



Cabinet

Date:	Thursday, 27 November 2008
Time:	6.15 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. 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.

2. 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.

COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

3. EQUALITY WATCH SCHEME 2009 -2012 PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT (Pages 1 - 24)

4. INTERNATIONAL LINKS (Pages 25 - 30)

REGENERATION AND PLANNING STRATEGY

5. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – CORE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT - PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES (Pages 31 - 78)

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

- 6. UPDATE ON THE NATIONAL BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE PROGRAMME (Pages 79 - 96)**
- 7. NEW KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM EXTENSION, STANTON ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL, BEBINGTON, WIRRAL - TENDER REPORT (Pages 97 - 100)**

STREETSCENE AND TRANSPORT SERVICES

- 8. NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN (Pages 101 - 192)**
- 9. HIGHWAY AND ENGINEERING SERVICES PROCUREMENT EXERCISE - PROPOSED EFFICIENCY SAVINGS AND CONTRACT MOBILISATION UPDATE (Pages 193 - 218)**

FINANCE AND BEST VALUE & CORPORATE RESOURCES

- 10. TRANSFORMING WIRRAL - STRATEGIC ASSET REVIEW (To Follow)**

ENVIRONMENT

- 11. PROVISION OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND RECYCLING CONTAINERS POLICY (Pages 219 - 228)**

FINANCE AND BEST VALUE

- 12. FINANCIAL & PERFORMANCE MONITORING (Pages 229 - 330)**
- 13. PROJECTED BUDGET 2009-11 (Pages 331 - 338)**
- 14. CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE (Pages 339 - 342)**
- 15. INSURANCE FUND BUDGET 2009/10 (Pages 343 - 350)**

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

- 16. RECONFIGURE ACTION OF YOUTH SERVICE PROVISION (To Follow)**

17. 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.

FINANCE AND BEST VALUE

**18. REVISED VALUATION OF DOCK PROPERTIES FOR RATING
(Pages 351 - 356)**

REGENERATION AND PLANNING STRATEGY

19. THE GOVERNMENT'S UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE (Pages 357 - 360)

SOCIAL CARE AND INCLUSION

**20. UPDATE ON CONTRACTUAL POSITION IN RESPECT OF
NURSING HOMES (Pages 361 - 366)**

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 27 NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

EQUALITY WATCH SCHEME 2009 -2012 - PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Single Equality Scheme is critical to the delivery of the council's aim to improve accountability, accessibility and openness and involve those who use our service in their design and delivery, which is aligned to the strategic objective to create an excellent council. The scheme will take forward key aspects of community engagement as well as consolidate the council's progress through the levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government. Moreover, the scheme will provide a co-ordinated approach to ensuring that the council meets its legal duties to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate any unlawful discrimination and harassment within the organisation.

1.2 The Equality Watch Scheme will be the Council's corporate equality and diversity action plan for the period April 2009 to March 2012, covering all six equality strands:

- Gender (including transgender)
- Disability
- Race
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Religion or Belief



Also taking into consideration multi-forms of discrimination

2. Background

2.1 The Equality Watch Scheme details the actions that will be taken across the whole council to eliminate any discriminatory practices and to promote equality and recognise diversity within employment and service delivery. The scheme will also provide the framework for the Council achieving the different levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

2.2 The Equality Watch Scheme will replace the Council's Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes. However, the proposed scheme will take into account the Council's statutory equality duties under the Race Relations Act 1976, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Equality Watch Scheme will also give appropriate regard to the forthcoming Single Equality Act relating to sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

2.3 The Equality Watch Scheme will be co-ordinated by the Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator, who will be supported by the Corporate Equality Watch Team and Departmental Equality Lead Officers, and will report directly to the Corporate Equality and Inclusion Group. The Council will also work in partnership to actively promote involvement of external stakeholders, including voluntary and community sector projects and peers within other public sector organisations. An

Equality Watch Review Group will be established made up of members from a variety of stakeholders to review progress on an annual basis.

3. Development of the Equality Watch Scheme

3.1 Staff from the Corporate Policy Section have participated in numerous events and meetings over a nine month period with a range of stakeholders, which have provided the opportunity to discuss the development and content of the Scheme. These include a think tank session undertaken in September 2008 with key community organisations and individuals which explored a shared vision and prioritised activities for inclusion in the Scheme.

3.2 Please see Appendix A for a copy of the draft consultation document.

3.3 It is proposed that the public consultation period will take place from 1 December 2008 to 28 February 2009. The final draft will be presented to Cabinet on 9 April 2009.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Most financial implications will be met within existing budgets. An additional sum of £68,000 will be needed to implement elements of the Scheme. It is suggested that this additional sum is allocated from the Council's Efficiency Investment Budget.

4.2 The actions identified in the scheme will provide a co-ordinated approach to ensuring that the Council meets its legal duties to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment within the organisation. The financial benefits from this are that it will reduce the potential for claims across the workforce and service users. The actions identified within the scheme will also have a number of added value benefits such as ensuring that the authority improves its standing as an employer of choice and also improving overall levels of customer satisfaction.

5. Staffing implications

5.1 There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

6. Equal Opportunities implications

6.1 The Council will meet its legal duties to promote equality of opportunity, to eliminate any unlawful discrimination or harassment, to promote good relations and positive attitudes, and to promote involvement.

6.2 There may be a decrease in the number of compensation claims from the workforce and customers based upon discriminatory practices.

7. Community Safety implications

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

8. Local Agenda 21

8.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

9. Planning implications

9.1 There are no planning implications arising from this report.

10. Anti-poverty implications

10.1 There are no anti-poverty implications arising from this report

11. Social inclusion implications

11.1 There are no negative implications that will potentially exclude individuals or groups from accessing services arising from this report.

12. Local Member Support implications

12.1 There are no issues mentioned in the report that are particularly relevant to a ward or small number of wards. However, equality and diversity are borough wide issues to be addressed by all members.

13. Recommendations

That

- (1) the Equality Watch Scheme 2009 to 2012 be agreed for public consultation during the period 1 December 2008 to 28 February 2009; and
- (2) £68,000 be allocated from the Council's Efficiency Investment Budget to part fund the costs of the scheme.

**JIM WILKIE
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

EQUALITY WATCH SCHEME

2009 to 2012

**Services and Employment
Opportunities for All**

Public Consultation Draft

December 2008 to February 2009

Foreword Councillor Stuart Kelly
(Lead Member for Equality and Diversity)

[To be inserted once final version agreed]

Foreword from John Webb
(Lead Director for Equality and Diversity)

[To be inserted once final version agreed]

Equality Watch Scheme Quotes
(from consultation participants)

[To be inserted once final version agreed]

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WHAT IS WIRRAL COUNCIL'S EQUALITY WATCH SCHEME?

The Equality Watch Scheme is the Council's equality and diversity action plan for the period April 2009 to March 2012, covering all six equality strands:

- Gender (including transgender)
- Disability
- Race
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Religion or Belief

} Also taking into consideration
multi-forms of discrimination

The Equality Watch Scheme details the actions that will be taken across the whole council to eliminate any discriminatory practices and to promote equality and recognise diversity within employment and service delivery. The scheme will also provide the framework for the Council achieving the different levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

The Equality Watch Scheme replaces the Council's Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes. However, this proposed scheme does into account the Council's statutory equality duties under the Race Relations Act 1976, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Equality Watch Scheme also gives appropriate regard to the forthcoming Single Equality Act relating to sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

The Equality Watch Scheme will be co-ordinated by the Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator, who will be supported by the Corporate Equality Watch Team and Departmental Equality Lead Officers. The Council will also work in partnership to actively promote involvement of external stakeholders, including voluntary and community sector projects and peers within other public sector organisations. An Equality Watch Review Group will be established made up of members from a variety of stakeholders.

The three year action plan is split into four sections and will be reviewed on an annual basis:

Sections	Sub-Sections
1. Promoting Equality of Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce • Corporate Governance • Inclusive Access • Communication
2. Eliminating Unlawful Discrimination & Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce • Corporate Governance • Inclusive Access • Communication
3. Promoting Good Relations & Positive Attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce • Corporate Governance • Inclusive Access • Communication
4. Promoting Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Governance • Inclusive Access • Communication

The Equality Watch Scheme will also dovetail other Corporate Council Strategies, e.g.

- The Local Area Agreement (incorporating National Indicators)
- The Sustainable Communities Strategy
- The Comprehensive Engagement Strategy
- The Third Sector Strategy
- The People Strategy
- The Customer Access Strategy

How has the Equality Watch Scheme been informed by Stakeholders?

The Corporate Equality Watch Team has participated in numerous events and meetings over a nine month period:

- January 2008
Voluntary Sector Network New Beginnings Conference (presentation questions)

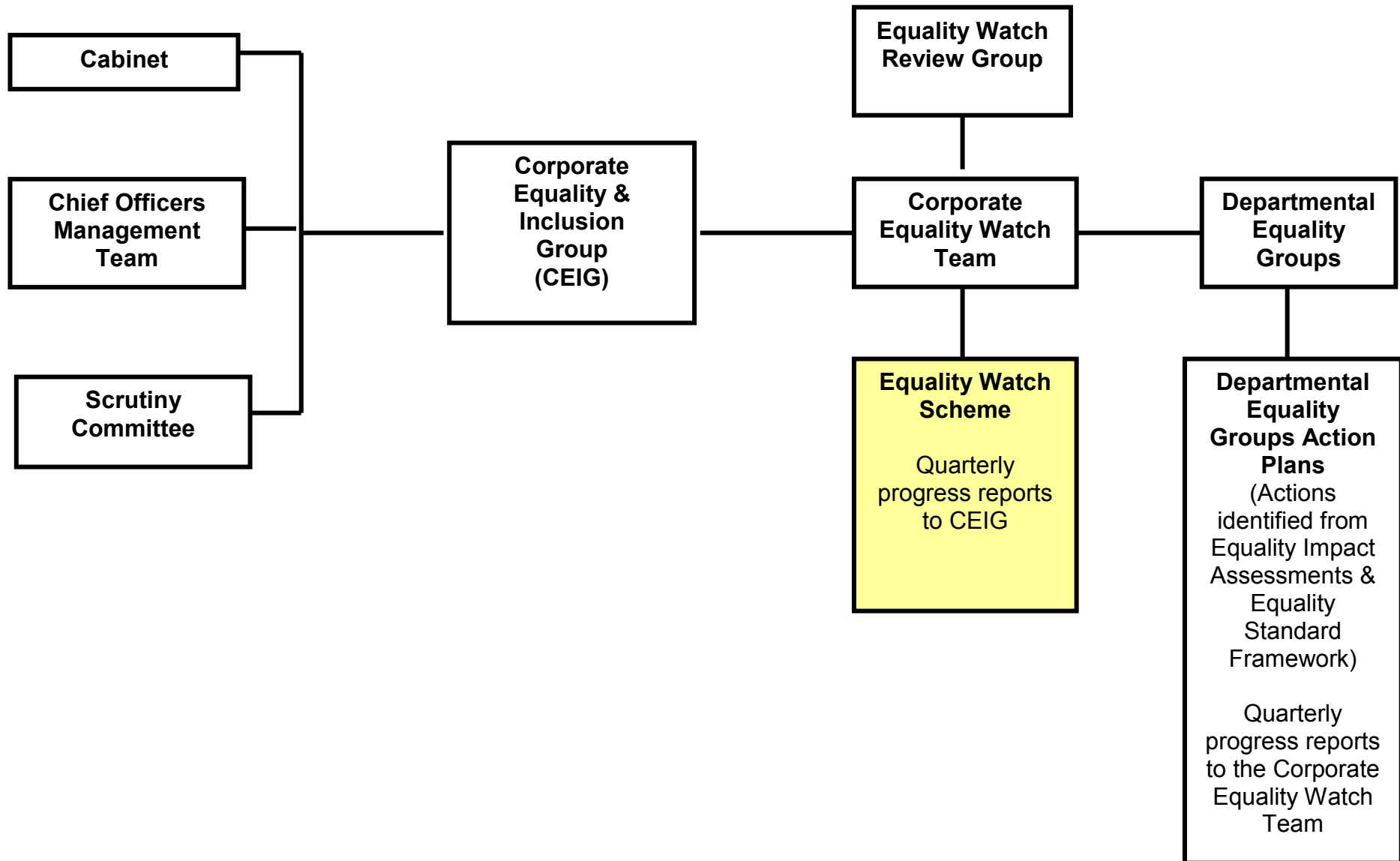
Rainbow Partnership Focus Group (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues - participant)

Equality Standard for Local Government requirements mapped by the Corporate Equality and Inclusion Group (presentation and facilitation)
- May 2008
TransWirral Conference (presentation questions)
Race Equality Scheme review with the Black and Racial Minority Staff Diversity Forum (facilitation)
- June 2008
Hate Crime Seminar (participant)
- June & July 2008
Community cohesion review of Council funded Black and Racial Minority community services (facilitation)
- July 2008
Council equality and diversity vision statement and outcomes developed (departmental exercises)
- September 2008
Pilot Equality Watch Think Tank Session (organisation and facilitation)

Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index questionnaire with the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Staff Forum (participant)

The Corporate Equality Watch Team thank all those people who have participated so far and to those who have invited the team to participate in their events.

How will Wirral Council ensure the Equality Watch Scheme is implemented and monitored?



Equality Watch Scheme Actions 1. Promoting Equality of Opportunity	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Workforce Promote a series of staff policies to Managers to gain a greater understanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable Adjustments and Redeployment • Bullying & Harassment and Capability • Flexible Working and Paternity 	Head of Human Resources	✓	✓	✓
Workforce Review staff policies with regard to caring responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Council statement • Incorporate council statement into staff policies (when developing new policies and when reviewing existing policies) 	Head of Human Resources	✓	✓	✓
Workforce Refresh the Private Fostering policy and function to ensure lesbian, gay and bisexual people are not excluded	Children & Young People Dep't	✓		
Workforce Deliver equality and diversity awareness sessions during the corporate induction process for all new staff	Equalities Officer (Access & Training)	✓	✓	✓

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 1. Promoting Equality of Opportunity	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Workforce Review the Key Issues Exchange process to incorporate equality and diversity competencies and behaviours for all Managers	Head of Human Resources	√		
Workforce Develop recommendations for a corporate approach to Positive Action within employment	Head of Human Resources		√	
Workforce Incorporate equality and diversity questions into recruitment procedures	Head of Human Resources		√	√
Corporate Governance Collect, store and analyse workforce equality data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce Guidelines • 50% of workforce • 65% of workforce • 80% of workforce 	Head of Human Resources	√ √	√	√
Corporate Governance Implement revised procurement guidelines to ensure all requirements are met	Procurement Manager	√	√	√

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 1. Promoting Equality of Opportunity	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Corporate Governance Assess the Performance Improvement Management System (PIMS) for accessibility	Access Officer	√		
Corporate Governance Implement revised Risk Management Strategy ensuring equality and diversity implications are highlighted in monitoring reports	Senior Risk Management Officer	√	√	√
Inclusive Access Council published literature to include an alternative formats statement, in different languages where appropriate	Head of Tourism and Marketing	√	√	√
Communication Compile equality and diversity articles for every issue of One Council magazine	Equalities Officer	√	√	√

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 2. Eliminating Unlawful Discrimination & Harassment	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Workforce Review the absence management policy with regard to mental health related absence	Head of Human Resources		√	
Workforce Review the Criminal Records Bureau checks process with regard to Transgender People	Head of Human Resources		√	
Workforce Review the Criminal Records Bureau checks process with regard to Ex-offenders	Head of Human Resources		√	
Workforce Develop and implement an equality and diversity training and skills framework for all staff and members, in line with appropriate strategic Human Resources developments	Head of Human Resources	√	√	√
Workforce Develop and implement a Gender Identity policy and guidelines	Head of Human Resources	√		
Workforce Implement outcomes from the Equal Pay Review	Head of Human Resources	√		

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 2. Eliminating Unlawful Discrimination & Harassment	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Corporate Governance Quarterly reporting to Cabinet Committee of workforce equality data Set employment targets based upon the above data	Deputy Chief Executive	✓	✓	✓
Corporate Governance Develop an annual schedule of Equality Impact Assessments to be completed (initial and full), including a consultation timetable	Corporate Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator	✓	✓	✓
Corporate Governance Ensure Equality Impact Assessments are included in service reviews	Departmental Equality Standard Leads	✓	✓	✓
Corporate Governance Monitor progress of all Departmental Equality Groups Action Plans on a quarterly basis	Departmental Equality Groups Chairs	✓	✓	✓
Corporate Governance Regularly update the schedule of equality legislation on www.wirral.gov.uk	Equalities Officer	✓	✓	✓
Corporate Governance Ensure Equality Impact Assessments and Action Plans are scrutinised by the Customer and Community Engagement Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Corporate Equality & Diversity Co-	✓	✓	✓

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 2. Eliminating Unlawful Discrimination & Harassment	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
	ordinator			
Inclusive Access Review telephone services for accessibility and procure services accordingly	Access Officer	√		

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 2. Eliminating Unlawful Discrimination & Harassment	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Inclusive Access Review the website and intranet to ensure 100% accessibility by all	Access Officer	√		
Inclusive Access Review the Marketing Guidance to include advice on inclusive environments for all	Head of Tourism and Marketing	√	√	√
Inclusive Access Complete a minimum of 18 Council building access audits per annum	Access Officer	√	√	√
Inclusive Access Review online self-assessment procedures for customers for accessibility	Access Officer	√		
Communication Publish all completed Equality Impact Assessments via www.wirral.gov.uk	Equalities Officer	√	√	√
Communication Publish progress of the Council buildings access audit programme	Access Officer	√	√	√

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 3. Promoting Good Relations and Positive Attitudes	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Workforce Continued support to all Staff Diversity Forums	Head of Policy	✓	✓	✓
Workforce Develop one equality and diversity campaign per annum for all staff and members	Equalities Officer	✓	✓	✓
Corporate Governance Continued membership of Wirral Equalities Forum	Corporate Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator	✓	✓	✓
Corporate Governance Continued membership of Merseyside Equalities Forum	Corporate Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator	✓	✓	✓
Corporate Governance Develop a framework for assessing, and improving, satisfaction among Council customers and workforce	Customer Services Manager & Head of Human Resources		✓	
Corporate Governance Collect, store and analyse Council customer equality data	Customer Services Manager		✓	

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 3. Promoting Good Relations and Positive Attitudes	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Inclusive Access Complete a Community Cohesion review of all Council funded community services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black & Racial Minority Services (completed 08/09) • Scope worship / belief venues • Disabilities services • Lesbian, gay and bisexual services • Age related services • Women's services 	Community Engagement Manager	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓
Inclusive Access Service Managers and Members to attend a variety of diverse community events per annum	Equalities Officer	✓	✓	✓
Inclusive Access Publish best practice diversity guidelines for staff organising events and catering	Equalities Officer	✓		
Inclusive Access Establish a Wirral Hate Crime MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Committee)	Hate Crime Manager	✓		

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 3. Promoting Good Relations and Positive Attitudes	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Inclusive Access Review all Council established Blue Badge parking bays	Access Officer		√	
Inclusive Access Work in partnership with Merseytravel during their comprehensive review of accessible transport	Access Officer	√		
Inclusive Access Complete a feasibility report for providing English language lessons for new migrants to Wirral, where appropriate	Corporate Policy Manager	√		
Communication Targeted promotion of appropriate Council services to Wirral's diverse communities, via Voluntary & Community Action Wirral (VCAW)	Community Engagement Manager	√		
Communication Publish quarterly Equality Watch Newsletters: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• E-version (May and November)• Glossy version (February and August)	Equalities Officer	√	√	√

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 3. Promoting Good Relations and Positive Attitudes	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Communication Develop a communications framework for working in partnership with local media regarding equality and diversity issues	Head of Tourism & Marketing		√	

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 4. Promoting Involvement	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Corporate Governance Collect, store and analyse Wirral population equality data from all available sources, and map demographic change	Senior Research & Information Officer	√	√	√
Corporate Governance Ensure equality and diversity considerations are embedded within the Comprehensive Engagement Strategy	Community Engagement Manager	√		
Corporate Governance Scope and review all stakeholders involved with the Council's equality and diversity programme	Corporate Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator	√	√	√
Corporate Governance Ensure equality and diversity considerations are embedded within the Third Sector Strategy	Community Engagement Manager	√		
Inclusive Access Ensure all Council events and meetings take place in fully accessible venues	Access Officer	√	√	√
Communications Organise four Equality Watch events per annum	Equalities Officer	√	√	√

Equality Watch Scheme Actions 4. Promoting Involvement	Council Lead	2009 / 2010	2010 / 2011	2011 / 2012
Communications Develop an annual schedule of Council wide equality and diversity meetings	Equalities Officer	✓	✓	✓
Communications Further develop the Equality Watch membership database: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150 members in total • 300 members in total • 500 members in total 	Equalities Officer	✓	✓	✓

Wirral council is committed to making information accessible to everyone. You can visit your local one stop shop or telephone our call centre on (0151) 606 2020 for support and advice if you need information translated or in another format such as large print, Braille or audio.

<p>مجلس ویرال Wirral ملتزم بامكانية توفير المعلومات ليتمكن الحصول عليها بواسطة كل فرد. يمكنك الذهاب الى وحدة الخدمات المتعددة او اتصل تلفونياً على مركزنا للاتصالات على الرقم (0151) 606 2020 للمساعدة والنصح إذا ترغب في المعلومات مترجمة او في شكل آخر كالكتابة بخطوط كبيرة، بكتابة بريل او شريط كاسيت.</p> <p>(Arabic)</p>
<p>উইরাল কাউন্সিল সকলের কাছে তথ্য পৌঁছে দেওয়ার জন্য দায়বদ্ধ। আপনি আমাদের ওয়ান-স্টপ-শপে ভিজিট করতে পারেন বা আমাদের কল সেন্টারে (0151) 606 2020—এই নম্বরে সাহায্য ও পরামর্শের জন্য ফোন করতে পারেন যদি আপনি তথ্য অনুবাদিত, অন্য ফরম্যাটে, বড়ো হরফে ছাপায় বা ব্রেইল লিপিতে পেতে চান।</p> <p>(Bengali)</p>
<p>偉盧鎮議會致力為所有人士提供資訊。如果您需要某些資料翻譯成其他語文或編制成其他模式的版本（如大字體、凸字或錄音帶），您可以到就近的「一站店」或致電「傳訊中心」（0151606 2020）查詢。</p> <p>(Chinese)</p>
<p>Tá Comhairle Wirral tiomanta le heolas a chur ar fail do gach duine. Is féidir leat cuairt a thabhairt ar an ionad ilfhreastail is áitiúla duit nó glaoch a chur ar an lárionad glaonna s'againn ar (0151) 606 2020 chun tacaíocht agus comhairle a fháil má tá eolas de dhíth ort aistrithe nó i bhfoirm éigin eile, mar shampla, cló mór, Braille nó ciosmheáin.</p> <p>(Gaelic)</p>
<p>विरल कौंसिल, सभी लोगों के लिए जानकारी को पहुंचयोग बनाने के लिए वचनबंध है। यदि आपको किसी जानकारी के हिन्दी में अनुवाद की या किसी और रूप में जैसे कि बड़े अक्षरों में छपाई, बरेल में या कैसिट के रूप में अवश्यक्ता हो तो सलाह और मदद प्राप्त करने के लिए आप अपनी स्थानीय वॉन स्टॉप शाप में जा सकते हैं या इस नम्बर पर (०१५१) ६०६ २०२० पर हमारे किसी भी एक काल सेंटर में टैलीफोन कर सकते हैं।</p> <p>(Hindi)</p>
<p>Rada Miejska Wirral stara się, aby informacje były dostępne dla wszystkich. Mogą Państwo odwiedzić miejscowy ośrodek informacyjny (one stop shop) lub zadzwonić do naszego biura obsługi klienta pod numer telefonu (0151) 606 2020 po wsparcie i porady, jeśli informacje wymagane są w innym języku lub formacie, np dużym drukiem, w wersji audio lub w alfabecie Braille'a.</p> <p>(Polish)</p>
<p>ਵਿਰਲ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪਹੁੰਚਯੋਗ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਵਚਨਬੱਧ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਤਰਜਮੇ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਛਪਾਈ, ਬਰੇਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਂ ਕੈਸਿਟ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਸਲਾਹ ਅਤੇ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਲੈਣ ਲਈ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਥਾਨਿਕ ਵੌਨ ਸਟਾਪ ਸ਼ੌਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ (0151) 606 2020 ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਾਲ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ।</p> <p>(Punjabi)</p>
<p>Gollaha Wirral waxa uu isku xil-saarey in uu wargelinta ka yeelo wax uu qof walba heli karo. Waxa aad booqan kartaa Dukaanka Hal-Mar-Joogsiga ah ee xaafadaada ama sooba wac xarruuntayada soo wicitaanka oo laga helo (0151) 606 2020 si aad tageero iyo la tallin uga hesho haddii aad u baahan tahay in wargelinta luqad kale loogu turjumo ama looga soo dhigo qaab kale sida far waaweyn, farta ee Braille ama cajallad maqal ah.</p> <p>(Somali)</p>
<p>ویرال کونسل معلومات کو ہر ایک کیلئے قابل رسائی بنانے کیلئے پابند عہد ہے۔ اگر آپ کو معلومات ترجمہ شدہ یا کسی دیگر شکل جیسے بڑے حروف، بریل یا آڈیو کی شکل میں مطلوب ہو تو آپ مدد اور مشورے کیلئے اپنے مقامی ون اسٹاپ شاپ پر آسکتے ہیں یا ہمارے کال سنٹر کو (0151) 606 2020 پر فون کریں۔</p> <p>(Urdu)</p>

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 27TH NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE/DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

INTERNATIONAL LINKS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the activity undertaken by the recent Wirral delegation visit to Suzhou, China from the 23rd – 27th September 2008. The report also recommends the development of four projects that will build upon the relationship that has been successfully developed.

Background

- 1.1 Cabinet approved on 22nd May 2008 further work to be undertaken to develop an International Links Strategy, including the establishment of a link with China. A similar discussion took place within the Investment Strategy Board which concluded that a link with China could significantly enhance the delivery of Wirral's Investment Strategy. A further report was considered by Cabinet on July 9th 2008 and it was agreed that a delegation should visit Suzhou between 23rd – 27th September.
- 1.2 The City of Suzhou was identified as a city with which it would be advantageous to develop a link. Suzhou is an ancient city with a history of achievement in arts and culture and it is also a major industrial centre and its high tech industries are at the centre of China's rapid development. Cabinet was clear that the developing relationship be not just economic but should also encompass cultural and social areas such as education, the arts, and tourism.
- 1.3 The Government of Suzhou had expressed a strong desire to establish formal links with Wirral. Following a meeting in London with Mr Wang Yang, the Director of the Bureau of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, a detailed proposition on what the mutual benefits might be was progressed and Cabinet approved the visit of an appropriate delegation to formalise this activity.

2. Overview of visit

- 2.1 It is felt that the visit and associated meetings were very successful in taking the first steps towards economic and cultural co-operation. A statement of intent was signed between Mr Xie Ming (Mayor of Suzhou's port City of Taicang) and Councillor Steve Foulkes to explore further the links between the two areas. Councillor Foulkes and Mr Yan Li, the Mayor of Suzhou, formally agreed to work together to secure full economic co-operation between the areas of Suzhou and Wirral. A series of meetings were held with senior Government and business representatives throughout the week. As a result a number of projects will be developed over the next few months relating to business, tourism, culture and educational links as detailed in this report.
- 2.2 The delegation also visited Liverpool University's Suzhou campus and a range of business parks in the municipality. Councillor Foulkes was also invited to meet children and local people at a community project in the historic Jinchang District of

Suzhou. The success of the visit was widely reported including coverage across television and the printed media in China.

2.3 The visit culminated in Councillor Foulkes delivering a key speech to the prestigious international Mayoral Consultation conference during which he set out Wirral's Investment Strategy and the Council's ambitions for the future. Other speakers included the two other government representatives invited to the conference from Venice and Constance in Germany and a range of international private sector organisations including Porsche and the American Chamber of Commerce.

2.4 The delegation comprised:

Councillor Steve Foulkes	Leader of the Council
Jim Wilkie	Director of Corporate Services
Kevin Adderley	Head of Strategic Development
Emma Degg	Head of Tourism and Marketing
Dr Kegang Wu	Chief China Advisor, British Chambers of Commerce (Interpreter)
Lindsey Ashworth	Development Director, Peel Holdings

2.5 The Investment Strategy Board received an update on the Suzhou visit and planned activities at its meeting on November 7th and endorsed the proposed actions detailed below.

3 Key projects recommended for development: **Education links**

3.1 A key objective for both areas is to build upon the excellent work already undertaken by a number of Schools in Wirral to enable their students to capitalise on the opportunities that China is likely to generate in the future. For example, Calday Grange Grammar School has been awarded a prestigious role in the development of Mandarin teaching through the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust and has been chosen to be the "Confucius Classroom" for the North West of England.

3.2 The delegation visited the Jianxiong Institute of Vocational Technology to view the facilities and meet students and staff and to discuss the future potential for partnership activity with Wirral Metropolitan College for the benefit of students from both areas. Particular interest was expressed in the potential for joint training programmes concerned with the logistics and port sectors. The delegation also visited Suzhou Xian-Liverpool University at the Dushu Lake Education Park.

3.4 Key contacts established:

Jeremy Smith	Vice President Suzhou Xian-Liverpool University
Chen Zhi-Qiang	Principle, Jianxiong Institute of Vocational Technology

3.5 Activity to be taken forward

1. An agreement to build upon existing school activity and develop further partnership activity with schools in Suzhou for the benefit of children and teachers from both regions.
2. The development of a firm proposal to take forward formal training links potentially as part of the development of the educational quarter on the Wirral Waters site focussing on logistics and port sector related activity

3. Possible co-operation between the Wirral Based Maritime Institute and Jianxiong Institute of Vocational Technology to develop Maritime training in Taicang

4. Port and business links

- 4.1 The Taicang Port of Suzhou benefits from over 25 kilometres of deep water. It has 172 designated berths and in 2007 it handled more than 1 million standard containers and over 30 million tons of cargo. The Port is currently implementing plans that it believes will, over the next three years, see it raise business to 5 million standard containers and 300 million tons per year.
- 4.2 The development of the Twelve Quays Ferry Terminal has secured Wirral's place as the key strategic location for passenger and freight movement between mainland UK and Ireland. In addition the new terminal in Liverpool will be capable of handling the new generation of larger post-Panamax vessels that will enable the development of new trade routes and increased cargo volumes.
- 4.3 In the light of this the delegation visited the Taicang Port Zone to investigate the potential for the establishment of shipping links between Taicang and the Port of Liverpool. Over the course of a number of meetings during the week the potential for the establishment of a Chinese business district focussed around port related businesses was explored.
- 4.4 In addition Suzhou has identified outsourcing as a key area for continued expansion. Wirral would like to support companies in Suzhou who wish to explore the establishment of trading bases in Europe.
- 4.5 Key contacts made:

Lu Yan (Alice)	Vice Mayor of Taicang responsible for Port activity
Wang Yang	Director, Suzhou Bureau of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation
Yuan Rong Hua	Director, Foreign Economics and Trade Bureau, Jinchang District, Suzhou
Sam Crispin,	Chairman of the British Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai

4.6 Action to be taken forward:

1. Discussions to commence with Peel Holdings regarding the establishment of a direct Port link between Taicang and the Port of Liverpool.
2. A proposition to be developed to establish a location for Chinese port related businesses located at Wirral Waters/Cammell Laird with an excellent business support service integral to the proposition.

5. Sustainable technology

- 5.1 Wirral shares a number of challenges with Suzhou when seeking to grow our economy, in particular the challenge of delivering massive economic development while protecting the heritage and natural assets of our regions. All aspects of sustainable development are of keen interest including power generation, environmental technologies and environmental protection. Wirral Waters aims to become an exemplar of sustainability. We would like to explore opportunities to share knowledge, investment and technologies for mutual benefit.

5.2 The delegation visited the Huaneng Thermal Power Plant and discussed the challenges of sustainable development across a number of meetings.

5.3 Actions to be taken forward:

1. Seminar to be organised to coincide with return visit by Chinese delegation to Wirral that would feature Wirral Companies and organisations who could demonstrate best practice.

6. Tourism

6.1 Suzhou was built in 514 BC and lies upon a network of canals and rivers and is referred to as the “Venice of China”. It has a sister city relationship with Venice, Italy and is famous for its canals and gardens and contains nine World Heritage sites. Visitor numbers have increased by 10% per year and income from tourism has been growing at 18% per year. It makes full use of its ancient cities, classical gardens, canals and lakes and is also home to the Chinese International Silk Festival and has an annual International Tourism Festival. It has in excess of 150 graded hotels, with over 50 at or above 4* and an additional 14 opened in 2007.

6.2 There are many common cultural and tourism attributes shared between Suzhou and Wirral – including our rich maritime heritage. Desire was clearly articulated at a number of meetings during the visit to explore cultural and tourism exchanges between Wirral and Suzhou.

6.3 Actions to be taken forward:

1. Cultural exchange exhibition to be organized to coincide with return delegation visit.
2. Tourism packages to be selected for mutual promotion.

6.4 It is considered that the projects detailed above should be progressed and cabinet is asked to endorse them. It is expected that additional opportunities for co-operation will be developed as the relationship between both areas develops

6.5 As a next step, it is suggested that Wirral hosts a return delegation from the Suzhou area in the early part of 2009

7 Financial and Staffing Implications

7.1 The cost of the visit was contained within existing budgets.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications

8.1 The links which might be developed in the future promote a greater understanding of different societies and cultures essential to the promotion of a sound and balanced approach to equality and diversity.

9 Community Safety Implications

9.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

10 Local Agenda 21 Implications

10.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

11 Planning Implications

11.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

12 Anti-Poverty Implications

12.1 Developing awareness of international links will encourage a deeper understanding of economic interdependence and our joint responsibilities as global citizens

13 Human Rights Implications

13.1 Our strategy for international links would embrace fully the fundamental principles of respect for human rights.

14 Social Inclusion Implications

14.1 Respect for other cultures will be enhanced and deepened through the wide range and variety of international links. This should enhance and improve relationships within our own community.

15 Local Member Support Implications

15.1 This report affects the entire Borough.

16 Background Papers

16.1 None were used in compiling this report

RECOMMENDATIONS

That

- (1) the projects outlined in this report be endorsed;
- (2) Members support the continuing development of relationships between Wirral and Suzhou; and
- (3) an official invitation be sent inviting a return delegation in the spring/early summer of 2009.

J. WILKIE

Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 27 NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR WIRRAL - CORE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT – PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out the background to progress on the emerging Local Development Framework for Wirral which will replace the Council's Unitary Development Plan as the Council's local strategy for the location and control of new investment and development.

