provide appropriate advice, support and access to homes, ultimately enabling them to live as independently as possible.

The Council has clearly recognised the significant impact these issues are having on people and this, coupled with the down turn over recent years in the economy over recent years means that more work needs to be done across all sectors to both support and prevent people from being at risk of social exclusion.

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 as well as identifying future priorities to inform its 2008 – 2010 Homeless Strategy. A key outcome of this review was the need to strengthen the Council's Housing Options Service through significant investment and refocusing of services towards homeless prevention. The service now focuses on proactive partnership working to provide advice and support to either assist people to secure appropriate accommodation or prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place. Initiatives such as education and awareness workshops about homelessness and use of the Government Mortgage Rescue scheme have supported this approach which is clearly working, with evidence indicating the number of statutory homeless acceptances in Wirral falling between 2007/08 and 2009/10 by 89% (467 in 2007/08 to 51 in 2009/10), however increased (by 51%) to 77 in 2010/11.

Whilst this approach has significantly reduced homelessness in Wirral, we must acknowledge that there is still work to do and we cannot be complacent. The national homeless statistics for England published in March 2011 (covering the quarter to the end of December 2010) record that the number of households accepted as homeless was 15% higher than the same quarter in 2009. Following a long term downward trend since 2004, acceptances have now increased nationally in two consecutive quarters for the first time since 2003.

This position although mirrored locally, is further magnified. In Wirral the number of households accepted as homeless was 25% higher in quarter 3 of 2010/11 and 150% higher in quarter 4 of the same year compared with the same quarters in the previous year.

In addition the latest footfall to the Housing Options service of people seeking housing options advice including where homelessness is threatened, shows an increase of 57% in 2010-11 compared with 2009-10. The majority of these cases were given housing advice.

The reality is that we need to recognise that issues such as the changing economic climate, people's changing housing needs, pressure on the housing market and welfare benefit reform, 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.

To do this, it is important that we continue to focus on homeless prevention generally. This will involve continuing to work with our partners to develop and make use of existing and innovative initiatives, coupling this where appropriate with access to support services to prevent people from being at risk of social exclusion.

To both inform and support this approach, throughout the life of this strategy we will carry out regular independent reviews of our services to ensure we continue in conjunction with our partners, to prevent and relieve homelessness. These reviews will consider the impact of issues such as the downturn in the economy, a reduction in the availability of public funding and changes to Government Policy such as the reform of Welfare Benefits, have on homelessness and how services should be developed and shaped to respond to this. Our next review will take place during 2011 and will inform the development of our new Homeless Strategy and Action Plan, which will continue to drive forward our partnership approach to addressing homelessness over future years.

Supporting employment, learning and skills through the delivery of housing programmes

Housing has a major role to play in supporting long term job creation and the economy. Whilst Wirral's housing market is showing signs of movement 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 accelerate its economic growth and there are significant investment and employment opportunities currently being developed which will support this. These include a number of housing and regeneration initiatives and developments, including importantly Wirral Waters, the creation of an Enterprise Zone and infrastructure improvements, including to power supply and Broadband distribution. The Enterprise Zone and Wirral Waters are adjacent to some of the Borough's most deprived communities, which have been a focus for regeneration investment, most recently through Housing Market Renewal and MerseyHeartlands New Growth Point.

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 Housing Association partners as part of the 2010 Decent Homes Programme. In particular as part of the Council housing stock transfer, investment of over £108m has been secured and invested in improving over 13,000 former council homes between 2005 and April 2010. A further £60 million is estimated as being available to be invested as part of this process over the next two years.

This investment is delivered through the stock transfer organisations who appoint contractors to undertake improvement works. Each organisation is committed, as part of the stock transfer promise offer document, to 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 improve their own social and economic well being, providing them with a starting point to develop their potential. We need to recognise however that people's 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 through housing investment. Key to this will be Wirral's role in supporting the Local Economic Partnership (LEP) to support the delivery of the right mix of housing in the right places. We will encourage and support 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.

The Council also recognises the links between housing and the "Green Economy" in lowering carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from housing. The Government has stated that should all households partake in the Green Deal by 2030, employment in "Green Jobs" would rise from 27,000 at present to almost 250,000. It is also predicted there will be £7bn of Green Deal

private sector investment per year²⁷. Wirral Council will ensure that the borough is actively involved in the Green Economy through the Wirral Investment Strategy, Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Strategy and through embedding local recruitment and training within procurement processes. The Council will also maximise Green Deal investment through targeted promotion with partners and will explore other ways to strengthen delivery such as becoming a Green Deal provider.

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 as part of the wider Liverpool City region area.

²⁷ www.decc.gov.uk, Press Release 2010/104, 21st September 2010

Glossary of Terms

1. Vision

Is a statement that organisations work to, to achieve a desired outcome for the future.

2. Affordable Housing

Affordable housing includes both social rented and low cost home ownership. It is available to eligible households whose housing needs are not being met by the open market. Affordable housing is at a cost which is below that of housing normally available on the open market.

3. Strategic Housing Plan

This set outs our long term priorities and shorter term measurable actions which will help us to achieve our vision. Our Strategic Housing Plan focuses on a three year period with the actions identified contributing to the long term priorities and overall vision of the Housing Strategy in 2026. The plan is regularly monitored and refreshed every three years with new actions and priorities added as appropriate.

4. Sustainable Community Strategy

Wirral Strategic Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), Wirral 2025 sets out the long-term vision for the area, which Wirral Council and other partners in Wirral Strategic Partnership will work together to achieve.

5. Social care

This involves actions or measures to support vulnerable people in their day to day lives.

6. 'Super Groups'

The 'super groups' referred to in this document are those with the highest level of needs in the borough.

7. Regeneration

This is about the renewal of a neighbourhood or place as a whole so includes actions to improve the physical (e.g. improving buildings), social (e.g. making places safer) and economic (e.g. improving access to skills and training) to improve neighbourhoods for communities.

8. Strategic Housing Market Assessment

Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA's) provide a robust evidence base for a wide range of housing policies. They enable Local Authorities to have a deeper appreciation of the drivers and characteristics of the local housing market, so that they can set a target for the proportion of affordable housing to be delivered through new developments.

9. Corporate Plan

The Council's Corporate Plan guides Councillors and Officers to achieve Wirral Council's vision which is, *"A more prosperous and equal Wirral, enabling all communities and people to thrive and achieve their full potential"*

10. Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD)

The Core Strategy DP sets out the Council's long term vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the future development of the borough.

11. Inequalities Gap

There is evidence of real differences between neighbourhoods in, for example, levels of health, income, and educational attainment, which need to be addressed to assist people to reach their full potential.

12. Priority neighbourhoods

These are neighbourhoods identified as a priority for action or interventions to support the local housing markets and improve outcomes for local people.

13. Credit crunch

This is a state in which there is a shortage of available credit to lend to businesses and consumers.

14. Median (house price)

Median price is one way that home prices can be measured to evaluate house prices in a specific area. The method to gain the median house price is to rank house prices from lowest to highest price and the price that falls in the direct middle of the list is the median.

15. Wirralhomes

Wirralhomes is a partnership of housing associations (Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)) in the Wirral area who have agreed an allocations policy for letting their social housing stock in the borough.

16. Strategic Enabling Authority

Wirral Council is a strategic enabling authority for housing in which the Council seeks to secure the best outcomes for their local communities by making the best use of resources.

17. Community Infrastructure Levy

The Community Infrastructure Levy (the levy) came into force in April 2010. It allows local authorities in England and Wales to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. The money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure that is needed as a result of development. This includes transport schemes, flood defences, schools, hospitals and other health and social care facilities, parks, green spaces and leisure centres.

18. Demographic

This refers to the human population and its characteristics e.g. number of households in a neighbourhood

19. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)

BME is a term commonly used to describe members of the Black and ethnic minority communities often with diverse ethnic origins, different religions, languages and cultural values.

20. Supported Housing

This is a combination of housing and support to assist vulnerable people to live independently.

21. Housing stock

This refers to Wirral's housing of all tenures and property types.

22. Affordable Rent Model

The Affordable Rent Model will give housing associations the flexibility to offer fixed term tenancies to some new tenants at a rent level higher than normal social rent. Landlords are able to set rents at up to 80 per cent of local market rents paid in the private sector.

23. Low Cost Home Ownership

Low Cost Home Ownership can be provided by a range of schemes to help people who cannot afford to buy a home outright. The most common scheme, Homebuy (or shared-ownership) enables you to buy a share, for example, 50% or 75% of a property. When you are able to do so, you can buy additional 'shares' of your home until you own 100% of the property. The share you do not own is owned by the social housing provider (usually a housing association) and you pay rent for this share.

24. Flexible tenancies

The Government plans to introduce 'fixed tenancies' as part of its social housing reform. New tenants to social housing may be offered a fixed tenancy for a suggested minimum period of two years but housing associations may set a longer fixed term if they wish. This is a change to the current system in that all new social tenants are offered an introductory tenancy for a period of one year which, subject to meeting the terms of the tenancy, then becomes an assured tenancy.

25. Community Land Trust (CLT)

CLT is a nonprofit, community-based organisation committed to the stewardship and affordability of land, housing and other buildings used for community benefit in perpetuity.

CLTs take a variety of forms: they may build on existing organisations such as development trusts or almshouse associations; they may have a very small area of interest, or cover an entire city; they may manage a handful of properties or an estate of 1000s of units; properties may be on a rental, shared-equity ownership, co-operative basis or even sold on the open market (cross-subsidy). They generally have in common the aims of meeting local housing need and providing community benefit.

Where CLTs are used to provide affordable housing they sell an equity share in properties and thus restrict their value to the homeowner. This unsold equity is used to ensure the property remains affordable to benefit others in the community.