This report seeks approval to undertake public consultation on a draft Issues and Objectives Document as part of the preparation of a Core Strategy for Wirral, which will be the lead document of the Borough's Local Development Framework. It recommends:

- (1) That the proposals for the future preparation of a Core Strategy Development Plan Document set out in this report be approved;
- (2) That the revised proposals for the preparation of the Core Strategy are included within a review of the Local Development Scheme;
- (2) That the Issues and Objectives Document attached to this report is submitted for consideration to the Sustainability Appraisal Panel;
- (3) That the Issues and Objectives Document attached to this report is made subject to an Equality Impact Assessment;
- (4) That the Director of Corporate Services is given delegated authority to make any changes necessary to the Issues and Objectives Document to reflect the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal Panel and the Equality Impact Assessment, before publishing the Document for public consultation;
- (5) That Area Forums be offered the opportunity for a presentation on the Local Development Framework and the emerging Core Strategy;
- (6) That the principle of preparing a renewable energy capacity study be approved, subject to the possibility of joint working with other neighbouring Local Authorities being explored and a further report on costs being brought back for Cabinet approval.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new system of land use plans known as Local Development Frameworks (LDF); a portfolio of Council prepared Local Development Documents. Local Development Documents can comprise:

- Development Plan Documents including a Core Strategy;
 - Supplementary Planning Documents;
 - a Statement of Community Involvement;
 - a Local Development Scheme; and
 - a series of Annual Monitoring Reports.
- 1.2 The original intention of Government was for a suite of Development Plan Documents to progressively replace “old style” Development Plans such as the Unitary Development Plan for Wirral (adopted February 2000).
- 1.3 Two key themes are: ‘front-loaded’ community participation, with a higher level of community involvement in the earlier stages of plan preparation; and the adoption of a spatial planning approach. A spatial planning approach is intended to provide:
- a locally distinctive vision for the future of the area, based on community derived objectives;
 - an set of objectives, priorities and programmes, including policies and land allocations;
 - a framework for the public sector resources necessary to aid delivery;
 - a framework for private sector investment and regeneration;
 - a co-ordinated approach to delivery with other agencies; and
 - measures to tackle climate change and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- 1.4 The vision and evidence base for the Core Strategy should be shared with the Sustainable Community Strategy, which should set the overall direction for the Local Development Framework. All the documents within the Local Development Framework need to be in conformity with each other and with the Core Strategy and with the Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 1.5 The ambition for a wider “place-shaping” role goes further than the simpler more focused “old style” land use planning documents that were only used to determine planning applications.

Preparation Processes

- 1.6 The new processes introduced by the 2004 Act were complex, involving several stages of preliminary consultation culminating in an independent examination by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to test the “soundness” of the proposals. In practice, these processes have proved to be resource-intensive, time-consuming and process-bound.
- 1.7 The introduction of a new, untested system has also led to considerable uncertainty amongst practitioners, not least in terms of defining what constitutes a “sound” Development Plan Document. The inability to establish this prior to public examination led to a number of early plans prepared by other Local Authorities across the country either being withdrawn or failing at public examination. One of the early lessons has been the need to provide a comprehensive evidence base at the outset of the process.
- 1.8 In most cases, Local Development Documents have had to be prepared in a set order to follow a “chain of conformity” – the Local Development Scheme, to set the

overall programme; the Statement of Community Involvement, to set out the processes for public consultation; the Core Strategy, to set the overall spatial framework; Site Allocations and Area Action Plans, to establish the land allocations necessary to deliver the Core Strategy; followed by supporting Supplementary Planning Documents to provide additional guidance.

- 1.9 In practice, delays in preparing the Regional Spatial Strategy (reported to Cabinet, 6th November 2008), which in most places is needed before a conforming Core Strategy can be prepared, have led to further delays in preparing the following documents.
- 1.10 By the end of April 2008 (the most recently available information) only 29 Core Strategies in England had been found sound and adopted. Of these, only 3 were in metropolitan boroughs. At the time of writing, Lancaster City Council is the only district in the north west of England with a sound, adopted Core Strategy.
- 1.11 Wirral has to date adopted a Local Development Scheme (the latest revision came into force in July 2007), a Statement of Community Involvement (adopted December 2006) and four Supplementary Planning Documents (adopted in October 2006 and June 2007), following on from work initiated under the pre-existing Unitary Development Plan. Work is also underway on a joint Merseyside Waste Development Plan Document, led by the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, which has now reached the Spatial Strategy and Sites Report and will be subject to public consultation at the end of 2008.

2 Changes to the Development Plans System

- 2.1 The Secretary of State published proposals to reform the new system during 2007. Amendments were proposed to the Regulations and to the national policies in Planning Policy Statement 12 (Cabinet, 23 January 2008, Minute 453 refers). The revised PPS12 was issued on 4 June 2008 and the new Regulations came into force on 27 June 2008.
- 2.2 The main changes:
 - replace the requirement to undertake a number of prescribed formal stages early in the process with a single requirement to engage, to consider who should be involved and to take appropriate steps to engage them, dependent on the scale and type of the plan being prepared (Regulation 25);
 - introduce a new pre-submission stage, requiring the publication of a draft Plan to enable the Council to address potential issues relating to soundness before submitting the final Document to an Inspector (Regulation 27);
 - simplify PPS12 to concentrate on the principles of spatial planning rather than the detail of the plan preparation process, which is now set out in a separate but still lengthy online Plan Making Manual;
 - summarise the nine tests of soundness presented in the previous PPS12 under 3 simpler headings - a plan must now be “justified”, “effective” and “consistent with national policy”;

- widen the scope of core strategies, to enable them to specifically allocate strategic sites and deal with local infrastructure requirements;
- extend the duration of core strategies from ten to fifteen years from the date of adoption;
- indicate that many, more detailed, site allocation documents may no longer be necessary, if enough detail is included within the core strategy on which to base appropriate decisions.

- 2.3 While these changes are to be welcomed, plan preparation is still a highly complex, lengthy process with numerous stages and assessments, often to satisfy cross cutting legislation, in addition to compiling and maintaining a detailed evidence base, which must be carried out openly and transparently, subject to public consultation.
- 2.4 Despite these changes, the Government and the Planning Inspectorate have already made clear that the standard of “soundness” remains the same and that the rigour of the examination process will remain unchanged.
- 2.5 By way of example, the Inspectorate has still identified 30 separate issues which a local authority will have to address under the simpler “three” tests of soundness and the need to demonstrate that alternative options have been properly evaluated means that there will remain a need numerous rounds of initial public consultation before a full draft plan can be prepared. The requirement for an extensive, detailed evidence base also remains.
- 2.6 The Planning Bill is expected to make further changes to the development plans system early in the New Year.

3 The Core Strategy for Wirral

- 3.1 The Core Strategy is a “new-style” Development Plan Document that will replace the majority of the Unitary Development Plan for Wirral. It is a key document, intended to set the overall framework for future development in the Borough, to which other Documents within the Framework will be required to conform. The Core Strategy must, however, be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 3.2 National advice indicates the Core Strategy should include:
- an overall vision which sets out how the area and the places within it should develop over the coming years;
 - the strategic objectives for the area, focusing on the key issues to be addressed;
 - a delivery strategy for achieving these objectives, which should set out the scale of development intended and how, where, when, and by whom it will be delivered;
 - broad locations for strategic development, indicated on a key diagram; and
 - clear arrangements for managing and monitoring the delivery of the strategy, including the delivery of any necessary infrastructure.
- 3.3 The time horizon must be at least 15 years from the date of adoption.

- 3.4 Once adopted, the Core Strategy will provide the blueprint for the social, economic, and environmental regeneration of the Borough, taking forward the vision of the Investment Strategy for Wirral and providing the framework for implementing the aims and objectives of the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy.

Initial Consultation

- 3.5 Initial consultation on the scope of the Core Strategy began in October 2005, to consider the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and local needs of the Borough. A report of Initial Consultation, which can be viewed at http://www.wirral.gov.uk/minute/public/execcs060712rep3a_20917.pdf, was published in July 2006.
- 3.6 A further round of initial consultation was undertaken to test and prioritise the earlier results through public workshops in November 2006. A draft Second Report of Initial Consultation was sent to participants for comment in January 2007.
- 3.7 The draft Second Report identified that comments had not been received from a number of important groups, including people representing the mid-Wirral settlements, younger people, BME groups and disabled people. Additional work to fill these gaps was completed during summer 2007.
- 3.8 Work since summer 2007 has been concentrated on securing an appropriate evidence base.

Evidence Base

- 3.9 Early experience from elsewhere in the country and strong advice from Government Office North West, indicates that a comprehensive evidence base needs to be in place in advance of the Core Strategy, rather than as originally anticipated as part of the preparation of later site-specific DPDs. The level of detail now considered necessary far exceeds that previously required for a Unitary Development Plan.
- 3.10 Cabinet agreed the funding necessary to bring forward a series of evidence base studies in January and March 2007 (Cabinet 24th January 2007, Minute 232 and 15th March 2007, Minute 284 refers).
- 3.11 The table below lists the studies identified and their current progress:

Study	Progress
Cultural Services Forward Plan (including PPG17-based Open Space and Recreation Audit) (<i>produced by Strategic Leisure Limited</i>)	Commissioned July 2007 – Initial report to Cabinet October 2008. PPG17 issues to be reported separately
Employment Land and Premises (<i>produced by BE Group</i>)	Commissioned September 2007 - About to report
Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment (<i>produced by Fordham Research</i>)	Completed September 2007 - Reported to Cabinet February 2008
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (<i>produced by</i>	Commissioned October 2007 - About to report

Study	Progress
<i>Faber Maunsell</i>)	
Merseyside Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (Produced by Salford HUSU)	Completed February 2008 – Not yet reported
Retail and Town Centres (produced by Roger Tym and Partners)	Commissioned March 2008 – About to report
Biodiversity Audit (produced by Penny Anderson Associates)	Commissioned April 2008 – About to report
Social Infrastructure Study (produced in-house)	Commenced May 2008 – Ongoing
Landscape Character Assessment (produced by The Environment Partnership)	Commissioned June 2008 – Due to report February 2009
Wirral Waters evidence base (produced by Peel Holdings)	Reported to Cabinet July 2008 - Public consultation pending
Settlement Level Profiles (produced in-house)	Initial data compiled August 2008 - Ongoing
Merseyside Minerals Study (produced by Urban Vision - managed by MEAS)	Completed September 2008 - About to report
Mersey Heartlands Growth Point Programme of Development (produced by Wirral Council, Liverpool City Council and Peel Holdings)	Reported to Cabinet October 2008
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	Pending tender - Joint study with Liverpool subject to Cabinet approval on 6 November 2008

- 3.12 The findings of each study will be reported to Cabinet and published for public consultation before being fed into the plan making process.
- 3.13 The only outstanding piece of evidence, not so far provided, which has been identified during the preparation of the Issues and Objectives Document reported below, relates to the capacity of the Borough to generate renewable energy, which may be needed in support of any future policy that the Council may wish to promote to support sustainable development. This study could be progressed as part of joint sub-regional working, subject to the agreement of other districts.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 3.14 The emerging Core Strategy must be subject to a statutory sustainability appraisal.
- 3.15 Consultation on the scope of the appraisal for the Core Strategy was undertaken during 2006 and the final scoping report, which can be viewed at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/minute/viewagenda.asp?mtg=2266#11> (Item 11 refers), was confirmed in July 2007 (Cabinet 26th July 2007, Minute 144 refers).
- 3.16 The stages required as part of the sustainability appraisal of the emerging Core Strategy, which are set out in more detail within the final Scoping Report, require a

written report to be prepared to demonstrate that the social, economic and environmental consequences of any future decisions have been properly considered.

Sustainability Appraisal Panel

- 3.17 The Council appointed an independent Sustainability Appraisal Panel in October 2006, to oversee the appraisal processes undertaken by the Council (Executive Board 12th July 2006, Minute 114 refers).
- 3.18 The appointment of the Panel committed the Council to take draft documents through a formal appraisal process, to be verified by the Panel at each stage of the plan making process, before they are published for public consultation. This report, therefore, recommends that the Issues and Objectives Document attached to this report is referred to the Panel before being published for public consultation.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.19 Initial screening for the need to prepare an assessment of the likely environmental effects of the Core Strategy was carried out in consultation with the specified consultation bodies in August 2005. The final determination, which can be viewed at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/LGCL/100006/200074/856/CSFinalSEADetermination.pdf>, was approved by Executive Board on 12th July 2006 (Minute 114 refers).
- 3.20 The requirement to prepare an additional environmental report will normally be undertaken as part of the sustainability appraisal of the Core Strategy, with the relevant elements sign-posted within the sustainability appraisal report. It is a particular requirement of the SEA Regulations that the identification and assessment of alternatives must be subject to public consultation.

Habitats Regulation Assessment

- 3.21 An assessment under the Habitat Regulations is required to demonstrate that the emerging Core Strategy will cause no harm to European designated sites. The assessment must also extend to sites outside the Borough boundary.
- 3.22 Expressions of interest to undertake the Habitat Regulations Assessment for the Core Strategy were invited as part of the Request for Quotation for the Biodiversity Audit. Formal work to undertake the Habitat Regulation Assessment is, therefore, still to be formally commissioned.
- 3.23 Cabinet on 7th February 2008 (Minute 502 refers) resolved that monies initially set aside for Habitats Regulation Assessment be used to widen the scope of the Biodiversity Audit and to ensure that the commission would be attractive to an appropriate calibre of consultant. Monies to undertake the Habitat Regulation Assessment are, therefore, still to be identified.
- 3.24 Habitat Regulation Assessment requires several stages of preparation, beginning with a screening exercise which identifies whether a more detailed "appropriate assessment" is required to ascertain impacts on European Sites and identify mitigation measures. The key stages for Habitats Regulations Assessment are from the preferred options stage onwards.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.25 There is a corporate commitment to assess the equalities implications of the Council's policies and activities.
- 3.26 An Equality Impact Assessment has not yet been undertaken for the Core Strategy. This report, therefore, recommends that a formal Assessment is carried out prior to the publication of the Issues and Objectives Document for public consultation.

4 Future Progress

- 4.1 Now that Regional Spatial Strategy has been issued (reported to Cabinet 6th November 2008) and the evidence base is nearing completion, it is necessary to return to the core of the plan making process.
- 4.2 Further consultation is needed to confirm the issues to be included within the Core Strategy and to identify the objectives to be pursued. The agreed objectives can then be used to identify the spatial options that will need to be assessed to arrive at the Council's Preferred Options for the Strategy, to demonstrate that the potential alternatives have been appropriately assessed and that the Core Strategy is "sound".
- 4.3 This report recommends a two stage process:

5 Issues and Objectives Consultation

- 5.1 The draft Issues and Objectives Document, attached to this report, is intended to secure agreement on the key spatial planning issues facing the Borough, a proposed spatial vision and a series of strategic policy objectives to address the issues identified. The Document provides:
- A general introduction to the Core Strategy;
 - A spatial portrait of the Borough (covering the economic, social and environmental context);
 - A Summary of the initial consultation findings
 - A Summary of Corporate policy context
 - A Summary of current regeneration activities
 - A Summary of emerging issues and challenges
 - A suggested Spatial Vision for the Borough
 - A series of draft strategic policy objectives
- 5.2 The spatial portrait is a description of the essential characteristics of the Borough, describing its social, economic and environmental conditions. This is the first stage in articulating the issues that Wirral faces and the strategy that may be necessary to respond to them. Consultees will be asked for their views on whether the spatial portrait is an accurate and comprehensive summary.
- 5.3 The summary of emerging issues and challenges attempts to encapsulate the issues that have arisen from initial consultation, the spatial portrait and the existing and emerging evidence base, including the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the Council's Corporate Plan. Consultees will be invited to confirm whether the issues, problems and challenges outlined are an accurate reflection of the key issues facing the Borough.

- 5.4 The spatial portrait and the emerging issues and challenges are then used to inform a draft spatial vision, which seeks to establish an agreed picture of what the Borough should be like towards the end of the plan period. The spatial vision is one of the most important components of the Core Strategy as it will set the context for the objectives, priorities, policies and land allocations which will flow from it.
- 5.5 Taking account of this background, a series of emerging strategic policy objectives are suggested. These objectives will form the link between the spatial vision and the series of spatial options that will need to be identified and assessed as part of the next stage of the process.
- 5.6 It is proposed that consultation on the Issues and Objectives Document will take place early in the New Year with the findings expected to be reported to Cabinet around Easter 2009.

6 Spatial Options Consultation

- 6.1 The results of consultation on the Issues and Objectives Document will be used to identify a series of spatial options for the Core Strategy.
- 6.2 The generation of spatial options offers stakeholders the opportunity to influence the key choices about the future development of the Borough, before they are finally confirmed. Consultation will enable the Council to demonstrate that it has identified and evaluated a full range of available potential options and to better assess their likely implications.
- 6.3 The generation and evaluation of spatial options generation will need to comply with national guidance, which indicates that they should represent genuine alternative approaches to governing future development and change in the Borough. Potential options should be “reasonable”, which is generally taken to mean that they should be realistic and genuinely capable of implementation. The spatial options will need to be subject to a full range of appraisals and assessments.
- 6.4 Following Cabinet approval, it is envisaged that a Spatial Options Document, setting out the accompanying appraisals and assessments, would be published for public consultation towards the middle of 2009.

7 Future Stages

- 7.1 Consultation on the Spatial Options Document will enable the Council to decide upon its Preferred Options. The Preferred Options must, again, be published for public consultation to ensure that the alternative options have been correctly evaluated and to confirm that the Council’s final decisions have been soundly based. The results of consultation on the Preferred Options will then be used to draw up a draft Core Strategy. This is the first time that the public and other stakeholders will have be able to see a complete fully drafted Core Strategy for the Borough.
- 7.2 The draft Core Strategy, which may now include strategic site allocations, will need to be formally published for statutory public consultation accompanied by the evidence base and a full suite of appraisals and assessments to explain the processes carried out to arrive at the conclusions now included within the Strategy.

7.3 The comments received can be used by the Council to make any final changes before submitting the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for public examination by an independent Planning Inspector. Assuming the Inspector concludes that the Core Strategy is “sound”, on the basis of the evidence submitted and any outstanding representations, the Council would then be able to proceed to adoption.

8 Local Development Scheme

8.1 A timetable for these future stages has not yet been prepared but will be provided as part of the review of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) to be submitted to the Secretary of State early in the New Year, following the submission of this year’s Annual Monitoring Report in December 2008.

8.2 The review of the LDS will need to re-consider the appropriateness of the subject-level Development Plan Documents originally proposed for housing, employment and retail, leisure and town centres, in light of the amendments to PPS12 and the enhanced role of the Core Strategy.

8.3 The review of the LDS will also include a consideration of the resources needed for future stages of work and a risk assessment.

8.4 The consideration of future timetabling and resource issues is currently being assisted by the Planning Advisory Service.

9 Public Consultation

9.1 Public consultation on the Issues and Objectives Document will be carried out in compliance with the standards set out in the Statement of Community Involvement adopted by the Council in December 2006.

9.2 Copies of the Document will be placed for inspection, free of charge, in public libraries throughout the Borough and at the public counter of the Technical Services Department, as well as on the internet through the Council’s website, and notification letters will be sent to all the contacts on the Council’s Local Development Framework database.

9.3 The Member Training Working Party on 6 October 2008 requested that a report on the Local Development Framework setting out the processes to be undertaken be presented to each of the Area Forums to enable the public to better understand how they can become involved.

10 Financial Implications

10.1 Public consultation on the Issues and Objectives Document can be undertaken from within existing resources.

10.2 The resources necessary for future stages of plan preparation will be considered alongside the review of the Local Development Scheme to be submitted to the Secretary of State early in the New Year.

10.3 The cost of preparing a Renewable Energy Capacity Study will be the subject of a future report to Cabinet.

10.4 The cost of preparing a Habitat Regulation Assessment will be the subject of a future report to Cabinet.

10.5 The annual award of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant to the Council is now directly linked to progress on the delivery of the Local Development Framework (Cabinet 25 September 2008, Minute 202 refers).

11 Staffing Implications

11.1 There are no staffing implications arising directly out of this report.

12 Equal Opportunities Implications

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

12.2 The publication of Issues and Objectives for the Core Strategy was originally held back to allow additional consultation with under-represented groups.

12.3 The preparation of the Core Strategy will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

13 Community Safety Implications

13.1 There are no community safety implications arising directly out of this report. The Local Development Framework for Wirral is, however, expected to include policies that will seek to protect and improve community safety.

14 Local Agenda 21 Implications

14.1 The Council has a legal duty to prepare the Local Development Framework with a view to contributing to the promotion of sustainable development.

14.2 Documents prepared as part of the Local Development Framework must be subject to a statutory sustainability appraisal including strategic environmental assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment.

15 Planning Implications

15.1 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document, once adopted, will form part of the statutory Development Plan for Wirral alongside the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Council's Unitary Development Plan and will have implications for the determination of individual planning applications and other decisions under the Planning Acts.

16 Anti-Poverty Implications

16.1 There are no anti-poverty implications arising directly from this report. The Local Development Framework is, however, expected to include policies that will seek to promote opportunities for wealth creation.

17 Human Rights Implications

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

18 Social Inclusion Implications

18.1 There are no social inclusion implications arising directly from this report. The Local Development Framework is, however, expected to include policies that will seek to support and promote social inclusion.

19 Local Member Support Implications

19.1 There are no Ward specific implications arising from this report.

19.2 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document will set the overall spatial framework for development and investment across the whole Borough over the next fifteen to twenty years.

20 Background Papers

20.1 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 can be viewed at www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/20040005.htm

20.2 Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004, No.2204) can be viewed at www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/20042204.htm

20.3 The Planning White Paper - Planning for a Sustainable Future (HM Government, May 2007) can be viewed at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/320546>

20.4 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2008 (SI 2008 No 1371) can be viewed at http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2008/pdf/uksi_20081371_en.pdf

20.5 Planning Policy Statement 12 - Local Spatial Planning (June 2008) can be viewed at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/pps12lsp.pdf>

20.6 The SEA Regulations can be viewed at http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/uksi_20041633_en.pdf

20.7 The Habitat Regulations can be viewed at http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2007/pdf/uksi_20071843_en.pdf

20.8 Local Development Scheme for Wirral (July 2007) can be viewed at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/LGCL/100006/200074/856/LDSReviewFinalJuly07.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS

That

- (1) the proposals for the future preparation of a Core Strategy Development Plan Document set out in this report be approved;**
- (2) the revised proposals for the preparation of the Core Strategy be included within a review of the Local Development Scheme;**
- (3) the Issues and Objectives Document attached to the report be submitted for consideration to the Sustainability Appraisal Panel;**
- (4) the Issues and Objectives Document attached to the report be made subject to an Equality Impact Assessment;**
- (5) the Director of Corporate Services be given delegated authority to make any changes necessary to the Issues and Objectives Document to reflect the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal Panel and the Equality Impact Assessment before publishing the Document for public consultation;**
- (5) Area Forums be offered the opportunity for a presentation on the Local Development Framework and the emerging Core Strategy; and**
- (6) the principle of preparing a renewable energy capacity study be approved, subject to the possibility of joint working with other neighbouring Local Authorities being explored and a further report on costs being brought back for Cabinet approval.**

J. Wilkie

Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services

This report has been prepared by the Forward Planning Section who can be contacted on 691 8218.

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ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES CONSULTATION

1. INTRODUCTION

The Borough of Wirral is home to approximately 310,000 people. The Wirral peninsula covers an area of only sixty square miles but within the Borough there is considerable social, economic and environmental diversity. There are sharp contrasts between the east and west of the Borough.

Wirral's natural and built environment is a major asset. Attractive countryside, wildlife habitats of international importance, areas of high quality housing and a considerable built and cultural heritage all contribute to Wirral's sense of place. The Borough has a wide range of leisure opportunities and was host to The Open Golf Championship, in 2006. The community places a high value on the protection of this environment.

There is however a need to widen access to economic opportunity. Levels of economic activity and productivity are low. In certain parts of the Borough there are high levels of worklessness and benefit dependency. Average life expectancy in the east is 10 years below that in the west of the Borough.

A Borough of such strong contrasts inevitably leads to competing demands and community expectations. The Council and its partners are ambitious for economic, environmental and social regeneration. Growing the local economy is identified as the top priority in the Council's Investment Strategy (issued in final form in 2007). The Investment Strategy aims to encourage focused and dynamic development while maintaining and enhancing Wirral's unique character and quality of life. A range of opportunities and challenges are identified under the headings of Infrastructure, Business, Skills and education, People and Jobs and Quality of Life. A number of priority projects and key outcomes are also identified.

The Planning system can play an important role in enabling local communities to meet these challenges, in particular, through the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF is a series of planning documents that will provide a blueprint for the future development of the Borough over the next 15-20 years. It will also provide the spatial framework for delivering the aims and objectives of Wirral's Sustainable Community Strategy.

The LDF must be prepared in harmony with national and regional policy. At the regional level the most important are the Regional Spatial Strategy, Regional Economic Strategy and Regional Housing Strategy, soon to be merged into a Single Regional Strategy¹. At a sub-regional level a key document is the Liverpool City Region Action Plan.

The Core Strategy

The Core Strategy is a key document within the emerging LDF for Wirral and is being prepared first because it sets the strategic direction for the rest of the LDF. Once adopted, all other Documents within the Framework must be in general conformity with the Core Strategy.

The Core Strategy must be prepared in accordance with national procedures. Community involvement will be secured in line with the commitments set out within

¹ To be prepared by the North West Development Agency.

the Council's Statement of Community Involvement². These procedures are intended to maximise the opportunity for the public to influence the content of the LDF early in the plan-making process. The Core Strategy must also be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West.

The Core Strategy is intended to provide a long term blueprint for the economic, social and environmental transformation of the Borough, taking forward the vision of the Investment Strategy for Wirral and the aims and objectives of the Council's Sustainable Community strategy and other Council policy documents that affect the use of land and buildings. The Core Strategy is not intended to be site-specific: it will only identify the broad locations that will be key in the delivery of the spatial priorities it identifies. The main site-specific elements of the future spatial strategy for the Borough will be contained in a series of site allocation Development Plan Documents to be produced once the Core Strategy has been adopted.

Once adopted, the Core Strategy will form part of the statutory Development Plan for the Borough alongside the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West and will be used as the basis for determining individual planning applications and for other decisions taken under the Planning Acts.

As it progresses through the various stages of preparation, the Core Strategy will be tested against a number of local social, economic and environmental sustainability objectives - a process called Sustainability Appraisal. The Council has already prepared a [Sustainability Appraisal Framework](#)³ in order to identify a series of local objectives for the delivery of sustainable development in Wirral. The scope of the sustainability appraisal for the Core Strategy was finalised in July 2007.

The Core Strategy will also be subject to an assessment under the EU Habitats Directive which is intended to ensure the plan will not have a significant impact on the sites of international nature conservation interest around Wirral's coast and beyond.

The Issues and Options Report

This document seeks to draw together the results of initial consultation on the likely content of the first Core Strategy for Wirral. It presents a spatial portrait of the Borough, summary of the policy background, summary baseline trends and key issues for topic areas, such as housing, employment, social inclusion and accessibility, and seeks views on the future options for the direction of the Council's spatial strategy for the Borough to 2025.

DEVELOPING A SPATIAL VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR WIRRAL

The Core Strategy will look forward for a period of 15 years from the date of adoption, expected to be 2010. It will contain a spatial vision based on a series of strategic objectives and spatial policies. The Core Strategy also needs to be underpinned by a spatial analysis of the characteristics of the Wirral and the key issues and challenges facing the Borough including information gathered from public consultation and Annual Monitoring Reports over the last 3 years.⁴

² The Council's Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in December 2006.

³ The Council's Sustainability Appraisal Framework was published for public consultation between July – September 2005 and formally adopted by the Council on 12th July 2006

The Annual Monitoring Reports can be viewed at:
http://www.wirral.gov.uk/LGCL/100006/200074/856/content_0001673.html

A Spatial Portrait of Wirral - what is the Borough like now?

Wirral is a large metropolitan area, forming the northern part of the peninsula to the west of Liverpool on the opposite bank of the River Mersey, to the north of Ellesmere Port and Neston.

Social Context

Wirral's population has declined from over 355,000 during the 1970s to 310,200 in mid-2007⁵. The population structure is skewed towards older age groups, with a lower proportion of younger adults and a higher proportion of older people than the averages for the rest of England and the North West. The greatest decline is in the 24 years and under age groups. While the number of households continues to rise, household densities are average for Greater Merseyside.

The principal flows of population are out of Wirral to Denbighshire, Flintshire and Chester and into Wirral from Liverpool and from the rest of Greater Merseyside. The largest flows are between Wirral and Liverpool.

Although average household incomes are among the highest in Merseyside, the Borough has a high number of localities⁶ falling within the most deprived in England, mainly concentrated in the older urban areas in the east of the Borough. 23% of the population of Wirral are within the bottom 10% of the most deprived super output areas. These localities score poorly across the full range of indicators for income; employment; health and disability; education, skills and training; living environment; and crime and disorder.

Areas of Bidston, Birkenhead, Tranmere, Seacombe, Leasowe and Woodchurch qualify for the national allocation of Working Neighbourhoods Fund directed towards localities with conditions falling within the worst 3% of England.

Wirral has a higher than average proportion of the working age population on key benefits and a quarter of all school children in Wirral qualify for free school meals.

Consultation Question 1- Do you agree that the above is an accurate reflection of the Borough's social context? If not please say why.

Economic Context

Key sectors in the local economy include retail and distribution, public administration, education and health. In manufacturing, the Borough is strongest in chemicals and food and drink. The number of tourism-related jobs and spending is also significant. The historical dominance of the port and shipbuilding sectors in the east of the Borough is much reduced, although both have experienced a revival in recent years. Further investment is expected at Eastham in response to proposals to reconfigure the facilities at Ellesmere Port.

⁵ Office of National Statistics (ONS)

⁶ Super Output Areas

The North West Development Agency has designated two strategic regional sites in Wirral: at Twelve Quays, Birkenhead and at the Wirral International Business Park, Bromborough. The Birkenhead docks system, part of the Port of Liverpool, including the Twelve Quays roll-on-roll-off ferry terminal; and the entrance to the Manchester Ship Canal, are key regional facilities, providing up to 3,800 jobs⁷. The Birkenhead Docks and the Wirral International Business Park are also identified as Regional Strategic Sites in the North West Competitiveness and Employment ERDF Operational Programme 2007-13.

The Wirral Investment Strategy recognises that the Borough's economic performance, nevertheless, continues to be a major concern. Output per head of population remains below NW and UK averages and is the lowest on Merseyside. Economic activity rates are lower than national and regional benchmarks and levels of worklessness are higher. Wirral also has fewer VAT registered businesses. The stock of modern business premises is also comparatively low. The total number of jobs in Wirral is not sufficient to employ the resident population of working age. Average earnings for jobs located in Wirral are lower than the average earnings of Wirral residents as a whole, leading to a high number of journeys to work to Liverpool, Chester and beyond. Journeys to work also appear to be lengthening over time. These economic indicators are regularly updated within the annual Merseyside Economic Review.

Large areas of the Borough to the east of the M53 Motorway, plus the communities of Leasowe, Upton and Woodchurch, retained Assisted Area status in the national review announced in December 2006⁸. An employment land and premises study should be completed by the end of December 2008. A Merseyside Office study is being undertaken.

Birkenhead is the main retail and service centre for the Borough and has a large covered market, plus the Grange and Pyramids shopping centres, (the latter are in the common ownership). There is a continuing challenge of responding to changes in the retail sector and to competition from nearby Liverpool and Chester, in addition to out of centre development such as Cheshire Oaks to the south of Ellesmere Port.

In addition to Birkenhead there are a network of district centres in the Borough's main settlements of Wallasey, Moreton, Hoylake, West Kirby, Heswall, Bromborough, New Ferry and Prenton. These centres are complemented by a number of local shopping centres and parades. The inner urban area of East Wirral has seen a prolonged programme of public funding of shopfront improvements, enveloping and more substantial contraction and redevelopment, most recently at Tranmere Urban Village and Church Road and previously including New Ferry, Rock Ferry, Seacombe, Laird Street, Victoria Road and Seabank Road, New Brighton.

The Wirral Retail Strategy was completed in 2004 and an updated Study, widened in scope should be completed by the end of November 2008.

⁷ Maritime Sector on Merseyside Economic Impact Study January 2007

⁸ To include the former Electoral Wards of Bidston, Birkenhead, Bromborough, Claughton, Eastham, Egerton, Leasowe, Liscard, New Brighton, Oxton, Prenton, Seacombe, Tranmere, Upton and Wallasey

Consultation Question 2 - Do you agree that the above is an accurate reflection of the Borough's economic context? If not please say why.

Environmental Context

Wirral is generally perceived as an area of high environmental quality, especially in the west. The Council's Tourism Strategy emphasises the importance of Wirral's countryside and coast.

Wirral has an extensive network of locally identified non-statutory Sites of Biological Importance, twelve nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, two designated European nature conservation sites and one potential European nature conservation site. There are also twelve locally identified non-statutory sites designated for their importance to earth science.

While these sites cover most of the key habitats identified as priorities within the Wirral Biodiversity Action Plan, there are relatively few within the urban areas of east Wirral and not all aspects of Wirral's biodiversity resource are currently captured by site designations. A biodiversity audit is due for completion by the end of October 2008 along with a review and updating of the guidelines for the selection of local wildlife sites. The Borough has four areas of Special Landscape Value and three areas requiring landscape renewal. Over recent years extensive tree planning by the Forestry Commission and Groundwork has been carried out within the M53 corridor and at Bidston Moss. A landscape character assessment is underway and is due for completion by January 2009.

Wirral also has a significant built heritage, with over 1,850 listed structures, twenty-four designated conservation areas, nine scheduled ancient monuments and four sites on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. A series of conservation area appraisals and action plans are being prepared and new conservation areas considered for designation. A Historic Character Assessment of Wirral's rural areas was completed in 2008. An assessment of the urban areas is still to be completed. Proposals in the Heritage Bill will expand the Borough's responsibility for maintaining and protecting local heritage.

Wirral has not needed to designate an air quality management area, although air conditions are continually monitored. Increasing car ownership and the continuing high level of out-commuting could, however, have major implications for travel generation and long-term air quality. Car ownership is still low in parts of the Borough but increased economic prosperity may see these levels rise.

The Merseyside Local Transport Plan sets out measures to promote more sustainable transport choices, supported by initiatives such as Travelwise.

Water quality within the Dee and Mersey Estuaries and inland watercourses has improved substantially over recent years, mainly due to the continuing programme of capital works undertaken by United Utilities. Wirral's beaches are consistently among the cleanest in the North West.

Levels of waste recycling in Wirral have seen significant recent improvement following the introduction of a new waste contract and the newly constructed recycling and composting facility at Bidston. Participation in recycling varies across

the Borough, with lower participation in higher density areas. No natural containment sites are currently available in Wirral, following the closure of the existing landfill site at Bromborough Dock. A Joint Waste Development Plan Document is being proposed for Merseyside and Halton to provide facilities to better promote facilities for recycling and reprocessing as an alternative to landfill.

Consultation Question 3 - Do you agree that this is an accurate reflection of the Boroughs environmental context? If not please say why.

Natural Resources

Extensive low-lying areas, especially in the north of the Borough, are protected by defences from both tidal and fluvial (river) flooding. Much of the coastline is protected from erosion and/or flooding by “hard” defences. Only short stretches of clay cliffs at the Thurstaston and New Ferry shorelines continue to be subject to natural erosion. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is in preparation and is due for completion by the end of 2008. The Shoreline Management Plan which includes Wirral’s coastline is also being revised to consider coastal flood and erosion risks for over a 100 year period and is likely to be finalised by mid-2010.

Land quality is generally good and there are significant areas of high-grade agricultural land, particularly in the south and west of the Borough. While progress on urban land reclamation continues through HMRI and the development of the Strategic Regional Sites at 12 Quays and Wirral International Business Park, a number of significant sites in the east of the Borough can only be brought forward for development once ground condition problems have been addressed. A Brownfield Land Strategy is being prepared alongside the other Merseyside Districts in partnership with English Partnerships (soon to become the Homes and Communities Agency). The current position is monitored annually through the National Land Use Database (NLUD).

Much of Wirral is founded on sandstone which is a major aquifer and groundwater provides around 13% of Wirral’s water resources. Wirral does not, however, have any significant mineral reserves, apart from small amounts of winnable brick clay. Reserves of aggregates are very limited and constrained by nature conservation or other considerations. A minerals strategy will report on areas which may need to be safeguarded for possible future extraction.

The Government has identified Liverpool Bay for a significant expansion in offshore wind farm development. The construction of twenty-five turbines has been completed off the coastline at New Brighton and the shore connection to the national grid will take place on the north Wirral coast. The provision of onshore renewable energy schemes has, however, been minimal, to date. There is a need to enhance the evidence base on the local feasibility and potential for renewable and low-carbon technologies, including microgeneration.