26. Housing Association

Housing associations in the United Kingdom are independent not-for-profit organisations that provide low-cost "social housing" for people in housing need.

27. Localism

Localism emphasises the value of decision making powers which should be exercised at the lowest practical level – close to the people who are affected by decisions, rather than distant from them. It gives Local authorities freedom to respond to what local people want, and maximise value for money.

28. The Big Society

A government initiative designed to put more power and opportunity into people's hands. The aim is to give citizens, communities and local government the power and information they need to come together, solve the problems they face and build the Britain they want.

29. Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3)

PPS3 (June 2010) sets out the existing national planning policy framework for delivering the Government's housing objectives through the land use planning system.

30. Affordable Rent Model

Affordable Rent properties will give housing associations the flexibility to offer fixed term tenancies to some new tenants at a rent level higher than social rent - with landlords able to set rents at up to 80 per cent of local market rents.

31. Market Rents

A market rent is the level of rent that a landlord would accept and a tenant would pay for the tenancy of the house. It is likely to be close to the rent being charged for similar assured tenancies of similar houses, in similar locations.

32. Landlord Accreditation

Wirral Council's Landlord Accreditation Scheme is a free voluntary scheme for private landlords, which recognises good quality, well-managed private rented accommodation. Each property which meets the Scheme's standards receives a certificate of accreditation.

33. Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)

Regional Spatial Strategies introduced house building targets for local authorities to meet the previous national housing policy to build 3 million homes nationally by 2020. Regional Strategies are proposed for abolition by the coalition government.

34. Liverpool City Region

The Liverpool City Region is an area of the United Kingdom centred around Liverpool. It was one of eight city regions defined in the 2004 document Moving Forward: The Northern Way, as a collaboration between the three northern Regional Development Agencies.

35. Local Investment Plan

The Homes and Communities Agency, as part of its 'Single Conversation' with local authorities, has worked with sub-regions to prepare Local Investment Plans based upon Government priorities. The plans set out the investment required for an area to deliver its agreed vision, identifying needs to be addressed with based on evidence from local, sub-regional and regional strategies.

36. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

The primary role of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is to identify sites with potential for housing; assess their housing potential; and assess when they are likely to be developed. The assessments are required by national planning policy as set out in Planning Policy Statement 3.

37. Affordable Housing Viability Study

The Affordable Housing Viability Study provides evidence for Local Authorities to set a robust affordable housing target taking into account current economic circumstances.

38. Section 106 Agreement

Section 106 (S106) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local authority to enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a developer in association with the granting of planning permission. The obligation is termed a Section 106 Agreement. Section 106 agreements are used to provide affordable homes and to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways, recreational facilities, education, and health.

39. Integrated Regeneration Study (IRS)

The IRS represents the "single, integrated comprehensive spatial regeneration plan for Birkenhead and Wirral Waters". As such, it is accountable to a number of audiences and will help establish the policy context in support of a wide platform of investment activity going

forward. It will inform the statutory Local Development Framework process and has taken account of work completed to date as part of this process.

40. Green Belt

Green Belt land is land designated through the planning system where new development is only permitted under very special circumstances under rules set out in national planning policy.

41. Private developer

These are property developers that build new homes or renovate existing homes for open market sale or private rented accommodation for a profit.

42. Lifetime Homes Standard

The Lifetime Homes standard is a set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes that aim to meet peoples needs over the whole of their lifetime.

43. 'Future Proofing' new homes

The phrase 'future proofing' describes the process of trying to anticipate future developments, so that action can be taken to minimise possible negative consequences, and maximise opportunities.

44. Wirral Home Improvement Agency (WHIA)

The WHIA works with people to provide adaptations and facilities, such as hand rails or wet rooms, to respond to individual needs to help maintain and sustain independent living.

45. Domiciliary Care

Home care is sometimes called **domiciliary care** or home help. It is when care workers visit people in their own homes to give help and support.

46. Floating Support (also called Visiting Support)

This is a service that provides housing related support to vulnerable adults (over 16) to enable them to maintain their independence in their own home. Floating support services will general be short term (less than 2 years) and will have the flexibility to support a person wherever they live.

47. Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

A Disabled Facilities Grant is a grant administered by the Council to help towards the cost of adaptations and facilities in a person's home to enable them to sustain or maintain independent living. A grant is paid when the council considers that changes are necessary to meet your needs, and that the work is reasonable and practical.

48. House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

The Housing Act 2004 introduced a new definition of a 'house in multiple occupation' (HMO). This can briefly be summed up as a building or part of a building consisting of one or more units of accommodation, or a self-contained flat; occupied by people who do not form a single household and where there is some sharing of the basic amenities (washing facilities, toilets, and kitchens).

49. Housing Benefit/ Local Housing Allowance

Financial assistance offered by the Government to eligible people on low incomes, whether they are working or not, to help to pay all or part of their rent.

50. Decent Homes Programme

The Decent Homes Standard is a minimum standard applied to all social housing and is a home which is wind and weather tight and has modern facilities.

51. Warmfront

This is a Government funded scheme to install heating and insulation measures into eligible homes. It is for people on certain disability or income-related benefits.

52. Cosy Homes

Cosy Homes offers free loft and cavity wall insulation, subject to a technical survey and a maximum grant allowance, and is available to Wirral residents living in private rented or owner occupied properties.

53. Green Deal

The Green Deal, introduced by the 2010 Energy Bill, provides measures to make properties more energy efficient in partnership with private energy companies.

54. Community Energy Saving Programme

The Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) has been created as part of the government's Home Energy Saving Programme. It requires gas and electricity suppliers and electricity generators to deliver energy saving measures to domestic consumers in specific low income areas of Great Britain. CESP has been designed to promote a 'whole house' approach and to treat as many properties as possible in defined areas.

55. Welfare Benefits

Welfare benefits are payments given by the Government to eligible people on low incomes, or to meet specific needs.

56. Feed-in Tariff

Feed-in tariffs are payment to energy users for the renewable energy they generate e.g. from wind turbines. The tariffs have been introduced by the Government to help increase the level of renewable energy in the UK towards our legally binding target of 15% of total energy from renewables by 2020 (up from under 2% in 2009).

57. Renewable Heat Incentive

The Renewable Heat Incentive provides a financial incentive to install renewable heating sources in place of fossil fuel based power, e.g. gas, oil and electricity.

58. Vulnerable groups

A vulnerable person can be someone who is in receipt of, or may be in need of, care or support services and are less able to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. For example, older people, or homeless people.

59. Excess Winter Deaths

During the winter months, deaths in England and Wales reach higher levels than during the summer months. Excess winter deaths is calculated as winter deaths (deaths occurring in December to March) minus the average of non-winter deaths (April to July of the current year and August to November of the previous year).

60. Health through Warmth (HTW)

The 'Health Through Warmth' scheme was set up by npower (private energy company) in 2000 in partnership with the health service and National Energy Action. The scheme operates through locally based partnerships which seek to help vulnerable people whose health is adversely

affected by cold, damp living conditions. This is achieved through the installation of appropriate energy efficiency and heating measures, along with the provision of related advice and information.

61. Supporting People Programme

The Supporting People Programme provides housing-related support to help vulnerable people to live as independently as possible. This could be in their own homes or in hostels, sheltered housing or other specialised supported housing. It provides complementary support for people who may also need personal or medical care. Supporting People only funds housing support.

62. Social exclusion

'Social exclusion' is a term that covers, but is broader than, poverty. It relates to being unable to participate fully in normal social activities, or to engage in political and civic life. This may be due to a range of reasons including because of the people themselves, or the areas where they live due to high crime, poor housing, high unemployment, low incomes.

63. Growth Point

Growth Points are communities that are pursuing large-scale, sustainable housing growth through a partnership between local authorities, private sector partners and Government, with an end delivery date of 2017. Additional funding for the Growth Point programme has not been provided beyond March 2011.

APPENDIX 1 – TECHNICAL APPENDIX

Responding to changes in the long term population of Wirral, in particular an increase in the number of older people and an increase in the number of smaller households.

The Evidence and Challenge

- A decrease in the overall population over a 25 year period (2008-2033) of 1.6% (4,800)ⁱ
- The biggest decrease is in those of working age (-14.6% or 26,500 people)ⁱⁱ.
- 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.ⁱⁱⁱ
- It is projected that the number of households will increase by 5.9% (8,000) between 2009 (135,200) and 2029 (143,200) or 6.6% between 2008 and 2033 (144,000)^{iv}.
- The average household size is projected to reduce from 2.29 in 2008 to 2.11 by 2033 [from 2008 CLG household and 2008 ONS population projections].
- 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^v. Pensioner households (65+) in Wirral are projected to increase by 43.37% (25,200) between 2008 and 2033 to make up 27.43% of all households. It is also projected that there is a small increase in 25-34 age group by 2.62% (800 households). All other age groups in Wirral are projected to decline^{vi}. One person households to increase by 31.3% (15,000) between 2008 and 2033.
- 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 (equivalent to 6.21% of all Wirral households aged 65 or over^{vii}).
- 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 (equivalent to 11.88% of all Wirral households aged 65 or over^{viii}).
- 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) (equivalent to 21.96% of all Wirral households aged 65 or over^{ix}).
- Previous consultation shows 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 were unable to afford general market homes of an appropriate size, an increase of 2 percentage points 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. Projected figures are not available for Wirral, however ONS 2007 mid year data indicated that 2.9% of the population in Wirral are non-white British.

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

A need to make better use of the existing stock across all sectors and make homes accessible, to meet the current and future local housing need.