Consultation Question 4 - Do you agree that this is an accurate reflection of the Borough's natural resource context? If not please say why.

Quality of Life

Wirral is generally seen as offering a high quality of life but there are marked contrasts between different parts of the Borough.

Over 40% of the Borough is open countryside, with much of high landscape quality. The 41km coastline is a special feature, high in value for recreation, nature conservation and tourism. There are also a significant number of leisure and cultural facilities in both urban and rural areas, including areas such as New Brighton, West Kirby, Port Sunlight, the facilities in and around Birkenhead and the Borough's Country Parks. A review of Wirral's culture and leisure services will be taken forward as part of the Council's Strategic Asset Review. The need to maintain local character and distinctiveness in both east and west Wirral is of importance, especially in the lower density residential areas built during the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Although not an environmental protection designation, the Green Belt continues to make an important contribution to Wirral's environmental quality as well as continuing to promote urban regeneration.

Some of the other older urban areas continue to be the subject of a variety of regeneration initiatives. Symptoms of low demand, including high levels of vacancy and unfit housing, led to the designation of the 'Newheartlands' Pathfinder Area in parts of Birkenhead, Bidston, Seacombe, Tranmere and Liscard in April 2002 and additional funding has now been secured in principle for these areas up to 2010. Action has also included Neighbourhood Management and the Empty Property Strategy.

The key housing challenges facing Wirral over the next few years are those of increasing homelessness, affordability and the condition of homes occupied by some of the more vulnerable members of the community. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment completed in 2007 found issues of affordability both in the west of the Borough (where property prices are in excess of 4 times the average house price for the Borough), and in the east, where the impact of HMRI has resulted in house prices increasing at a faster rate than household incomes. The SHMA also concluded that the majority of demand identified is for 2 bed and 4 bed accommodation in all tenures across the borough. The Merseyside Gypsy and Traveller Assessment completed in 2007 shows a need for up to 10 pitches in Wirral.

The Council has for some years sought to restrict house building in west Wirral to support regeneration and development in the east. The requirement for new house building set at regional level has now increased from 160 net new dwellings to 500 dwellings per annum. This figure could increase to 600 net new dwellings per annum as the Growth Point proposals submitted to Government in October 2008 are taken through the development plan process. The Core Strategy will need to show how to accommodate this high figure while retaining regeneration in the east and restraint in the west. The Growth Point identified at the heart of the New Heartlands HMRI Pathfinder in Birkenhead Docks (including Wirral Waters) could accommodate 400 dwellings per annum. If the Growth Point is confirmed, this would take the Borough's Housing Requirement to 600 dwellings per annum leaving up to 200 dwellings per

annum to be found elsewhere in the Borough. A Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment will be prepared to identify the capacity of the Borough to satisfy these requirements.

Disparities in health are closely associated with income and employment based deprivation. There is a significant gap in life expectancy between the poorest and most affluent areas. For the five years between 1999 and 2003, ONS data suggests that there is an 11 year gap in average life expectancy between Birkenhead and Heswall. Wirral has a high number of admissions to hospital for alcohol related conditions. Rates of mental health, drug misuse, diabetes, healthy eating and physically active adults, are poorer than national and regional averages⁹. These indicators are annually updated in the Wirral Health Profile published by the Primary Care Trust.

While educational attainment figures are just above the national average with 60.6% of children achieving five or more A-C GCSEs (national average 59.3%), an east/west disparity persists with children in Birkenhead achieving 49.9% compared with 75.4% for West Wirral.

Wirral has the lowest rate of recorded crime on Merseyside and rates of burglaries, violent crimes, robberies and vehicle crimes continue to fall and are among the lowest in the country. However crime levels in the most deprived wards are disproportionately higher than the overall position for Wirral, with 10% of the Borough accounting for 30% of the crime.

The promotion of sustainable travel can also have a significant impact on local quality of life. The majority of Wirral's residential areas are within 400 metres of a bus stop or railway station and most of new housing continues to be built within 30 minutes public transport time of key facilities such as hospitals, schools etc (this is monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report). The fact that there is still a high dependency on the car for journeys to work suggests that the issue is not one of accessibility but lifestyle choice. Traffic levels have the greatest impact on communities along the busiest routes, particularly along routes to and from the Motorway and Birkenhead. The framework for investment in transport infrastructure is set by the Merseyside Local Transport Plan and monitored through a series of Annual Progress Reports.

Consultation Question 5 - Do you agree that this is an accurate reflection of the Borough's Quality of Life context? If not please say why.

RESULTS OF PREVIOUS CONSULTATION

The Council undertook initial consultation as part of the development of the vision and objectives for the Core Strategy during 2005 and 2006. Further consultation will take place when each of the evidence base studies related to the Core Strategy are published.

In March 2005, consultation letters inviting open comment on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT) and needs of the Borough were sent to contacts from the Council's Local Development Framework database, as well as to

⁹ National Health Service - Wirral Health Profile 2007

MPs, Councillors and Area Forum representatives. The result of this SWOT analysis is set out in an initial report of consultation.

In November 2006, two workshops were held to consider the findings of the initial consultation and help to prioritise the issues raised and begin to consider the possible objectives for the Core Strategy and some of the options likely to be available for future development in the Borough. The results of this consultation are contained in the second report of initial consultation.

The workshop participants identified the following key characteristics and issues:

Table 1: Summary of SWOT analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local history and heritage and the Victorian and Edwardian legacy; • peninsula coastline and scenery; • other aspects of the natural environment, including the Green Belt, open countryside, open space, parks, green spaces and gardens; and • access to national transport networks. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inequalities in health, housing, education and environment and the polarisation between east and west; • jobs and investment, loss of young people and graduates, alongside an ageing population; • poor image of the urban environment and town centres and the failure to grasp development opportunities such as New Brighton, Cammell Lairds, Hind Street and Housing Market Renewal; • pollution, particularly from traffic and aircraft; and • limited funds for recreation and open space maintenance.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the promotion of more sustainable development, including issues such as waste minimisation, recycling, renewable energy, energy and water conservation and eco-homes; • brownfield re-development, to protect the Green Belt, the countryside and other green sites; • the promotion of leisure, tourism, coastal recreation and water sports; • re-development in and around Birkenhead, including the Town Centre, Cammell Lairds, Housing Market Renewal and the Docks, including the re-use of the docks rail link; and • improved public transport, tackling the impact of car use and parking, including improvements to the Bidston-Wrexham line. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the loss of local character and distinctiveness, including heritage and open land; • over-development, over-loading local infrastructure, particularly related to the increasing number of flat developments; • anti-social behaviour, mainly drink-related; • climate change and flood risk; and • the impact of traffic growth.

The principal needs of the Borough were considered to be:

- 1 inward investment, local enterprise and jobs;

- 2 Better public transport, especially in the evening, across the Borough between the radial routes to Birkenhead, and along the Bidston-Wrexham railway line;
- 3 A greater emphasis on the conversion and re-use of existing buildings and the protection of local character and heritage; and
- 4 The control of anti-social behaviour.

Better provision for local services and community facilities, affordable family housing, public toilets and recreation facilities for young people, were also identified as significant needs.

Consultation with under-represented Groups

Subsequent consultation in 2007 with groups under-represented at the workshops which included people representing the mid-Wirral settlements, younger people, BME groups and disabled people confirmed many of the comments already submitted but also included new comments related to their principal areas of concern:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility within Birkenhead Town Centre 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design of housing developments • Physical accessibility of public transport, rail stations and terminals • Need for improvement in pavement finishes • Need for improvement in youth engagement • Need for improvement in leisure facilities • Need for improvement in local play areas and youth facilities • Lack of good quality hotels
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cycle paths with better linkages • More events and festivals 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shop closures in local estates • Poor relationships with police • Continued pressures on Council budgets and services • Further out-of-town developments • School closures • Flooding in Leasowe • Immigrant labour • Drugs, teen pregnancy, sexual infections

The principal needs of the Borough are considered to be:

- Affordable, social and special needs housing in local estates
- Multicultural activities and facilities
- Secondary school in Greasby

Comments on a Vision for Wirral

The workshops shared a general consensus that Wirral should seek to be different from Liverpool. Participants considered that the focus of any new vision for Wirral should focus on promoting jobs, leisure and tourism alongside the protection of unique features such as the natural environment, coastline and heritage. Less emphasis should be placed on addressing east-west divisions and more on local distinctiveness, care over the design of new development and meeting identified local needs. The main priorities identified for a strategy were jobs, affordable family housing, meeting local needs, improved design quality, brownfield development, the reuse of existing buildings, improvements to the waterfront and the protection of heritage and open countryside. Measurable targets for delivery were also difficult to identify.

Continued regeneration in and around Birkenhead and the Docks was strongly supported to assist with addressing the underlying problems of the surrounding areas and improve quality of life.

REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

The Regional Spatial Strategy

The North West of England Plan – The Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 - was issued in September 2008 and forms part of the Development Plan for Wirral.

Policies DP1 – DP9 set out a series of spatial principles which underpin the Strategy. Policy RDF1 indicates in a Merseyside context that the first priority for growth, investment and regeneration should be the regional centre of Liverpool, with the second priority being the inner area surrounding this centre with particular focus on the Housing Market Renewal Area. Policy RDF1 is complemented by a series of sub-regional policies.

In relation to the Liverpool City Region, Policy LCR1 identifies the overall spatial planning priorities, supported by policies LCR 2-5. In relation to Wirral the new RSS effectively divides the Borough into three spatial areas:

- The Inner Area (Policy LCR2) – the first priority for investment in Wirral – is defined by the Newheartlands Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Area, which includes Wirral Waters, Birkenhead Town Centre, Woodside, Hind Street and Cammell Lairds. This area is identified as a priority for residential development in order to secure a significant increase in population and support major regeneration activity
- The Outer Area (Policy LCR3) – the second priority for investment in Wirral – includes the remainder of the eastern area of Wirral to the east of the M53 Motorway (paragraph 11.9). In this area the focus is on focusing development in established centres, intervening in housing markets where additional restructuring

is required, widening the quality and choice of housing, and addressing worklessness

- The Rural Areas (Policy LCR4) – the lowest priority for investment in Wirral – includes the remainder of Wirral to the west of the M53 Motorway, (paragraph 11.13). In this area the focus is on improving access to services and addressing barriers to affordability and meeting identified local needs

Boundaries for these spatial areas should be defined within the Local Development Framework, as RSS only indicates broad areas.

CORPORATE POLICY CONTEXT

The Sustainable Community Strategy

The Sustainable Community Strategy provides a long term vision that sets out how the statutory agencies, the private sector and the community and voluntary sector (the third sector) will work collectively to improve the quality of life within Wirral. The Community Strategy was originally launched in 2002 as 'Getting Better Together' and was "refreshed" in March 2005. It is currently being reviewed alongside the emerging LDF.

The Council's vision for the Borough, as expressed in the emerging Sustainable Community Strategy (together with the Local Area Agreement and Council's Corporate Plan) is as follows:

"Our vision is of a more prosperous and equal Wirral, enabling all communities and people to thrive and achieve their full potential"

The review of the Sustainable Community Strategy identifies six strategic aims to underpin this vision;

- A Strong local economy for Wirral;
- Safer, stronger communities in all parts of the Borough;
- The best possible health and well-being for all families and individuals;
- Excellent life chances for children and young people
- A high quality living and working environment;
- Sustainable, affordable housing for all.

Local Area Agreement

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a contract between central government and local partners. It sets out the delivery plan for key elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy and runs for three years. Wirral is part of the second round of Local Area Agreements and submitted its Partnership Agreement for 2008/9 to 2010/11 to the Communities and Local Government Department at the end of May 2008.

Given the scale of the challenges, the Partnership Agreement restates that preventing and tackling worklessness and related deprivation (including child poverty) are priorities that must cut across strategic policies at a number of levels. A multi agency approach to tackling worklessness and growing the economy has been

recognized by partners across the Local Area Agreement with joint priorities being agreed through the Wirral investment strategy. Activity will focus on the implementation of the full employment and skills plan and the City Region Employment Strategy. In addition work will be undertaken to strategically plan and align activity and resources of all partners to support the delivery of sub-regional and local employment and skills strategies.

Wirral's Corporate Plan 2008-2011

The Council's Corporate Plan identifies the Council's contribution to the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement. The Plan sets out five main objectives:

1. To create more jobs, achieve a prosperous economy and regenerate Wirral
2. To create a clean, pleasant, safe and sustainable environment
3. To improve health and well being for all, ensuring people who require support are full participants in mainstream society
4. To raise the aspirations of young people
5. To create an excellent Council

The Corporate Plan includes a delivery plan which sets out a detailed breakdown of how progress will be made; showing the actions to be taken and the indicators that will be adopted to measure progress.

Wirral Investment Strategy

In 2004 the Council commissioned a review of existing strategies and policies to ensure a strategic and co-ordinated approach to the future economic development of the Borough. The review was informed by research undertaken by GVA Grimley and KPMG to ensure a clear evidence base for the new strategy. Examination by Elected Members and a consultation event with more than 170 business representatives has firmed up and secured support for the Investment Strategy which was issued in final form in 2007. Growing the local economy is identified as the top priority of the Investment Strategy. A range of opportunities and challenges are identified under the headings of Infrastructure, Business, Skills and education, People and Jobs and Quality of Life.

A number of priority projects are listed – Mersey Waterfront Regional Park, Brand New Brighton, West Wirral Developments, Wirral Docklands and Woodside, Wirral Strategic Investment Area, Wirral Strategic Rail and Road Transport and Infrastructure and Birkenhead Town Centre.

The Strategy identifies a number of Key outcomes;

- Raise productivity
- Retain and increase the number of higher value jobs in the Borough
- Encourage innovation and enterprise
- Tackle Skills and employment disparities
- Develop and improve infrastructure

- Develop the future viability of the existing employment space
- Improve the availability of sites and premises for new investment

ENHANCING THE EVIDENCE BASE

The LDF must be based on a robust and agreed evidence base. A number of additional studies have been commissioned to better reflect the spatial planning dimension to the Core Strategy. These include:

- Employment Land and premises,
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment
- Merseyside Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment
- Cultural Services Forward Plan incorporating Open Space and Recreation Audit
- Retail, Town Centres and Commercial Leisure
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Biodiversity Audit
- Landscape Character Assessment
- Social and Community Infrastructure Requirements study
- Wirral Waters evidence base (produced by Peel Holdings)
- Settlement Level Profiles
- Merseyside Minerals Study
- Mersey Heartlands Growth Point Programme of Development

In April 2007, the Council invited consultees to identify any sites or information that they believed ought to be considered or assessed as part of these evidence base studies. It was made clear that the identification of any sites through this consultation process would not in any way imply any future commitment by the Council to allocate these sites for any development purposes proposed. Publication of each Evidence Base study will coincide with 6 weeks public consultation on the findings.

Where available, the findings have been reflected in the following sections and highlighted as appropriate. It is intended that the findings of these studies will inform subsequent stages of preparation of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. These studies will supplement on-going monitoring undertaken through the Annual Monitoring Report, NLUD, the LTP, Housing Flows Reconciliation, RSS monitoring, national indicator datasets and National Core Output indicators for LDFs.

The Council is also working on detailed area profiles for 7 settlement areas of the Borough including Wallasey, mid-Wirral, West Kirby, Heswall, Bromborough, Birkenhead and the rural areas of the Borough. These profiles will provide a more local dimension to the evidence base.

Current and emerging Regeneration Activity

Key to the delivery of the vision and spatial planning strategy will be the range of regeneration and intervention activities in the Borough: the Core Strategy will play a key role in ensuring that these activities now and in the future contribute to the delivery of the Core Strategy vision and objectives. Equally, future business and other plans for these initiatives should take account of the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy will need to guide and support the delivery of a range of physical regeneration and publicly funded intervention activity in the Borough.

Newheartlands

The Merseyside Housing Market Renewal Initiative Pathfinder – Newheartlands, is a long term regeneration project, to tackle the causes and symptoms of housing market failure, vacancy and decline at the heart of the conurbation. In Wirral, the boundary designated by the Government, in April 2002, includes parts of Bidston, Birkenhead, Liscard, Tranmere and Seacombe¹⁰.

A Strategy for Inner Wirral was originally published by the Council in January 2004, to inform the Prospectus for the Newheartlands Pathfinder, as a guide to local priorities for action. The Strategy was followed by a series of non-statutory master plans: for North Birkenhead; Church Road, Tranmere; and Fiveways, Rock Ferry, which were adopted by the Council in 2005.

Since 2003, a £43 million programme has been delivered, involving targeted acquisition and clearance and large scale refurbishment and the objectives of the programme continue to have a major influence on policy development across the Borough. The latest Business Plan, for 2008/11, was submitted to the Government in November 2007 and provides for £29.53m to be expended through the HMRI programme to 2011. An additional £45.47million is expected to be drawn down from the Council's Regeneration Capital Programme, Housing Corporation, RSL investment, private sector investment and capital receipts

In relation to Wirral, current intervention activity in Rock Ferry and Tranmere will be completed over the 2008-11 period culminating with the leveraging of £38 million private sector investment in new homes on the Fiveways estate and the £30 million redevelopment of Church Road. This represents the exit strategy for 15 years of area based renewal in the neighbourhood.

In addition the Business Plan indicates that a key element for 2008-11 will be to align the HMR Programme in Birkenhead with the long term intentions of the Wirral Waters scheme and ensuring that HMR makes a full contribution to the local economy harnessing the potential economic benefits of housing led investment. HMR funding will be used to remove the least sustainable stock, create opportunities for new build, undertake further Group Repair and continue with "Living Through Change" to support residents through the process. In Wallasey, HMR funding will be used to complete existing commitments and tackle low demand through a programme of strategic selective clearance.

The objectives of this and later programmes will need to inform the content of the Core Strategy DPD and the site-specific Allocation DPD's.

¹⁰ The Newheartlands Pathfinder also includes parts of neighbouring local authorities in Sefton and Liverpool

Wirral Waters

Wirral Waters is a major private-sector-led urban regeneration opportunity at the heart of the Newheartlands Pathfinder, based around the extensive Birkenhead Dock Estate, to the north and west of Birkenhead Town Centre which could have the potential to draw in £4.5bn of private sector investment to deliver up to 27,000 new jobs and up to 25,000 new dwellings over a 30 year period. The delivery of the project is supported by an extensive evidence base. To assist this process of regeneration, the Council officially requested that UDP Policy EM10 – Birkenhead and Eastham Dock Estates, should no longer remain in force. The withdrawal of Policy EM10 was confirmed by a Direction issued by the Secretary of State in September 2007¹¹.

Work on the conversion of the dockside mills along the East Float is almost complete and a planning application for a new-build residential development on vacant dockland to the west has been recommended for approval subject to a legal agreement. The proposed conversion of the Hydraulic Tower into a hotel and restaurant was granted planning permission in May 2008. Further planning applications are expected to be submitted in early 2009.

A bid for New Growth Point and Eco Town status - Mersey Heartlands was submitted to the Government, in partnership with Liverpool City Council and Peel Holdings, in October 2007¹². This was shortlisted in July 2008. A Programme of development for the Growth Point was submitted to the Government in October 2008. Public consultation on the emerging proposals was undertaken during October 2008.

The Wirral Waters Strategic Regeneration Framework and the Mersey Heartlands Programme of Development will be used to inform the content of the Core Strategy DPD and the site-specific Allocation DPD's.

Woodside Regeneration Area

The Woodside Regeneration Area is another significant private sector-led regeneration opportunity at the heart of the Newheartlands Pathfinder, based around the waterfront adjacent to Birkenhead Town Centre, between Priory Wharf and Woodside Business Park. A non-statutory master plan for a mixed-use redevelopment including offices, residential and leisure, originally commissioned in May 2004, was approved by the Council in August 2005.

Further work, including a Technical Appendix and a Conservation Area Appraisal, was commissioned in October 2005. Public consultation was undertaken during March 2007. The results of these further studies and of public consultation are expected to be reported in due course.

The Woodside Master Plan will be used to inform the content of the Core Strategy DPD and the site-specific Allocation DPD's.

Hind Street Regeneration Area

The Hind Street Regeneration Area also lies at the heart of the Newheartlands Pathfinder, based upon the redundant land around the gasholders at Hind Street and

¹¹ Paragraph 4.14 above refers John – there are no para numbers to refer to?
¹² Paragraph 5.60 below refers

the former railway land reclaimed and serviced by the Merseyside Development Corporation in the late 1990s, to the south of Birkenhead Town Centre, in Tranmere.

The Council jointly commissioned a regeneration strategy for the Hind Street Regeneration Area in 2001.

Outline planning consent for non-food retail, office, trade sales, restaurant/public house, car showroom and crèche, was recommended for approval in July 2007, subject to notification to the Secretary of State and a legal agreement to secure a revised road link to Birkenhead Town Centre from the A41. The Section 106 agreement is expected to be executed before the end of 2008. The development is expected to be a partnership between the Council, English Partnerships and National Grid.

The Core Strategy DPD and the Town Centres, Retail and Leisure Allocations DPD will need to take account of these proposals, in the event of planning consent being granted.

New Brighton

The initial proposal for a major private sector-led mixed-use, leisure-based re-development on the waterfront at New Brighton was refused planning permission by the Secretary of State in July 2006. The development was revised to address the Secretary of State's concerns and split into two phases.

Planning permission for Phase 1, to the south of Marine Promenade, for the redevelopment and extension of the Floral Pavilion, was granted in October 2006 and is now nearly complete with the Floral Pavilion expected to re-open in late 2008.

An outline planning application for Phase 2, for a smaller scheme to the north of Marine Promenade including a supermarket, hotel and leisure uses, was approved in November 2007 following notification to the Secretary of State. The first of a series of reserved matters applications (covering the public realm works) has now been submitted to the Council.

The Core Strategy DPD and the Town Centres, Retail and Leisure Allocations DPD will need to take account of these proposals.

Birkenhead Town Centre

Birkenhead has seen significant public investment in new public transport infrastructure, at the new central bus station at Europa Square and the new Merseyrail station at Conway Park. The removal of the Conway Street flyover and associated environmental improvements were funded as part of the Government's City Challenge programme.

The Grange and Pyramids shopping centres are now both owned by Warner Estates and some investment has been made in creating a new Food Court in the Pyramids. Proposals for leisure-based development on Europa Boulevard have recently secured planning permission.

The Council is working with a developer to bring forward the development of a food superstore on part of the Oliver Street Car Parks site, intended to address the need for a large supermarket in the Town Centre since the closure of the Asda store in the

1990s. It is also hoped that the new development will also provide uplift to the Grange Road end of the shopping centre.

There has been some success in attracting new office development to the Town centre in and around Europa Boulevard, and a new build scheme close to the Birkenhead tunnel entrance is now also nearing completion. On the edge of the town centre, long-standing proposals to regenerate the Hind Street area of Birkenhead are moving forward: outline planning permission has been granted for a mixed-use development which will include the provision of a new link road between the Rock Retail Park and Central Station Roundabout (the Hind Street scheme referred to above).

The Core Strategy DPD and the Town Centres, Retail and Leisure Allocations DPD will need to take account of these proposals.

Wirral International Business Park

Wirral International Business Park (WIBP) comprises 336 hectares (830 acres) of industrial and commercial land at Bromborough, adjacent to the River Mersey. The Northwest Regional Development Agency has identified it as a Strategic Regional Investment Site. More than £150m has been invested in WIBP over recent years, with over 50 hectares of land improved and developed. 1,800 of a targeted 3,000 jobs have already been created through attracting new companies to the new business park areas.

The Core Strategy DPD and the Employment Allocations DPD will need to take account of these proposals.

Port Wirral

Peel holdings have identified potential for further expansion of port and associated facilities at Eastham and alongside the Manchester Ship Canal, linked to potential redevelopment of the existing port facilities in Ellesmere Port.

The Core Strategy DPD and the Employment Allocations DPD will need to take account of these proposals which in the case of Port Wirral has not yet been formally put to Wirral Members.

Cammell Laird

A large part of the site of the former Cammell Laird shipyard has been reused as a highly successful ship repair activity utilising the graving docks and wet basin. The rest of the site to the south, including the main construction hall is underused and remains a significant regeneration opportunity. Now in the ownership of Peel Holdings, this part of the site may have potential for future deep sea port facilities, although this will need to be confirmed through a port masterplan.

The Core Strategy DPD and the Employment Allocations DPD will need to take account of these proposals.

West Kirby/Hoylake Master Plan

A non-statutory master plan for the regeneration of Hoylake and West Kirby was approved by the Council in November 2004, as part of the build up to the return of the Open Championship. An initial package of improvements was delivered prior to

the Championship in 2006. Further projects, including re-developments at West Kirby Concourse, West Kirby Sailing School, Thurstaston Visitor Centre and other environmental improvements to the public realm, promenades and open spaces, are ongoing.

The Council and the Mersey Partnership has also been investigating the concept of providing a Golf Resort linked to the Royal Liverpool Golf Course, in the area of open land to the east of the railway. The concept is supported by the North West Development Agency. Further technical work, to identify the optimum location for such a facility, has been undertaken and expressions of interest will be sought from the market in 2008/9.

The Core Strategy DPD and the Town Centres, Retail and Leisure Allocations DPD will need to take account of these proposals

EMERGING ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Drawing together the findings of the spatial portrait, the initial consultation exercise, emerging evidence base findings and the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy a number of emerging issues have been identified, including:-

1. Cross-Cutting Issues

Supporting Urban Regeneration

Policies encouraging urban regeneration allied with a Green Belt boundary tightly defined around the urban area have been a cornerstone of the Council's planning Strategy for the last 25 years. The Annual Monitoring reports published to date demonstrate that the approach has been successful in securing development on previously developed land - in excess of Regional Targets in the case of housing. A succession of funding streams from Central Government and Europe including City Challenge, Single Regeneration Budget and most recently Housing Market Renewal have been targeted at the built up eastern side of the Borough. Many of the specific problems and challenges identified under the headings below are concentrated in the east of the Borough. There remain significant amounts of vacant and derelict land for example. The Core Strategy will need to balance the ongoing strategic priorities of urban regeneration in the east of the Borough with meeting local needs achieving objectives such as enhancing the tourism offer and maintaining environmental quality elsewhere in Wirral.

Achieving sustainable development

The UK Sustainable Development Strategy "Securing the Future" published in March 2005, identifies five principles for sustainable development in the UK:

- Living within environmental limits;
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society;
- Achieving a sustainable economy;
- Promoting good governance; and
- Using sound science responsibly

The Government has determined that sustainability appraisal must be central to the spatial planning system. The stated purpose of sustainability appraisal is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of revisions of Regional Spatial Strategies and for new or revised Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. There is also a need to respond to the challenge of climate change.

The Sustainability Appraisal Framework for Wirral provides a method for describing, analysing and comparing the sustainability effects of plans and policies. A series of sustainability objectives has been developed, following public consultation taking into account the relationship between the Core Strategy DPD and the objectives of other plans and programmes, alongside the findings of the baseline information review and the sustainability issues identified in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping report. These objectives will form the basis of the framework for evaluating the various options for the emerging Core Strategy.

Ensuring high quality development across the Borough

National advice requires positive planning for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development. The Core Strategy therefore needs to promote high quality design, both in the layout of developments and also in terms of individual buildings, for the lifetime of the development. The Core Strategy also needs to ensure that new development is accessible to all.

2. A Stronger Economy

Improving economic performance

Wirral has a relatively small and low value economy. It has the lowest GVA per capita in Merseyside and the North West and represents only 56.7% of the UK average. The slow rate of growth of the economy means that Wirral is falling behind other parts of the city region, the North West and the rest of the UK. There are low levels of entrepreneurial activity in Wirral: the rate of 16 VAT registrations per 10,000 people is just over half the national figure (31), and significantly below the regional figure (26). The Core Strategy will need to include policies which contribute to improvements in the Borough's economic performance.

Addressing worklessness

Unemployment in Wirral increased to 3.6 percent in September 2008. This was above the regional and national levels of 3.0 percent and 2.5 percent respectively. The overall economic activity rate for March 2007 was 75.2% for Wirral, compared to a rate of 73.4% for Merseyside. There is significant variation in economic activity rates within the Borough. Wirral also has a higher than average proportion of people of working age on key benefits compared to the UK and North West average.

Reducing out-commuting

The Borough is a net exporter of workers, with almost three times as many residents travelling outside Wirral to work, compared to the number of people commuting into the Borough for employment. However much of the higher value employment is located outside the Borough - over 40,000 of Wirral's residents (the majority from west Wirral) commute out of the district with over half of these jobs being in the professional sector. As such, despite the economic problems in the Borough the

earnings of Wirral residents are above national figures. Wirral has a healthy representation of graduate level skills, with the number of residents qualified to at least NVQ level 4 equal with the national average.

Addressing Low paid and low quality employment

By contrast the earnings of workers employed in Wirral are below the national average outside the public sector and Wirral's economy is increasingly dependent on small to medium enterprises. Levels of employment in Wirral businesses have fallen. Overall job density in the Borough is low: for every 100 people of working age in the Borough, there are only 61 jobs (2006) compared with a Merseyside average of 73 and a North West average of 80. The Borough has an over-representation of high volume/low value manufacturing and primary industry activities and a lack of dynamic higher-value sectors such as knowledge-based industry. Wirral mirrors the Merseyside sub-region in the percentage of service sector businesses (55 percent), but is under-represented in the Transport & Communications and Banking, Finance and Insurance sectors.

Maintaining an adequate supply of immediately available employment land

Emerging studies have confirmed the short term shortage of readily available, serviced, developable land with road access and utilities in place for modern businesses. The historic annual take up rate of 10.3 ha also suggests that the Borough will face a long term shortfall of suitable developable land. Many older premises are unattractive to the local market and hinder aspirations to strengthen the local economy.

Promoting and supporting the tourism economy

The leisure and tourism industry for Merseyside represent nearly 40% of total employment. There are over 3000 tourism related businesses in Merseyside providing 37,000 jobs. This is expected to further expand as a result of the Liverpool Capital of Culture 2008 programme. The Mersey Partnership has identified hospitality and tourism as a priority growth area for the Merseyside economy. Wirral's Tourism Strategy has identified the countryside and coast as key assets.

Supporting the vitality and viability of the Borough's existing town and local centres

While Birkenhead remains the Borough's largest shopping centre, there are high levels of expenditure leakage to Liverpool and Chester in particular and Birkenhead has lost a number of national retailers in recent years. Survey evidence also suggests that it no longer serves as the shopping centre of choice for all Wirral residents, particularly those in the west of the Borough. Liscard and the other district centres, perform a more local role, but again traditional shopping centres within the inner urban area continue to face problems in terms of an over-supply of shop units and competition from the supermarkets. Ensuring all communities have access to a good choice of local retail and other facilities remains a key challenge. The majority of new retail and leisure floorspace in recent years has occurred in out of centre locations and there are few easily developable opportunities in established centres.

3. Housing

Providing a size, type and tenure of housing to meet identified needs.

The Strategic Housing Market and Needs Assessment [SHMA] has forecast a latent demand for up to 1633 new dwellings per annum with 528 of these units identified as affordable dwellings. The majority of demand identified is for 2 bed and 4 bed accommodation in all tenures across the Borough. Affordability is not limited to the more affluent areas where average property prices are well in excess of 4 times the average house price but is also prevalent in a wide range of neighbourhoods in east Wirral. Specific needs for local areas are set out within the SHMA. Pending the outcome of the Core Strategy, the Council has adopted a target of 40% affordability in all new housing schemes over 15 units subject to a site-specific viability assessment. The Core Strategy will need to rely heavily on the detailed findings of the SHMA to guide the type and pattern of new development.

Delivering appropriate specialist housing

The SHMA identified a high level of special needs for 22% of all households. The majority are physically disabled (13%) whilst frail elderly (4.9%) and those with severe sensory disability (4%) are also significant. A quarter of all households in Wirral contain only older people. These needs are not being adequately met. The changing social profile of an ageing population will require sufficient housing provision that is appropriately designed and suited to their needs. A Gypsy and Traveller study, undertaken at a Merseyside level shows a potential need for up to 10 residential pitches by 2016. Provision may also need to be made for transit pitches across the sub-region. The Core Strategy will need to set out criteria for these various types of provision.

Maintaining a continuous supply of deliverable housing sites.

The requirement for new housing is set by national and, regional policies. The RSS issued in September 2008 suggests a total housing provision in Wirral between 2003 and 2021 of 9,000 dwellings (net of clearance replacement) at an annual average rate of 500 net new dwellings per year. A further 100 dwellings net per annum will effectively be added to this if the new Growth Point at Mersey Heartlands is accepted. The RSS housing requirements are no longer regarded as a ceiling where development proposed is in line with established local priorities.

One of the key issues for the Core strategy will be how the housing requirement is accommodated within Wirral without harming the objectives of Housing Market Renewal, the character of established residential areas and travel patterns whilst continuing to reflect the spatial framework for Wirral set out in RSS. The Council currently restricts new housebuilding outside the Interim Housing Policy Area to direct new housing into identified Regeneration Priority Areas. This has delivered 771 dwellings gross across the Borough for 2007/8. There will be also be a need to test delivery within the proposed Growth Point and consider alternative strategies should actual delivery fall below expected levels. The delivery of 400 dwellings per annum within the Growth Point focus area will be critical if current policies are to be maintained.

Maximising the use of previously developed land

Maximising the use of previously developed land, which includes the conversion of existing buildings, is a national priority, reducing the need to develop on greenfield land. The RSS sets an indicative target of at least 80% of the housing provision to be accommodated on brownfield land and buildings. The protection of local character and heritage are, however, local priorities. The protection of local distinctiveness is a major issue for Wirral people. Despite long term regeneration

initiatives, Wirral still has a high proportion of vacant land and derelict buildings, located mainly in the eastern side of the Borough. This is due largely to poor levels of commercial investment related to a decline in the desirability of this area as a place in which to live, work and invest. The reuse and redevelopment of this land is essential if urban renaissance is to occur.

The character of the older and well established, attractive housing areas that contain aspects of unique heritage such as Edwardian and Victorian properties located outside Conservation Areas has faced particular pressures for redevelopment. The Council's Interim Housing Policy has provided a degree of protection for many of these areas, but there will be a need to consider how best to safeguard the character of these neighbourhoods in future in the light of the need to provide for additional homes in accordance with the spatial priorities of RSS.

Securing sustainable design and construction

National policy requires the planning system to contribute to reducing carbon emissions and apply measures to address climate change and take into account the unavoidable consequences. The Government has introduced the Code for Sustainable Homes, a voluntary standard for design that will become mandatory over time. There is an additional initiative to support Lifetime homes. Only a small number of dwellings in Wirral have so far been built to these new standards. Over the lifetime of the LDF, Wirral will need to contribute to the Government's ambition that all new homes should be zero carbon by 2016 and promote the adoption of BREEAM standards for other developments

4. Building Sustainable Communities

Creating Sustainable communities through Housing Market Renewal

A main priority for the LDF will be to deliver mixed and sustainable communities at the heart of the urban area including a greater mix in the size, type, tenure, quality and affordability of housing, supported by a high quality, accessible environment with modern services including transport, health and education. There is a particular need to reduce the barriers to worklessness and deliver improvements to health. This will include the provision of new facilities within the Mersey Heartlands Growth Point.

Tackling nationally significant deprivation

The national index of multiple deprivation for England continues to show nationally significant deprivation concentrated in the east of the Borough. The wards of Bidston St James, Birkenhead and Tranmere have twice the national average proportion of children living in households where key benefits are claimed. Claimants of key benefits are concentrated within six wards, all of which are located in the eastern half of the Wirral. Almost 20,000 people claim incapacity benefit. Wirral is one of the first Local Authorities to deliver a nationally agreed Local Public Service Agreement to focus on reducing economic inactivity across all benefit recipients, and has seen a fall of 3,000 in the number of Incapacity Benefit Claimants in the three years to April 2007, and a fall of over 700 people claiming Lone Parent benefits. Any spatial policy for the Borough will need to reflect the need to address these issues to tackle income and employment based deprivation.