The Evidence and Challenge

- There is still a significant regeneration challenge particularly within eastern Wirral.
- Wirral recorded an increase in the number of all empty homes from 5086 in 2009 to 6099 in 2010.
- The number of empty homes in Wirral forms part of a wider regional problem as the North West has the second highest proportion of homes being empty in England, meaning there is 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.
- The number of Private sector homes in Wirral empty for more than 6 months increased by 4.4% between 2009 and 2010 (up from 2623 to 2739) with Wirral existing housing market renewal areas tending to experience the highest levels^x
- The numbers of empty homes being brought back into use has been steadily increasing year on year rising from 177 in 2007/08, to 207 in 2008/09, to 284 in 2009/10. The majority of these homes were in the private sector.
- Over two thirds of the Newheartlands area has vacancy rates above the Wirral average. [Of the 31 LSOA's in the Housing Market Renewal Area 67%, (21) of those also have vacancy rates above the Wirral average].
- As at April 2010 there were 916 empty socially rented homes, 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%, this increase is mainly due to an increase in the number of homes awaiting 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.
- As at December 2010, Wirralhomes had 14,141 households registered of which 897 (6.34%) were awarded urgent need status. A total of 183 applicants were overcrowded,

and 73 applicants were under-occupied representing 20% of all applicants awarded urgent needs status. This represents a 4% increase in the number of urgent need status' being awarded for under-occupation and overcrowding, on data available as of March 2010.

Evidence: Empty Property Strategy, Wirralhomes data, Private Sector Stock Condition and Home Energy Survey 2008, Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007 and 2009

A need to encourage people to stay within the borough through improving the quality and mix of stock, providing greater housing choice where appropriate to local needs, supported by the Council's economic development objectives.

The Evidence and Challenge

- Wirral's housing stock consists^{xi} 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%^{xii}) and national picture (18%).
- 74% of all housing^{xiii} (both social and private sector) in Wirral meets the decent homes standard.
- 94% of homes in the social rented sector were 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 2012^{xiv}
- 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 in east Wirral.
- There was a 3.57% reduction in house prices for the borough between 2007/08 and 2009/10, with an increase of 2.27% during the last year.
- Within the same period the housing market renewal priority areas have seen an 11.7% reduction in prices, with a 6% reduction during the last year, 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 need to increase the availability of housing to respond to changes in household projections and deliver affordable homes.

The Evidence and Challenge

- Since the economic downturn, new housing development has fallen significantly below the pre-recession regional annual average dwelling requirement of 500 net additional homes^{xv}.
- Wirral's Local Area Agreement targets for 2009/10 and 2010/11 were subsequently re-negotiated to 265 and 160 to take into account the national economic downturn.
- The Council resolved to apply an interim annual average target of 250 additional dwellings in response to the Government's intention to abolish Regional Strategies until a Core Strategy Development Plan Document is adopted in 2012.
- Indications are that demand in Wirral will continue to be restrained in the short term.
- The median house price in Wirral between 2007/08 and 2008/09 fell by 5.7% and sales reduced by more than half (54%). There was a limited recovery in 2009/10 with a 2.3% increase in median house price and a 1.3% increase in sales. Data for the first 2 quarters of 2010/11 shows sustained house price increases of a further 1.1%.
- The median house price for Wirral increased from £132,000 in 2008/09 to £135,000 in 2009/10 with a further 1.1% increase in the first half of 2010/11.
- 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 refocusing has also increased compared to previous years, indicating that more people are in immediate need for affordable housing to meet their specific needs.
- Those on Job Seekers Allowance for more than 12 months will have their Local Housing Allowance cut to 90%.
- In April 2011 it is planned to introduce caps on the maximum Local Housing Allowance payable for each property size in the private rented sector: £250 for one-bed; £290 for two-bed; £340 for three-bed; £400 for four-bed and larger properties.
- An implied requirement to deliver 570 new homes per year up to 2029 to balance the housing market and make areas in the east of the borough more attractive to live [the 2008-based CLG household projections reduce this to an annual average of 400 between 2009 and 2029 or 390 between 2008 and 2029 or 360 between 2008 and 2033].

- Quarter (25.6%) of all households in Wirral is unable to afford market accommodation of an appropriate size, an increase of 2 percentage points since 2007.
- While the Council's long term aspiration is for 40% of new housing to be affordable, current viability would only support a 20% target, with a 10% target within the older urban areas of east Wirral.
- The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment showed a gross capacity of up to 11,517 units on deliverable sites^{xvi}, with 92% on previously developed sites. 3,403 units had planning permission at March 2010.
- Wirral Waters alone could provide up to 15,000 dwellings within the older urban areas of east Wirral.

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

Making homes warmer and reducing the energy consumed by households

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 in 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 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

Meeting the housing and support needs of 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: 4,298 older people; 261 people with learning disabilities and / or physical / sensory disabilities and 889 people who are experiencing, or at risk of social exclusion.
- 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 in 2008, the number of statutory homelessness cases has decreased significantly from 467 in 2007/08 to 51 cases in 2009/10 (a reduction of 89%). However 2010 has seen a reversal of this trend with an increased demand on the service and a corresponding increase in statutory homeless acceptances.
- On average the Housing Options Team are able to prevent 110 homeless cases per quarter, with 20% of cases assisted to remain in the home and 80% of cases assisted to find alternative accommodation. In 2009-10 of the cases where homelessness could not be prevented in the time available and who were accepted as unintentionally homeless, the majority (75%) were considered to be priority need because the household included dependent children. An increased proportion (10% compared with 4% in 2006-07), were vulnerable because of mental illness. Similarly, an increased percentage (8% compared with 4% in 2006-07), were considered to be vulnerable because of physical disability.
- In 2009/10, of those homeless applicants who were eligible, unintentional and in priority need, the highest percentage of applicants (63%) were within the 25-44 age group, with the next highest (24%) in the 16-24 age group.
- Although overall homeless acceptances have fallen, the three main reasons for homelessness in Wirral in 2009/10 were the termination of short assured tenancy (22%), Mortgage Arrears (18%), Parents or family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (20%). A further 12% of cases were caused through violence.
- There is still an underlying low level incidence of rough sleeping, mostly by single people with complex needs^{xvii}. The number of rough sleepers is however rising, possibly due to

changes in Communities and Local Government policy. The number of rough sleepers in Wirral is the estimated highest in Merseyside.

- Whilst there is a good level of supported housing for single young people, move-on into the social rented sector is restricted due to the limited amount of accommodation available to younger age groups and move-on to the private rented sector is limited by levels of Local Housing Allowance available to people seeking Housing Benefit.

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

Supporting employment, learning and skills through the delivery of housing programmes

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 where people lived who were provided with a loan through this route are Birkenhead, Tranmere and Rock Ferry, Seacombe and Egremont and Prenton.
- By January 2011, 175 cases have been considered through the Government’s Mortgage Rescue scheme which was fast tracked in Wirral in 2009, with 17 cases completing successful mortgage rescue, enabling 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.

APPENDIX 2 – STRATEGIC HOUSING PLAN

The Strategy statement is supported by a Strategic Plan. The Strategic Housing Plan has been developed to be a high level overarching plan which is measurable, realistic and achievable. The actions contained within it have been developed to meet the long term objectives of the strategy but will be flexible and responsive to changes in market conditions, new opportunities and also introduce new perspectives as they arise, such as changing legislation and government policy. It is intended that the Plan will be reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure it is responsive to change and also to reflect on what milestones have been achieved in respond to our seven objectives for housing.

We consider the actions and targets developed to be cross cutting in terms of our strategic themes and as such the plan has been designed with this in mind. Strategic actions, baselines and targets whilst placed under specific themes for ease of understanding and future monitoring, should be considered within the context of each of the seven strategic themes. The Plan includes actions that are short, medium and long term and are supported by targets and timescales.

Strategic Theme 1 - Responding to changes in the long term population		
Action	Baseline	Targets and timescale
Monitor mid-year population estimates and CLG household projections and analyse 2011 Census results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population estimates and projections currently inform housing policy. ONS 2008 population projections from 2008 to 2033 estimate a decrease in population of 1.6% (4800 people). The fastest rate of increase at 36% (24,600) is older people with the largest increase being 122% (9,700) for those aged 85 and above Projections indicate the number of households will increase by 5.9% (8,000) between 2009 (135,200) and 2029 (143,200) or 6.6% between 2008 and 2033 (144,000) The average household size is projected to reduce from 2.33 in 2008 to 2.016 by 2033. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the latest CLG population projections to ensure they are aligned with the most up to date SHMA each year
Support vulnerable people in maintaining their independence in the community	<p>The current Supported Housing Strategy which ends in 2011, identifies 3 key super groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> people living independently with support; people in receipt of care with support; people experiencing or at risk of social exclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To complete a strategic review of supported housing need and provision by March 2016/17 Identify future priorities for supported housing for all client groups Develop Housing Plan for people with learning Disabilities by March 2012
To decrease the number of households with Wirralhomes Urgent Need Status under occupying social housing in Wirral, using these homes to decrease overcrowding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At Quarter 3 of 10/11, 67 households registered with Wirralhomes with Urgent Need Status were under occupying. At Quarter 3 of 10/11, 110 households registered with Wirralhomes with Urgent Need Status were over crowded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and set up a pilot Under occupation incentive scheme by August 2012 To consider the findings of the pilot Under Occupation Incentive Scheme and utilise good practice from other Local Authorities by December 11 Implement the Borough wide scheme by April 2012 Assist 25 people per annum in 2011/12 and 2012/13
Review BME Support Service	<p>ONS 2007 mid year population by ethnic group indicates that the current ethnic mix in Wirral consists mainly of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> white British (95%) people with other ethnic origins in Wirral is less than half the English average 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of service to be completed by December 2011 Implement findings of review by March 2012

Strategic Theme 2 - Making better use of existing stock		
Action	Baseline	Targets and timescales
To reduce the number of long term empty properties left vacant for over 6 months in the Borough to below the national average	As at March 2010 there were:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,739 long term vacant private properties • 535 long term vacant social properties • 269 long term vacant properties earmarked for regeneration purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To bring 250 empty properties back into use per year by March 2014 • To continue to produce quarterly reports on empty property to enable the targeting of key empty property hotspot areas with appropriate intervention.
To maximise the use of social housing stock within the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Quarter 3 of 10/11, 67 households registered with Wirralhomes with Urgent Need Status were under occupying. • At Quarter 3 of 10/11, 110 households registered with Wirralhomes with Urgent Need Status were over crowded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of 60 empty property grants by March 2013. 30 grants to be completed by March 2012. • To explore bringing empty properties back into use in-conjunction with development of a pilot Local Authority Property Shop by March 2012 • Implement new Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme by December 2011
To optimise the delivery of the adaptations service to reflect the changing legislative framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010/11 – 1783 adaptations completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic review of the adaptation service by September 2011 • 1,500 adaptations to be completed in 2011/12
To refocus the Disabled Persons Housing Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At 15th March 11 there were 373 applicants on the Disabled Persons Housing Register (DPHR) • Between 2007-2011 31% of disabled persons rehoused through DPHR where housed in an existing adapted home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review and refocus the Disabled Persons Housing Register in partnership with Housing Association by March 2012 • Implement required changes to the DPHR to make best use of specifically adapted properties to re-house a greater number of people in need of adapted properties on the Register and enable greater choice and control to the client
To promote good quality housing in the private rented sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Houses in Multiple Occupation identified and licensed in 2010/11. 22 Houses in Multiple Occupation on a 1 year license and 31 on a 5 year license in 10/11 • 28 accredited managing agents in Wirral, 2,032 accredited properties at 16th March 11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify new Houses In Multiple occupation through proactive targeting of Healthy Homes by March 2012 • Accredite 200 properties per year • Review the potential for fees and charges for Landlord Accreditation by march 2012 • To continue to promote accreditation and encourage managing agents to increase the

		number of their properties they are putting up for accreditation by March 2012
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- Accredite 600 properties by March 2014
- Explore the feasibility of addition House in Multiple Occupation licensing and produce a full impact assessment by March 2014

Strategic Theme 3 - Encouraging people to stay within the Borough		
Action	Baseline	Targets and timescales
To achieve and maintain 100% decent homes in the social housing sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21,924 properties decent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All housing association properties decent by December 2012
Reduce number of homes with a Category 1 Hazard under the Housing Health & Safety Rating System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19,900 homes in 2008 identified through Private Sector Stock Condition and Home Energy Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalise referral routes when a Category 1 Hazard is identified, with the Fire & Rescue Service by March 2012 Formalise referral routes with other organisations and Council Department by March 2014 Private Sector Stock Condition Survey to be completed by August 2013
Develop and produce a Strategic Tenancy Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New statutory requirement introduced – no baseline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Authority tenancy strategy to be completed within 12 months of Localism Bill enacted (target for Localism Bill is April 2012) - by March 2014 Engage with housing associations on the development of a Strategic Tenancy policy
Promote and develop a more holistic approach to maintaining independent living for vulnerable people, offering greater choice and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting People at full capacity can provide services for up to 5,000 vulnerable people per annum. Wirral Home Improvement Agency process 3,500 jobs per annum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote services to the wider community by developing greater partnership working and shared services with health, social care, and voluntary organisations to promote independence and choice for vulnerable people by September 2011. Maintain level of Supporting People Service to 5,000 vulnerable people at full capacity Provide 3,500 jobs per annum through Wirral Home Improvement Agency Promote greater use of Assistive Technology in maintaining independent living by September 2011 3500 Wirral Home Improvement Agency jobs completed in 2011/12

Continue Landlord Accreditation Scheme through new methods of income generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing scheme is 100% Council funded	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce new income streams, such as training fees, by March 2012
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Strategic Theme 4 - Increasing the availability of housing and delivering affordable homes		
Action	Baseline	Targets and timescales
Delivering affordable homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated 650 affordable homes completed between April 2009 and 16th March 2011 (final year end figures not yet available for 2010/11) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maximise use of the Homes and Communities Agency's Affordable Homes Programme Framework 2011-15 focusing opportunities for investment in key priority areas
Explore alternative funding and delivery mechanisms to provide new homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total number of Section 106 affordable housing units agreed – 35 as at 31st May 2011 Total number of Section 106 affordable housing units on site / completed – 16 as at 31st May 2011 Total number of units approved for affordable housing through planning conditions – 19 as at 31st May 2011 Total number of units approved for affordable housing through planning conditions and on site – 19 as at 31st May 2011 New Homes Bonus allocation 2011/12 - £260,019 Affordable Homes flat enhancement rate estimated year 2 (2012/13) – 300 units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the feasibility of a Community Housing Trust in Wirral 1% contribution from sales income on HMR developer partner for Birkenhead (site 6) to be invested in Community Housing Trust To secure additional affordable housing through planning gain on applicable developments over 5 units – 40% target (10% in inner/ priority areas of Wirral and 20% throughout the rest of the Borough) To implement Affordable Rent on new social housing and convert 5,050 social re-lets by 2015 To maximise the use of Council land and assets to assist in the delivery of affordable housing through the Affordable Housing Framework by March 2015 Bring 2 hectares of derelict vacant land into use for new housing Increase affordable homes bonus allocation award for 2012/13 by 10% 200 affordable homes delivered over 2011/12 – 2012/13

<p>To encourage high standard private house building in the Borough on brownfield sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010/11 – 105 net additional homes provided • Planning permission granted for Wirral Waters 3rd August 2010 to deliver 15,000 commercial and residential units. (cleared by Government 29th November 10) • Supply of ready to develop housing sites - 2010/11 target – 100, 2010/11 actual 135 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the delivery of 200 new build homes per annum across the borough. • Work with Peel Holdings to deliver Wirral Waters and ensure appropriate levels of affordable housing are developed based on viability throughout lifetime of the development • Supply of ready to develop housing sites – 2011/12 - 100
<p>To respond to changes in Welfare Benefits policy which impact on housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of February 2011, there were 29,214 housing benefit claimants in Wirral of which 9426 were receiving Local Housing Allowance 	<p>To respond to Government changes by working with partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify households whom the changes will affect and support them • To investigate house shares for under 35s by March 2012 • To investigate shared tenancy options by April 2012
<p>Responding to changes in the local housing market and peoples ability to purchase a home</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The median house price for properties in Wirral during the 2010 calendar year is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Borough - £135,000 with 2759 sales - Regeneration Priority Areas - £75,000 with 295 sales - RSS outer area - £131,750 with 1318 sales - RSS rural area - £160,000 with 1147 sales • The average 25% deposit for a First Time Buyer in Wirral is £25,000 • 21 HomeBuy Direct units sold in 09/10, 3 Social HomeBuy taken up in 08/09, 9 Own Place sold in 09/10, 10 Open Market HomeBuy taken up in 09/10 - 2010/11 figures not finalised until end of 2011 (linked to HSSA figures) • Median earnings of employees in Wirral 2010/11 - £414.80 (median gross weekly pay of full time employees) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify and develop opportunities to assist first time buyers to buy a home (such as piloting a Local Authority Mortgage Guarantee known as 'Local Lend A Hand' by March 2014 • Successful First Buy bid products to be completed by December 2012 • Promote Homebuy direct and HMRI shared equity scheme

<p>Work with partners to provide greater housing choice based on local needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline for NAHP units allocated – 975 affordable homes delivered between 2006/07 – 2010/11 • There are as at 16th March 2011:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 28 accredited managing agents in Wirral - 2,032 accredited properties • 16,232 applicants registered on Wirralhomes database at 1st April 2011 • Currently enquiries for low cost home ownership are through HomesHub (in 10/11 26 enquiries logged from people living in Wirral) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree conversion rates and specific new build sites with local housing associations for 2011 – 2013 framework period by July 2011 and indicative programme up to 2015. • Target to deliver 200 homes through firm schemes by March 2013 • Target to deliver 150 per annum in 2013/14 and 2014/15 • Commission new Strategic Housing Market Assessment by March 2012 and implement findings • To explore introducing options to improve mobility between tenures by March 2012 • To develop a Local Authority Property Shop by March 2014 • To promote and increase the public knowledge on tenure options such as Low Cost Home Ownership
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Strategic Theme 5 - Making homes warmer		
Action	Baseline	Targets and timescales
Reduce Carbon Footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing action plan and programme August 2010 – March 2011 – 7,655 measures installed (cavities and lofts insulated) Private sector SAP rating - 49 as of 2008 Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new Affordable Warmth Implementation Plan by September 2011 Install cavity wall and loft insulation into 80% of private sector properties in need of insulation by March 2014 24,660 measures by May 2012. 41,100 measures by May 2013 57,544 measures by May 2014 Lifetime CO2 savings of £870,340 tonnes by 2014 Increase private sector average SAP rating to 52 by 2013
Reduce energy consumed by households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current "hard-to-treat" schemes are focussed on Housing Association properties only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a scheme to improve "hard-to-treat" properties in low income areas across all tenures in partnership with Housing Associations Complete scheme by end of 2012
Make homes warmer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,400 households in 2008 (<SAP 35) 1,700 households in 2009 (>SAP 65) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce households in receipt of means tested benefits living in a <SAP35 property by 2,500 by 2013 Increase private households in receipt of means tested benefits living in a >SAP65 property by 3,700 households by 2013 CosyHomes heating scheme – 140 vulnerable private sector households receiving heating per annum up to March 2013 25 Cosy Loans issues per annum
Increase the proportion of households receiving benefit or energy tariff advice in Wirral within warmer homes schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2010-11: 106 referrals out of 3,257 warm homes household assessments (3.3%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 690 referrals out of an estimated 13,800 warm homes household assessments (5%) by end of 2011/12