Reducing health inequalities and improving life expectancy

Wirral has one of the widest variations in terms of health outcomes for its residents of all the Merseyside PCT's. There is a stark mortality gap, with the highest numbers of people suffering from alcohol and smoking related illness, obesity and mental health problems located largely within the east of the Borough. On average those living in the poorest wards are expected to live 11 years less than those living in the most affluent areas of the Borough. The scope for a spatial land-use plan to directly change personal lifestyle choices is limited, but by ensuring that the necessary built infrastructure and health care facilities can be provided and influencing the location and form of development it can provide the framework that could encourage more healthy life choices.

Addressing inequalities in skills, education, and training and life chances

There is a clear link between deprivation and academic attainment. The attainment gap between pupils receiving free school meals and those not receiving free school meals in maintained schools for GCSE attainment of 5 plus GCSEs at grade A*-C in Wirral was 37.4 percentage points, higher than in the other Merseyside districts. The employment rate in Wirral for people with no qualifications is declining. The lowest qualified are increasingly unlikely to be unemployed. A third of workless people in Wirral have no formal qualifications and three quarters have a low level of qualifications (NVQ2 and below). The scope for a spatial land-use plan to directly influence educational attainment is limited, other than ensuring that the necessary built facilities can be provided in the most appropriate and accessible locations.

Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour

Wirral has the lowest rate of recorded crime on Merseyside and the rates of burglaries, violent crimes, robberies and vehicle crimes continue to fall and are among the lowest in the country. However approximately 30% of all recorded crime on Wirral occurs in 10% of the Borough; these areas broadly correspond with the most deprived areas of the Borough. Much of this is violent crime associated with the night time economy. There has been a fall in residents' fear of crime, but anti-social behaviour remains a significant issue for local people. Anti-social behaviour was still the highest reported incident category reported on Wirral in 2006/7 by a considerable margin: there were 21,994 incidents of Anti-social behaviour and 7,569 recorded incidents of criminal damage, the next highest category. The Core Strategy will set criteria for the design and layout of new development that will reduce the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour.

5. An Accessible Borough

Reducing dependency on the private car

The majority of Wirral's residential areas are within 400 metres of a bus stop or railway station and the Merseyside rail network is one of the most heavily used for commuter journeys outside the south east of England. However, there is still a high dependency on the car for journeys to work, some of the main arterial routes in the Borough are carrying large volumes of traffic and car ownership is forecast to rise. There are also declining levels of bus patronage and low levels of walking and cycling. The high level of out-commuting from the Borough has been previously highlighted. The number of new homes that we are required to build could result in thousands of additional commuter trips being made everyday. Initial consultation confirmed that people were concerned about traffic growth and highlighted difficulties travelling between urban areas by public transport as a contributory factor on journeys to work and shop etc. The Core Strategy will need to minimize the need to

use the car, promote alternative modes including walking, cycling and park and ride through the location of new employment and housing development. It could also serve to support the enhancement of existing public transport infrastructure such as the Bidston-Wrexham railway line (Borderlands).

Congestion management, particularly on the section of the A552 (east of M53 J3 to Birkenhead Central), will need particular consideration as this route informs the government's national congestion target. Being one of the eleven Merseyside corridors monitored for traffic growth and person through-put, development on, or in the vicinity of, this corridor will need to be effectively managed to ensure that additional vehicular trips do not significantly impact on journey times.

Minimising the environmental impact of transport

Although Wirral does not have any declared Air Quality Management Areas, increasing car ownership and the continuing high level of out-commuting could have major implications for travel generation and long-term air quality. The road network in the vicinity of the Birkenhead Tunnel has been identified as a location of potential concern. Development which will significantly increase traffic levels on the A41 could potentially give rise to air quality issues. Deprived areas can suffer disproportionately from the impact of transport. Regeneration projects in more central locations could introduce significant levels of new residential development. There remain heavy levels of industrial traffic particularly in the docks and along the A41. Outside the Borough, the continued expansion of Liverpool John Lennon airport has increased the frequency of aircraft flying over Wirral although these are generally Chapter 3 compliant aircraft and the amount of overflights is dependent on wind direction. The number of night flights has reduced significantly in recent years as a result of the contraction in the amount of freight handled at Liverpool. Development at the airport is subject to an Airport Masterplan, adopted in November 2007.

Supporting the port and maritime industries

The Borough's ports are facilities of regional and national significance and have been identified as a key economic driver for the city region. The Mersey waterfront between Birkenhead and Eastham is identified as having the potential to support EC initiatives to encourage the transfer of freight from land to water. Road and rail access to the region's main ports is an important issue, particularly in terms of the potential to reduce unnecessary and unsustainable use of ports in other UK regions such as the east and south-east of England. This could minimise road transport and reduce pressure on ports in the east and south east. There are plans to improve the facilities at Eastham. The Core Strategy will need to provide for the future of the docks as part of the Wirral Waters regeneration proposals, which may include reinstatement of the docks freight link. A Port Masterplan will be prepared, in accordance with Policy RT6 of RSS and consistent with the Core Strategy.

6. Environmental Quality And Protection

Safeguarding and enhancing Wirral's natural environment

Wirral's coastline, countryside, biodiversity, geodiversity and natural beauty are not only intrinsically important but are crucial to the overall image of the Borough. The Council also has a legal duty to provide for the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and amenity of the Borough. Significant challenges are posed by the close proximity of European nature conservation sites around the majority of Wirral's coast and the need to consider impacts on these of policies and proposals in the

LDF. Provision, protection and enhancement of sites that provide outdoor recreation opportunities close to and accessible by existing communities is an important objective. Some areas of landscape require enhancement. The majority of Wirral's biodiversity and geodiversity sites are located outside the urban area. While the Green Belt provides an element of protection, the Core Strategy will need to make specific provision for protected species and habitats. Not all aspects of Wirral's biodiversity resource are currently captured by site designations. The Core Strategy will have to demonstrate that any proposals will preserve and where appropriate enhance these assets.

Protect and enhancing Wirral's urban environment.

The urban area environment is where the majority of Wirral people live and work. The attractiveness of the urban environment is a key element in most people's quality of life. The urban area is also expected to accommodate the majority of new development over the plan period. Some of the urban area is of limited attractiveness in terms of the environment and amenities it provides. There are relatively few designated nature conservation sites within the urban areas of east Wirral and the role of Greenspace as part of a network of Green Infrastructure has yet to be fully recognised. Opportunities to maximise green infrastructure might also consider less traditional areas such as highway verges which could be enhanced to create wild-flower habitat corridors. Merseyside Local Authorities are considering a proposal for a sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy, promoted by the Mersey Forest.

Public consultation has shown that people are most concerned about the landscape, open space maintenance, the quality of design and safeguarding of heritage. Whilst the need for new development is acknowledged, there is also a need to ensure that local distinctiveness and areas of special environmental quality are protected and enhanced. The Core Strategy will need to balance the need for urban regeneration with safeguarding local distinctiveness and securing environmental improvements.

Adapting to climate change

Adaptation to the effects of climate change is a key Government priority. Energy use in homes and businesses along with transport are having a significant impact on the climate through the carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels. There is currently very limited renewable and low carbon energy production in the Borough. There is however, a need for a better understanding of the feasibility and potential for renewable and low-carbon technologies. The Government has recently relaxed planning rules to promote microgeneration, but the Core Strategy will need to provide a framework for the wider delivery of new renewable technologies.

Controlling flood risk

Parts of the Borough are at risk of flooding both from river (fluvial) and tidal sources. The long term implications of climate change for the future risk and extent of flooding needs to be understood. Periods of high intensity rainfall have also caused problems of sewer flooding in some localities. The Core Strategy will need to ensure that new development is only located in areas which will not increase the likelihood or extent of flooding and that adequate drainage infrastructure is provided. It will also need to include measures to minimize run-off and encourage the incorporation of sustainable urban drainage systems.

Sustainable Waste Management

Reducing the consumption of resources and the generation of waste is a national priority. The amount of household waste collected per capita in Wirral is increasing. The overall pattern of waste management is however changing with the greater emphasis on recycling. Household waste recycling rates in Wirral have improved significantly and are anticipated to increase further. Waste issues will be dealt with in detail in the Joint Merseyside Waste DPD which will provide the framework to deal with the minimisation and management of waste arisings, including provision for separation, recycling and the safe storage of different types of waste. The Core Strategy will however need to reflect this spatial framework for the provision of these new facilities.

Control of Pollution and Hazards

The regime for dealing with contaminated land was introduced through Part IIa of the 1990 Environmental Protection Act. A duty is placed upon the Council to publish an approved Inspection Strategy for contaminated land. The inspection programme concentrated initially on those wards in the east of the Borough where potentially contaminating uses of land were historically located - Seacombe, Birkenhead, Tranmere, Bromborough and Eastham. As the focus of the 1990 Act is on voluntary remediation, much of this is likely to occur as a result of development.

There are no overall quality issues with controlled waters (surface inland waters, groundwater and coastal waters) in the Borough. It will be important that the LDF ensures that development does not result in adverse effects on surface and ground waters. The Core Strategy also has to take account of any locations subject to the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 1999 (COMAH). The Core Strategy should not promote development which might lead to the designation of an Air Quality Management Area in the Borough.

Consultation question 6: Do you agree that the key issues problems and challenges outlined above accurately reflect those facing the Borough?

A SPATIAL VISION FOR WIRRAL

Taking account of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the issues raised in the previous section the Spatial Vision for the Wirral Core Strategy is proposed to be as follows:

By 2025 Wirral will be a Borough which offers a high quality of life for all its residents and visitors:

- The Investment Strategy for Wirral will have been implemented
- Wirral's economy will be strengthened and diversified; there will be a wide range of employment sites and premises attractive to existing businesses and inward investors. The Borough will be an attractive location for higher quality, better paying employers, particularly in the knowledge-based sector
- The population of Wirral will be growing, out migration will have been reduced and there will be a better balance of age groups

- Levels of unemployment and worklessness in the Borough will have been significantly reduced and the skills base will have been enhanced
- As a result of Housing Market Renewal and the Mersey Heartlands Growth Point, all parts of the Borough will be seen as attractive places to live, through the promotion of sustainable, mixed communities and the provision of high quality, well designed, zero-carbon, affordable, mixed tenure housing, which will meet the needs of all sectors of the community
- The amount of vacant and derelict land in the older urban areas will have been reduced
- Birkenhead as the Borough's sub-regional centre will have been enhanced and revitalised as the retail and service centre of choice for all the Borough's residents, supported by a network of vital and viable district and local shopping centres
- The major regeneration opportunity at Wirral Waters will have successfully transformed surplus docklands in Birkenhead and Wallasey into vibrant thriving mixed communities with a substantial range of jobs, homes and services
- The Borough will have developed its potential as a tourism destination focusing on the quality of its natural environment, its built heritage and the coastal resorts at New Brighton, West Kirby and Hoylake
- The high levels of deprivation and social and health inequalities found in parts of east Wirral will have been significantly reduced
- All new development will be suitably adapted to the potential impacts associated with climate change and flood risk whilst minimising their own carbon emissions and the consumption of water and other resources. All new residential developments will have been zero carbon from 2016 onwards
- The Borough will have maintained and enhanced a high quality urban and rural environment, including a fully established network of green infrastructure within the urban area and a safeguarded and enhanced biodiversity and geodiversity resource. Maximum use will have been made of previously developed land and buildings and Wirral's built heritage will have been safeguarded and enhanced
- The quantity of waste generated in the Borough will have been reduced through greater levels of waste reduction, re-use and recycling and a large proportion of the waste still generated will be managed and processed as close as possible to the Borough
- Transport and land use will be fully co-ordinated, maximising the use of sustainable transport modes, including bus, rail, walking and cycling with the number and length of individual car journeys minimised

Consultation Question 7 Do you agree with the spatial vision as set out above?

STRATEGIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

Taking account of the evidence base, Regional and Corporate Policy contexts, along with the emerging issues and challenges identified for the Borough and the Spatial Vision for the Core Strategy, a series of emerging Strategic Objectives have been developed.

A Stronger Economy

Objective 1

To improve the performance of and diversify Wirral's economy in line with the Investment Strategy.

Objective 2

To reduce levels of unemployment and worklessness in the Borough

Objective 3

To provide a continuous supply of accessible, high quality and readily available employment sites.

Objective 4

To use local spending and skills to support urban regeneration

Objective 5

To focus new development within the Borough's existing urban centres

Objective 6

To develop and support a sustainable tourism and leisure based economy.

Objective 7

To sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Borough's town and district centres.

Housing

Objective 8

To provide a continuous supply of housing land to meet identified needs.

Objective 9

To focus new investment to deliver housing market renewal and growth to areas of greatest need at the heart of the older urban areas in east Wirral..

Objective 10

To meet proven needs for affordable and specialist housing.

Objective 11

To maximise the use of derelict and vacant previously developed land and buildings while maintaining local character and distinctiveness.

Objective 12

To ensure new housing development incorporates sustainable design and construction principles.

Building Sustainable Communities

Objective 13

To reduce health inequalities and ensure that new development encourages healthier lifestyle choices.

Objective 14

To reduce inequalities in skills, education and training.

Objective 15

To minimize the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.

An Accessible Borough

Objective 16

To provide and promote more sustainable, integrated travel options

Objective 17 To make efficient use of existing transport networks and infrastructure.

Objective 18

To maximize the accessibility of services and jobs especially to areas of greatest need.

Objective 19

To support the movement of freight from road to rail and water

Objective 20

To minimise the adverse impacts of transport on local communities and the environment.

Objective 21

To support the future of port activity and related maritime sectors

Environmental Quality and Protection

Objective 22

To provide sufficient opportunities for outdoor recreation, sport and to protect and enhance the Borough's natural environment.

Objective 23

To protect and enhance the Borough's biodiversity and geological resources.

Objective 24

To protect and enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the urban environment.

Objective 25

To protect and enhance the Borough's historic environment.

Objective 26

To ensure that future development is adapted to the impact of climate change.

Objective 27

To minimize the risk of flooding from sea, rivers and rainfall

Objective 28

To provide for more sustainable waste management.

Objective 29

To maximise public safety and minimise hazards to people and the environment

Consultation Question 8: do you agree with the above Strategic objectives?

Consultation Question 9: Are there any others you would like to suggest?

Consultation Question 10: How can we measure success?

A FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

The Core Strategy must be capable of being implemented and providing a robust framework for delivery is an essential element of the plan making process. As the Core Strategy progresses and policies are finalised, it is proposed that a framework for implementation will be drawn up which for each policy will identify the principal implementation route (i.e. through other DPDs/SPDs, planning applications etc), responsibility for implementation and by when, any resource implications and an appropriate target/indicator for measuring progress.

The following table places the LDF/Core Strategy in context with the other key delivery strategies produced by the Council and its partners:

Long Term - 10-15 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Community Strategy, • Local Development Framework, • Regional Spatial Strategy • Regional Housing Strategy • Regional Transport Strategy • Regional Economic Strategy • Housing Strategy for Wirral • Investment Strategy
Medium Term - 3-5 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wirral's Local Area Agreement • Wirral Council Corporate plan, • Local Transport Plan • Primary Care Trust Strategic Commissioning Plan 2008-2013 • Primary Care Trust Joint Strategic Needs Assessment • Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy • Children's & Young People's Strategic Plan, • Licensing Strategy • Medium Term Financial Plan
Short Term – 1 Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities for improvement • Council service plans, • Local Area Agreement Action Plans

Engagement with Delivery Stakeholders

The Council is undertaking a Social and Community Infrastructure Requirements study as part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy. This is intended to ensure that spatial planning policies in the Core Strategy take account of the needs and requirements of other Council Departments and external organisations engaged in the provision of services to the wider community. This will include services provided by the Council for adults and young people as well as services provided by bodies such as:-

- External

Merseyside Police Authority, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Wirral PCT, Wirral Partnership Homes, Wirral CVS, Wirral Community and Voluntary Sector Network, Wirral Local Strategic Partnership, and the utility companies. The initial stage includes a review of the service and business plans for each organisation, to establish the likely infrastructure requirements. This will enable the Council to identify gaps in provision that will need to be addressed as development progresses.

Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring of the adopted Core Strategy will also be a key element in ensuring that delivery follows the pattern of expectations set out within the Core Strategy. The Annual Monitoring Report is the main opportunity for monitoring delivery and the effectiveness of plan policies. Specifically it looks at:

- How policies are working in practical terms and how they are being implemented (take up and development of sites)
- How plans and policies are affecting agreed indicators.
- How the LDF work programme is progressing (and whether any alterations to it are required) by comparing actual progress achieved in the preparation of individual Local Development Documents against the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme for Wirral.

The key indicators from the sustainability appraisal process are closely aligned to those in the Annual Monitoring Report to ensure that the impacts of the plan on sustainability can be closely measured.

Next Steps

Spatial Options Consultation

The results of consultation on the Issues and Objectives Document will be used to identify a series of spatial options for the Core Strategy.

The generation of spatial options offers stakeholders the opportunity to influence the key choices about the future development of the Borough, before they are finally confirmed. Consultation will enable the Council to demonstrate that it has identified and evaluated a full range of available potential options and to better assess their likely implications.

The generation and evaluation of spatial options generation will need to comply with national guidance, which indicates that they should represent genuine alternative approaches to governing future development and change in the Borough. Potential options should be “reasonable”, which is generally taken to mean that they should be realistic and genuinely capable of implementation. The spatial options will need to be subject to a full range of appraisals and assessments.

Following Cabinet approval, it is envisaged that a Spatial Options Document, setting out the accompanying appraisals and assessments, will be published for public consultation towards the middle of 2009.

Future Stages

Consultation on the Spatial Options Document will enable the Council to decide upon its Preferred Options. The Preferred Options must, again, be published for public consultation to ensure that the alternative options have been correctly evaluated and to confirm that the Council’s final decisions have been soundly based. The results of consultation on the Preferred Options will then be used to draw up a draft Core Strategy. This is the first time that the public and other stakeholders will have be able to see a complete fully drafted Core Strategy for the Borough.

The draft Core Strategy, which may now include strategic site allocations, will need to be formally published for statutory public consultation accompanied by the evidence base and a full suite of appraisals and assessments to explain the processes carried out to arrive at the conclusions now included within the Strategy.

The comments received can be used by the Council to make any final changes before submitting the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for public examination by an independent Planning Inspector. Assuming the Inspector concludes that the Core Strategy is

“sound”, on the basis of the evidence submitted and any outstanding representations, the Council would then be able to proceed to adoption.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 27th NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

UPDATE ON THE NATIONAL BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE PROGRAMME

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) was launched in February 2003. BSF aims at educational transformation through providing all secondary school pupils and teachers in England with 21st Century buildings and facilities.

Following consultations by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) reported to Cabinet on 26th June 2008, this report is to update members on recent developments in the BSF Programme.

The report also seeks permission to submit a revised expression of interest to DCSF, who have requested that the submission be with them by 30th November 2008.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is a long-term programme of investment and change in secondary school education that was launched by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in February 2003. The programme creates an important opportunity to transform the way secondary schools function, developing buildings for the 21st century with teaching and learning to match and is delivered by Partnerships for Schools (PfS). Partnerships for Schools (PfS) was established in 2004 by the DCSF to deliver BSF. The role of PfS is to ensure that investment in secondary schools is based on robust educational strategies and that BSF schools and Academies are well designed, are built on time at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer, and are properly maintained over their lifetime.
- 1.2 In order for Local Authorities to participate in the BSF programme they must be able to demonstrate that they are ready to establish a long-term strategy for change based upon BSF, an integral component of which links buildings with teaching and learning via the use of Information Communications and Technology (ICT). In addition, secondary schools provide a major resource for local communities, and as such, the new and refurbished facilities delivered by BSF should be designed for shared community use wherever appropriate. In line with the "Every Child Matters" agenda, every BSF school will be an extended school, offering additional or dual use facilities, such as sport halls, libraries, nurseries and ICT resources. BSF offers a great opportunity to integrate schools into wider regeneration projects, repositioning our schools at the heart of communities. These broad aims support the Corporate Strategic Asset Review and the Strategic Development Plan for Cultural Services in Wirral.
- 1.3 BSF will ultimately reach every part of the English maintained secondary school system, including:
 - 11-16, 11-18 and upper schools
 - middle schools deemed secondary, and secondary and all-age special schools

- all categories of secondary schools – community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation, trust and academies.

1.4 In order to have the optimum effect on teaching, learning and hence attainment at the beginning of the programme, funding was initially targeted at areas with the lowest attainment at GCSE level and highest levels of deprivation, measured by eligibility for free school meals (FSM). The Council was invited to place an Expression of Interest at that time, which it did in December 2003, a copy of which is included in Appendix 1.

2.0 Wirral Position

2.1 From the original consultation in 2003 all authorities have been given an indication of which BSF wave they have been placed in and provisional timescales for each wave. The criteria for allocation to the current BSF waves is based upon deprivation (FSM) and examination performance. Wirral has been allocated Band D, Wave 12, which currently indicates an entry into full BSF around 2015. This later entry date reflects the recent investment in Wirral secondary schools through PFI, Aided school investment, other capital schemes and overall examination and deprivation factors in the national context.

2.2 Subsequently, local authorities in the later waves of BSF have been allocated capital funding for a “One School Pathfinder” secondary school re-build. Woodchurch High School is the selected school and design work is underway, with a target completion date of September 2010 for a full school transfer to the new building.

2.3 Currently local authorities are being admitted to BSF on an annual basis, to the original wave timescales, the process being managed by the national body, PfS. Under existing plans, Wave 7 will be launched early in 2009 with funding on stream from 2011.

3.0 DCSF Consultation on the Future BSF Schedule

3.1 In April 2008 DCFS published a consultation on the management of waves 7 to 15 of BSF, which ran until 4 July. The proposals in the consultation reflected the learning from the early waves and the aim to ensure delivery of the programme through flexible management. Options discussed in this consultation included:

- i) setting additional prioritisation criteria, but retaining educational and social need as a tie-breaker;
- ii) starting all authorities not already in the programme with a priority project as soon as practicable;
- iii) revising project sizes to make the programme flexible;
- iv) emphasising readiness to deliver as the factor which will start projects in the programme.

3.2 Details of Wirral responses to this consultation were approved by Cabinet on the 26th June 2008, a copy of which is included as Appendix 2.

3.3 Following consideration of the responses to the consultation, Ministers have agreed that local needs could be reflected in how authorities propose projects, and that social

and educational need will remain the highest criteria in how the programme is prioritised, as well as its readiness to deliver.

4.0 PfS Invitation to submit a Revised Expression of Interest for BSF

- 4.1 Following this latest consultation each authority has been asked to review its original Expression of Interest (EOI) and consider revising it. Clearly the Wirral EOI from 2003 does not take account of changes in the pupil population, national and local initiatives since 2003 and the LA Secondary Reviews. It therefore requires revision and re-submission to PfS. The deadline for submission is 30.11.08. The revised EOI will then be considered by PfS as part of drawing up a revised National Project Priority list by early in 2009. LA's with high priority schemes will then be invited to provide evidence of their readiness to deliver and be able to show a robust 'Strategy for Change' for their secondary school provision.
- 4.2 The revised Expression of Interest requires:
- i) A summary of the LA's Strategic Plans for the delivery of secondary education transformation and evidence of consultation of these plans (2 sides of A4),
 - ii) A map showing the location of all secondary schools,
 - iii) An explanation of the methodology used to prioritise schools, demonstrating links to ministerial prioritisation,
 - iv) A completed PfS spreadsheet showing the local prioritisation of schools into groups of around five schools for the initial Priority project wave and around seven for follow on project waves. This spreadsheet envisages three waves:-
 - Top Priority Project (around five schools) - up to £80m approx.
 - First Priority Follow-on project and - up to £100m approx.
 - Second Priority. Follow on project.
 - Further waves can also be submitted.
 - v) An initial assessment of the LA's readiness to deliver a local BSF programme.
- 4.3 There is no longer a requirement for geographical coherence for a project wave i.e. the five schools in the Top Priority Project do not have to be in one geographical area. All secondary schools should be considered, including Voluntary Aided, PRU's, special schools and hospital schools. Follow on projects should reflect some geographical coherence.
- 4.4 PfS would prefer to have full details on every school. However it will be acceptable to anonymise details "if there are local sensitivities around school organisation proposals". Where an LA is aiming for an early start on a project PfS expect any reorganisation proposals to already be in the public domain. LA's can if they wish provide details on their existing schools but leave the columns on the spreadsheet relating to investment plans and projected numbers on roll blank at this stage, the information to be submitted when PfS asks the LA for readiness to deliver information.
- 4.5 BSF is about much more than building condition and the overall aims nationally for BSF are required to be a key factor in prioritising works. Alongside this is the need to reflect the national priorities and needs criteria, linking these in turn to the local context, in particular the agreed secondary review process.

4.6 The national prioritisation criteria are:

- a) social and educational need, including:-
 - national challenge schools
 - less well performing schools
 - areas of deprivation
- b) building need (suitability and/or condition)
- c) contributing to local or regional regeneration, including opportunities for co-location with other public services
- d) school reorganisation
- e) sustainable communities, new housing and population growth.

4.7 In terms of national prioritisation of each LA's Top Priority project, Ministers intend the "focus of prioritisation to remain on social and educational need". For educational need the most recent data on GCSE performance, including English and Maths will be used and for social need the Tax Credit Indicator (TCI) will be used rather than FSM data. TCI data was not available at the start of BSF.

4.8 Upon receipt of the revised Expressions of Interest, PfS will check the data and maps and once any queries have been dealt with will:

- bring together nationally the Priority projects (up to five schools) from each authority
- bring together all the First Follow on projects from each authority
- bring together nationally all the Second Follow on projects from each authority, and so on.

4.9 Each of the national project lists – Priority, First Follow on, Second Follow on etc. will be prioritised nationally and ranked, ie there will then be a separate national, ranked list for each project group. Ministers will then decide on the balance nationally between Priority projects and Follow on projects, Priority projects being those from LA's not yet in a full phase of BSF (eg. the position on Wirral) and Follow on projects from all authorities.

4.10 PfS anticipate that in Spring 2009 they will announce the national priority lists and identify funding to deal with the next urgent projects. At this stage, those LA's with the most urgent projects will be invited to demonstrate "Readiness to Deliver" and will have 6-8 weeks to respond to this invitation. The LA's Readiness to Deliver will be assessed by PfS, and if deemed appropriate the project will proceed with funding from 2011/12. If the LA's readiness is felt to require further development, the approval to proceed will be held until PfS requirements are satisfied.

4.11 It is therefore possible that an authorities' Priority Project will be ranked amongst the most urgent nationally, will be allocated funding but may not receive the funding from 2011/12 due to the authority deciding it is not ready to deliver against PfS criteria and/or PfS deciding the authority is not ready. The national priority ranking would remain the same but the project would be "held" or "bumped" until the PfS Readiness to Deliver criteria were satisfied.

4.12 PfS measure Readiness to Deliver against the following elements:

- the LA's Strategy for Change in secondary education
- the LA's Estate Strategy for schools
- the LA's Commitment to the BSF model, including the creation of Local Education Partnerships to procure the works
- the Project Management structuring Board and project team are adequate

- the required Project Support Network, both internal to the council and external advisers is understood and there is agreement to allocate staff and fund external advisers, (PfS estimate 3% of capital allocation is needed for this; funded by the LA)
- there is corporate support and capacity for the project, including member support and “buy in”
- consultation to date is appropriate and plans for further consultation with all relevant bodies are in place
- appropriate Risk Management arrangements are in place
- appropriate arrangements are in place for any joint working.

PfS has urged LA’s to be realistic in their self-assessment of their Readiness to Deliver.

5.0 The Wirral Position in Respect of the PfS Invitation to submit a Revised Expression of Interest for BSF.

The 2003 initial Expression of Interest, which ranked Wirral in Band D, Wave 12 with a 2015 start was based on exam performance data and social deprivation using FSM figures. Clearly there was no phasing or grouping in the original submission as the intention at that time was that all the school projects would have one starting date for an authority of Wirral’s size. The prioritisation ranking was therefore based on the exam performance and FSM data for the Borough as a whole. The 2003 submission was also made at a time when one High school was being re-built under PFI, seven other High schools were undergoing major refurbishment under PFI, two High schools had recently received significant capital investment under a City Challenge initiative and two Catholic Aided High Schools were receiving significant levels of targeted capital investment following on from the closure of St Benedict’s Catholic High School.

- 5.1 Clearly, given the Ministerial and PfS prioritisation criteria, Top Priority schemes which include schools with the greatest social and educational need, as defined by PfS, will have the greatest chance of early prioritisation and funding.
- 5.2 Applying the national criteria to the local, current Wirral context is not easy. The secondary review process, the Academy proposals, the special school review, the background of a falling secondary roll and the implementation of national initiatives, particularly the 14-19 agenda, all require consideration in prioritising work at individual schools.
- 5.3 However here is a correlation between the PfS social and educational prioritisation criteria and Phase 1 of the LA Secondary review in Birkenhead/Bebington, which in turn relates to the Academy proposals. This forms a rationale for the bulk of the LA’s Top Priority group of schemes to have its basis in the Phase 1 Secondary review area, possibly grouped with the most urgent Secondary Special provision.

Whilst such a Top Priority group would appear to have the best match to the PfS criteria, such a submission would mean that school project works in other areas of Wirral become “Follow On” projects under the PfS framework.

- 5.4 A possible grouping of schemes therefore could be:

Top Priority/Initial group of schemes (five schools approx)	Birkenhead/Phase I review Special, most urgent
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First Priority Follow on Project
(seven schools approx)

Phase 2 of local secondary review
Key Suitability and Condition shortfalls in
other secondary schools and other Special
Schools

Second Priority Follow on Project

Other Suitability and Condition needs
Outstanding works/provision at PFI schools
Outstanding Suitability at 2 Catholic Aided
schools

5.5 Such a grouping as set out above would:-

- i) make the strongest links between BSF and the local review
- ii) make the strongest links between BSF and the Academy proposals
- iii) address some of the most urgent imbalances in the quality of accommodation and the scale of provision against need
- iv) mean that those schools which have enjoyed very significant recent capital investment, particularly the eight PFI and 2 Catholic Aided High Schools which have received around £100m of investment since 2000, are in the final wave.
- v) mean that special provision is included in the earliest waves, which not only links with the Special review process, but also reflects the relatively low levels of recent investment in special schools compared to many of the mainstream secondary schools

5.6 Clearly any final listing would have to take account of the outcomes of the key consultations on the Academy proposals, the LA secondary review and the LA special Review. At the time of writing this report work is in progress in drawing up a proposed list of priorities.

6.0 Financial implications

6.1 The initial Projects put forward are estimated at £80 million of work at approximately 5 schools with follow on projects estimated at £80-100 million each. This does not include the estimated £27 million of capital investment for Woodchurch High School as part of the "One School Pathfinder" project.

6.2 Capital funding would be from DCSF/PfS, any funding shortfall between the DCSF/PfS formulaic allocation and the actual cost of building the school is expected to be met by the Local Authority from other capital sources. PfS envisage, the majority of schemes being delivered through Local Education Partnerships (LEPs) which have funding contribution requirements on LA's. The LEP requirement will be subject of a further report to Cabinet

6.3 The DCSF/PfS have developed a national procurement framework for BSF, including the "One School Pathfinder" schemes. All local authorities are expected to procure the new school within the national framework unless they seek to "opt out" of the process. Opt outs will only be allowed where the local authority can demonstrate at least comparable Best Value. The DCSF/PfS have produced a series of exemplar designs for new schools and it is the DCSF/PfS expectation that these will be used wherever possible, adapted as necessary to suit local conditions. A standardised procurement

route and the exemplar designs are intended to support local authorities in implementing this initiative and are seen as key factors in achieving Best Value.

6.4 Cost implications for staff and external advisor support are set out below.

7.0 Staffing implications

7.1 The DCSF/PfS “strongly encourage” local authorities to appoint an experienced design adviser to assist in creating the briefs. ICT specialist advice is also advised.

7.2 The initial review undertaken as part of the selection process for the One School Pathfinder Project (reported to Cabinet on 15th November 2006) compiled by staff in the Council’s Technical Services and Children and Young People’s Departments, supported by advice from the Planning Section and the Environment Agency identified that there would be a requirement for additional Council staffing resources and external support. The experience of the extensive PFI secondary school works and “One School Pathfinder” project also confirms that the process will create significant demands on school management and staff.

7.3 The existing team have a full range of existing commitments to PFI. One School Pathfinder (OSP), Primary Capital Programme (PCP), Children’s Centres, Extended Schools and a range of other capital works across an extensive programme and support services to schools.

7.4 A move to earlier Readiness to Deliver in the full BSF programme would require additional staffing resources to develop the Education Strategy and Business Cases, carry out all the required consultation with all stakeholders, develop the required partnership working and manage the procurement and delivery of the project. The expectation is that Local Authorities will fund support teams for BSF programme development from local resources in anticipation of significant national capital investment.

7.5 From guidance issued by PfS on Building Schools for the future and research undertaken into the types of teams created by other Local Authorities in order to deliver their programmes it is likely that the following posts would need to be created to form a full core team.

- Project Director – responsible for the overall delivery of the Wirral BSF Programme.
- Education Improvement Advisor – responsible for advising the project team on issues relating to educational transformation.
- ICT Advisor – responsible for advising the project on issues relating to ICT in Schools.
- Project Manager – responsible for the project management of the Wirral BSF Programme.
- Partnership Manager – responsible for drawing together the aims of the Children’s Plan in order to increase choice and diversity and ensure that BSF Schools are well used by the community, offer extended services and collocation of other services.
- Project Administrator – responsible for administration within the core team.

7.6 In addition to the core team additional resources would be required for an extended team. At present it is envisaged that relevant department and sections would be approached in order to provide these skills to the BSF Programme. The extended team is likely to comprise the following disciplines.

- Finance
- Legal
- Building Design
- Planning

7.7 The staffing requirements outlined in 7.4 & 7.5/6 could amount to around £500,000 per annum for a full team and ensure full “Readiness to Deliver”. A stepped approach could be taken to develop a team, with the associated gradation in moving to Readiness to Deliver probably over a longer timescale. These costs would need to be funded from the Councils’ budget and currently plans are being explored from within existing council overall resources. Initial discussions with the Director of Finance have explored the possibility of capitalizing the necessary funding. In addition, extend adviser costs are estimated at £250,000 per annum.

8.0 Equal opportunities implications

8.1 There are no adverse equality and diversity issues arising from this report.

9.0 Community safety implications

9.1 There will be community safety issues arising from the building and refurbishment of Wirral’s Secondary Schools safety / security issues will be addressed at the design stages wherever possible.

10.0 Local Agenda 21 implications

10.1 The new build will maximise modern building technology, energy conservation and wherever possible alternative energy provision and recycling of resources.

11.0 Planning implications

11.1 All works will be subject to Building Control and Planning approval.

12.0 Anti-poverty implications

12.1 The BSF Programme supports improved learning opportunities and should have a positive impact on poverty.

13.0 Social inclusion implications

13.1 The BSF Programme supports improved learning opportunities and accessibility issues and should have a positive impact on Social inclusion.

14.0 Local Member Support implications

14.1 The BSF Programme will affect all wards in the Borough.

15.0 Background papers

- Wirral Building Schools for the Future, Expression of interest - December 2003
- Report to Cabinet (15th November 2006) Building Schools for the future, One School Pathfinder Selection of School to be re-built.
- Report to Cabinet (26th June 2008) Building Schools for the Future, Consultation on management of BSF for future waves 7-15.

- DCSF Guidance for Local Authorities on revising and resubmitting expressions of interest for projects in Waves 7 to 15 of Building Schools for the Future – September 2008
- DCSF/PfS Readiness to Deliver – Guidance for Local Authorities in BSF Waves 4-6 – June 2006.
- DCSF/PfS/4ps An Introduction to Building Schools for the Future - 2008 Edition.
- Working papers held in the Children and Young People's Department.