<p>Continue the Wirral Healthy Homes initiative to reduce Category 1 Excess Cold hazards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot initiative completed in New Brighton in 2010-11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete at least 200 Healthy Homes surveys per year
<p>Investigate feasibility of the Council becoming a Green Deal provider</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current provision for improvement loans is through Cosy Loans and Home Repair Assistance loans. New regulations coming into effect from 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study to be completed by Summer 2012

Strategic Theme 6 - Supporting vulnerable people		
Action	Baseline	Targets and timescales
Ensuring the widest possible options for care and support are made available close to where people live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care Quality Commission Inspection of Adult Social Care Report September 2010. 1,131 adults living in residential care and 640 in nursing care at 28th February 2011 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisting Department of Adult Social Services with re-provision by carrying out a strategic review of supported housing need and provision by March 2016 for all client groups
To identify and address the housing needs of people with learning disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,885 households in Wirral with someone with a learning disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify people with learning disabilities in the Borough and those living with a carer over the age of 70 by March 2012 To review existing services available for people with learning disabilities by end of March 2012 To evaluate current information readily available around housing options for people with learning disabilities by April 12 To develop where appropriate information material for people with a learning disability to access routes into housing by December 12 To develop a Housing Plan for people with a learning disability by March 2012
To identify and address the housing needs of young people at risk and care leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline to be established, following Supporting People strategic review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify young people at risk and care leavers by March 2016 To review existing services available for young people at risk and care leavers by end of March 2016 To evaluate current information readily available around housing options for young people at risk and care leavers by April 12 To develop where appropriate information material for young people at risk and care leavers to access routes into housing by December 12 To develop a Housing Strategy Plan for young people at risk and care leavers by March 2016

Prevent and alleviate homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 1st January 2010 to 31st December 2010, 3,296 individuals sought advice • 94 cases per quarter during 2010/11 prevented from becoming homeless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a range of suitable housing options support in partnership with CAB and early interventions to take homelessness • Support 450 with advice and support to prevent homelessness per annum
Regularly Review Wirral Homeless Services at least every 5 years in conjunction with our partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing review completed in 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval to Commission the review of service by June 2011 • Commissions a complete a review of homeless services and provision in Wirral by July 2011 • Develop and implement new Homeless Strategy by January 2012
Reduce rough sleeping in Wirral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 people recorded in Rough Sleepers estimate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support 450 with advice and support to prevent homelessness per annum
To improve access to housing options for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,333 people registered on Wirralhomes database aged 16-25 for re-housing in 1st April 2011 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider and implement policy changes through use of shared tenancies by December 2012

Strategic Theme 7 -Supporting employment, learning and skills		
Action	Baseline	Targets and timescales
Promote the economic and employment benefits of housing investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Development Agreements with lead developers in housing renewal projects to contain targets to promote local economic benefits and employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targets in Development Agreements to achieve 50% local labour, 30% local contractors and 20% local supply chains each year from 2011-12
Promote apprenticeships in construction housing regeneration projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Development Agreements with lead developers to contain targets for apprenticeships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through HMR Development Agreement, ensure 100% of new-build housing development on Council owned land includes at least one apprenticeship from 2011-12 Where viable, apprenticeships to be provided on developments on Council owned land
Promote the use of local contractors in minor improvement works funded by the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> financial assistance policy introduced in 2010/11 to incorporate link between financial assistance with local contractors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of works using financial assistance from the Council to be carried out by a Wirral Trader Scheme contractor from 2011-12
Supporting employment, learning and skills through housing development schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2008/11 NAHP – Awaiting baseline from HCA end of year programme outputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be set once baseline from end of year programme released

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- ⁱ ONS 2008-based Subnational Population Projections For England – 27 May 2010
- ⁱⁱ ONS 2008-based Subnational Population Projections For England – 27 May 2010
- ⁱⁱⁱ ONS 2008-based Subnational Population Projections For England – 27 May 2010
- ^{iv} Communities and Local Government Household Projections, 2008 to 2033, England
- ^v Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2010 Update – page 67, para 7.10
- ^{vi} ONS 2008-based Subnational Population Projections – Table 2a Local Authorities in North East, North West and Yorkshire
- ^{vii} ONS 2008-based Subnational Population Projections For England – 27 May 2010, which projected 59,200 Wirral households aged 65 or over in 2010
- ^{viii} ONS 2008-based Subnational Population Projections For England – 27 May 2010, which projected 59,200 Wirral households aged 65 or over in 2010
- ^{ix} ONS 2008-based Subnational Population Projections For England – 27 May 2010, which projected 59,200 Wirral households aged 65 or over in 2010
- ^{xi} PSSC&HES (2008) pg11
- ^{xii} HCA- Pete Bailey – tenure patterns & aspirations (2009) (original data 2007)
- ^{xiii} 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.
- ^{xiv} The delay in 100% decency being achieved due to WPH and extension agreed with HC (now TSA)
- ^{xv} The figures included in the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (September 2008) were based on the higher unrevised 2003-based household and population projections
- ^{xvi} Sites that could be developed within ten years
- ^{xvii} Meeting statutory thresholds for advice and assistance

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23RD JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	REVIEW OF HOMELESS SERVICES IN WIRRAL
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR GEORGE DAVIES
KEY DECISION? <i>(Defined in paragraph 13.3 of Article 13 'Decision Making' in the Council's Constitution.)</i>	YES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- provide Members with an overview of the current successful Homeless Strategy 2008-2010 and action plan and;
- to seek Members' approval to commission a review of homelessness in Wirral to ensure the new Homeless Strategy reflects the significant impact of changes in homeless services and the economic climate and policy over recent years.

1.2 Completing a review of homelessness will assist in meeting one of the Council's Corporate Priorities to significantly 'prevent and alleviate homelessness' by continuing to focus on the continuous evaluation and improvement of homeless services to meet local needs. The Council's Homeless Service has benefited from significant investment over recent years to respond to the issues identified in the last Homeless Review carried out in 2007.

1.3 Local Authorities are required to consider the local housing needs within their individual areas, including those of homeless households, to whom Local Authorities have a statutory duty to provide assistance. Under the Homelessness Act 2002 there is a statutory requirement for the Council to produce a Homeless Strategy informed by a comprehensive review of all forms of homelessness in their area.

1.4 A new Homelessness Strategy is required to be published within the period of five years beginning on the day on which the last Homelessness Strategy was published (which was 26th June 2008). The aim is to ensure that Local Authorities take a comprehensive and strategic approach to the management and prevention of all forms of homelessness in their areas. Commissioning a complete review of homeless services and provision in Wirral and developing and implementing a new Homeless Strategy are also action targets which have been identified as needed to be completed within the Housing Strategic Plan, which is the subject of a separate report to Members.

1.5 Following the last homelessness review the Council's Homelessness service was re-branded as a Housing Options service with a focus on prevention of homelessness. Operationally it is reported that Council's Housing Options service has seen a

significant rise in demand with a 57% rise in housing and debt advice cases opened during 2010/11 compared with the previous year. The number of statutory homeless acceptances increased by 51% in 2010/11 which reflects the national picture which has seen an increase in homeless acceptances in three consecutive quarters for the first time since 2003. Further work is required to understand the reasons for this and how to best respond. Consultants would work with officers and key partners to explore these issues in more detail to inform a new Homeless Strategy.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 It is recommended that Members:

- a) note the achievements of the successful 2008-2010 Homeless Strategy and;
- b) approve engaging consultants to carry out a review of homeless services in Wirral to inform the development of a new Homeless Strategy for the borough.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 The Homeless Act 2002 requires Local Authorities to adopt a strategic approach to homeless issues by completing a comprehensive review of all forms of homelessness in their area and publishing a Homeless Strategy every five years.

3.2 Wirral's last comprehensive review of homelessness and homeless services was carried out in 2007 and the outcome of this review informed the basis of the 2008-10 Homeless Strategy which as a result focused on four strategic themes:-

- Understanding homelessness and housing need
- Preventing homelessness
- Increasing access to choice of housing
- Providing appropriate support.

These themes have ensured that working with our partners, homeless services in Wirral have continued to develop and improve to reflect local needs.

3.3 Since the current strategy was implemented there has been an 89% decrease in the number of statutory homeless acceptances. The Housing Options team successfully prevented homelessness for 1,199 cases between April 2008 and March 2011.

3.4 During this time and in particular more recently, members will be aware of the significant difficulties and uncertainties which people have faced as a result of both the downturn in the economy and the subsequent impact on the housing market as well as changes currently taking place around the future of social housing and the welfare benefits system.

3.5 As a result of the changes and uncertainties facing people both now and in the future, officers believe it is important to obtain a comprehensive assessment of the likely extent of homelessness in Wirral in the future and to evaluate the services available. It is important that this review again determines the effectiveness of homeless services and measures their impact upon homeless prevention and relief, and identifies any gaps or improvements needed in the current services provided.

3.6 A review carried out by consultants would be seen to be independent by partners and service users and would look at where services need improving or developing, identify if required the need to refocus and shift resources. Consultants would in their independent capacity engage with hostels, service providers, partners and service users. It is intended that the outcome of the review will inform the development of the new Homeless Strategy and associated strategic action plan.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 Robson Rhodes (previously known as Grant Thornton) were commissioned by Wirral to carry out its last Homelessness Review in 2007.