16.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That

- (1) the progress of the national Building Schools for the Future programme and local work towards inclusion in this programme of work be noted;
- (2) the request for an updated Expression of Interest from PfS be responded to in a positive manner based upon the principles of prioritisation with a response to the PfS as outlined in sections 4 and 5 of this report by the deadline of 30.11.08; and
- (3) BSF be the subject of a further report once national priorities have been announced, with the report to also include an update on financial implications within the council's capital programme.

Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services

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1.0 Context

Wirral is the eighth largest Metropolitan Council with 327,000 residents and a low rate of population decline. The Wirral Peninsula is bounded on three sides by the Mersey Estuary, Irish Sea and Dee Estuary with a land boundary only with Cheshire. The western side is relatively affluent and contrasts with the eastern areas which have areas of severe decline and deprivation centred around Birkenhead, with the North Birkenhead ward the most deprived in the country in respect of child poverty. Overall the council is the 44th most deprived in England. Unemployment is higher in the eastern areas where a number of large scale initiatives are underway, including the Housing Market Renewal Strategy.

2.0 Pupil numbers

Primary numbers are falling, with a reduction of approximately 3300 pupils forecast by 2007, from the current figure of 27,321. Current occupancy rate is 89%. Secondary numbers are approaching a peak, with a current occupancy rate of 98% putting the system close to full capacity, with a steady reduction forecast from 2005/06 onwards.

3.0 Secondary school provision

No new, additional secondary schools are planned – any modest housing growth can be met via existing provision. The Wirral has a complex provision of secondary provision, with all ability and grammar schools and sixth form provision via the VIth Form College in Birkenhead and school based in other areas. There are 26 secondary schools comprising: 16 community schools, 2 Foundation schools, 4 Voluntary Aided Catholic Schools, 4 Community Special schools and an all-age Community Hospital School. There is also a Pupil Referral Unit. One Catholic Aided School was closed in 2002 and one Community School was closed seven years ago to deal with surplus place issues. There are no denominational High Schools other than the Catholic schools outlined above.

4.0 Recent investment in Secondary provision

Significant recent and current investment comprises four main elements:

- a) By far the greatest is the Wirral PFI scheme, £55 million capital investment, at eight secondary schools and one primary – the eight secondary schools comprising one new build replacement and seven extension/refurbishment works including two consolidations onto single sites. The scheme was one of the first grouped schemes in the country and the provider has experienced serious difficulties in meeting timescales, both phases and end dates. Final completion is now indicated at September 04 (originally Jan 04). This challenging scheme will, when complete, transform school environments in the eight secondary schools which had the most serious Suitability, Condition and temporary accommodation issues. These schools do not form part of our BSF Expression of Interest.
- b) Investment at two schools – Mosslands and Oldershaw, under a mid 1990s bid initiative – Capital Challenge, which consolidated them to single sites from split sites and provided extensive new accommodation. The remaining needs at these schools are included in this BSF Expression of Interest.
- c) Investment in the Catholic Aided schools, following the closure of St Benedict's Catholic Aided School in 2002. Of the four Catholic Aided schools, two are former independent schools which became grant maintained, then aided – Upton Hall Convent has enjoyed major Targeted Capital investment and LEA VCAP investment is planned for St Anselm's. The two other Catholic secondary schools, Plessington and St Mary's are currently enjoying major investment through Targeted Capital and LEA VCAP funding. The remaining needs are included in our BSF Expression of Interest.

- d) Investment at other non PFI schools, using Modernisation, NOF, local capital, Expanding Popular Schools, Laboratory, Staff room, Access, Seed Challenge, Specialist Schools and delegated funding. All of the above combine to provide a significant and diverse onward programme ahead of BSF.

5.0 Implications of current position for BSF

- i) The PFI programme, after consultation, selected schools with the greatest Suitability, Condition and temporary accommodation issues. They are therefore distributed across the peninsula – which results in a similar distribution pattern for the non PFI schools included in this BSF Expression of Interest. However, the compact nature of the peninsula means that the BSF school list could be seen as one group in procurement and geographical terms.
- ii) The initial work programmes put forward reflect a similar approach to that of the PFI works ie. mainly large scale extensions/adaptations to meet Suitability shortfalls and extensive Modernisation/condition elements. This would produce a consistent standard across the LEA, reflect the relatively stable population and geographical distribution, make best use of investment to date outlined at 4.0 above and enable a programme of works to continue ahead of BSF.
- iii) Greater levels of new build and renewal are required in the special sector and this is reflected in this Expression of Interest.
- iv) The LEA will seek further guidance from the DfES and other sources on the best options for those schools currently with the highest combined A and B percentage total.

6.0 Consultation

The consultation ahead of the PFI scheme resulted in the overall prioritization of works across the secondary sector. The principle of “follow on” investment in the non-PFI schools was established some time ago and as outlined at 4(d) above an ongoing programme is in place ahead of BSF. All schools have been circulated with details of the BSF Initiative by the LEA, together with additional clarification of the LEA’s decision to make an Expression of Interest and also to confirm the ongoing programme ahead of BSF, thereby dispelling fears schools may have had that all non urgent works would be put on hold ahead of BSF. All schools (except the PFI schools) have been invited to contribute to their line on the Expression of Interest spreadsheet and a small number have done so. The DfES and additional LEA information has been shared with the Diocesan Bodies and BSF will now be an agenda item at future LEA/Diocesan meetings and AMP group meetings. Further discussion is planned with Headteachers, governors and elected members in Spring 2004.

7.0 Summary

- i) BSF offers a unique opportunity to build on the current and recent investment, particularly the PFI, to complete major investment needs in Wirral secondary schools. Being probably at least half way makes that goal achievable more quickly.
- ii) BSF would bring major investment into the special schools, would support the LEA Special Needs plan and inclusion agenda.
- iii) The PFI means that a pool of LEA staff and Heads have current, extensive and very practical experience of the demands of working with a private sector partner – through good and challenging times and, large scale construction and investment, particularly when the schools involved are ‘live’ sites. BSF offers the opportunity to roll this expertise and support on to the remaining schools.
- iv) As explained at 5(i) above, the PFI school distribution pattern across the borough unknowingly determined the BSF schools list. This results in a spread of schools, with a full range of deprivation from the most extreme, and also a full range of ability and outcomes. The schools in the BSF Expression of Interest, we feel, could be procured in one bundle, manageable in volume, cost and relatively tight geographical spread of the schools.
- v) Clearly, this is the start of a long process, but one which offers the unique opportunity to build on existing recent progress and complete transformation of all the secondary accommodation. We feel we have a good track record in working with the private sector, local partners, schools and the DfES and will welcome further advice, input and comment on our plans to date in a positive manner.

CABINET – 26th JUNE, 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE (BSF)
CONSULTATION ON MANAGEMENT OF BSF FOR THE FUTURE WAVES 7-15 WAVES**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides details of a DCSF Consultation Paper on the later waves of Building Schools for the Future and sets out proposed responses to the consultation from Wirral, as an authority which is currently in Wave 12 (2015 full start). The report is for approval to allow a response to the DCSF by the closing date of 4th July 2008.

1.0 Background

The original DCSF consultation on BSF is now five years old and led to fifteen waves of investment which started in 2005/6. BSF is a national, key strategic programme intended to “create a new approach to capital investment for transforming secondary schools” (DCSF).

- 1.1 From the original consultation all authorities have been given an indication of which BSF wave they have been placed in and provisional timescales for each wave. The criteria for allocation to the current BSF waves is based upon deprivation (free school meals) and examination performance. Wirral has been allocated Band D, Wave 12, which currently indicates an entry into full BSF around 2015. This later entry date reflects the recent investment in secondary schools through PFI, Aided school investment and other capital schemes and overall examination and deprivation factors in the national context.
- 1.2 Subsequently, LA's in the later waves of BSF have been allocated capital funding for a “One School Pathfinder” secondary school re-build. Woodchurch High School is the selected school and design work is underway, with a target completion date of September 2010, for a full school transfer to the new building.
- 1.3 Currently LA's are being admitted to BSF on an annual basis, to the original wave timescales, the process being managed by the national body, Partnerships for Schools. Under existing plans, Wave 7 will be launched early in 2009 with funding on stream from 2011.

2.0. DCSF Consultation

The current DCSF consultation document relates to managing waves 7 to 15 and deciding the order in which those authorities not yet in the full programme will join BSF.

- 2.1 Briefly, the consultation document proposes:

- i) All LA's in the later waves will have a chance to join BSF as soon as they have strong plans to deliver at least an initial streamlined project of four or five schools, including any under-performing schools and those in pockets of deprivation.
- ii) There would be a wider range of criteria to decide how projects should be prioritised, including school projects related to areas with major social regeneration and development projects, schools with poorest infrastructure to avoid short term "patch and mend", areas where wider community facilities are planned, including children's centres, extended school facilities and broader provision for young people and areas of major school reorganisation, where investment is needed to address standards, or increase parental choice, for example introducing federations, trusts and academies.
- iii) LA's would join BSF in a rolling programme when they are ready, rather than waiting for formal year on year launches.
- iv) Some projects will no longer be required to include schools in the same geographical part of the LA area, giving LA's greater flexibility to invest in schools and target funding exactly where it is needed.
- v) LA's should work closer with neighbouring Authorities in setting up the required Local Education Partnership (LEP's) to get the most efficient procurement planning and building programmes in place".

2.2 The DCSF proposals set out above aim to reflect developments since the start of the BSF programme, in particular:

- the inclusion of secondary special schools
- revised DCSF Building Bulletin Standards for Secondary Schools (BB98 Secondary and BB102 Special) which are more generous in terms of space
- introduction of sustainability targets
- revised national requirements for ventilation, acoustics, energy use and fire safety
- development of Every Child Matters, personalised learning, extended schools, federations and trusts and the December 2007 Children's Plan.

The proposals also reflect lessons learned by the DCSF and Partnerships for Schools (the national body set up to manage BSF) in the implementation of BSF to date.

3.0 Proposed LA response to the DCSF Consultation

3.1 A copy of the DCSF Consultation Response Form is attached as Appendix 1, setting out the eleven questions being presented by the DCSF.

3.2 Subject to Cabinet approval, it is proposed to respond positively to the proposals in the Consultation for the reasons set out below:

3.3 Having a wider set of criteria for prioritisation in addition to deprivation and examination performance could allow Wirral earlier entry to the main BSF programme, particularly as one of the new criteria could be "areas of major school reorganisation". (Question 1) It seems logical that educational and social need should remain the "tie breaker" when two projects are evenly balanced and resources mean they have to have staggered starts (Question 2).

- 3.4 In terms of BSF facilitating “joined up” services for children, young people and families (Question 3) we are seeking to develop some of these principles in the Woodchurch scheme, making the building “user friendly” in its layout for uses beyond core school activity, considering the potential of parts of the current building and further developing the schools PE facilities around the existing sports hall. This will build on work to date in the primary sector for example Children’s Centres, and other developments e.g City Learning Centres.
- 3.5 In relation to introducing greater flexibility into LA’s entering the main BSF programme (Question 4) this would be helpful to Wirral as it could allow for some projects to be brought forward from the current 2015 entry date. It would also provide a more manageable programme of four/five schools in the first phase. An earlier date for some works could be integrated with the outcomes of the secondary place review process and would also allow lessons and expertise gained through the development of the Woodchurch One School Pathfinder scheme (and prior to this eight school PFI project) to be applied to some projects earlier than 2015.
- 3.6 The DCSF are seeking views on joint authority working (Question 5) and barriers to working together. Any cross authority working with other Merseyside authorities would be against a background where there is a desire to build upon existing joint working into new areas of which this could be one. Authorities would be at different stages, some already being in early waves with work underway and there would be variations in the value and type of works e.g. amount of special school work, proportion of new-build/refurbishment and the types of secondary school provision. Reorganisation in Cheshire will also mean a smaller authority on Wirral’s southern border.
- 3.7 The proposals suggest smaller initial projects to get all authorities started in the full programme as soon as is practical. This will result in “follow on” projects. Experience from the early phases suggests bundles of four to eight school projects with a value of £100m approx (Question 6). This approach could be helpful to Wirral as a smaller authority, would allow progress on at least four projects ahead of the current 2015 start date. A series of bundled projects could also be more manageable within the changing secondary roll and the PFI contractual framework. It may mean some works extending beyond 2015 but these would be the lowest priority projects within the context of the investment to date and other continuing non BSF funding.
- 3.8 It will be the responsibility of each authority to prepare itself for entry to the full programme. Authorities “with projects at the front of the queue” will need to provide evidence that they are ready to proceed to the satisfaction of Partnership for Schools (PfS). LA’s will need to be ready to start “immediately and quickly”. PfS will provide an early indication of position in the programme, clear guidance on what is expected and support from the national 4Ps support organisation (Question 7 and 8). The need to satisfy PfS re readiness has resource implications as outlined in section 4 of this report but overall a phased programme of smaller bundles of projects over a longer timescale but with an earlier start date for the first projects would seem to have some advantages over the current full entry in 2015 position.
- 3.9 Questions 9 and 10 relate to Local Education Partnerships *(LEP’s) which are the delivery method for Building Schools for the Future, with the LA working with a private sector partner. The DCSF are seeking views on whether the LEP partner should be able to deliver other schemes in addition to schools “to deliver other authority projects and facilities for other services on school sites”. The ability of the LEP to take on additional work of a non BSF nature is seen as making the LEP more attractive

commercially, with continuity of work. As we are not yet in full BSF we have no experience of operating in an LEP with a selected private sector partner. Any widening of the work allocated to the LEP partner could have implications for other council departments and other bodies in jointly funded works. However the council do not currently have framework contractors for high value capital schemes and therefore the idea seems worthy of further consideration within the council's developing procurement strategy.

- 3.10 Question 11 seeks any additional comments. Following the deadline for consultation responses of 4.7.08, the DCSF intend issuing guidance on revised expressions of interest in August 2008 with LA's submitting revised expressions of interest by October 2008. Early in 2009, DCSF will announce a revised national programme, setting out the next tranche of LA's to provide evidence of readiness to deliver. Later in Spring 2009, the next tranche will be announced.
- 3.11 It is proposed, subject to Cabinet approval, to respond to the consultation as set above, with an overall positive response to the proposed changes to the BSF programme

4.0 Implications for the Council

An earlier start date than 2015 for some projects would be helpful in continuing the improvement of the secondary school estate and would build on experience gained to date on secondary school capital works.

- 4.1 The "bundling" of the schemes into four/five school schemes would be helpful in terms of management and contractor capacity. Experience with the nine school PFI scheme showed the demands of such a sized scheme, particularly when works do not go to plan and schools need additional support.
- 4.2 Potential for joint authority working could build on the four authority joint working over the last two years on the PFI scheme, or with similar sized authorities in the region.
- 4.3 A move to earlier readiness to enter the full BSF programme would require additional staffing resources to develop the Education Strategy and Business Cases and carry out all the required consultation with all stakeholders and develop the required partnership working. The existing team have a full range of existing commitments to PFI. One School Pathfinder (OSP), Primary Capital Programme (PCP), Childrens Centres, Extended Schools and a range of other capital works across an extensive programme and support services to schools. The expectation is that LA's will fund support teams for BSF programme development from local resources in anticipation of significant national capital investment. There are also capital requirements in setting up an LEP and, it is proposed that the future resource implications are the subject of a further report, following the DCSF issuing revised guidance in August 2008.
- 4.4 The proposal for LEP's to carry out the other works than just BSF would have wide implications for the Council. Again, it is proposed to report further on this, following the issuing of the revised DCSF guidance.

5.0 Financial and Staffing Implications

There are none arising directly from this report. It is proposed a future report will set out potential revenue and capital implications of an earlier entry than 2015 into full BSF.

6.0 Equal Opportunities Implications

There are none arising directly from this report.

7.0. Human Rights Implications

There are none arising directly from this report.

8.0 Local Agenda 21 Statement

BSF will enable better use of existing premises and rationalisation and renewal where appropriate.

9.0 Community Safety Implications

There are none arising directly from this report.

10.0 Planning Implications

There are none arising directly from this report.

11.0 Anti-Poverty Implications

There are none arising directly from this report.

12.0 Social Inclusion Implications

There are none arising directly from this report.

13.0 Local Member Support Implications

Building Schools for the Future is applicable to all secondary schools.

14.0 Background Papers

BSF Working papers held by CYPD Department
DCSF Consultation Papers, BSF Future Waves 7-15

15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) that this report be noted
- ii) that the DCSF consultation be responded to in a positive manner with responses to the DCSF Consultation questions based on section 3 of this report.
- iii) that a further report on future waves of BSF and implications for the council be brought to Cabinet following further guidance from the DCSF later in 2008.

Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services

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METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL

CABINET- 27 NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

NEW KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM EXTENSION, STANTON ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL, BEBINGTON, WIRRAL - TENDER REPORT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of Tenders received, and to seek approval of the lowest tender.
- 1.2 Cabinet at its meeting on 16th April 2008 approved the Scheme and Estimate for this project and authorised invitations to tender-minute 607 refers.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The scheme is included within the Education Capital programme for 2007-2008 and will be funded from DCSF Capital allowance modernisation, Schools Access Initiative, Extended Schools Capital and School Devolved Formula Capital, a breakdown of the figures is given later in the report.
- 2.2 The scheme comprises the construction of a new single storey Kitchen and Dining Room Facility and redevelopment of the existing Hall into classrooms. The proposed building will provide more suitable accommodation to replace the former dilapidated kitchen and dining facilities. The mobile classrooms at present used as temporary accommodation will be removed on completion of the scheme.
- 2.3 The scope will include a platform lift and suitable WC for people with a disability plus all the necessary finishes, fitted furniture, heating, lighting, power, fire and intruder alarms
- 2.4 The new building has been designed to be efficient and economic to operate and maintain. The building will use ecologically responsible materials and create a pupil-orientated environment.
- 2.5 Full planning approval has been sought and is now in place.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Tenders were received on 20th October 2008 and are as follows:

No.	Contractor	Amount	Local Labour
1	Tender 1 PT Ltd.	783,755.41	TBC
2	Tender 2	808,883.00	25%
3	Tender 3	819,750.00	30%
4	Tender 4	835,989.00	50%
5	Tender 5	842,929.00	TBC
6	Tender 6	849,970.00	75%

All tenders were asked to submit on a fixed price basis and include a contract period of 30 working weeks.

3.2 The total cost of the scheme based upon the lowest tender submitted by PT Ltd, is

Building Works	£783,755.41
Departmental Charges including: -	£117,563.00
Professional Fees	
Clerk Of Works Salary	
Planning Supervisor	
Others (Planning & Building Regulation Fees etc)	
TOTAL	<u>£901,318.41</u>

3.3 Funding for the proposed scheme is as follows:

DCSF Capital allocation modernisation 2007/08	£400,000
DCSF Capital allocation modernisation 2008/09	£400,000
Schools Access Initiative 2008/09	£ 75,000
Extended Schools Capital 2008/09	£ 50,000
School Devolved Formula Capital	£100,000
TOTAL	<u>£1,035,000.00</u>

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

4.1 All Professional Services for the scheme are being provided by staff within the Technical Services Department.

4.2 The Corporate Procurement Support Unit have been consulted and are satisfied with the procurement process implemented for this project

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Access will be provided for children and adults with disabilities. There are no implications in this report for equal opportunities in relation to women, ethnic minorities, or the elderly.

6.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The design of this project will take into account best practice to reduce the risk of crime and the local crime reduction officer has been consulted

7.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Thermal insulation provided on this project will meet the standards and guidelines recommended by the DfES in the school premises regulations 1996 and part L2 of the Building Regulations 2000 as implemented in April 2002. The design shall also follow the DETR/DfES guidelines of "Energy efficient design of new buildings and extensions for schools and colleges.

8.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Planning permission for the project has been granted.

9.0 ANTI POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Scheme will provide new facilities, which will assist in raising standards for all children including any disadvantaged pupils living within this area of the Borough.

10.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The new facility will assist in providing an integrated approach to children's education, which is recognised as being a key factor in determining positive educational outcomes for all children.

11.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Stanton Road Primary School is in the Bebington Ward.

12.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 The information used in preparation of this report was obtained in consultation with the Children's and Young Peoples Department and with reference to their bidding documents, no other background papers have been used in the preparation of this report with the exception of the Architects file C18287 and the Quantity Surveyors working papers.

13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the lowest tender in the sum of £783,755.41 submitted by PT Ltd, be approved, subject to the Contractor developing a satisfactory Health & Safety Plan and completion of contract documentation.

David Green
Director of Technical Services

This report was prepared by Paul Easton who can be contacted on 606 2336.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 27TH NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the key elements of the Council's first Network Management Plan and seeks endorsement of the principles set out in the document. The Plan is intended to set out the processes that the Council employs to meet the Council's duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 1.2 Whilst there is no statutory requirement to develop a Network Management Plan, it is considered that having such a plan will enable the authority to ensure it is actively working to make the most efficient use of its existing road network to support economic and community development across the borough. It will also fully demonstrate to the Government Office North West how the Council is complying with its duty through an assessment of current processes and the identification of performance targets and areas for improvement. The plan documents existing procedures and working practices and sets out action plans and improvement areas to enable the authority to comply with the requirements of the Traffic Management Act and the associated Network Management Duty. A copy of the proposed Wirral Network Management Plan is attached as Appendix 1.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Traffic Management Act 2004 introduced a Network Management Duty on local traffic authorities, which came into effect in January 2005. Section 16 of the Act sets out the requirement of the new duty as follows;
 - (1) *"It is the duty of a local traffic authority to manage their road network with a view to achieving, so far as is reasonably practicable having regard to their other obligations, policies and objectives, the following objectives: -*
 - (a) *Securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network; and*
 - (b) *Facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority."*
- 2.2 Members should be aware that the Council already has systems in place to control the impact of traffic and road works on the efficient operation of the highway network and is largely successful in that respect. Examples would include the establishment of a traffic sensitive route network, annual processing of 50,000 notices relating to public utility and road works in the Borough and various co-ordination meetings to mitigate the impact of these works.
- 2.3 Guidance on the Network Management Duty, published by the Department for Transport, makes it clear that the duty applies to the whole authority and requires consideration of anything that affects the coordination or regulation of the flow of traffic, not just the activities of the highways department and third parties. For example, if an authority allows a contract for refuse collection on a route in rush hour, it would be expected to demonstrate that due regard had been given to the duty beforehand.

- 2.4 Monitoring the implementation of the Duty in local traffic authorities will be through the Local Transport Plan Progress Report structures, therefore in keeping with national best practice the five Merseyside district authorities agreed to develop Network Management Plans in two parts. Part A is a common strategic section for Merseyside and Part B is a local plan for each authority but based on a common layout.
- 2.5 Part A principally draws together the policies and strategies relevant to the Network Management Duty from the Local Transport Plan previously approved by the Council. Consequently it has not been reproduced with the report but is available from the Network Traffic Management section and can be viewed in the electronic Council Library.
- 2.6 The draft Wirral Network Management Plan Part B document covers the following key elements:
- ***Introduction and Equality of Travel Opportunities***

This section of the Plan outlines the background to the Traffic Management Act and Network Management Duty. It also summarises the consideration and needs of all road users.
 - ***Corporate and Departmental Objectives, Local Transport Plan and Key Stakeholders***

In this section, the document outlines the joint working arrangements that have been developed both at a regional, sub-regional and local level and sets out the Council's statutory responsibilities, highway assets and departmental outcomes framework. Detail is also provided on the LTP's key priorities.
 - ***Performing the Network Management Duty; Management and Co-ordination, Monitoring and Control, Communication and Marketing and Technology***

This section of the Plan outlines co-ordination and planning of all streetworks activities and summarises the co-ordination groups, which have been established to ensure that internal and external works are fully co-ordinated across the Borough. It also summarises the Travelwise campaign including details on travel plans and provision of travel information. Details are also provided on technology used to comply with the Network Management Duty including our traffic signal control centre and extensive CCTV coverage.
 - ***Appendices – key contacts, network management hierarchy, height and weight restrictions etc.***

The appendices set out, amongst other things, the key contacts of the Councils and its Partners with regard to the planning and co-ordination of streetworks associated with the Duty and the wider implications of the Traffic Management Act.
- 2.7 Progress against targets and improvement actions set out in these sections will be closely monitored to ensure that they contribute to improved network management and that they are effective in helping the Authority to meet its obligations under the Network Management Duty.
- 2.8 Under the new national performance framework, a performance indicator (NI 167) has been developed to directly measure how well authorities are performing in meeting their network management duties. Our performance on this indicator, which

measures the average journey time per mile during the morning peak, will be regularly updated and reported through the LTP progress reports to the Council's Streetscene and Transport Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2.9 The authority must be able to demonstrate and provide evidence to the Secretary of State for Transport, that it has made suitable arrangements and has implemented procedures and measures to comply with the requirements of the Network Management Duty. If the Secretary of State is not satisfied that the authority is performing satisfactorily, he may serve an intervention notice on the authority, generally to request additional information. He may also serve an intervention order to make provision for the appointment of a traffic director to oversee and direct the approach of the authority to comply with the duty at the authority's expense.

2.10 It is recognised that the Wirral Network Management Plan is a working document and contains a comprehensive action plan to direct future actions and provides a framework for monitoring progress. Annual reports will be submitted to Cabinet Member on progress with the action plan.

3.0 FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The cost of the Plan's development process will be met from existing resources and budgets. However, the resource implications and further enhancements required to promote the Network Management Duty will need to be revisited when further parts of the Act are endorsed in the future.

4.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 When considering effective network management the definition of traffic includes all types of vehicles as well as all other road users such as pedestrians and cyclists, and includes vulnerable users such as the elderly and disabled.

5.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no specific Community Safety implications arising from this report.

6.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The effective management of the highway network and the reduction of congestion will reduce the environmental impact of traffic and reduce pollution.

7.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no specific Planning Implications arising from this report.

8.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

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

9.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific Anti-Poverty implications arising from this report.

10.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific Social Inclusion implications arising from this report.

11.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 This report has implications throughout the Borough.

12.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

12.1 The Traffic Management Act 2004 document has been used in preparing this report.

13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That

- (1) the report be noted and the authority's approach to the Network Management Duty including the Draft Wirral Network Management Plan be endorsed; and
- (2) the Director of Technical Services be authorised to finalise the Wirral Network Management Plan in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transport Services.

DAVID GREEN, DIRECTOR
TECHNICAL SERVICES

WIRRAL NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN

**NOVEMBER 2008
VERSION 1**

**David Green, Director of Technical Services,
Wirral Council**

NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN**Preamble – Secretary of State’s Intervention Criteria****1.0 Equality of Travel Opportunities**

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- 5.5 A and B roads
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- 5.11 Main pedestrian areas
- 5.12 Public Rights of Way
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- 5.17 Abnormal Loads
- 5.18 Co-ordination of the Highway Network
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- 5.20 Management of incidents
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- 5.22 The Council's Emergency Plan
- 5.23 Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)
- 5.24 Contractors Working Group
- 5.25 Routine Coordination of Highway and Streetworks Activities
- 5.26 Statutory Undertakers Co-ordination meetings
- 5.27 HAUC meetings
- 5.28 Permit Scheme
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- 5.31 Insurance Claims
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6.0 Monitoring and Control of the Highway

- 6.1 Managing the highway network
- 6.2 Traffic signals
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- 6.4 CCTV
- 6.5 TTRO's

7.0 Engineering Work on the Highway

- 7.1 Resources
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- 8.1 Merseyside Police
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- 9.1 Travelwise
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- 9.8 School Travel Plans
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- 10.1 Urban Traffic Control Unit (UTC)
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- 10.3 VMS
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- 10.5 Vehicle Activated Signs
- 10.6 COMET
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- 10.8 Select Vehicle Detection
- 10.9 Bus/Ambulance Priority
- 10.10 Journey Time Monitoring
- 10.11 Camera Enforcement
- 10.12 Sharing of Information
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11.0 The Future

- 11.1 Regeneration
- 11.2 Transport Innovation Fund (TIF)
- 11.3 Road User Charging
- 11.4 Monitoring and Managing Functions

12.0 Action Plan

13.0 Traffic Managers Contact Details

14.0 Merseyside Traffic Managers' Group Terms of Reference

15.0 Appendices

Appendix A – Road Hierarchy Plan

Appendix B – Criteria for Designation as a Traffic Sensitive Road

Appendix C – Emergency Services Priority Routes Plan

Appendix D – Height and Weight Restrictions

16.0 Glossary

PREAMBLE

SECRETARY OF STATE'S INTERVENTION CRITERIA

The Secretary of State for Transport made the Traffic Management Guidance on Intervention Criteria (England) Order 2007 laying out the manner in which intervention will be carried out if a local traffic authority fails to adequately perform their duties under Sections 16 and 17 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA).

Consequences of an intervention could lead to the installation of a Department for Transport (DfT) appointed Traffic Manager, and the subsequent programme of remedial works and costs being charged to the local traffic authority.

The guidance also establishes the preliminary use of Section 19 powers within the context of enforcement. Under this section, the Secretary of State may direct an authority to provide information relating to any aspect of the performance of their network management duties. An authority could take advantage of this by working with the Secretary of State to raise their standards. This would provide an opportunity for remedying any potential issues without the need for further formal intervention.

The guidance sets out examples of questions that the Secretary of State may ask to determine an authority's level of performance, when assessing the evidence available. These give authority's level of performance, when assessing the evidence available. These give authorities a clear understanding of the general questions that they should be asking themselves in determining whether they are performing their network management duties properly.

The Act itself, which is seen as a spur for the better management of the road network, provides a built-in opportunity for engagement and recovery, by enabling a local traffic authority to work together with the Secretary of State at an early stage with the aim of making improvements. Making an intervention order to appoint a traffic director will be a situation reached only after serious efforts have been made to raise the standard of an authority that may not be properly managing its network.

The guidance highlights common features of the Network Management Duty Guidance (published by the Department for Transport in November 2004), for all of which a local traffic authority must have regard. It also re-states the network management duties and discusses ways in which an authority may present evidence of performance when reporting to the Secretary of State.

The guidance shows when and how the Secretary of State would reach decision points in relation to enforcement. This enables local traffic authorities to see if they are at risk of intervention and to take action accordingly. It will also act as a reference that authorities can use over time to improve their performance in managing their road network.

It is paramount that Wirral Council is not subject to such measures and the Technical Services Department will do everything within its powers to fully perform the duties as mandated under the Act.

1.0 EQUALITY OF TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

1.1 Introduction

The important consideration for our transport strategy is first and foremost about ensuring that the safe and efficient movement of people and goods assists regeneration and allows all members of the community the same opportunity to travel.

Demand for movement is rising inexorably. This means we have to manage the demand for movement making best use of our resources and develop innovative measures to provide solutions. Our approach to the Network Management duty, the transport SPD and smart choices – are critical elements of our approach.

Wirral recognises that in ensuring the efficient operation of the network, in order to protect the environment and health of the community, we shall wherever possible seek to reduce the need to travel. Proposals for a Transport Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) set out later are a major part of that strategy.

Underpinning Wirral's approach is the belief that the transport system has to be accessible to everyone. It is important to remember that accessibility is not just about physical barriers that people face, but also about ensuring everyone can use the highway and transport networks. We need to find new ways to engage and open up services for people who suffer from social exclusion.

To ensure that all members of society are included and that everyone has equal access to transport resources, it is vital to recognise that transport user needs are diverse. This embraces:

- Race
- Gender
- Age
- Faith
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Social inclusion

The Disability Discrimination and Race Relations Act have changed so public authorities have to ensure that they are proactive in ensuring services and employees are non-discriminatory and develop a diverse approach. This legal requirement now applies to Age since 2006 and Gender from 2007.

There are specific priorities relating to equalities communities (i.e. those with disabilities, BME groups, Faith groups, Women (gender), Young people, Older people and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities (LGBT) which are under consideration.

Transport has a significant impact on service delivery in the public sector. The failure of the transport system impacts on public service; for example lack of transport to access health opportunities costs the health sector money when people fail to attend appointments. There are also some important differences within travel patterns of men and women that pose a range of issues to be addressed.

1.2 Meeting the Needs of Disabled People

The definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) is fairly complex, but our plan assumes a person is disabled for the purposes of the Act if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Examples of normal day-to-day activities will include mobility; manual dexterity and physical co-ordination; continence, speech, hearing or eyesight; memory for ability to concentrate, learn or understand.

To address these issues, we will build on the principles of Universal Accessibility which Merseytravel have already adopted.

- Provide:** equitable use and accessibility for everyone irrespective of ability.
- Allocate:** appropriate space for people, regardless of body size, posture and mobility.
- Ensure:** ease of use, comprehension and understanding, regardless of physical or cognitive abilities.
- Require:** minimal physical strength, stress and economy of effort.
- Achieve:** comfortable and healthy conditions and minimise hazards.

The growing disabled and older populations will have social as well as economic problems if those responsible for transport systems and built environments do not recognise and address the need for more inclusive environments. Mobility and transport are vital to achieving and sustaining self-sufficiency and independence into old age.

Approximately 25,000 of Wirral's 312,000 population are in receipt of a blue badge.

The DDA of 2005 Part 1 (iii) puts an onus on local authorities to view the pedestrian environment as a "service provision" and therefore places greater emphasis on the wider environment. In adopting the principles of accessibility, usability and functionality in relation to meeting the needs of the disabled, Wirral recognises that this means paying particular attention to the "seamless" journey from accessible services to destination. The pedestrian environment and public transport are clearly critical.

These ideas are being developed further through our Merseyside Pedestrian Strategy which was adopted in June 2008.

We are building on initial assessments into the needs of our diverse community. We will build on the work of the DfT who are currently reviewing their gender checklist which acts as an aide-memoir to any transport project and this will act as a guide to our improvement programme.

1.3 Equality and Diversity Group

The Technical Services Equality and Diversity Group (TS EDG) aims to promote equality in all its Technical Services operations, to celebrate the diversity of its staff and the service users and to play a part in the prevention of unlawful discrimination.

The group:

- Is led by the Assistant Director of Support & Information Services who also sits on the Corporate Equalities and Inclusion Group (CEIG).
- Includes representation from all TS Divisions.
- Meets regularly through the year, on average, every six weeks.
- Supports the Council's approach and progress with respect to the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG) monitored through BVPI 2a *The level of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the authority conforms*.
- Supports progress against BVPI 2b *The duty to promote race equality* and therefore the Race Equality Scheme (RES).
- Supports the Gender Equality Scheme (GES) and Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and any other such scheme the Council implements.
- Supports the Council's Social Inclusion Strategy.

Information from the Corporate Equalities and Inclusion Group (CEIG) will be cascaded to the TS EDG representatives. Where appropriate, outcomes from discussions at the TS EDG will be used to inform the CEIG.

1.4 Measures to assist

Over the range of services discharged by the Technical Services Department, the following is a prioritised (not exhaustive) list of functions to assist on equality and diversity. Of particular note are those with direct relevance to the highway and traffic.

- Dropped crossings
- Provision of parking bays
- Event/Support planning
- Residents parking permits
- Forward Planning and Policy/Travelwise
 - accessibility planning/GIS mapping
 - pedestrian audits
 - cycle audits
 - travel training
- Driveway Access (Access Protection)
- Road Safety (including traffic calming)
- Road signs
- Street lighting
- Traffic signals

It is envisaged that under the action planning of these service areas, timely procedures will be put in place to meet the aspirations of the prevention of unlawful discrimination.

2.0 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

2.1 Aims and Objectives of the Plan

The aim of the Plan is to provide a joined up transport network that helps Merseyside grow and be a better place to live. The challenge is to achieve the designed growth in an environmental sustainable sustainable way with equal opportunity for all.

The clear objectives which Wirral and its partner authorities and Merseytravel has are well documented in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and represent the rationale for improvement up to 2011.

The five key objectives are:

- Provide appropriate infrastructure for regeneration
- Ensure accessibility for all
- Manage demand through effective management strategies and awareness programmes
- Promote healthier communities
- Protect and enhance the environment
- There is also an overarching objective to make best use of existing resources

Not one strategy or policy in respect of the management of traffic and people on the Transportation Networks can be read in isolation of many others. The Local Transport Plan is one such document, however, and in the context of Network Management is worthy of mention and in part summarising so as to be able to address key aims under the establishment of four shared priorities, these being:-

- Accessibility
- Road Safety
- Air Quality
- Congestion
- Overarching priority of quality of life

The four shared priorities inextricably link into the TMA and Network Management duty and the priorities set within the context of the LTP are those which the foundation of the TMA objectives are built upon and delivered over the life of LTP2.

Key Merseyside targets which Wirral has adopted as part of the Merseyside Local Transport Plan are:

Accessibility – to jobs and opportunities

- Access to jobs
- Access to education

Road Safety

- Reducing the total number of people Killed or Seriously Injured
- Reducing the number of children Killed or Seriously Injured
- Road and footway condition

Reducing Air Pollutants

- Estimated transport related emissions of CO, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter.

Managing Traffic Growth

- Cycling usage
- Person Delay Indicator
- Mode share to school
- Mode share indicators
- % New developments with SPD

The aim is to stitch together the various elements of the transport network and closely integrating the package to the wider social, economic and environmental agenda.

As a partner in the Merseyside LTP, Wirral Council will contribute to:

- Restricting increases in Merseyside's traffic levels to 9.2%
- An increase in cycling of 10%
- Restrict increases in off-peak HGV journey times to a third of the increase of the overall increase in traffic volume
- Accessibility of pedestrian crossings BVPI Target per Authority – local authorities will have a minimum of 80% fully accessible.
- Road works coverage and duration.
- Work closely with Merseytravel to increase bus patronage and assist in further development of Park and Ride and promote rail travel.

Whilst Wirral has a specific requirement to address the four shared priority areas, it is important that the actions taken in addressing those priorities are seen within the overall context of our consistent approach to developing an efficient and integrated transport network, where each mode contributes to the effectiveness of the network.

Over the coming years and within the lifetime of the current LTP (2006 to 2011) it is also intended that programmes will be developed to:

- Implement the integrated corridor management approach to the freight and public transport networks.
- Integrate this approach with agreed DfT congestion monitoring.
- Review the network of traffic sensitive streets, so they remain appropriate for current condition.
- Review the Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI 100) that measures the number of days temporary traffic controls or road closures that are in place on traffic sensitive streets, to ensure there is consistency amongst the Merseyside partners in the way it is being measured and to see whether it is feasible to expand the monitoring of these controls and closures to include statutory undertakers works.
- Examine the potential for the establishment of a central recording point for all works on the highway network.
- Agree additional indicators that monitor the effectiveness of the highway – these could incorporate reduced delays at critical junctions or road works finished ahead of schedule, for example.
- Implement the provision of contingency plans for road traffic accidents on all high speed roads and/or the strategic highway network, incorporating emergency plans (access and egress points, traffic management proposals etc) and the provision of permanent diversion signs and storage cabinets for traffic management signs at key locations.
- Take forward the UTMC Business Plan.
- Review speed limits on category A and B roads by 2011.
- Review Traffic Regulation Orders for No Waiting.
- Deliver on a Roadsafe Action Plan.

Wirral recognises that setting targets for performance is a central component of good planning. A well framed target that measures the achievement of the plan's objectives is a vital tool in ensuring real delivery and real improvements to the region. Much emphasis has been given to the importance of making targets well balanced.

2.2 ACCESSIBILITY

2.2.1 Strategy

Wirral's vision along with our fellow Merseyside Region constituent local authorities and partnered with Merseytravel and Merseyside Police is to develop:

“a fully integrated safe transport network for Merseyside, which supports economic and social regeneration and ensures good access for all, and which is operated to the highest standards to protect the environment and ensure quality of life”.

Our strategy envisages the need to manage for growth in demand for travel and ensure the efficient movement of people and goods.

It also envisages amongst other matters:-

- (i) Making best use of our existing assets to ensure continuing improvement to the capacity and efficiency of the transport network based on the best means of delivering the efficient movement of people and goods.
- (ii) Continuously improving the links between transport and land use and locational choice in ways that support the efficient movement of people and goods.
- (iii) Creating a well-connected region in terms of our links to neighbouring areas and beyond and within the Merseyside and wide city region. (This may involve consideration of wider joint planning for future LTPs).
- (iv) Ensuring **equality of travel opportunity for all** by setting out in the Access Plan a programme of action to ensure all members of the community have equal access to opportunities and services.
- (v) Improving and enhancing a single integrated public transport network to make it affordable and accessible to all, and enhancing capacity to support connectivity and alternatives to private car use.
- (vi) Managing demand for travel by ensuring that the transport network operates efficiently and minimises the impact on the environment, contributes to addressing climate change, and does not impact on people's health.
- (vii) Creating a safe and secure travel environment by continuously reducing the level of accidents on the highway network and ensure personal security across all modes.
- (viii) Providing the community with “informed choices” through continuous communication about travel options that are available and the need for change to be understood.

Wirral recognises the problems to the quality of life, health and well-being to the community that increasing traffic levels and congestion can bring. Particular measures will have to be taken to ensure that our most disadvantaged communities are not further affected by the transport impacts of this economic growth. Many of these communities are most vulnerable to increases in traffic passing through their neighbourhoods, bringing with it health concerns relating to road accidents, air quality and noise.

Many of the areas will also suffer the effects of high levels of worklessness and unemployment. Changing work patterns may make it harder for them to access jobs and opportunities, and enjoy the fruits of economic renaissance across the region.

We are committed within this Plan to “equality of travel opportunity” and to manage and mitigate issues that affect our most disadvantaged communities.

Specifically under the TMA and NMD, Wirral has been active in the following areas:

- Improving accessibility through planning, delivering and managing the local public transport, highways, cycle, footway and rights of way networks.

- Integrating and mainstreaming accessibility considerations into their wider transport strategies, policies and programmes.
- Integrating and mainstreaming accessibility objectives across the planning and delivery of the authority's wider policy areas and within the corporate centre.
- Influencing partners' policy and scheme delivery so that accessibility considerations are taken into account.
- Ensuring public transport provision is matched to the agreed Access Strategy and Plan.
- Co-ordinating the development of the Accessibility Strategy; and
- Developing the role of the partnership working with key stakeholders.

Work so far has led to the establishment of Merseyside Strategic Accessibility Partnerships (SAPs) around the themes of health, employment and education. In addition to this, further partnerships at a local level have been established with Housing Market Renewal teams and good leads in each of the Wirral Primary Care Trusts and Wirral Hospital Trust across Merseyside. Each of these Partnerships include stakeholders with both policy development and delivery roles.

Wirral has developed a Local Area Access Plan, setting out actions to meet identified accessibility problems and this is reviewed on an annual basis.

Officers are keen to tap into the various strategies and funding schemes not necessarily usually associated with their particular work area. The table below identifies key issues from Wirral's local Accessibility Audit and notably employment, education and health action planning is fundamental in eradicating the key accessibility issues.

2.22 Key Accessibility Issues

Priority Groups and Areas	Key Accessibility Issues	Transport Issues	Links to Strategic Stakeholder Priorities
Pathways areas of: Birkenhead Leasowe Woodchurch Moreton Beechwood Noctorum Seacombe Poulton Egremont Tranmere Rock Ferry Bebington/ Bromborough Mill Park	Poor access to employment opportunities on Wirral International Business Park Poor cross boundary linkages to Deeside Industrial Park, Chester Business Park and Cheshire Oaks Poor accessibility to post 16 education at Wirral Met 12 Quays site Poor links from many part of Wirral to major hospital at Arrowe Park Lack of evening services	Access to Chester Business Park, Broughton and Deeside for employment Access to health and education/training services Night buses Bus service penetration of housing estates Good links to HMRI areas And Park and Ride Schemes	Improved access to key employment sites – Wirral and cross boundary – Employment Action Plan Improved access to post 16 education for excluded young people – Education Action Plan Reducing health inequalities by improving access to healthcare – Health Action Plan Improved accessibility for staff and patients at health sites – Health Action Plan

In liaison with the Housing Market Renewal Initiative team, an assessment of the HMRI intervention areas has shown that some communities are not well served by public transport, particularly in parts of the Wirral, where the North-South link to employment opportunities in Deeside and North East Wirral are limited.

The ability to access and understand information is crucial in overcoming transport barriers and broadening travel horizons for excluded people. The establishment of a team of Neighbourhood Travel Teams (NTTs) has been well received in Wirral. Working with partners and NTCs across Merseyside as part of an expanded Workwise programme across the area. They are responsible for:

- Maximising the transport and travel opportunities of residents.
- Identifying and developing low cost travel solutions for local community needs.
- Providing a full range of travel information and personal travel advice (personal journey planning).
- Liaising with Merseytravel, local authorities, key agencies and transport operators (including community/voluntary transport organisations) with regard to transport improvements/initiatives in each area.
- Liaising with Travel Training Co-ordinator to promote and support independent travel.

2.3 ROAD SAFETY

2.31 Key Aims

The safe and expeditious movement of people and traffic is as has been previously stated as the key principle of the TMA.

In Wirral, we intend to make the roads safer for everyone and progressively reduce the level of accidents on the highway.

In 2007, the Police recorded over 1129 people injured on the roads of Wirral. We know that the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities suffer the most.

Our aim is to provide a safe and efficient highway network for all users, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable users, and our new priorities for action that have been identified.

We will measure our performance by:

- Over the next three years reduce by 40% the total numbers killed and seriously injured.
- Reduce by 50% the total numbers of children killed or seriously injured.
- Not increase the number of people suffering minor injuries through road crashes.

2.32 Local Authority Agreement

From 2008/09 Local Area Agreements will feature 'up to 35' improvement targets drawn from a rationalised national indicator set.

Of these 35, Wirral has included additional stretched targets for two key areas of casualty reduction within its Local Area Agreement., which reflect the high degree of priority and concern over road safety issues. These are:

Percentage reduction in the total number of people killed or seriously injured:

Three year rolling averages				
	Baseline (05/06/07)	2006 to 2008	2007 to 2009	2008 to 2010
KSI Casualties	174	154	138	123
%age change	~	11.3	10.4	11.1

Percentage reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured

Three year rolling averages				
	Baseline (05/06/07)	2006 to 2008	2007 to 2009	2008 to 2010
KSI Casualties	31	26	22	22
%age change	~	16.3	15.6	6.2

2.33 Strategy

The number of children killed or seriously injured on Wirral's roads is successfully responding to our programmes and is down in line with our target. However, the overall number of people killed or seriously injured, although down is not reducing in line with our target. The downward trend in child casualties is being offset by rises in some groups of adult casualties.

The Road Safety Strategy for Merseyside has two main themes: first, it seeks to sustain success in reducing child casualties which are particularly numerous in the more deprived areas; second, it proposes additional programmes to combat newer and rising threats to adults, where younger adults are found to be especially at risk. The partnership between the highway authorities in Merseyside and the Police is strong, as is their joint commitment to tackling this problem. We believe that the programmes now proposed and summarised briefly below will bring the partners back on target by 2010.

Records, Analysis, Co-ordination, Consultation and Monitoring. We will undertake:

- Data Collection, analysis, strategy formulation and co-ordination with partners.
- Consultation with community on strategies and programmes.
- Monitoring of results of individual initiatives and programmes. Annual refresh of Casualty Report and Road Safety Strategy.

Education Training and Publicity for Children. We will continue with the following programme:

- Pre-Schools information distributed by Health Visitors as road safety advice for new parents; advice in fitting and checking child car seats and seat belts. Activities for Nursery Groups.
- Reception starting School Pack – advice for Parents.
- Year2:; Assessment of children's pedestrian skill-level. "I can keep myself Safe" – Books for children with Teachers notes and CDROM.
- Year 4: Pedestrian skills and awareness programme in schools
- Years 5 and 6: Cycle Training; speed and risk awareness on highway.
- Years 7 and 8: Pedestrian skills and in car safety; Education curriculum resource (Sophies Journey)
- Years 9 and 10: Teenage pedestrian issues; Pre-driver Training and 4Wheel-Ed multi-agency programme

Other Education Training and Publicity. We will continue to work with:

- Taxi Drivers, Ice Cream Vendors, Nursery Nurses, Childminders, Parent/Carers, Offenders, Road Safety Committees, Awareness raising, Summer and Winter anti-Drink Drive, Road Safety at Work (HSE/DfT), BikeSafe for safety of motor cyclists.

Enforcement. We will develop:

- Intelligence-led Policing to reduce excessive speed. (NIM compliant).
- Enhanced working arrangements with the Police.
- Campaigns targeted at drink driving, failing to use seat belts, mobile phone usage while driving, failing to comply with traffic lights, disqualified or uninsured Drivers.
- The Road Safety Camera Partnership.

Engineering. We will undertake:

- Annual evaluation for Local Safety Schemes at single and mass action sites.
- Area and Route based analysis leading to co-ordinated speed reduction and other safety measures through Urban Safety Management and a variety of Local Safety scheme initiatives.
- Walking and Cycling Schemes.
- Comprehensive Safety Audit of all Highway schemes.
- Consultation on all highway changes.

Transport and Travel Planning. We will ensure:

- Assessment of all aspects of the LTP Strategy and Implementation for Road Safety Implications.

Develop working arrangements with TravelWise to develop:

- Safety opportunities during School and Workplace Travel planning.
- Safety Audit of Routes to school.
- Full involvement with Accessibility Planning.

The above interventions are described in more detail in the Merseyside Road Safe Action Plan which will form the basis of individual programmes of action for the partner authorities and other bodies involved.

2.34 Merseyside Police

The partnership between the highway authorities in Merseyside and the Police is strong. The Local Strategy and Policing Plan for Merseyside acknowledges the important part that roads policing has to play in reaching the Government's target to reduce road traffic casualties. It is keen to achieve a cultural change in the way it deals with road traffic law and safety issues, and has increased the level of resources available for road safety policing with an increase in the Traffic road safety by 20%.

Consistent with the views of the Government and the Association of Chief Police Officers and backed up by the Road Safety Bill, it clearly sets a commitment to deal with all forms of illegal and anti-social use of the roads, including drink-driving, speeding, dangerous or careless driving and driving-behaviour threatening to road users including pedestrians and other drivers.

The Road Safety Strategy has identified those areas of casualty reduction where enforcement is probably the most effective and appropriate option if we are to reach our targets. This particularly applies to the increase in casualties that have been noted among younger drivers

Joint working including sharing of technical expertise between the Police and Local Authorities has created profiles, describing the times and areas where this can be most effectively applied. The Police have developed this assessment according to the National Intelligence Model (NIM) using the National Roads Policing Framework. In identifying the specific areas where action is required, the NIM interplays between the Force-wide level 2 Assessment and the Level 1 Assessment for each Basic Command Unit (BCU). BCUs are contiguous with the Local Authority Boundaries. The Police have set themselves targets for casualty reduction which match our targets, and have expressed these at BCU level.

As well as casualty reduction, the Road Policing Strategy addresses several key objectives. For example, Merseyside Police are equipped with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology, which is being used as part of their strategy to deny the use of roads to criminals. In practice, many of the area requiring greatest attention are also found to have the highest casualty rates, so enforcement here is effective on both fronts. There is also a measure of reassurance provided by the Police presence, which meets yet another objective of the strategy.

The need for speed reduction has emerged from analysis of the road casualties as a common theme running through many strands of our safety strategy for Merseyside and hence in the programmes of intervention that have been developed by the Highway Authorities, the Police and our other partners.

Partners are committed to undertaking a complete review of speed limits on the major roads across Merseyside. This will be consistent with the road and road user hierarchy set out elsewhere in the LTP and will take into account the objectives of the five Traffic Managers and the Police, and the history of road casualties on the network. This area of work will be complete by 2011.

In addition to the year round attention to speed reduction; there is also a highly visible police presence on the roads, with specific campaigns to target:

- Drink driving
- Failing to use seat belts
- Mobile phone usage while driving
- Failing to comply with traffic lights
- Disqualified or uninsured drivers

Wirral has pursued strategies in the way we have prioritised speed reduction on the residential and other minor roads, guided by the elected members and residents of those areas.

Casualty reductions of around 65% are commonplace from such schemes. However, there is also great amenity value from lower traffic speeds in residential areas, which offer significant benefits to vulnerable users and form part of the cycling and walking strategies in their locality.

Any changes made to the highway system can affect the levels of risk. The now familiar practice of Safety Audit attempts to avoid the unwitting introduction of hazards in all new designs that vary the functionality or appearance of the highway. Equally, there is a potential safety bonus from any improvement where there has been a history of casualties.

The Merseyside Road Safety Partnership is engaging with staff in the other programme areas to ensure that added value by the use of collision data is being taken, and also to attempt to quantify the extent of the safety benefit. The Strat-e-gis system being developed will be of assistance in this area.

2.35 Highways Agency

The programmes of the Highways Agency are playing an important role in our strategy on the strategic highway network. Junction improvements at the M53 interchanges are designed to further reduce casualties at the sites which have been significant trouble spots in recent years. Their co-operation via the Memorandum of Understanding with Merseyside Authorities will minimise risk at congested locations. Their partnership with highway authorities via the National Traffic Control Centre is welcomed as a valuable method of highway management which will assist the traffic managers of Merseyside in their task.

2.4 AIR QUALITY

The long-term impacts of Climate Change have to be addressed through initiatives at a local level as set out in this Plan. The Government has highlighted valid concerns regarding increasing CO2 levels together with other pollutants that affect our climate. At a local level, these issues are recognised through the declaration of Air Quality Management Areas.

Air quality is known to impact on the health of the community, and this is particularly noticeable in deprived areas. People living within areas of social deprivation are more than twice as likely to die from respiratory disease than the average for England. These areas may also be further disadvantaged by poor accessibility to health, education, fresh food and employment and also subject to poor road safety records. Given the high mortality ratios from respiratory disease, improving air quality may well serve to reduce health inequalities. Traffic growth must be managed and controlled to improve urban air quality and reflect positively on the other shared priorities and quality of life issues.

For Wirral no significant air quality problems have been identified in Emission Reviews and Assessments to date and therefore a detailed plan is not currently needed. There is, however, a need for on-going monitoring.

Generally, however, officers are mindful of the air quality agenda and are embracing initiatives that help promote sustainability. Examples include:

- Contracts for quality improvements to bus services
- More Park & Ride schemes
- Better signage
- Employers to offer incentives not to use the car
- More cycle lanes and cycle parking
- Low emission buses
- Traffic lights that give priority to buses
- Car free residential developments and workplaces

2.4 CONGESTION

2.41 The Indicators

Government concerns about congestion, particularly in urban areas, has resulted in an indicator being set by the Department for Transport (DfT) which is to be measured in 10 major urban areas in England.

Merseyside is one of these areas and a composite target has been determined for the sub-region that informs the national congestion target.

The period over which the indicator is measured is the morning peak period (defined as 07:00 – 10:00).

The Merseyside congestion target is comprised of both journey time and person throughput (i.e. flows) that reflects that some traffic growth is expected as part of the increase in economic activity.

There are eleven target routes in Merseyside and the change in journey time is measured per person per mile. The target is reported to Ministers as the percentage change in journey time. Of the eleven routes along which this person delay indicator is monitored, only one is in Wirral, this being the A552 Woodchurch Road/Singleton Avenue/Borough Road (towards the Queensway Tunnel from M53 junction 3).

Selection of the eleven Merseyside routes was done in accordance with DfT Guidelines and to represent various urban conditions represented in the area.

Notwithstanding the identification of this one route, Wirral is not complacent, and we look to review our procedures, particularly project management, to ensure that the issues of congestion and delay across the Borough are considered during the planning stages of projects, including traffic regulation orders, as well as at the construction stage. Congestion will then be one of the criteria to consider when deciding whether a project is to be brought forward to the implementation stage. Of course, this will be balanced against other considerations, such as safety.

Under the new national performance framework, a performance indicator (NI 167) has been developed to directly measure how well authorities are performing in meeting their network management duties. Our performance on this indicator, which measures the average journey time per mile during the morning peak, will be regularly updated and reported through the LTP progress reports to the Council's Streetscene and Transport Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2.42 Congestion Monitoring Target

The key aim of LTP2 in relation to congestion is:-

To provide a safe and efficient transport network that supports regeneration and seeks to minimise delay and disruption

Performance against this aim will be measured by various targets, including:

- Restricting traffic growth across Merseyside to 9.2%
- Increasing non-car journeys to school
- Increasing the numbers of people using Park & Ride by 35% by 2010/11
- Increasing the numbers of people using the bus by 1% and rail by 7.9%

The identification of congestion hotspots can be a subjective matter depending on the road user. What is needed are clear criteria as to what constitutes congestion and benchmarks against which delays at any particular location can be measured. Along the Woodchurch Road/Singleton Avenue/Borough Road route, specific hotspots may be identified. Other hotspots can be identified through other traffic modelling work.

In order to aid monitoring of traffic growth across Wirral, Automatic Count Loops have incrementally been installed across the Borough over the past ten years or so. Monthly data collection has created a database to facilitate analysis of flows around Birkenhead Town Centre and at various background sites. There are approximately 35 ATC locations to date, and opportunities will be taken where appropriate to extend this source of data collection.

In terms of managing, a balanced approach is being adopted which will enable economic growth and increasing travel to be accommodated whilst, at the same time, aim to prevent congestion in the long term. These measures include:

- (a) In partnership with Merseytravel, improvements and development of the single integrated public transport network and further enhancements to Park and Ride capacity and increasing rail capacity for passengers and freight;
- (b) Increasing the use and development of Integrated Transport Systems (ITS) and Urban Traffic Control (UTC);
- (c) The effective utilisation of our Network Management Duty (NMD) to tie together the various elements of the package approach; and
- (d) Underpinning the package by a range of smarter choice measures and the utilisation of our revised communication strategy.
- (e) Automatic traffic counts assist with congestion monitoring.

The constituent Merseyside local authorities in partnership with Merseytravel have created a vision for the delivery of an Integrated Transport Strategy to address the safe and expeditious movement of people and traffic.

3.0 CORPORATE AND DEPARTMENTAL OBJECTIVES

3.1 Mission Statement

Behind any strategies and policies, it is fundamental that planned delivery is achieved through a strong and dedicated staff/resource base.

In the Technical Services Department we are demonstrating on all service fronts our pledge to our customers that we are:-

“Consulting and engaging with residents, our business and community partners, to deliver a range of efficient and high quality Technical Services, from building control and design, highways maintenance and transportation to planning matters, land charges, drainage, waste and recycling, which improve the quality of life for people in Wirral.”

3.2 Statutory Responsibilities

The Department has a wide variety of statutory responsibilities and functions and works within a complex legislative and policy framework. The main statutory responsibilities and corresponding legislation used by the Department is as follows:

Activity	Legislation
Maintain highways at public expense	Highways Act 1980 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Road Traffic Act 1988 Local Government Act 2000
Secure and facilitate the expeditious movement of traffic	Traffic Management Act 2004
Carry out work in a safe manner	Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 1994 Road Safety Code of Good Practice 1996 The Confined Spaced Regulations 1997
Allocation of postal addresses within the Borough	Public Health Act 1925 & County of Merseyside Act 1980
Powers to ensure maintenance of flow in watercourses	Land Drainage Act 1991
The safety of the public attending events at Prenton Park	Safety at Sports Grounds 1975
Enforce the Building Regulations within Wirral; deal with dangerous, ruinous and dilapidated buildings or structures and with demolitions in the interests of public safety	Building Act 1984
Powers relating to erection of scaffolding, retaining walls and dangerous land	Highways Act 1980
Enforce Planning legislation	Town & Country Planning Act 1990
Facilitate land charges operations	Local Land Charges Act 1975

In addition to the above, the Department is required to produce a number of statutory documents including the Local Transport Plan (in conjunction with other Merseyside authorities).

3.3 The Assets

In practice, these responsibilities relate to service delivery to 312,000 local people over an area of 15,560 H acres with an extensive range of Council assets as follows:

- 48km of coastline 90% of which is protected;
- 26km of sea defences;
- 300 bridges or other highway structures;
- 54,500 gullies most of which are cleaned twice each year;
- 25km of drainage channels;
- 37,600 lighting units;
- 5,350 illuminated signs;
- 30 Pay & Display car parks;
- 38 free car parks;
- 119 School Crossing Patrols serving 125 schools;
- 102 traffic-signalled junctions;
- 141 pedestrian signal crossing facilities;
- CCTV at 110 locations;
- Variable Message Systems at 19 locations;
- 122kms of A roads, 61kms of B roads, 922 kms of unclassified roads;
- 2.2 million square miles of grass in landscaped areas and highway verges;
- 11.8km of cycleway

In terms of workload, each year staff can expect to:

- Deal with 50,000+ fixed penalty notices;
- Investigate 1,000 injury collisions;
- Carry out 10,000 site inspections;
- Receive 2,200+ building regulation applications;
- Receive 2,000 planning applications;
- Handle 200 requests for disabled parking bays;
- Enforce 50 temporary road closures;
- Be called out 125 times to assess dangerous buildings; and
- Delivery approximately £20m of capital constructions works.

During the past twelve months, key achievements in a highway traffic context by the Technical Services Department include:

- Investors in People accreditation to the new standard;
- Successful Open Golf tournament in 2006 – acclaimed by national and international press, visited by over 250,000 people and specific praise for traffic management;
- 2008 Tall Ships Parade of Sail Traffic Management;
- ISO 14001 accreditation and ISO 9001:2000 registration retained and expanded;
- Awarding of bulk change street lighting contract;
- Procurement of a new Environmental Streetscene Services Contract – a refuse, recycling and street cleansing service;
- Income generated from inspection of Utility Company reinstatements and S.74 fines;
- Achieving BV 199 Streetscene and Environmental Cleanliness stretch targets;
- Introduction of an Assessment programme for Council fleet vehicle drivers;
- Completion of many Capital Programme projects significantly affecting the built environment and the highway network within the Wirral;
- Setting up the Nottingham Declaration Working Group and leading the development of the Council's Climate Change Strategy with staff and Members;
- Submission of second LTP to DfT that sets out our transport strategy up to 2010/11;
- Piloting of a Green Courier scheme to provide a more sustainable way of transporting correspondence between Council buildings;
- Acknowledged improvements in processing planning applications which led to a significant increase in the Planning Delivery Grant award.
- Tendering the HESPE Contract under the Gateway Review Process.

3.4 Council's Corporate Plan

The Department plays an important role in the delivery of most of the priority areas in the Council's Corporate Plan

3.5 Council Constitution

The Council's Constitution requires the Authority to be managed by a Cabinet comprising a Council Leader and nine Cabinet Members each with a specific portfolio.

The Highway and Traffic responsibilities are delegated to the Cabinet Member Technical Services, with the exception of the approval of Traffic Regulation Orders and the details of highway improvement schemes that are delegated to the appropriate Local Area Committee.

3.6 Vision for Wirral

- Our vision is of a more prosperous and equal Wirral, enabling all communities and people to thrive and achieve their full potential.
- We aim to build a Borough founded on a strong, vibrant economy with high levels of employment. We will give priority to providing the environment and developing the skills needed to make Wirral a place where business chooses to invest – an economy that retains and attracts our young people and provides opportunity for all to realise their full potential. We have already agreed an investment strategy to help deliver this.
- Our ambition is to end deprivation. We will work to narrow the gap in education, employment, health and housing both within and between communities. We will give priority to raising the aspirations, opportunities and quality of life of our most vulnerable, disadvantaged or excluded citizens, wherever they might live.
- We will seek to establish a shared Wirral identity, which draws together the Borough's urban, rural and coastal communities – proud of our history and heritage, confident in our future, welcoming, inclusive and open to all people. We will encourage a real pride in the borough, through high standards of cleanliness, environmental protection and public safety, creating a clean, safe and sustainable environment.
- We are committed to playing our full part in the economic, political and cultural life of the city region. We recognise our success is closely linked with that of our neighbours in Liverpool, Chester and beyond. We will work enthusiastically with them and others to ensure Wirral both contributes to and benefits from growth and development in the region. We will also develop links with regions elsewhere in the UK and abroad in order to further enhance our economic prosperity.
- As a 'can-do' council, our aim is to deliver first class services, which are affordable, sustainable and meet the needs of local people. Wherever possible we will do this through the engagement and empowerment of individuals and communities in both the design and delivery of local services, and by working together with partners in the public, private and the community/voluntary sectors.

TECHNICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT – DEPARTMENTAL OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

Corporate Objective	C1 "To create more jobs, achieve a prosperous economy and regenerate Wirral"	C2 "To create a clean, pleasant, safe and sustainable environment"					C5 "Create an Excellent Council"						
Corporate Priority <i>(Improvement Priority 2008/9 in bold)</i> <Lead Officer>	1.1 Increase investment & encourage new developments 2.8 Conserve the Borough's natural & built heritage & increase civil pride & public participation	2.1 Increase levels of recycling <M. Smith>	2.2 Reduce our carbon footprint <B. Anderson> 2.3 Create exemplary levels of street cleanliness	2.4 Reduce number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents <M. Smith>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5.2 Create a sustainable & stable budget providing value for money	n/a	5.4 Improve accountability, accessibility & openness & involve those who use our services in their design & delivery	n/a	
DEPARTMENTAL AIM	TS1 Work with partners & the private sector to promote appropriate development of the built environment & encourage more employers to the Borough while protecting our natural assets	TS2 Manage waste effectively & maximise recycling within the Borough	TS3 Improve environmental quality in our neighbourhoods with particular emphasis on developing the Authority's sustainability programme including reducing its carbon footprint	TS4 Work with partners to improve the safety & accessibility of the transport network with particular emphasis on reducing the number & severity of road accidents & access to jobs & key services for everyone	TS5 Improve the management of the Authority's highway network by introducing a new strategic contract by April 2009	TS6 Ensure the Authority's resilience in the aftermath of foreseeable emergencies & minimise the long-term effect of such emergencies	TS7 Value our staff by monitoring views & taking action to address issues raised & ensure proper engagement & consultation to facilitate the effective management of organisational change	TS8 Ensure the effective management of risk in all the Department's activities including contributing to the delivery of the Authority's Risk Management Strategy	TS9 Continue to improve the efficiency & value-for-money of our services to contribute to the Departments financial savings targets	TS10 Improve our approach to managing performance & projects to facilitate the delivery of our Departmental Aims	TS11 Improve the efficiency & quality of customer access to our services through the continued roll-out of CRM in all service areas	TS12 Improve the marketing of our services focusing on clearly defining our service standards & improving the perception of our customers	
Divisional Responsibilities (L – lead, S = support) <Lead Officer>	Development Control (L) <P. Grey> Design Consultancy (S)	Environmental Services (L) <T. Dumas>	Design Consultancy (L) <J. Sherlock> Environmental Services (L) Bldg Control Development Control (L)	Traffic & Transportation (L) <G. Bell>	Highway Maintenance (L) <M. Wilkinson> Operational Services (S)	Emergency Planning Team (L) <M. Camborne>	SMT <D. Green>	SMT <M. Camborne>	SMT <D. Green>	SMT <A. Murphy>	SMT <M. Smith>	SMT <B. Anderson>	
National Indicator (old BVPI reference) (CAA Improvement Priority in bold) (r = for reporting)	NI157 (BVPI 109a, 109b, 109c) Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for major, minor & other	NI191 (BVPI 84a) Residual house-hold waste – kg landfilled per household per year NI192 (BVPI 82a(i) & BVPI	NI185 CO ₂ reduction from LA operations NI186 Per capita reduction in CO₂ emissions in the LA area NI188 Adapting to climate	NI 47 (BVPI 99a(i) People KSI in road traffic accidents NI48 (BVPI 99b(i) Children KSI in road traffic accidents	NI168 (BVPI 223) Principal roads where maintenance should be considered NI169 (BVPI 224a) Non-principal	NI 36 (r) Protection against a terrorist attack – reducing the vulnerability of crowded places from terrorist attack NI 37							

<p>purposes only)</p>	<p>application types</p>	<p>82b(i)) Household waste recycled and composted NI193 (r) Municipal waste landfilled</p>	<p>change NI194 Air Quality – reduction in No_x & primary PM₁₀ emissions through LA's estate & operations NI195 (BVPI 199a, 199b, 199c) Improved street & environmental cleanliness – Litter, Detritus, Graffiti & fly posting NI196 (BVPI 199d) Improved street & environmental cleanliness – fly tipping</p>	<p>NI167 Congestion – average journey time per mile during morning peak NI175 Access to services & facilities by public transport, walking & cycling NI176 Working age people with access to employment by public transport (& other modes) NI 177 (r) Local bus passenger journeys originating in LA area NI 178 (r) Bus Services running on time NI198 Children travelling to school – mode of travel</p>	<p>roads where maintenance should be considered NI189 Flood & coastal erosion risk management</p>	<p>Awareness of civil protection arrangements in local area</p>						
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Fulfilment of General Requirements relating to the Network Management Duty in Wirral

Section of Act	Duty	Comments
16 (1) (a)	Securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network	This is done on a day-to-day basis as described in Chapter 5 and 6
16 (1) (b)	Facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority	This is achieved as described in Chapter 4
16 (2) (a)	(actions contributing to securing) the more efficient use of the road network	This is achieved through the Council's mode shift approach and the Council's parking enforcement practices.
16 (2) (b)	(actions contributing to securing) the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic	This is done using mode shift as described in Chapter 2 and 6.
16 (2)	The exercise of any power to regulate or co-ordinate the uses made of any road (or part of a road) in the road network	Details are given in Wirral's LTP Programme. Wirral Council will review the roads designated as traffic sensitive.
17 (1)	Arrangement (considered) appropriate for planning and carrying out the action to be taken in performing the network management duty	The management of the duty is described in Chapter 3.
17 (2)	The appointment of a person..the 'traffic manager'	This was done at an early stage Chapter 3.
17 (4)(a)	Identify things (including future occurrences) which are causing or which have the potential to cause road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic on the road network	The management of planned and unplanned events are described in Chapter 5.
17 (4)(b)	Consider any possible action that could be taken in response to (or in anticipation of) anything so identified	Same as above and day-to-day highway management.
17 (5)(a)	Determine specific policies or objectives in relation to different roads or classes of road in the road network	The Council's road classification for network management duty purposes is described in Chapter 2 and 5.
17 (5)(b)(i)	(monitor the effectiveness of) the authority's organisation and decision making processes	This is achieved through the Network Management Advisory Group.

4.0 PARTNERS IN THE DELIVERY OF THE TMA AND NETWORK MANAGEMENT DUTY

Programme Co-ordination Forum

In order to fulfil the Network Management Duty, Wirral Council work closely with a series of key partners, both within and beyond the Borough boundary. The Council's partners will include:

- All internal Wirral Council Directorates
- Merseyside Police
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Merseyside Regional Ambulance Service
- National and Regional Traffic Control Centres
- Highways Agency
- Neighbouring County Councils / Merseyside Authorities
- Merseytravel including Mersey Tunnels
- Passenger Transport Operators
- Utility Companies
- Other Undertakers, e.g. developers, etc.
- The Public

Forums have been set-up with the above including:

National Traffic Control Centre – Detailed Local Operating Agreement (DLOA) in place with Traffic Information Systems to provide reciprocal information about networks.

Highways Agency – Liaison Meetings with Highways Agency and their agents and Quarterly Co-ordination Meetings.

Neighbouring Authorities – Various cross-boundary working and regional groups, including Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee and Traffic Managers Group.