4.2 The review identified key recommendations, which were addressed through the Homeless Strategy 2008-2010 and included the following findings and actions:

- Wirral Homelessness and Housing Advice team - A substantial gap in housing options available and insufficient resources for staff was identified.
 - Investment in the Housing Options and Homeless team enabled a refocus towards prevention work and lead to the successful prevention of homelessness for 1,199 cases between April 2008 and March 2011 and a reduction in statutory homeless acceptance of 89%. This has resulted in substantial savings on the cost of temporary accommodation.
 - A Private Sector Liaison Officer was appointed to reduce homelessness resulting from rent arrears and tenancy breakdown and increase working with the private rented sector.
 - Accredited landlord properties are now advertised through Wirralhomes with private rented homes also being used to prevent homelessness and discharge the Council's statutory homeless duty, assisting to alleviate pressure on the social housing stock.
 - The Government's Mortgage Rescue scheme was implemented to assist households facing repossession. Between December 2009 and November 2010, 1,642 households were given advice on financial or debt issues. During 09/10 and 10/11, 159 households followed the Mortgage Rescue route, with 27 eligible households assisted to remain in their homes under an affordable tenure.
 - No 16 or 17 year olds have been placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation since April 2009.
- Partnership – it was identified that people with housing need, often require medical assessments and or support.
 - Partnership working has enabled a more holistic approach to homelessness with specific initiatives between health. and housing developed.
 - Projects have been developed to respond to homelessness and the impact this has on a person's health. These include a Hospital Link worker who has been appointed to improve the hospital discharge process for homeless people; an outreach mental health service to improve access for homeless people to mental health services and a practitioner to provide surgeries at local hostels and drop-in centres.
- Access to permanent housing – an annual review of allocations was recommended.
 - The Housing Priority Panel was mainstreamed to assist vulnerable adults to move-on from supported or temporary accommodation and between April 2009 and January 2011, 109 individuals were re-housed.
 - Visiting support services also supported over 230 individuals to maintain or sustain independent living.

- Strategic planning – the need to understand the strategic connection between social care and housing policies was identified.
 - The Strategic Homeless Group was established in November 2008 to oversee and drive forward the delivery of the Homeless Strategy Action Plan (2008-2011) and to achieve decision making to take forward Wirral's wider strategic homeless agenda.

4.4 Despite the success of the existing strategy, as a Local Authority we cannot be complacent, with further work still to be done. The development of the new Homeless Strategy and action plan will ensure that Wirral and its partners are best placed to respond to the changes taking place which impact on homelessness.

4.5 In particular, initial discussions with the Strategic Homeless Group (who have overseen the process of driving forward the existing strategy) have identified the following issues which they feel need to be considered as we develop the new Homeless Strategy:

- Responding to increasing demand for housing advice.
- Issues arising from drugs and or alcohol misuse.
- Mental health – including access to services, assistance, links with health and the evaluation of impact of the Mental Health Worker.
- Residents with complex needs in social housing sector.
- Responding to the national strategy to end rough sleeping.
- The need to consider how homeless people access health services and live more healthy lives.
- A review of the sustainability of move-on accommodation and the isolation felt in the community following move-on from supported accommodation.
- The link between homelessness and insecure housing and child safeguarding issues.

It is anticipated that there will be many other issues which need to be considered in the review.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 Carrying out a comprehensive review of homelessness and using this to inform and produce a Homeless Strategy is in accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002. Therefore if this is not carried out Wirral Council will be in breach of its statutory requirements and would be the subject of legal challenge.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 The option to conduct the review using in house staffing resources has been considered. This however, would not be considered good practice as an internal review would not be as effective, objective or independent particularly as it needs to review all homeless services provided in Wirral including those provided in house by the Council.

6.2 The review therefore needs to be independent to be able to establish if services need to be improved, developed and/or there is a need to refocus and shift resources from existing services being provided. Consultants would in their independent capacity, be able to engage with hostels, service providers, partners and service users and provide a truly independent review of the current services and set clear recommendations for change.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation would take place with partner organisations and services as part of the Homeless Review.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 A Homeless Review will positively affect the general public, Housing Associations, local enterprises, local services, and voluntary and community organisations. Many of the homeless services in Wirral are carried out by voluntary, community and faith groups therefore consultation would take place with these bodies as part of the review.

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

- 9.1 Officers within the Strategic Housing Division of Corporate Services would commission the review and work with the consultants to complete the review.
- 9.2 The 2007 Homeless Review cost £40,183 and it is estimated that the next review would cost in the region of £45,000 with the cost of the review being met from the Housing Strategy Annual Research Budget.
- 9.3 There are no IT or assets implications arising from the report.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There is a statutory requirement for the Council to produce a Homeless Strategy under the Homelessness Act 2002 based on the findings of a review of all forms of homelessness in the area.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups will be considered as part of the review and will be addressed within the Homeless Strategy. It is a key objective of the current Strategy to ensure that those at risk of homelessness or currently homeless have equal access to opportunities, and would continue to be so in the new Strategy.
- 11.2 The Homeless Strategy aims to reduce poverty, isolation and exclusion by meeting local needs and assisting to provide access to appropriate accommodation.
- 11.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (a) Is an EIA required? | Yes - on the new Homeless Strategy |
| (b) If 'yes', has one been completed? | No |

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 None known.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 None known.

REPORT AUTHOR: *Lisa Caldwell*
Principal Officer (Housing Strategy)
telephone: (0151) 691 8268
email: lisacaldwell@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Wirral Homeless Review - Joint Meeting (Housing and Community Safety/ Regeneration and Planning Strategy) Overview and Scrutiny Committees	5 th December 2007
Homeless Strategy 2003-2008 - Cabinet	24 th July 2003
Wirral's Homeless Strategy 2008-2010 - Cabinet	26 th June 2008

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	INVESTMENT SUPPORT SERVICES FRAMEWORK
WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES REGENERATION AND PLANNING STRATEGY
KEY DECISION? <i>(Defined in paragraph 13.3 of Article 13 'Decision Making' in the Council's Constitution.)</i>	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Invest Wirral delivers a range of business support services that help businesses set up, grow and maintain competitiveness. This report sets out proposals to develop these services further in order to respond to the needs of Wirral businesses and therefore to stimulate economic growth and create new jobs for the residents of Wirral. The report outlines how these services would be co-ordinated and delivered through a proposed Investment Support Services Framework enabling Invest Wirral to offer a single point of contact and a seamless advice and guidance service to support Wirral businesses.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees that Invest Wirral develop an Investment Support Services Framework that includes the business support activities described in the report.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agrees to the procurement proposals for delivering the investment support services set out in the report.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Supporting Wirral's businesses is one of the key priorities of the Council's Investment Strategy which aims to deliver a strong, vibrant economy with high levels of investment and employment opportunities for the residents of Wirral. Providing an effective and co-ordinated advice and support service to Wirral's businesses is critical to ensuring that they are supported to develop and grow sustainably.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Wirral's Investment Strategy recognises the importance of supporting businesses in order to deliver a strong and dynamic economy and provide employment opportunities for Wirral's residents. This includes encouraging the start-up of new businesses as well as providing firms with the support necessary to enable them to grow and to remain competitive.
- 4.2 Business support and advice within Wirral has been delivered and co-ordinated through Invest Wirral. This has included direct provision of a range of services such as:
- business advice - each of the Invest Wirral Relationship Managers specialise in an industry sector group to offer expert guidance;
 - funding support – Think Big and Big Business investment grants – 179 investment projects were supported in 2010/11;
 - locating business premises – 3 inward investment projects were secured in 2010/11 and Invest Wirral activity has generated an investment value of over £23m;
 - networking events and workshops - 33 business related workshops were hosted during 2010/11;
 - Wirral Business Forum – membership is growing month by month with a targeted figure by the end of March 2012 of 2,500 members. 14 sector based networking events have been held encouraging collaboration and inter-trading between indigenous businesses. This also included the Invest Wirral Annual Conference which attracted an audience of over 250 Wirral based businesses;
 - key enhancements to the on-line business network;
 - Invest Wirral has also provided links to key business support organisations and has hosted three business advisors from Business Link North West who have provided expert advice on business planning and other key business issues.
- 4.3 Cabinet on the 21st February 2011 (Min 327) confirmed funding to support investment growth and to continue business support services previously funded by Working Neighbourhoods Fund. Funding of £1.625m has been made available for the delivery of investment support services in 2011/12. It was agreed that in addition to the existing services available through Invest Wirral that further investment should take place to:
- Link business growth with the delivery of jobs for local people;
 - Provide support targeted at micro businesses (3 or less staff and/or a turnover below £100,000) to encourage development and job creation;
 - Develop a 'Business Angels' network to provide investment in fast growing enterprises.
- 4.4 Cabinet on 14th April (Min 397) noted that the Business Link NW would cease operation in November 2011 and be replaced by a streamlined national service that includes a website and dedicated advice via a national call centre. As a result the agreement with Wirral Council with Business Link NW for the placement of 3 business advisors with Invest Wirral ceased on the 31st March 2011. Cabinet therefore agreed that this service should continue on a 3 month

interim basis whilst a new delivery framework was developed. The NWDA will cease operation on the 31st March 2012 which has implications for regional business support, including the ISUS programme. A report on these issues will be brought to Cabinet once further details are known.

4.5 The development of a new, enhanced investment support services framework provides an opportunity to build on and capture the successful operation of the current services whilst also ensuring that the new services offered by Invest Wirral effectively address the current and emerging needs of businesses by providing an enhanced package of business support. The framework will also ensure that Wirral businesses can be offered a single point of contact and a seamless service for the business lifecycle.

4.6 It is proposed that Invest Wirral will deliver the investment support services framework put forward in this report in order to support indigenous businesses that have the potential to grow, helping them to identify new business opportunities, access new markets and create employment opportunities.

4.7 **The Investment Support Services Framework**

It is proposed that in addition to the existing Invest Wirral services, outlined in 4.2 above, the Framework would include the activities set out below:

4.8 Support for Business Growth

Business acumen within the private sector is the driving force of economic growth and job creation. Many businesses are preoccupied with the day to day running of their business and need intensive support to enable them to think strategically and take their business to the next level. It is proposed that Invest Wirral will procure a pool of skilled private sector individuals who can offer specialist support on key elements which promote business growth. The outcome of the support will be to improve main business areas such as strategy and vision, people and processes, customers and sales and raising finance.

It is proposed that these self-employed project managers would be managed by Invest Wirral but employed on a task specific basis.

4.9 Micro Business Support

Wirral has a large percentage of small businesses with two or less employees and with a turnover below £100,000. According to UK Business 2010, 2,700 of Wirral based businesses are turning over less than £100,000 per annum which is approximately 40% of Wirral's over all business stock.

It is therefore proposed that Invest Wirral procure Project Advisors to work specifically with micro-businesses (3 or less staff and/or a turnover less than £100,000) to support businesses in identifying barriers to growth and to support them to develop. It is proposed that grants of up to £2,000 would be made available to micro businesses for work agreed by Invest Wirral and the Project Advisors. Approvals for these grants would be given by the Interim Director of Corporate Services.

An additional six workshops will be added to Invest Wirral's workshop programme which will specially focus on micro businesses. The workshops will be delivered in partnership with the private sector and will provide in-depth knowledge transfer on businesses growth related themes.

4.10 Business Angels

It is proposed to develop a Wirral Business Angels Network that will provide private risk capital for investment in fast growing local enterprises. Invest Wirral, through their existing contact with the local business community, will recruit individuals or groups of individuals looking to invest in locally identified growth businesses. The objective is to recruit initially a group of 15 investors to the Network, recognising that a typical Business Angel makes one or two investments in a three-year period, either individually or through a syndicate.

The Network will be delivered by Invest Wirral and operate within the provisions of the Financial Services Act, offering a dedicated service, including one-to-one business support for angels (investors) and entrepreneurs/business owners, attracting private capital for local fast growing businesses and providing a cost effective local route to investment. In the first year the aim is to engage with at least 12 businesses with high growth potential that are seeking investment.

4.11 Event Management

Invest Wirral has established a recognised platform for Wirral Businesses to network and gain expert knowledge on a range of practical business topics. Funding for the current programme is due to come to an end in July 2011 and it is proposed that the event management service should be continued and a suitable service provider procured to organise the events. This will enable Invest Wirral to continue to provide the sector based networking events and informative workshops which have been running successfully during 2009/10 and 2010/11.

4.12 Direct Inward Investment Support

Cabinet on the 14th April (Min 396) welcomed the designation of Wirral Waters as an Enterprise Zone (EZ) and noted that this would assist businesses through tax incentives, superfast broadband, improved infrastructure and simplified planning rules. The EZ provides a clear opportunity to promote the Borough as a preferred location for inward investment and it is anticipated that Wirral will receive an increased number of investment enquiries.

It is proposed that direct investment support to promote Wirral as a preferred business location should be developed in order to facilitate investment enquiries and ensure that Wirral's economic potential is realised. A further report will be brought back to Cabinet setting out proposals for how this would be progressed.

4.13 Business Investment Grants

Supporting Small and Medium sized Enterprises in Wirral is a key objective of the Investment strategy and is a key priority for the Invest Wirral team. Funding has been allocated to provide capital grants to support businesses with potential for growth in Wirral. This could include a company choosing to locate

in Wirral for the first time, or an established business in Wirral with a project to sustain or uplift the productivity and employment of their business through investing in their people, equipment or facilities.

The capital grant will be offered to Wirral businesses that have viable project proposals to support the sustainability or growth of the company. Grants will be subject to a robust health check and dependant on a project plan being in place, following the Councils standard due diligence procedure.

4.13 Social Enterprise Manager

A social enterprise can be defined as a business with primary social objectives, whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose, rather than surpluses being used to maximise profit for shareholders or owners. They operate across a wide range of industries and sectors from health and social care, to renewable energy, recycling and fair trade and at all scales, from small business to large international companies.

It is proposed that a support mechanism be established to promote and develop a wider understanding of social enterprise and its benefits across the borough. The objective is to increase the number, size, and sustainability of social enterprise in Wirral, to design and provide support interventions as required by social enterprise in Wirral, encourage inter-trading, sharing of best practice and research between social enterprise and work with local, regional, national and transnational bodies to strengthen the sector and to open up new markets.

The current estimated number of social enterprises on Wirral according to Guidestar data is 160. These include Companies Limited by Guarantee, Industrial and Provident Societies and Registered Charities.

Invest Wirral will recruit 1 member of staff to work with existing social enterprises and support the development of new social enterprises. The Social Enterprise Development Officer will work closely with social entrepreneurs in forming new ventures, support existing social enterprises to identify barriers to success, develop and implement strategy and facilitate the development of core organisational infrastructure.

All support will be delivered through an Enterprise Hub in Egerton House. The hub will be a facilitator between the services of Invest Wirral and other networks/organisations/partners. Facilities will include free access to meeting rooms, hot desks and drop in clinics offering specialist advice. Four/six workshops will be arranged and run from the Hub covering Public sector procurement and commissioning, developing core organisational infrastructure, Identifying a niche and organisational review.

4.14 International Links

Since 2009 the Council has been supporting work to identify, develop and capitalise on international links in order to support economic growth within the Borough. It is intended that this work should continue so that Wirral's

businesses are promoted internationally and able to access global opportunities.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 A full risk analysis had been carried out by Wirral Officers and the business support framework has been designed to offer Wirral businesses the highest quality level of support. The councils risk manager has been asked to comment on the requirement of the businesses advisors to have specialist professional indemnity insurance for advice and guidance and this has been considered and will be covered by existing insurance policies.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Officers have carefully developed the investment support services framework taking into account past experience of dealing with business in Wirral and best practice from elsewhere. The options outlined in this report have been designed to offer Wirral businesses a high quality, single point of contact, offering specialist advice and access to finance.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Invest Wirral, through the Wirral Business Forum and the sectoral cluster groups, engage with businesses on a regular basis, listening and responding to their needs as appropriate. The demand for quality business advice is high and the success of the previous project delivered through Business Link Advisors clearly demonstrated with over 450 businesses being provided with business support advice.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 None as a direct result of this report, although the social enterprise support functions will be offered to relevant voluntary, community and faith groups as appropriate.

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

- 9.1 Cabinet on the 21st February 2011 (Min 327) confirmed funding to support investment growth and to continue business support services previously funded by Working Neighbourhoods Fund. Funding of £400,000 is available from the Capital Programme for 2011/12 for the Big Investment Grant and £1.225m has been made available for 2011/12 from Corporate Services Revenue Budget to deliver the remainder of the activity identified within the proposed Investment Support Services Framework. This includes £250,000 Policy Option for 2011/12 for the re-focusing of support to small businesses to safeguard and create jobs, and allocations to replace activity previously funded by the Working Neighbourhoods Fund.
- 9.2 The Director of Finance confirms that the most cost effective way of procuring the services outlined in the report would be through the operation of the Council's Matrix contract. This service has been procured by Wirral Council and will enable individuals or private sector businesses to be employed on a

task and finish basis. This would enable project managers and project advisors to be employed who possess the specific skills identified as being required by Wirral businesses.

- 9.3 Market analysis has indicated that an appropriate daily rate to obtain the necessary qualified and self employed individuals would be £250 a day for project managers and £150 a day for project advisors. The cost of using the Matrix contract will be in addition to this and is likely to be within the range of 8 – 10% of the costs (with a maximum of 15%). The procurement of the Matrix contract through the Council's tender process will assist the service demonstrate value for money through the efficient and competitive procurement of staff.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The development of an Investment Support Services Framework will need to comply with the obligations arising under the Bribery Act 2010 which comes into force on the 1st July 2011.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None as a direct result of this report

- 11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? No

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 None as a direct result of this report

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 None as a direct result of this report

REPORT AUTHORS:

Gemma Henry
Invest Wirral
Corporate Services
Tel:0151 650 6926
e-mail: gemmahenry@wirral.gov.uk

Sally Shah
Strategic Development
Corporate Services
Tel: 0151 691 8148
e-mail: sallyshah@wirral.gov.uk

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Council Budget 2011-12 Report to Wirral Council Cabinet Business Support Services	21 st February 2011
Report to Wirral Council Cabinet	14 th April 2011

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	<i>PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SHADOW HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD FOR WIRRAL</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR STEVE FOULKES</i>
KEY DECISION?	<i>YES</i>

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This paper provides recommendations, and draft Terms of Reference for the establishment of a shadow Health and Wellbeing Board for Wirral in response to a request from Cabinet at its meeting on 17th March 2011, that such a Board should be established at the earliest opportunity, and at the latest by October 2011.

- 1.2 ‘Liberating the NHS: Legislative framework and next steps’, the outcome of the consultation on the Government’s Health White Paper ‘Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS’, was published in December 2010. It is clear from this, that the government will be legislating through the Health and Social Care Bill to establish Health and Wellbeing Boards in every upper tier local authority by April 2013. Scrutiny will be part of corporate structures and will not rest with Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWB). Developing the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and a high-level joint health and wellbeing strategy (JHWS) will become a formal statutory responsibility for both councils and GP commissioning consortia in April 2013.

- 1.3 The Council has already been approved as an early implementer for Health & Wellbeing Boards.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Cabinet agree that the first meeting of the Shadow Health & Wellbeing Board should be held by the end of September 2011.

- 2.2 That the Cabinet agree the Draft Terms of Reference and membership as outlined in Appendix A.