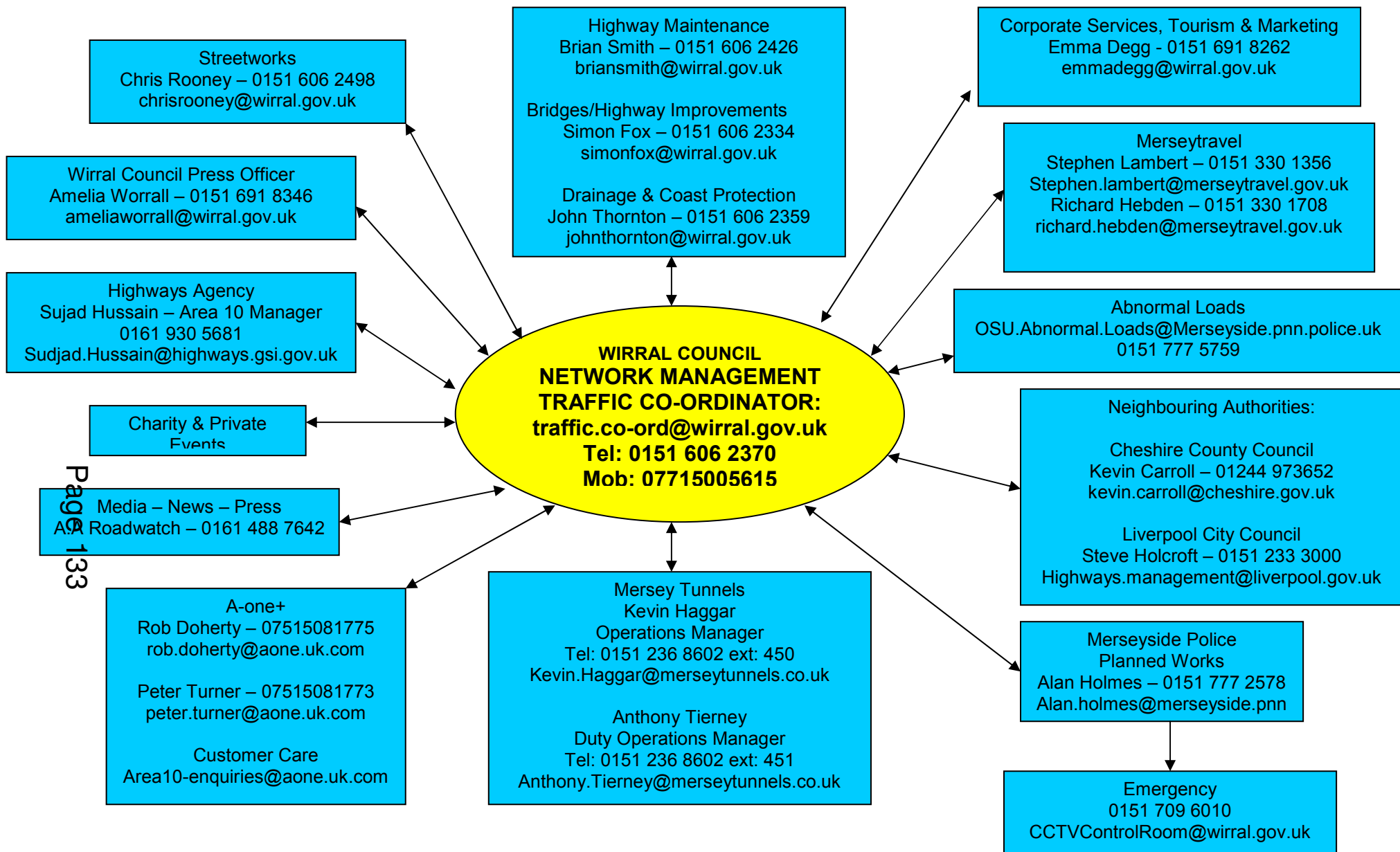
The objective of the above forums is to:

- Raise awareness to the requirements of the TMA
- Inform stakeholders of the actions Wirral Council have taken to date
- Define roles that stakeholders have to play
- Consider network management options
- To set actions to implement the TMA and NMD
- To set priorities and an implementation programme
- To set metrics against the achievement of actions
- To monitor and report on successes/failures

To promote continuous improvement in fulfilling the duties of the Act.

Wirral Council has taken a number of steps to ensure the maximum possible opportunities for coordination. These include:

- a) Quarterly coordination meetings with utilities, Wirral's Streetworks section, Traffic Co-ordinator and neighbouring authorities.
- b) Weekly Streetscene coordination meetings within the Technical Services department during which, officers from Highway Maintenance, Environment, Streetworks, Traffic Management, Street Lighting and Operational Services discuss existing and potential works that will impact the highway.
- c) Any works assessed as major on the carriageway or difficult or sensitive locations are subject to a site meeting and walks with both the Traffic Co-ordinator and Street Works Officers to ensure effective working and reduction of any disruption of the network.
- d) Regular meeting with works contractors to discuss any problems on site.



Role of Traffic Co-ordinator
 To act as a point of contact for any agency/group planning works/events on the highway
 To record details of those works/events and to identify possible conflicts/problems
 In the event of a possible conflict, to facilitate liaison between the agencies/groups involved
 To release relevant information to the press/media via press office (Amelia Worrall)

5.0 MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION OF THE HIGHWAY NETWORK

5.1 Road Hierarchy

A brief description follows of the highway network in Wirral for which the Council is responsible as local highway authority and importantly in the discharge of the TMA and NMD.

An integrated approach is being adopted which is built on the definition of a road hierarchy based on road users and mode priority. This approach will allow those designing or planning works that affect the highway to fully utilise measures to give the greatest effect for the different road users. It is anticipated that the road hierarchy will be the pivotal focus in our proposals to tackle congestion.

There are two streams to the road hierarchy; these being:

- Road User Hierarchy
- Road Mode Hierarchy

These hierarchies, along with the identified networks below, are to be used when considering any new works on the highway network, and the resulting proposals should be fully reflective of these.

The Road User Hierarchy gives a definition of priority for road users as follows:

- (a) Pedestrians;
- (b) Cyclists;
- (c) Public transport passengers; and
- (d) Other motorised vehicle users.

The use of the Road User Hierarchy is intertwined with the classification of a road within the Road Mode Hierarchy.

The Road Mode Hierarchy is defined as follows:

- (a) Strategic Routes with priority for freight movement;
- (b) Strategic Routes with priority for public transport;
- (c) Strategic Routes with priority for motorised traffic generally;
- (d) Local Distributor Roads, and
- (e) Local Access Roads.

On Local Distributor Roads there will still be a need to accommodate motorised traffic, but these roads will not generally be signed for through traffic and heavy goods traffic is discouraged. For motorised traffic, priority will vary depending on the circumstances of the individual route, such as whether or not it is part of the identified networks discussed below.

On Local Streets (including residential, service and pedestrianised areas) pedestrians receive the highest priority, followed by cyclists. As with Local Distributor Roads, further prioritisation will depend on the circumstances of the individual streets, such as whether or not it is used by public transport, service vehicles or taxis. District centres are to be treated in a similar fashion to Local Access Roads with walking, public transport and cycling receiving the top priority.

A plan of the Road Hierarchy is shown in Appendix A.

Category	Hierarchy Description	Type of Road General Description	Description
1	Motorway	Limited access motorway regulations apply	Routes for fast moving long distance traffic. Fully grade separated and restrictions on use.
2	Strategic Route	Trunk and some Principal 'A' roads between Primary Destinations	Routes for fast moving long distance traffic with little frontage access or pedestrian traffic. Speed limits are usually in excess of 40 mph and there are few junctions. Pedestrian crossings are either segregated or controlled and parked vehicles are generally prohibited.
3a	Main Distributor	Major Urban Network and Inter-Primary Links. Short-medium distance traffic	Routes between Strategic Routes and linking urban centres to the strategic network with limited frontage access. In urban areas speed limits are usually 40 mph or less, parking is restricted at peak times and there are positive measures for pedestrian safety.
3b	Secondary Distributor	Classified Road (B and C class) and unclassified urban bus routes carrying local traffic with frontage access and frequent junctions	In rural areas these roads link the larger villages and HGV generators to the Strategic and Main Distributor Network. In built up areas these roads have 30 mph speed limits and very high levels of pedestrian activity with some crossing facilities including zebra crossings. On-street parking is generally unrestricted except for safety reasons.
4a	Link Road	Roads linking between the Main and Secondary Distributor Network with frontage access and frequent junctions	In rural areas these roads link the smaller villages to the distributor roads. They are of varying width and not always capable of carrying two-way traffic. In urban areas they are residential or industrial inter-connecting roads with 30 mph speed limits random pedestrian movements and uncontrolled parking.
4b	Local Access Road	Roads serving limited numbers of properties carrying only access traffic	In rural areas these roads serve small settlements and provide access to individual properties and land. They are often only single lane width and unsuitable for HGVs. In urban areas they are often residential loop roads or cul-de-sacs.

5.2 Footway Hierarchy

Footway hierarchy, as with the carriageway hierarchy, will not necessarily be determined by the road classification, but the functionality of the footway and scale of use. In urban areas the contribution of the footway to the quality of public space and streetscene will be particularly important. Local factors such as the age, distribution of the population, the proximity of schools or other establishments attracting higher than normal numbers of pedestrians to the area should also be taken into account. As a general guide, five broad maintenance categories are recommended for footways, as described in Table 2 below:-

Category	Category Name	Description
1(a)	Prestige Walking Zones	Very busy areas of towns and cities with high public space and streetscene contribution.
1	Primary Walking Routes	Busy urban shopping and business areas and main pedestrian routes.

2	Secondary Walking Routes	Medium usage routes through local areas feeding into primary routes, local shopping centres etc.
3	Link Footways	Linking local access footways through urban areas and busy rural footways.
4	Local Access Footways	Footways associated with low usage, short estate roads to the main routes and cul-de-sacs.

The assignment of a footway to a particular category within the hierarchy is a matter for local discretion. However, the following issues should be taken into consideration:-

- pedestrian volume;
- current usage and proposed usage;
- accident and other risk assessment;
- age and type of footway (e.g. old flagged footways may require more frequent inspection than newly laid); and
- character and traffic use of adjoining carriageway

The footway hierarchy should have regard to any network of “housing footways”, serving housing estates or related development, which may be unadopted as public highways but maintained separately by the authority. Users will make no distinction and will consider the footway network as a whole.

Category 2 Secondary Walking – Small retail shopping outlets + 5 shops, large schools and industrial outlets +500 pupils or equivalent pedestrian movements.

Category 3 Link Footways – Urban access, busy rural, all other schools.

Category 4 Local Access – Rural footways, non feeder footways in housing estates.

5.3 Cycle Route Hierarchy

The categories suggested by this Code for cycle routes are shown in Table 3 below. They are categorised not by use or functionality but by location, as the level of use is generally low and not related to maintenance need. This approach also reflects the differing risks associated with shared, partially segregated and fully segregated cycle routes. Where the level of use on particular cycle routes is significant and relevant to maintenance need, for example on commuter cycle routes, authorities may establish categories based on use.

Category	Description
A	Cycle lane forming part of the carriageway, commonly 1.5 metre strip adjacent to the nearside kerb. Cycle gaps at road closure point (no entries allowing cycle access).
B	Cycle track: a highway route for cyclists not contiguous with the public footway or carriageway. Shared cycle/pedestrian paths, either segregated by a white line or other physical segregation, or un-segregated.
C	Cycle trails: leisure routes through open spaces. These are not necessarily the responsibility of the highway authority, but may be maintained by an authority under other powers or duties.

5.4 Public Rights of Way Hierarchy

Authorities have not generally established a formal hierarchy for PROW, for the purpose of assigning maintenance and improvement priorities. The range of guidance on preparation of ROWIPs includes no reference to the need for hierarchy.

Some authorities have established hierarchies based on designation:

- Byways open to all traffic (BOAT);
- Long Distance Trails (LDT);
- Designated Recreational Routes (DRR);
- Right of Way (ROW).

Some use the following, which reflects the different maintenance responsibilities:

- Strategic link path;
- Recreational path (maintained);
- Recreational path (non-maintained);
- Other access rights.

The integration of ROWIPs with LTPs to ensure that PROWs are recognised as key ingredients of an integrated transport network may make it helpful to establish some general principles of hierarchy, based on the relative contribution of particular links.

Like many authorities that have adopted maintenance regimes that incorporate PROWs with a metalled surface, particularly those within or on the fringe of urban areas into the footway hierarchy, irrespective of their designation to recognise users' requirements consistency in highway maintenance. Wirral is working towards a strategy and policy in this regard.

Using the Road User Hierarchy and the Road Mode Hierarchy as an overarching umbrella, the needs of specific road users have been considered in more detail, along with further mode routes.

A number of routes/networks have been identified across the Borough.

5.5 A and B Roads

Road classification is primarily based on the function of a road. It would therefore be expected that A roads will reflect principal through routes, while B roads may interconnect these routes or lead from these routes to local destinations. It is therefore the case that these routes will be expected to take the majority of traffic.

The current road classification in Wirral has been in place with little change for a long time. It is recognised that the circumstances which defined the original classifications may have changed and would benefit from a review. This will establish a more appropriate network fit for purpose under the TMA along which traffic will be directed. Wirral is committed to a review of the road hierarchy.

5.6 Traffic Sensitive Roads

Under Section 64 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, a highway authority may designate certain roads (or parts of roads) as "traffic-sensitive". For a road to be traffic-sensitive it will meet one or more of the criteria detailed in Appendix B.

The designation of a traffic-sensitive road may apply to the carriageway, or to a footway or pedestrian area, to part of a length of road and to certain times of the day, days of the week or days of the year depending on circumstances.

Works on traffic sensitive roads will have the greatest impact on traffic in terms of delays and congestion, on the road itself and for the surrounding network. Therefore, unless there is not alternative, any works or activities will be co-ordinated so that they will avoid traffic-sensitive situations at sensitive times, i.e. at peak rush hours.

This network of traffic-sensitive roads is under review alongside that of the road hierarchy.

5.7 Freight Route Network

The ability to move freight efficiently to and from the ports and industrial areas is crucial to the economic health, physical health and attractiveness of Wirral and indeed Merseyside. Wirral's strategic freight route network comprises the M53 motorway, Kingsway Tunnel and the local roads to and around the Birkenhead Docks/Freeport.

Journey times for freight traffic on the strategic network are one of the key indicators for the LTP and there is a particular focus on traffic management along these routes. These are also at the top of the road mode hierarchy. (Refer to Section 5.1).

The Council recognises the need to maintain a sustainable freight transport system that has good links to the national road network, and that is effectively signed to avoid unnecessary intrusion in residential areas.

Wirral, along with its LTP partners, continues to liaise with local freight hauliers and members of the Merseyside Freight Partnership. Themed events have given the LTP partners the opportunity to inform the freight industry of key projects, such as Bidston Moss Viaduct Strengthening and proposed rail schemes, and enabled the freight industry to raise key issues. This two-way process is seen as instrumental in developing effective working to ensure effective freight access is maintained.

Further details on the Merseyside Freight Strategy can be seen at:
www.letstravelwise.org/goods.

5.8 Emergency Services Route Network

In the development of any proposals that will affect the highway network, whether they are permanent or temporary, consultation and, if necessary, liaison will always be undertaken to ensure that the right balance between achieving a project's objectives and the potential effect on emergency response times are achieved.

Representations from the emergency services also sit on a number of strategic and operational groups and can also provide their input in this manner.

Currently, the plan of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's Strategic Route Network is being reviewed and updated. Merseyside Police and Mersey Regional Ambulance Service requirements are being accommodated for in the plan. A plan of the Emergency Services Priority Routes is shown in Appendix C.

5.9 Cycle Routes

Introducing key cycle routes and promoting cycle use throughout the Borough is key in delivering the objectives of the Local Transport Plan. Cycling plays a much increased role for the journey to work and short trips such as local visits and the journey to school, therefore plays a key role in addressing congestion, accessibility, air quality and safety aims. The target across Merseyside is a 10% increase in cycling of the life of the 2nd LTP.

There is an approved cycle strategy for Wirral that has been in place for a number of years. This strategy is complemented by an Action Plan that details the proposed works over the next few years.

Despite Wirral being unsuccessful, in 2007, in its bid to the Government for Cycle Demonstration Town status, the focus of cycle provision in the next few years will see the implementation of a comprehensive cycle network in the Wallasey area. This district network will maximise links with key services and attractors, and complement other programmes such as Safer Routes to Schools and accident reduction.

To facilitate the on-going expansion of the Borough's cycle network, the Council ensures that requests for cycle parking at key developments are included within the determination of Planning Applications along with other accompanying features for cyclists.

To ensure that participation from the local communities is maintained, the Council's Cycling Officer holds regular meetings with representatives from various agencies and interest groups under the banner of the "Wirral Cycle Forum".

5.10 Pedestrian Routes

Wirral has prepared a walking implementation plan as part of the Merseyside Pedestrian Strategy which sets out aims and objectives to improve the pedestrian environment over the period of the 2nd LTP. The strategy is essential in delivering the objectives of the LTP, with its shared priorities for transport of congestion, air quality, road safety and accessibility and the overarching priority of quality of life.

As part of the strategy, we are planning to undertake walking audits. Following consultation, works which have been highlighted as being high priority will be carried forward to be assessed and prioritised in the wider capital programme.

5.11 Main Pedestrian Areas

These areas are essential in maintaining pedestrian flows and movement throughout the urban area in order to sustain economic growth. Pedestrianised areas within the Borough have high footfalls and provide priority to pedestrians in order to promote growth within the retail area. Vehicular traffic have access to these areas at set times within the day to maintain safety and movement of pedestrians.

5.12 Public Right of Way

A Public Right of Way (PROW) is a highway, usually in the form of a footpath, which the public has a right to use at any time.

Wirral has a set of definitive maps showing the routes of each individual public rights of way in the Borough. We intend to build on this to provide a comprehensive and accessible network. The maps, along with a supporting statement, are a legal record of the public's rights along the identified routes, and may be relied upon as evidence if a path were obstructed. The information may also be used for highway searches.

The government recognises that the PROW network plays an important role in encouraging walking for leisure, and we are now required to record a Best Value Performance Indicator to measure how well signed and accessible the network is.

Improvements to local rights of way (as defined in Section 60(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) links with cycling and walking and has the potential to contribute in a number of ways to the key objectives of the LTP.

To this aim, the Merseyside Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan, completed in 2007, sets out a framework for future PROW improvements in each district. Further details can be seen at www.merseysiderightsofway.org.

5.13 Bus Routes

Within Wirral and Merseyside, the co-ordination of public transport is undertaken by Merseytravel.

We will continue to work with Merseytravel to deliver the aim of providing a comprehensive and integrated approach to the provision of bus services and their supporting infrastructure as part of the Single Integrated Public Transport Network detailed in the Local Transport Plan.

These on-going improvements include provision of:

1. New, modern buses;
2. Bus priority measures (including Selective Vehicle Detection (SVD) and bus lanes);
3. Higher quality and better improved shelters and information boards.

Bus punctuality and reliability are key issues that can affect how people judge the effectiveness of this important service. It is therefore essential to maintain traffic flows and movement along specified bus corridors in order to cut congestion and delay. Enforcement is also a crucial action along these routes to ensure their effectiveness.

Wirral is committed to the introduction of bus quality corridors and supports the Merseyside Bus Strategy. This strategy demonstrates how buses support measures to tackle congestion, improve accessibility and support regeneration and create opportunity for all.

The objective of the Merseyside Bus Strategy is:

“to provide a high quality bus network that meets the needs of the people of Merseyside in a secure, accessible, sustainable and cost effective way”.

Greater usage of public transport facilities such as buses will help our congestion aims by reducing the number of private cars on our roads.

Other measures, such as SVD, VMS and CCTV, can improve traffic management and minimise delays, not only for buses but for all road users.

5.14 Taxis

The Licensing Section is responsible for issuing all taxi related licences, as required by law. They also monitor compliance with licence conditions, standard of service offered to the public and take enforcement action where necessary.

The following taxi-related licences are issued by the Licensing Section:

- Private Hire Driver
- Private Hire Vehicle
- Private Hire Operator
- Hackney Carriage Driver
- Hackney Carriage Vehicle

We have excellent links with the taxi trade and hold regular meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee to discuss topical issues which highlight new initiatives and share information.

5.15 Coaches

We currently have a coach drop off/pick up facility located on Chester Street, Birkenhead nearby the Woodside gyratory to accommodate national and local services. This facility is situated in close proximity to Hamilton Square train station, Woodside bus and ferry terminal.

5.16 Motorcycles

Wirral Council Road Safety are part of the BikeSafe initiative which is a nationwide plan of action to reduce the number of motorcycle accident casualties by promoting safer riding. Bikesafe Merseyside was formed as a partnership between Merseyside police, Merseyside fire and rescue service and Wirral Council as an active response within the national bikesafe initiative. Bikesafe workshops are held on the Wirral to promote safe riding system for everyday motorcyclists.

5.17 Abnormal Loads

We receive approximately 250 requests to assist with abnormal load movements per month.

The assessment of route suitability takes into account:

- Provide information on loading and/or height limitations on specific bridges to the Client, Department for Transport, Traffic Police and Hauliers to assist in identifying suitable routes for specific abnormal loads;

- Undertake assessment of all elements of the structure to determine acceptability for the passage of a specific abnormal load where acceptability for similar roads has not previously been established. Assessment to use global analysis and computer modelling as required;
- Advise the Client, Department for Transport, Traffic Police or hauliers on the suitability of proposed routes for specific abnormal load movements with regard to loading and headroom restrictions on highway structures.

Checking Abnormal Load Movements is carried out as and when required upon receipt of notifications of abnormal load movements and generally within two working days of receipt. For large enquiries, i.e. from the Highways Agency, assessments are made within five full days and involves liaison with the Police in case escorts are required.

Each assessment is kept on a Register which shows:

- The date enquiry is received
- The decision, i.e. acceptable/not acceptable/warning given/re route required
- The date response sent

Such load movements are likely to be undertaken in off-peak hours and therefore have a minimal effect on congestion there is still a desire to capture and share this information. Appendix D shows a list of height and weight restrictions.

5.18 Co-ordination of the Highway Network

It is essential that with all of the work taking place on the highway network that effective co-ordination is undertaken. Whilst there are existing procedures and forums whereby this co-ordination takes place, there is a desire to further embed this process. Existing procedures that co-ordinate and monitor the network include establishment of the Network Management Advisory Group (NMAG).

The subscription to this group is the Wirral Traffic Manager, key officers, Merseyside Police, Merseytravel, the Fire and Ambulance Services and, when required, other attendees who have an interest in future special events affecting the highway.

5.19 NMAG (Network Management Advisory Group)

It is essential that with all of the work taking place on the highway network that effective co-ordination is undertaken. Whilst there are existing procedures and forums whereby this co-ordination takes place, there is a desire to further embed this process. Existing procedures that co-ordinate and monitor the network include establishment of the Network Management Advisory Group (NMAG).

The subscription to this group is the Wirral Traffic Manager, key officers, Merseyside Police, Merseytravel, the Fire and Ambulance Services and, when required, other attendees who have an interest in say special events affecting the highway and/or coastline.

NMAG was set up to consider and approve/decline permission and co-ordinate any works of any description that have an impact on the movement of traffic and pedestrians on designated traffic-sensitive roads. NMAG ensures that works are undertaken in such a capacity that they will limit the disruptive impact to the road network (and hence the travelling public) by considering highway works in terms of occupancy. NMAG meets monthly, however can be quickly convened should the need arise.

The scale of regeneration and tourism work planned to take place over the coming years is unprecedented. A combination of high profile events, major projects and general developments are being planned in association with a range of public and private agencies and developers. These projects are likely to lead to widespread changes to the levels of disruption across the region whilst they are being constructed. However, the investment is expected to transform the cultural, social, educational and business life of the Wirral and lead to significant inward investment and economic growth.

Running in parallel with the remit of NMAG is a separate group of officers which meet, the Events Advisory Group. Amongst the matters which they assess prior to sanctioning events are:

- Safety of the public, crowd management;
- Unnecessary or unacceptable levels of inconvenience to the public;
- Emergency service provision;
- Acceptable traffic management proposals;
- Risk assessments;
- Contingency planning;
- Licensing issues;
- Adequate lead-in time for media and regulatory purposes.

Events on the highway come in two categories, planned events such as carnivals or street parties and unplanned events such as closures due to road traffic accidents, fires or utility apparatus failure.

In relation to planned events, Wirral Council has a traffic co-ordinator who is responsible for ensuring that these activities are publicised and the correct traffic regulations are implemented. The traffic co-ordinator liaises with the Streetworks section to ensure they do not conflict with any planned roadworks. Any closure or events with traffic management implications will be publicised on the Wirral Council website. Wirral Council will collate a list of all re-occurring annual events and produce details of associated traffic management requirements. This information will be made available to the public and other Council departments and will be posted on the Wirral Council Internet site.

Unplanned events are, by their very nature, much more difficult to deal with. However, Wirral Council has already carried out some procedures to try to reduce the adverse effects of such eventualities on network traffic flow.

Some events, although unplanned, do occur regularly such as the closure of the New Brighton sea front due to extreme tides exacerbated by adverse weather conditions. Wirral Council has erected variable message signs to inform drivers of alternative routes.

Wirral Council are also working with the Highways Agency to identify and implement tactical diversion routes for M53 Junction 1-5. The Council proposes to expand this procedure to cover all the major routes within the Wirral highway network so that diversionary routes for the most critical parts of the network are planned well in advance.

Wirral Council hosts numerous high profile events attracting many visitors to destinations within the Borough and therefore significant emphasis is placed on partnership working with other Directorates within the Council and external partners. Examples include the Wirral Show in New Brighton and the Wirral Egg Run .

Events on the highway must be registered with and approved by the Highway Authority. Temporary Road Traffic Regulation Orders may be required to ensure the Event is managed safely or other Traffic Management arrangements are advised or directed by the Highway Authority. Costs for such arrangements will be borne by the Event Organiser.

The NMAG and Events Advisory Group has to be satisfied with all elements prior to granting approval.

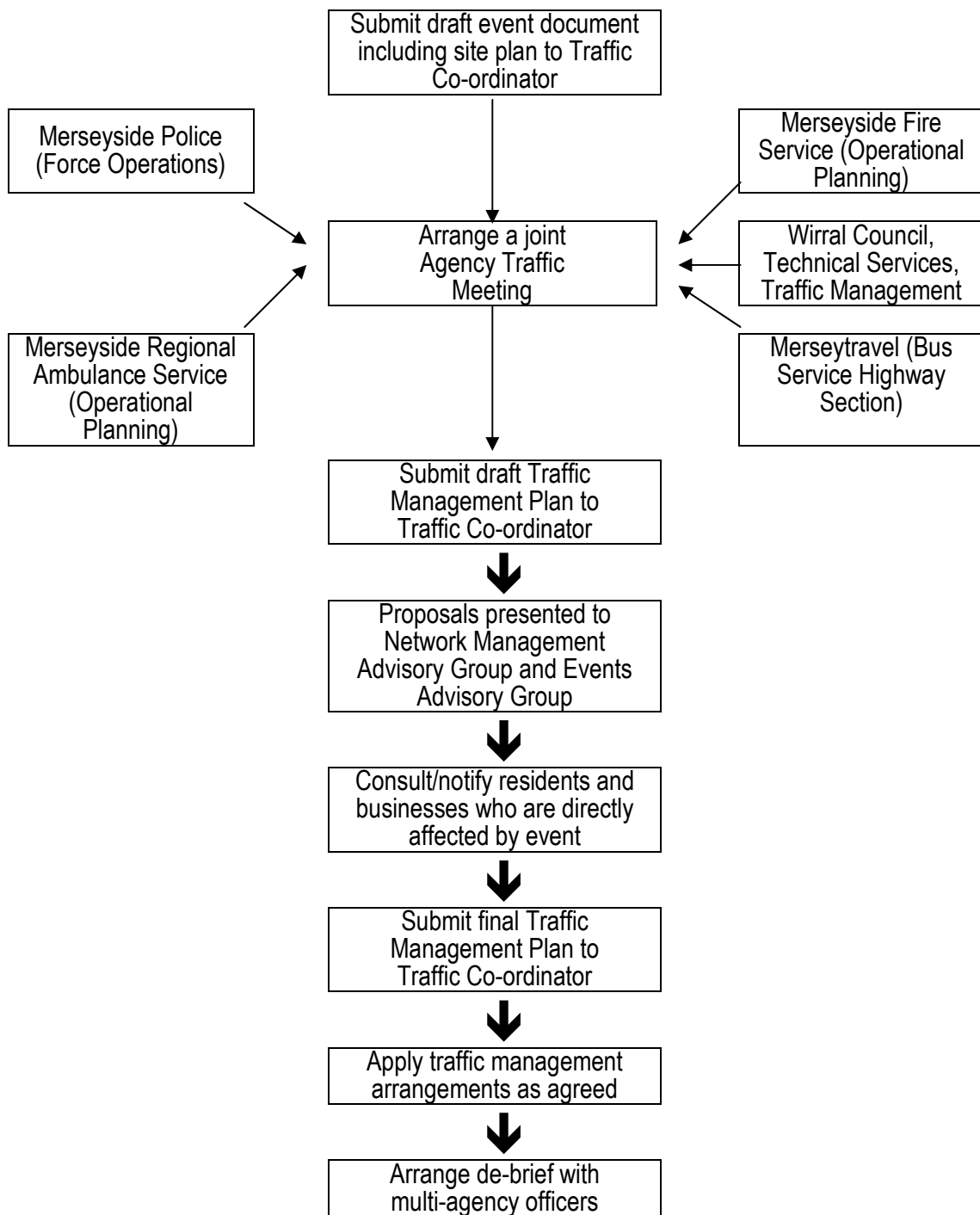
Traffic Plan Approval Process

Typically below is the flow chart accounting for the stages in approving a Traffic Plan for an activity likely to impact on the highway.

Crowd Management Plan

It is the responsibility of the event organiser to manage the safety of people visiting the event and it is always important to keep pedestrians and traffic separate.

Certain areas may need to be cordoned off to members of the public and in some areas you may also need a steward to “man the barrier” to prevent people moving them and walking through regardless. In some areas you may need to operate a one-way system for pedestrians at peak times to minimise risks. Consider access and egress of the emergency services and make sure that clear access is available through entry and exit points for both pedestrians and traffic. The larger the site, the more barriers, signage and stewards will be required. Assess the needs of wheelchair users, prams etc and ensure that signage is highly visible.



5.20 Management of Incidents

It goes without saying that unplanned incidents, whether on the highway network or not on the highway network, can have implications for all road users, causing disruption and congestion. There have to be procedures in place to mitigate the effect of such incidents, which will cover dealing with the incident itself, to communicating it to road users and stakeholders.

Wirral, in close partnership working with the emergency services and the Operational Services Division already has established procedures in place to tackle incidents on the highway network. These include the following:

- Road traffic accidents;
- Broken down vehicles;
- Debris or diesel chemical (including fuel) spillage on the road;
- Structural failures of the carriageway, such as potholes;

- Failure of utilities' apparatus, which may cause disruption to the highway, such as burst water, sewage or gas mains;
- Emergency repairs to utilities' and telecoms apparatus;
- Adverse weather conditions;
- Security alerts.

The first point of contact for members of the public in reporting incidents on the highway network is through the Police. A contact list is available internally which gives details of all contact officers across the Portfolios of the Council. This needs to be updated on a regular basis and are contained in the Emergency Plan, which is a controlled document checked 2 times per year.

5.21 Major Incidents

Major incidents and disruptive challenges requiring urgent action can strike suddenly, unexpectedly and anywhere. Many agencies have a part to play in dealing with these emergencies and their aftermath. Emergency Planning is the process whereby the Council prepares to deal with major emergencies and incidents and assist in the welfare and recovery of the community. The aim of Emergency Planning is to maintain appropriate arrangements and procedures that enable the Council to respond to and manage major incidents.

5.22 The Council Emergency Plan

The Civil Contingencies Act, 2004 is the primary legislation that underpins the responses of the Emergency Services and other Category 1 responders, including local authorities like Wirral. The Emergency Plan co-ordinates the planning, training, exercising, activation and the management of the Council's response to emergencies. The service works in collaboration with the emergency services, adjoining local authorities, voluntary agencies and the many other varied responders who have a role to play, to ensure there is a co-ordinated and effective response.

Emergency Planning falls into four broad categories:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Planning | The Council is continually assessing the risks posed within Wirral and developing and maintaining plans to ensure that procedures are in place to control and mitigate their impact. |
| Training and Exercising | The service conducts a programme of training and exercises for our staff and partner agencies to make them aware of the need to plan. Training and exercising helps provide an effective response. |
| Liaison | The service works closely with partner agencies and stakeholders to share information and ensure dovetailing of plans and procedures thereby providing a co-ordinated and integrated response to emergency incidents. |
| Operational | The Council provides a 24-hour, 365 day response to major incidents. Several service areas operate a Duty Officer system and are available out of hours. The Council's emergency response is activated by the Wirral Call Centre. |

5.23 Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)

The successful management of our highway network is critical to the success of our NMD. Not only does this mean the management of movement and activities on the network, but also the infrastructure of the network itself.

It is imperative that monitoring regimes are in place that provide meaningful information so that we are able to determine how well we are doing, what is working and what isn't, so we can change things.

Monitoring in this sense does not just mean looking at traffic flows, but it means assessing how well our procedures are working and whether we are meeting targets, both national and local.

Our strategy for the management of our highway and transport assets will be detailed in the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). This Plan is currently being developed as part of the LTP. The intention is that the Plan will bring together all the policies, aims and objectives of the Authority and will clearly set out management arrangements, aspirations for service delivery and maintenance of our assets.

The Merseyside Districts, together with our transport-related partners including Mersey Tunnels and Merseytravel, have developed a framework TAMP. Each district will also have its own specific TAMP to take into account local conditions. By working together in partnership, it is intended to facilitate change, innovation and best practice with the objective of managing transport and highway assets for the benefit of all stakeholders in Wirral and across Merseyside.

There are many facets to the highway infrastructure that need to be managed. The Merseyside Districts will endeavour to include and capture all highway network components during the life of the TAMP.

Such components (but not exhaustively) will include:

- Footways
- Street lights
- Cycleways
- Signs
- Drainage
- Road markings
- Traffic signals
- Structures including gantries, bridges, tunnels, culverts, retaining walls etc
- Verges
- Trees
- Street furniture
- Bus lanes
- Bus stops
- Transport interchanges
- Taxi facilities

5.24 Contractors Working Group

Currently these meetings occur on a weekly basis where major works are involved. Programmes of work are discussed along with any particular traffic management problems the works may cause. Known traffic 'hotspots' are programmed outside school term times to minimise their disruptive impact. Performance issues are also discussed at the meetings to highlight issues that may involve further excavations on defective workmanship that can result in further disruption when remedial works are required to poor quality reinstatements. Possible road closures and temporary signal requirements are also highlighted.

Wirral Council also have a weekly meeting to discuss and, if need be, co-ordinate our own works for road purpose in association with any programmed Statutory Undertakers works. This way any roads closures can be utilised to carry out tree pruning, gully replacement or cleansing etc to minimise any disruption that would otherwise be caused by such operations

5.25 Routine Co-ordination of Highways and Street Works Activities

Advanced notice is required for any works undertaken on the highway that have 4 working days or more duration. Emergency and Urgent works have to be noticed within 2hrs of works starting on site. Opening notices have, from 1st April 2008 been transferred in real time via web service, EtoN 4. All notices received are monitored on a daily basis. We issue on occasion challenges in relation to duration of works and the timing of works. This is usually done in response to an excessive duration request for certain works or where works are likely to cause major disruption if undertaken at the requested time period.

The Authority has powers to direct the timing and placing of apparatus under section 56 and 56a of the TMA. At present the majority of major and standard Authority works are noticed and it is envisaged that all highway works undertaken by the Authority will be noticed in the same manner as utility work. Currently skips hoardings and scaffolding is dealt with outside the scope of TMA but it is envisaged that these items will be registered on the Street Works data base to assist in the co-ordination process. It is also envisaged that the council web site will contain a list of all highway works showing their location, start and end dates and a description of the planned works for each individual works promoter, both Utility and Highway works will be displayed.

5.26 Statutory Undertakers Co-ordination Meetings

In accordance with Section 59 of NRSWA 1991 Wirral hold co-ordination meetings on a quarterly basis. Any person with an interest in works on the boroughs highway network is welcome. The invitation extends to the Police and our Neighbouring authority, Ellesmere Port and Neston Council.