- 2.3 That the Cabinet note the success of the partnership application for Place Based Leadership development support from the National Leadership Council and request that the Chief Executive and Director of Public Health ensure the views of the Council and partners are reflected in the construction of a

development programme that makes best use of the resource offered through the award.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 The Council is already approved as an early implementer for Health & Wellbeing Boards, and has requested that the Board now be set up. Additionally, although membership from partners may change over the next couple of years, particularly as NHS reform plays out, there is considerable support from them to see the Health and Wellbeing Board in place as soon as possible.
- 3.2 The draft Terms of Reference create the basis for a first meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board to be put in place. They are based on the intentions outlined in Liberating the NHS, and in the public health white paper Healthy Lives, Healthy People. They also reflect the proposed responsibilities as outlined in the Health and Social Care Bill. The previous decision of cabinet that all three parties should be represented on the Board is reflected in the proposed membership.
- 3.3 A recent submission to the National Leadership Council from Wirral Council, NHS Wirral, the three GP Commissioning Consortia, Wirral Community NHS Trust, Wirral University Teaching Hospital, Cheshire & Wirral Partnership Trust, Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology and Voluntary and Community Action Wirral (VCAW)/LiNKs, for funding to support a development programme for the Health and Wellbeing Board has been successful. The outcomes to be achieved through the development programme include:
 - 3.3.1 An established Health & Wellbeing Board for Wirral, with appropriate mechanisms for community and provider involvement.
 - 3.3.2 To deliver increased impact of our public health improvement programmes.
 - 3.3.3 To increase the numbers of people supported and empowered to be independent and to take control of their care through personal budgets
 - 3.3.4 A healthy and fit Wirral workforce
 - 3.3.5 Increasing the maximum benefit from the public purse through the use of the social value toolkit in commissioning, while developing the provider market to support this (particularly for the voluntary and community sector).

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 As outlined in the Cabinet paper on public health of 17th March, 2011, the Health and Wellbeing Bill will expand local authorities' responsibilities for ensuring integration in the approach to health and social care provision in its

area, and (subject to legislation) will require the establishment of a formal Board.

- 4.2 The Bill would transfer to local authorities and the commissioning consortia in their area the existing duty in the NHS Act 2006 requiring local authorities and PCTs to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. To this is added a further duty requiring the local authority and the commissioning consortia to prepare a joint health and wellbeing strategy, which is a "strategy for meeting the needs included in the [JSNA] by the exercise of functions of the authority, the NHS Commissioning Board or the consortia". In preparing this strategy consideration must be given to the extent to which the needs could be met more effectively by arrangements under s.75 of the NHS Act 2006 [arrangements between local authorities and NHS bodies] rather than in any other way.
- 4.3 The JSNA and the joint health and wellbeing strategy are then given effect by another new requirement that local authorities and the commissioning consortia must have regard to the JSNA and the strategy when exercising any relevant functions and by a power on local authority Health and Wellbeing Boards to give their local authority an "opinion" on whether the authority is fulfilling the requirement to have regard to the JSNA and the strategy when performing its functions.
- 4.4 The Health and Wellbeing Board is the new body which will carry out the local authority functions in relation to the JSNA and the joint health and wellbeing strategy. It will be a committee of the local authority, but its membership is broad and determined in the Bill.
- 4.5 In addition to the functions already described, HWBs will have further functions in relation to encouraging integrated working, including a duty to encourage those arranging for the provision of health or social care services in their area to work in an integrated manner, and in particular provide advice, assistance etc. to encourage the making of arrangements under section 75 of the NHS Act 2006.
- 4.6 In addition the local authority would have power to pass other functions to the HWB. This reflects the message from the government that, while the HWB functions expressly set out in the Bill are reasonably limited and largely strategic in nature, it is anticipated that they will develop a wider key role in the area in relation to health and social care. The Healthy Lives, Healthy People white paper states that the Bill gives "sufficient flexibility... for health and wellbeing boards to go beyond their minimum statutory duties to promote joining-up of a much broader range of local services for the benefit of their local populations' health and wellbeing". It refers to the wider localism agenda in setting out a vision of local government taking "innovative approaches to public health by involving new partners", which might put HWBs as the central co-ordinating point of a network of services commissioned from different types of provider.
- 4.7 The membership of the HWB reflects the breadth of perspective needed for the preparation of the JSNA and the strategy, and to facilitate integrated

working. In response to the requirement to have at least one councillor of the local authority on the Board, Cabinet at its meeting on 4th February agreed that the Wirral HWB would include all three party leaders. Other required members are the directors of public health, adult social services and children's services, representatives of each commissioning consortia and a representative of the Local Healthwatch organisation. In addition the HWB itself and the local authority (in consultation with the HWB) will have powers to include additional members. Authorities will need to think carefully about the composition of their HWB to ensure that it balances the need for other perspectives with ensuring appropriate levels of control over the body's activities. The role of provider organisations will be one area where, as a commissioning-focussed body, the HWB will need to ensure transparency and appropriate methods of inclusion. The Health and Wellbeing Board may also wish to consider establishing some working groups to take forward specific areas of work.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 If the Health and Wellbeing Board is not established early, the local commissioning arrangements could lose synergy and opportunities to work in partnership may be lost.
- 5.2 Good partnership working will be critical to support continued delivery of shared priorities on Wirral during the reform of the NHS and in light of the impact of reduced financial allocations to the Council.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Not relevant to this report, however it is proposed that the Terms of Reference for the board will need to be reviewed regularly, following the development programme, and prior to the formal establishment of the statutory Board in 2013.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 It is proposed that the draft Terms of Reference are shared with the proposed partners on the Board for comment prior to the first meeting of the Shadow Board.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 The Voluntary, Community and Faith groups on Wirral will have an opportunity to influence the strategic direction for health and wellbeing through membership of the Board.

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

- 9.1 There will need to be support provided to the Health & Wellbeing Board to ensure its effective operation. It is suggested that this could come from the public health directorate, which currently provides such support to the Wirral Health and Wellbeing Coordination Group.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Health & Wellbeing Boards are proposed to be statutory bodies from April 2013 under the Health and Social Care Bill that is currently making its way through parliament. National policy has set a timeline that Shadow Health & Wellbeing Boards are in place by April 2012.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None identified in this report.

11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required?

No

(b) If 'yes', has one been completed?

Yes (specify date) / No (*delete as applicable*)

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Not directly applicable

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Not applicable

REPORT AUTHOR: *Fiona Johnstone*
Director of Public Health
telephone: (0151 651 3914)
email: fiona.johnstone@wirral.nhs.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Draft Terms of Reference

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Equity and Excellence – Liberating the NHS, Department of Health, 12 July 2010

Liberating the NHS: Local democratic legitimacy in health, Department of Health 22 July 2010

Liberating the NHS: Legislative framework and next steps, Department of Health, 15 December 2010.

Healthy Lives, Healthy People, our strategy for public health in England, Department of Health, 30 November 2010.

(all of the above reference material can be found at the Department of Health website www.dh.gov.uk)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
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Cabinet

4 February 2011

Cabinet

17 March 2011

Appendix A

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

WIRRAL HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

Purpose

1. To oversee and implement the creation of a Wirral Health & Wellbeing Board in readiness to assume its statutory responsibilities from April 2013.
2. To propose recommendations regarding this work to:
 - Wirral Council Cabinet
 - NHS Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral Cluster PCT
 - Wirral GP Commissioning Consortia
3. To drive a collaborative approach to commissioning of improved health and care services which improve the health and wellbeing of local people.
4. To develop a shared understanding of the needs of the local community through the development of an agreed Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
5. To seek to meet those needs through leading on the development and publication of a high-level Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy.
6. To consider options for the development of HealthWatch in Wirral ensuring that appropriate engagement and involvement within existing patient and service user involvement groups takes place.
7. To consider and take advantage of opportunities to more closely integrate health and social care services in commissioning and provision.
8. To review the financial and organisational implications of joint and integrated working across health and social care services, ensuring that performance and quality standards of health and social care services are met, and represent value for money across the whole system.
9. To establish a key forum for local democratic accountability relating to commissioning against agreed health outcomes.
10. To consider how best the Shadow Health & Wellbeing Board can work with the Local Strategic Partnership and ensure that the relationship is productive and does not duplicate activity.
11. To identify and act on changes that may be required following the enactment of the Health and Social Care Bill in order to establish the Statutory Health and Wellbeing Board to replace the Shadow Board.

Proposed Membership

Board membership as outlined in Health & Social Care Bill	Proposed Shadow Board Membership
<p>Locally elected representatives</p> <p>Chief Executive Council</p> <p>NHS Commissioners (PBC) Representative of NHS Commissioning Board</p> <p>Director of Public Health Director of Adult Social Services Director of Children & Young People's Services</p> <p>HealthWatch</p>	<p>All three party leaders</p> <p>A representative from each of the three GP Commissioning consortia</p> <p>Chief Executive Wirral Council</p> <p>A representative of the NHS Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral Cluster Board</p> <p>Director of Public Health Director of Adult Social Services Director of Children & Young People's Services</p> <p>LINKs</p>

Representatives of other bodies may be invited to participate in Board discussions to support effective decision-making. Such representatives should be invited bearing in mind the principles of fairness, equality and transparency.

The Board would need to be supported by appropriate administrative support.

Meetings

Meetings would be held quarterly

Chair

The Leader of the Council will chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board.

Decisions

Where a decision is required, that decision will be made by agreement among a majority of members present. Where a decision needs to be ratified by one or more of the statutory agencies, the ratification process will be in accordance with the agreed process within that particular agency.

Minutes

Minutes of the proceedings of each meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Board will be drawn up, circulated and agreed as a correct record at the subsequent meeting, once any required amendments have been incorporated.

Support to the health & wellbeing board

Support to the Board will be provided through the existing arrangements for the Health & Wellbeing Coordination Group.

Review

The membership and terms of reference of the Health & Wellbeing Board will be regularly reviewed (at least annually) to ensure that they remain relevant and up to date.

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