The meetings are designed to discuss both Utility and Highway major works that are normally planned at least six months in advance.

5.27 HAUC Meetings

Wirral attend the North West HAUC quarterly meeting. All North West Highway Authorities represent themselves at the meeting as of May 2008.

In addition, the North West Street Works Highways Group meet on a quarterly basis. The aim of this meeting is to try to create a consistent approach to the various issues surrounding NRSWA and the TMA throughout the North West. The use of recycled materials is an issue, which needs to be addressed, and a working group has been set up to investigate the way forward in accordance with the WRAP protocols. Wirral welcomes the use of recycled materials with the caveat that the material must perform to the same criteria as the virgin material would. The group has also created a broadly acceptable duration table designed to create a consistent approach to the duration timescales the Utilities request for their various operations.

5.28 Permit Scheme

Wirral are currently exploring the possibility of becoming a Permit Authority and would envisage that it would take between 18 months to two years before this option could be realised. A Merseyside working group has been set up to investigate the option of setting up a Merseyside joint permit scheme.

Currently we are notified of a works promoter's intention to undertake works on their apparatus by means of the notice regime as set in the Code of Practice for the coordination of street works. The current method of noticing is a fairly passive operation that involves members of the street works team looking at all notices that we receive on a daily basis, currently in the region of 130 per day. A significant number of these notices would, in the new regime, require a permit on any given day.

The current emphasis, in terms of scrutiny, is directed towards major and standard works as these normally present the most risk of traffic/pedestrian disruption. Works promoters submit their notice informing us what work is intended and when they propose to start and finish. Historically the works neither start nor end on their proposed dates on a significant number of occasions. This is usually, in my opinion, a resource issue.

This can, and does, make coordination of any works quite a difficult process. The current method of noticing, EtoN 4, gives Highway Authorities little power if the works do not start on their due date.

From October 2008 Highway Authorities can apply to the Secretary of State to become a permit authority.

The process involved is quite lengthy, as all works promoters who undertake work within Wirral will need to be consulted about our proposal as the scheme does place a financial burden on all works promoters. The application will also need to demonstrate that the permit scheme will allow us to undertake our Network Management Duty more effectively.

It is envisaged that by becoming a permit authority we can exercise greater control over all works on our highway. Any promoter would have to apply for a permit, regardless of the work they propose to undertake or where they plan to undertake such work. All permits will have a charge attached to them and works likely to cause greater disruption will have a greater charge. The current system of noticing does not incur a charge therefore there is no real incentive for certain works to start when they are meant to start.

In the permit regime, should proposed works not start on time, a variation to the permit would be required and this would incur a further charge. It is envisaged that the costs incurred in the permit scheme will focus the works promoter's attention on starting the works when they should. The same principal would apply should the works not end when they were supposed to.

The permit option also allows the authority to impose conditions on the permit that must be adhered to and failure to comply with a permit condition can incur a fixed penalty fine.

5.29 Winter Maintenance (Gritting)

In accordance with council policy Wirral grit the primary and secondary road network in response to forecasts received from the Met office

Wirral has its own weather station and special computer links which provide the Met Office with data. Together with other weather stations across Merseyside, this enables Manchester weather centre to forecast Wirral's weather and more importantly the road surface temperatures. Forecast information is updated 24 hours a day and used by trained Wirral staff to make the decision on whether or not to grit. Salting decisions are taken very seriously to ensure road safety, to avoid unnecessary gritting and to protect the environment.

Unnecessary gritting poses a threat to the environment as most of the 3,500 tonnes of salt spread on to roads will eventually be washed off by rain or snow and find its way into a watercourse.

We grit all major roads and bus routes in Wirral, whenever it is necessary. Side roads are not gritted unless they are on exceptionally steep hills or at problem locations, eg at roundabouts.

5.30 Street Repairs

The Council has a duty to ensure that all roads and footpaths in its ownership are properly looked after and safe to use. This includes signs and road markings on the highway. Again, this is undertaken by the Operational Services Division. Ensuring that repairs are undertaken quickly can have an effect on safety and also of promoting other modes of travel, i.e. walking and cycling.

Wirral undertakes safety inspections of all roads and footpaths at regular intervals to check that there are no significant hazards which could endanger users.

5.31 Insurance Claims

Wirral Council proactively focuses effort and energy in its approach to risk management for highway claims, which has traditionally been one of Wirral's largest insurable risk exposures.

In 2001 the Council saw a sharp increase in the number of claims made against it by over 50% in 12 months and by over 75% in 2 years. This had a severe impact in claims administration and the Council had to set aside large sums to pay for the cases that it may be liable, taking away resources from front line services.

By the summer of 2001 maintenance inspections provided a defence in only 50% of claims, work completed on time was only at 50% with a best value review indicated that Highway Maintenance was failing with no sign of improvement.

In order to resolve this problem, the highway maintenance management was given a total cultural change and the foundation was laid to bring about a complete joined up approach to maintenance management.

The inspection system was reviewed with each inspector given clear areas of ownership, set target dates, support in cover personnel and clear written procedures.

The streetscene weekly meeting was introduced to ensure there was a co-ordination of all works on the network.

A full survey and categorisation of the highway structure was carried out and a risk related best practice inspection hierarchy and maintenance system established.

The whole joined up approach is designed to improve the condition of the network providing resources where needed and being able to compliment various network improvement schemes.

This joined up approach also extended to the Risk and Insurance team in the Finance Department. The team took a greater role in the investigation process and deciding if a liability exists for claims using local knowledge. Strategic decisions were made not to make economic settlements on cases, but not to settle if any doubt existed of liability.

The aim of this whole approach is to improve the service delivery, condition of the network and provide a co-ordinated management of the networks.

The result of this co-ordinated approach has been a dramatic increase in the percentage of highway claims that Wirral is able to successfully defend. Up to the year 2001 the percentage claims defended was about 50% with the introduction of the streetscene approach. This percentage increased year on year to around 95% of claims successfully defended.

This success rate has continued even with the fall of claims being made which has gone from a peak of 952 in 2002 to below 300 highway claims for 06/07.

The effect of fewer claims has enabled the Council to reduce its self-insurance premiums by £2m 2005/06 and a further £0.5m in 2006/07. In addition funds of £1.8m in 2005/06 and a further £2.1m in 2006/07 have been released from reserves set aside for settlements.

These savings have enabled the Council to provide extra resources into front line services.

5.32 Safety and Serviceability Inspections

A full review of the inspection procedures was undertaken during 2001/2002, during which the network hierarchy was established in accordance with the new code of practice.

Detailed risk assessments and causes of highway condition was undertaken using records from the previous six years.

This information was then used to set the inspection frequencies and standards.

- weather and other emergencies.

Each of these maintenance types contribute in varying degrees to the core objectives of safety, serviceability and sustainability, summarised earlier in this section of the Code. In each case therefore, standards and delivery arrangements should preferably be established having regard to these objectives focussed on outcomes, rather than on inputs mainly related to maintenance type. It is accepted that this principle may take time to establish and will be easier to pursue in conjunction with new procurement arrangements.

5.34 Maintenance Category

Within each of the above types there are various categories of maintenance as follows, each of which should be considered in terms of their output contribution towards the core objectives of safety, serviceability and sustainability:

Reactive

- all assets – sign and make safe for safety purposes;
- all assets – provide initial temporary repair for safety purposes;
- all assets – provide permanent repair for safety purposes.

Routine

- carriageways, footways and cycle routes – minor works and patching;
- drainage systems – cleansing and repair;

The following measures are used to plan works effectively:

- Best use of school holidays for works to take advantage of reduced traffic flow;
- Internal team meetings to agree on programming of highway works;
- Agreement of night time working if appropriate and acceptable to Environmental Health with regard to noise nuisance in non-residential areas;
- Weekend closures to carry out works if necessary in consultation with residents and businesses;
- Review of Traffic Sensitive Streets, with the hours of traffic sensitivity;
- Meetings with events organisers/developers/utility companies and highway contractors to discuss individual works and local conditions.

Attendance at neighbouring boroughs co-ordination meetings to discuss impact of works on each others networks.

6.0 MONITORING & CONTROL OF THE HIGHWAY

6.1 Managing the Highway Network

The historic trend on rising car usage presents a particular problem in managing the highway network. It is well known that we cannot build ourselves out of trouble to cope with rising traffic levels. It is therefore imperative that strategies are in place to manage existing and future traffic. As well as more traditional engineering measures, it is recognised that the use of “softer” initiatives to encourage modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport will help to achieve this aim.

6.2 Traffic Signals

Wirral has a number of traffic signal installations managed in-house. These have been located strategically for a number of reasons ranging from safety to provision of pedestrian facilities to managing traffic flows.

The Urban Traffic Control system was originally implemented in Wirral in 1990. There are currently 46 junctions and 12 pedestrian crossings connected to the UTC/SCOOT system. The UTC system co-ordinates the operation of traffic signals and crossings in a network and reduces the delay to pedestrians and motorists.

The system can also be used to remotely monitor the operation of the traffic signals and identify faults quickly. Measurement of delay and congestion is also possible. The system also allows manual or automatic intervention when problems occur, even when monitored by CCTV.

There are a further 60 isolated traffic signal controlled junctions in the borough and 139 pedestrian crossings. Many are connected to our remote monitoring system, which automatically notifies the control centre of faults.

Wirral Council currently has the following traffic signal installations:

No. of Traffic Signal Installations	
Type of installation (By Controller)	No.
Junction	106
Dual Pelican	18
Single Pelican	54
Dual Puffin	9
Single Puffin	54
Dual Toucan	4
Single Toucan	12
Wig Wag	1
TOTAL	258

6.3 Pedestrians

Traffic signals and signal-controlled pedestrian crossings are provided to improve the safety and progression of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists, buses and other vehicles.

Wirral Council's pedestrian crossings have enhanced facilities including tactile paving and audible signals to assist the disabled and rotating tactile cones under the push button for the visually impaired.

6.4 CCTV

Wirral Council is a leading authority in the use of CCTV cameras for monitoring congestion and delay.

Wirral's CCTV service started in 1996 with just 13 cameras in Birkenhead Town Centre. Today there are 111 permanent cameras throughout Wirral in town centres, community shopping areas, housing estates, car parks and major traffic routes including the M53 motorway. CCTV is a staffed service, operating from a secure urban traffic control unit at Cheshire Lines. Wirral also operates 'rapid deployment' CCTV cameras, which can be placed in areas temporarily to help to tackle specific, short-term situations or problems.

6.5 Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders

A temporary traffic regulation order (TTRO) is made by the Council when it is necessary to prohibit or control vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic along the highway. TTROs can be applied to roads, footways or public rights of way. The Council can make a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to cover planned situations, or we can issue an emergency notice if regulation is needed without delay.

TTROs are normally used to allow essential or emergency works to be carried out on the highway, typically installation of, or maintenance works to, services such as gas, electricity, water etc. However, roads can also be closed under the Town & Police Clauses Act, for street parties etc.

TTROs are made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended, and can take up to six weeks to arrange due to the legal requirements involved. A consultation process is undertaken with the police, emergency and other services. Initial public notification takes the form of an advertisement placed in the local press before the Legal Department makes the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order.

A TTRO can have a maximum duration of 18 months for a road and 6 months for a public right of way. Examples of TTROs include:

- Road closures
- Waiting restrictions
- Weight restrictions

There is a cost for providing the temporary traffic regulation order.

For an informal discussion on whether your proposals require a TTRO contact can be made with the Network Management Section within Technical Services. They will then be able to supply the appropriate forms depending on your requirements.

7.0 ENGINEERING WORK ON THE HIGHWAY

7.1 Resources

The local authority has a responsibility to routinely inspect and maintain its assets on the highway and procedures and practices are in place with partner agencies to fulfil this roll. Activities are numerous and on many fronts both from a reactive and proactive viewpoint.

The main source of financial resource is derived via the LTP process and annually Council members receive programmes of works to fulfil the local highway authorities obligations.

The programmes in the main cover structural maintenance, local safety schemes, improvements to bus facilities, cycling, walking, signalisation schemes and signing schemes and can be viewed in detail on the Council's website via www.wirral.gov.uk (click on transport and streets link).

We are seeking to integrate the highway services with those of the Development Control (Planning) services and are taking the initiative as laid out in the Government's white paper on Planning Gain.

There is an opportunity to ensure that congestion issues are given more of a emphasis in the planning process. Discussions will take place to give the Traffic Manager role a specific input in the approval of proposed developments.

7.2 Developers Manual

Wirral Council's Development Control Service has seen a dramatic increase in planning applications per year. The number has risen to between 4,500-5,000 full applications for consideration and determination. The Council is required to consider these applications within a period of eight weeks and is assessed on this timescale through corporate BVPIs. In addition to these planning applications, the service receives in the order of 15,000 pre-application consultations and enquiries per year from the public and prospective developers.

Whilst the Planning Portal offers the public a first line of enquiry, it is evident that the public and developers require a Development Manual, which offers a range of "standard" guidance for both pre-application and post application stages.

The proposed Developer's Manual is intended to be of value to commercial developers, planning consultants, community and environmental groups, householders and small entrepreneurs as well as local authority planners and designers.

The Manual will include some or all of the following:

- National and Local planning policy, guidance and standards e.g. CABE, LCC and other good practice guides;
- The expected format and content of submissions and accompanying documentation, including environmental, transportation and health impacts and other relevant information;
- Standards for different types of development; residential, commercial, industrial etc;
- Specialist Design Elements e.g. city centre public realm, drainage, street lighting, pedestrians, cyclists, urban traffic control, routing of utility services etc;
- Standard construction details;
- Procedural Guidance e.g. consultation which is necessary during pre and post-application stages, temporary and permanent traffic regulation orders (TROs), advice on NRSWA, legal agreements, etc;
- Statutory and adoption procedures;

- A schedule of fees and other payments which are required, together with timescales for applications, pre-payment etc;
- Buildability and programming guidance;
- Other information such as checklists of information to be provided, etc;
- Key contacts for various services.

Although there would be a wealth of reference material and recommendations, it is proposed that the Manual would be as simple as possible to use and is not prescriptive.

In terms of the TMA, the benefits of a Development Manual would be to ensure that buildability issues are considered early in the planning process. This would prevent the problems associated with developers wishing to start on site without the necessary TTROs which then causes co-ordination problems since there are more often than not contractual obligations in the time they have to construct any development.

7.3 Supplementary Planning Document for Transport “Ensuring Choice of Travel”

Well integrated land use and transport provision can assist our commitment to equality of travel opportunity and many priority areas. It can make it easier for people to access opportunities, and can reduce the need to travel. Policies in the Local Development Documents will form the principle means by which the demand for travel will be reduced, structuring the location and type of development, favouring mixed uses, brownfield sites, and locations with good public transport access. These policies will be supported by the Merseyside Supplementary Planning Document “Ensuring Travel Choice” (SPD) which will ensure developments are accessible by a choice of all modes and encourage sustainable travel to new developments. The SPD will provide the detailed guidance with regard to using planning obligations, accessibility and Travel Plans to locate developments in accessible locations and secure more sustainable travel to them.

At the present time Planning and Building Control assess and determine planning applications. Matters regarding transportation are considered by Development Control, Highways Management. Merseytravel comments on applications with transport implications and participates in planning meetings when possible but is not a statutory consultee on planning applications, and consequently there is no requirement to act on these comments. Pre-application meetings are usually held with Planning, and occasionally other partners may be included.

The planning system is used to bring about improvements for transport and access through use of conditions on applications or through Section 106 and 278 Agreements. These may include travel plans, bus services or alterations to infrastructure to facilitate improvements for sustainable transport access. However, the application of planning guidance, standards, conditions and requirements is applied inconsistently across Merseyside leading to missed opportunities to improve transport access. Fewer than 20, successful and substantive Section 106 Agreements have been entered into during the first LTP period.

In addition, the monitoring and enforcement of planning conditions and agreements is insufficient to provide appropriate weight to the system. Travel Plans are monitored through the TravelWise programme with enforcement support sought from Planning when difficulties are encountered. Currently no penalties are being used to enforce conditions. Section 106 planning agreements are monitored to some extent, however an increased use of the system is already identifying difficulties in ensuring agreements are delivered appropriately and in a timely fashion.

The development of the Merseyside Transport SPD aims to set out clear and consistent standards for LPAs and developers to ensure that a transparent, fair and clearly understood system is in place to improve the integration of land use planning and transport and to ensure that new developments promote good access by all modes of transport and encourage sustainable travel. In developing the SPD, the changing framework for planning is being taken into account.

The aim of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to ensure that sustainable transport and accessibility issues receive greater significance in the consideration of planning applications. It also seeks to secure a consistent approach across Merseyside by, for example, ensuring that new housing developments adequately cater for and support new bus routes, subsidised bus services where necessary, incorporate new cycle routes and parking facilities and cater for pedestrians.

The SPD will attempt to ensure that the same development standards are applied across Merseyside. The more rigorous standards will help to manage public and private parking stock, encourage alternative travel and in doing so help to reduce congestion.

By 2011, 95% of all Merseyside developments will be subject to the approval of the SPD, with an overall aim of having 100% of developments checked.

7.4 Capital and Revenue Schemes

The table below shows a list of local safety schemes to be included in the 2008/09 Capital Programme:

Location	Scheme
Thingwall Road, Irby	Speed Reduction Measures
Irby Road/Fishers Lane, Irby	Puffin Crossing
Bidston Link Road, Bidston	Anti-Skid, Vehicle Actuated Signing & signing
M53 Junction 5, Hooton	Signs & Road markings
Old Chester Rd/Union St, Birkenhead	Puffin Crossing
Poulton Rd/Brimstage Road, Bebington	Signal Re-Phasing
Hillbark Road/Montgomery Hill, Frankby	Signs & Road Markings
Column Road, West Kirby	Cycle Lane
Birkenhead Road (footpath adj. to railway), Meols	Pedestrian Measures – inc. Guardrail
Cathcart Street Area, Birkenhead	Minor Junction Improvements
Woodchurch Road/Prenton Hall Road, Prenton	Signal Re-Phasing
M53 Junction 4, Bebington	Signing & Road Markings
Martins Lane/Liscard Road, Liscard	Minor Junction Improvement
Rock Ferry By – Pass, Rock Ferry	Vehicle Actuated Signing
Frankby Road Roundabout, Frankby	Signing
Upton Road/Tollemache Road, Claughton	Pedestrian Facilities
Woodchurch Road/Holm Lane, Prenton	Pedestrian Measures – inc. Guardrail
Pensby Road (Downham Rd Nth – Ashlea Rd), Pensby	Signs & Road Markings

8.0 ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement is an essential element in keeping traffic moving on the highway network. It also assists in realising the full effectiveness of schemes introduced for road safety or accident reduction purposes and can help in the delivery of demand management and modal choice objectives. Within busy town centres enforcement of parking restrictions can play a significant role in encouraging effective use of road space by generating a turnover of parking space and removal of undesirable long-term parking to the benefit of local commerce. The various elements of enforcement activities on the highway network help to keep traffic, which include pedestrians, moving and to keep the highway clear of obstructions.

There are a number of agencies that undertake enforcement on the highway network and each have an important part to play in helping us to discharge our duties under the Network Management Duty.

8.1 Merseyside Police

The most obvious enforcement agency to the public is the Police. There are strong partnership links between Wirral Council and Merseyside Police. The Local Strategy and Policing Plan (2005-08) for Merseyside now recognises that road traffic policing can make a significant contribution in reaching the national 2010 casualty reduction targets. In support of this, the Police have increased the resources available for road safety policing by 20% in September 2005. This equates to an extra 20 dedicated staff (2 sergeants and 18 constables) who have been posted to Merseyside Police's newly formed Traffic Road Safety Unit. The unit's primary role will be to address the KSI casualty figures by means of enforcement of core traffic offences.

However, whilst the Police contribute and help in our co-ordination of the highway network further strategic links need to be made to promote more general road policing to keep traffic moving and reduce congestion.

8.2 Parking

Since the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) powers in Wirral in 2003, and now Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE), since March 2008 under the Traffic Management Act 2004, the enforcement of parking regulations has been undertaken by a Council appointed Enforcement Contractor.

Parking policy, management and appeals functions are undertaken '*in-house*' by the Parking Services unit. Wirral's parking policies support and compliment the transport and parking aims and policies adopted through the Merseyside Local Transport Plan and support national policies and guidelines on transport.

The Council's published policy and strategy on parking and enforcement is available online at www.wirral.gov.uk

8.3 Powers

Appointed Civil Enforcement Officers undertake enforcement of parking regulations within Council managed public off-street parking places, including both pay and display (P&D) and "free" car parks in Wirral. On-street parking enforcement of yellow lines and other parking and waiting restrictions is undertaken in the majority of the Borough's streets but excludes the M53 Motorway and the Mersey Tunnel approach roads.

The TMA 2004 has extended the Council's powers under Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) so that most regulations relating to on-street parking and waiting restrictions can now be enforced. These powers, however, do not extend to the issuing of penalty charge notices (PCN) for obstructive parking where no specific regulation or order exists, but do now potentially allow for the enforcement of parking across a dropped vehicular access, double parking and parking on pedestrian crossing zigzags. Before taking on the powers relating to dropped crossings and double parking, further clarification is being sought from the DfT.

The TMA 2004 also permits authorities to undertake enforcement via fixed or mobile cameras and for postal PCN's to be issued to motorists in these and other circumstances where otherwise prevented from issuing conventionally.

8.4 Revenue

Wirral Council is now in its fifth year of operating a CPE scheme. The use of CPE surplus revenue is governed by Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended by Section 95 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. This states that CPE surpluses may only be used to:

- Make good any deficits on CPE for the preceding four financial years
- Offset the costs of providing and maintaining Council off street parking
- Offset the costs of providing and maintaining non Council off street parking
- Meeting costs of the operation of or facilities for public transport
- For the purposes of a highway or road improvement project
- The reduction of environmental pollution [Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999]
- Improving or maintaining the appearance or amenity of a road or land in the vicinity of a road, or open land or water to which the general public has access
- The provision of outdoor recreational facilities available to the general public without charge.

Highway and road improvement projects cover such areas as: safety measures on dual carriageways and roundabouts; highway widening; cycle tracks; footways and guard rails; pedestrian refuges; levelling and altering the level of the highway; construction of road humps; other traffic calming works; etc.

Environmental pollution is defined as pollution of the air, water or land which may give rise to any harm and includes pollution caused by noise, heat or vibrations or any other kind of release of energy.

CPE income is an integral element of the on and off-street parking budget. All income generated is utilised to deliver the service within the budget set. Any excess income over expenditure would be used to offset budget allocations against eligible expenditure within the above definitions.

8.5 Resources

Parking Services utilise proven and reliable case management technology that is regularly updated to take on board new legislation such as the TMA 2004 and video evidence. CEOs record and issue PCNs using modern hand-held computers and printers, which were renewed early in 2008. Digital cameras are used to record photographic images of all contraventions. The case management system for notice processing (Si-Dem by Spur Information Solutions) is also utilised to manage car park and on-street resident parking permits. It is also proposed to utilise further add-in modules for other enforcement requirements including FPNs for environmental offences. Additional storage capacity for servers/hard drives etc can be accommodated through modular expansion.

The adoption of fixed and mobile camera enforcement and the use of postal PCN's will be managed to ensure the parking operation remains cost neutral to the Authority.

Enforcement of bus lanes is being considered and may be dependant upon funding from other sources including Merseytravel in order to implement and operate dependant upon the level of enforcement considered necessary for it to be effective across the Borough.

It is proposed that persistent parking penalty evaders will have their vehicles clamped if observed contravening further parking regulations. Details of this proposal are contained in the Council's published policy and strategy on parking and enforcement available at www.wirral.gov.uk

The use of wheel clamping will not increase the number of PCN's issued, but may assist in the recovery of existing unpaid debts.

8.6 Car Park Management

One of the fundamental requirements of an accessible, integrated transport network strategy is the provision of reliable and useful information. A clear signing strategy will ensure that traffic entering the Borough is informed through a combination of conventional and variable message signs where to access town centre car parks.

Signing of car parks within Birkenhead Town Centre is currently under review as part of a major re-development taking place within the town centre.

Wirral Council also plans to develop a parking strategy for the Town Centre, which will inform/be an integral part of a Town Centre Management Strategy.

8.7 Camera Enforcement for parking contraventions

The TMA 2004 allows for the enforcement of parking regulations with approved devices (fixed or mobile cameras). It is proposed that cameras are used in places where enforcement is difficult or sensitive such as school entrance markings and locations where high turnover of persistent, but generally short duration parking, creates traffic problems but are difficult to enforce. Camera enforcement is considered a critical element of the tool kit available to us to ensure the effects of congestion are minimised.

As further powers relating to moving traffic offences are enacted under the TMA the Council will explore the feasibility of such options for example enforcement of yellow box junctions and banned turn etc.

8.8 Highways Act/New Roads and Street Works Act

Council officers assume responsibility for enforcing the relevant legislation concerning activities undertaken on the highway, and delivers, a wide range of enforcement activities aimed at safeguarding the environment and the wider community.

Enforcement action whether verbal, written, statutory notices, formal caution or prosecutions is primarily based upon an assessment of risk to public health and safety.

The adoption of standard practices ensure that enforcement decisions are consistent, balanced, fair and relate to common standards which strengthen the protection of the public.

Works conducted within the highway can limit the amount of road space available to traffic and so lead to congestion and disruption. Whilst some of the resulting disruption is inevitable given the need to carry out the works, this can be minimised by ensuring that works do not take longer than necessary, are planned and co-ordinated effectively with other works and that those likely to be affected by the works are consulted upon or informed of the works. The risk of not conducting such activities is that unnecessary disruption to road users and local residents and businesses continues.

8.9 Highway Obstructions

Within the adopted highway where advertising signs, goods or other items are causing an obstruction outside premises that are closed, the items will be removed with the owner being informed of any action taken at the earliest possible convenience. Periodically, the Police may be asked to support enforcement activities so as to negate possible "Breach of the Peace" when offending items are removed.

Any interference with public passage is technically an illegal obstruction of the highway. The Highway Authority will enact action and/or legal processes to ensure removal of any such obstructions in accordance with current legislation.

Ultimately, we have a duty of care that requires all unlicensed obstructions to be removed from the highway. This duty is conducted under the provisions of the Highways Act 1980 by removing nuisance contrary to the provisions of Section 137. Recent changes in the Disability

Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) also put greater onus on us in maintaining freer passage and access for those with disabilities.

Typical examples of obstructions under the Highways Act 1980 would be:

- 'A' boards, typically used for pavement or roadside advertising;
- Goods displayed outside shops (beyond any private forecourt) (overtrading);
- Unauthorised signs attached to poles and lighting columns.

It is important to recognise that much compliance is achieved through informatory and educational activities. However, where such educational processes have failed the use of enforcement powers including issuing FPNs and court prosecutions is an important element in ultimately securing compliance with legislation.

We have a duty:

- To maintain adopted highways to safe and serviceable standards;
- To protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of such highways;
- To ensure they are free from nuisance, danger, obstructions, unlawful stopping up, interference and encroachments.

8.10 Miscellaneous Activities

As well as the Council's own highway activities and works, the Highways Act 1980 also sets out the legislative regime controlling a variety of other activities in the highway, such as the placing of skips, scaffolding and piles of building materials (e.g. sand or bricks) in the highway.

In contrast with utility works under NRSWA, the rules controlling these activities are generally set out in the 1980 Act itself, rather than in supporting regulations. So, for instance, under Sections 139 to 140A of the Highways Act 1980 it is against the law to deposit a builder's skip on a street without the permission of the highway authority for that street.

The Council is currently reviewing its environmental and highway enforcement activities and will be presenting a Streetscene Enforcement Strategy report to Cabinet in September 2008 detailing how such activities will be undertaken in the future. The report will seek Members approval of a strategy embracing all the main areas of enforcement used to protect and improve the environment, to protect the public from risk and to ensure compliance with Council adopted policies, in particular when other avenues of education and encouragement have failed. The report will recommend policies on the use of different enforcement legislation, set priorities and include short, medium and long term actions.

8.11 Multi-Agency Enforcement Team

Given that enforcement of activity on the highway network is undertaken by a number of different agencies, it is an aspiration to set up a multi-agency enforcement team. This team would consist of officers from Wirral Council, Merseyside Police, Community Patrols and the Neighbourhood Management Team with support from Merseytravel, Street Crime Wardens, etc. This team would be able to utilise a control centre monitoring the highway and be able to react in a more co-ordinated manner to unplanned events.

9.0 EDUCATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT

9.1 TravelWise

Through the TravelWise campaign target marketing along corridors to encourage public transport use, reduce the dependence on private cars and improve quality of life.

9.2 Car Share / Car Clubs

The Merseyside Travelwise website (www.letstravelwise.org) hosts a Merseyside Car Share journey matching service for individuals and business/residential groups. Greater promotion of this site will support increases in car share and will include for example links to tunnel traffic.

9.3 Park & Ride

Park & Ride facilities are considered to be a key element of the overall transport strategy since they complement the aims of removing reliance on the use of the private car.

The Merseyside Park & Ride Strategy, which formed part of the first LTP submission in July 2000, set out a framework for implementation in both the short-term and longer-term across the sub-region.

Locations in Wirral were: Bidston; Woodchurch; Bebington; Bromborough; Upton; Spital; Birkenhead North; Birkenhead Park; New Brighton Seafront and Meols.

In 2002, an enhanced P&R strategy document was submitted to Wirral Council's Environment, Transportation & Planning Strategy Select Committee on 23rd July 2002 and Cabinet on 25th July 2002 and included additional locations, Hoylake and Beechwood.

Since 2002, Green Lane (Birkenhead) Rail Station has also been identified for future P&R provision due to its location on the cordon of Birkenhead Town Centre and its potential to serve as an important facility to access Liverpool.

To date, Wirral has P&R facilities at Spital, Leasowe, Grove Road (Wallasey) and Hoylake Rail Stations. There is also parking (but not specific P&R) at other rail stations on the Merseyside network.

Wirral officers continue to liaise with Merseytravel to deliver a rolling programme of P&R improvements. Consideration will also be given to the introduction of bus-based P&R if/where appropriate, to expand choice for travellers and encourage modal shift and reduce traffic levels.

9.4 Linking with Public Transport Information and Marketing

Merseytravel's TransportPlus (TransportPlus is the promotional brand for Merseyside's single, integrated public transport network) initiative highlights how improvements to services and opportunities to present information in new ways will enable targeted marketing of public transport. Prolonged campaigns relating to major new schemes will be developed including extensive marketing of the enhanced bus routes and rail improvements for example. In addition, campaigns will support maintenance of current public transport patronage, as well as raising the acceptability and attractiveness of public transport options. This is a crucial element of locking in the benefits of new infrastructure. Train and bus services will continue to be promoted through Travel Planning in support of the extensive marketing campaigns to promote new and improved services.

9.5 Communication

Communication and engagement with road users and key stakeholders is considered an essential element of any project, initiative or strategy that Wirral delivers. It is essential for any organisation to have good communication and this begins from within. If an organisation is not effectively communicating internally, it severely weakens their ability to communicate well externally.

With the rate of regeneration within Wirral, communication and engagement is brought even more to the forefront and is seen as critical indicator of success. This is even more critical in managing the disruption and congestion on the highway network that works over the next few years will create.

A review of consultation undertaken in the first Local Transport Plan period showed that in terms of congestion:

- (a) It is perceived that local authorities and individuals could do more to tackle congestion – but, the solutions are seen to lie in persuasion not restraint.
- (b) Traffic congestion is seen to be confined mainly to the peaks, but tolerance is very low with waiting or queuing of more than 3 minutes being seen as “congestion”.

As Wirral becomes more prosperous and more people come to work, live and visit, the perceptions of congestion will present a challenge in meeting our duties under the TMA.

The need to market sustainable transport options at an individual level, with tailor made information and incentive packages is now more widely recognised.

9.6 Informed Choices

All projects proposed by the Council undergo a comprehensive consultation procedure involving all key stakeholders. Even without the TMA, the scale of projects being undertaken means that it is seen as desirable that once works start on site, information should be communicated to road users and stakeholders so that they can plan their journeys or their own works.

9.7 Provision of Travel Information to Road Users and the Community

It is an aim to introduce systems that will allow the provision of travel information. Intelligent Transport Systems will be used, together with internet technology to enhance the provision of comprehensive and integrated traffic and travel information. Wirral, along with its partners, proposes to use these systems to disseminate the following information:

- Traffic Information
 - Congestion
 - Journey Time
- Timetable Information
 - Bus
 - Rail
 - Ferry
- Real Time Passenger Information
 - Bus
 - Train

9.8 School Travel Plans

The importance of the school run as a major contributor to morning peak hour traffic is well known. The Merseyside Countywide Survey shows that the proportion of children driven to school has increased from 29.1% in 2001 to 31/8% in 2005. The vast majority of schools now experience localised congestion. School Travel Plans are a key element of addressing these problems. There is a commitment to engage with all schools by 2010. Development of Travel Plans will continue as a strong element to tackle congestion, safety, health and environment issues as well as engaging with the next generation regarding the impact of travel choices.

Work with secondary schools will increase in coming years as the need to address flexible learning pathways increases. Emerging analysis of data collected from schools developing School Travel Plans during the first LTP shows a measurable positive effect in reducing car usage and increasing walking to school. The data will be examined further in developing a target for mode share for the journey to school.

9.9 Workplace/Organisation Travel Plans

Car use for the journey to work has been increasing in Wirral and across Merseyside. As regeneration continues and employment increases, the contribution of the journey to work to congestion and poor air quality will also increase without intervention. Many of the major employers in Merseyside are now engaged in travel planning with 150 organisations involving more than 110,000 employees. Work will continue with these employers and the partner authorities themselves to ensure effectiveness of these plans. New travel plans will focus on key regeneration areas. In the next five years the programme will be strongly supported by planning requirements, which are envisaged to direct the majority of the work. This will encompass large employment sites, health sites, visitor attractions and residential developments. Over 100 travel plans across Merseyside have been required to date through the planning process. It is anticipated that 300 travel plans will be secured through the planning system over the next five years principally through our proposals for the transport Supplementary Planning Document. This approach also provides an important contribution to the Access Planning process by informing people of available travel options.

Travel Plans will be used to help address the impact of traffic generation at these sites as well as to increase their accessibility. The potential to introduce a workplace parking levy on organisations not implementing a travel plan has been discussed and will be kept under consideration as a tool to manage traffic growth.

As the largest employer on the Wirral, with approximately 13,000 staff, the Council recognises that it has a significant role to play in promoting sustainable travel.

The original Travel Plan was adopted in 2002, the second and current Travel Plan updated this plan and covers up to end March 2010.

9.10 Improving Bus Services

Wirral, along with Merseytravel, are keen to implement Quality Contracts (QC) so that more control can be gained over bus services, in relation to fares, quality, service frequency and bus routes.

Commercial bus services can, in some locations, provide over-competition of key routes and this can itself lead to congestion on these routes.

The Road Transport Bill, which is progressing through Parliament, would support the Government's efforts to cut congestion and improve public transport, particularly in the major cities outside London.

The draft Bill would:

- enable local authorities to improve the standard of bus services in their areas. Ministers have closely examined successful services and intend to set out proposals on future policy;
- reform Passenger Transport Authorities and Executives to enable a more coherent approach in major English cities. New governance options are being considered by Merseytravel in consultation with partner local authorities to determine the most effective arrangements for the sub-region.

We will look to use these new powers to help in our efforts to manage congestion on major routes.

9.11 Walking and Cycling Promotion

The benefits of increasing active travel are wide reaching for transport, health and environment sectors. The need to market these modes is well recognised and will be taken forward in partnership with the health sector.

A set of cycle and walk maps will be developed for local areas, covering all of Merseyside, and targeted marketing campaigns will take place through travel plan settings and more widely to support a new cycle and pedestrian infrastructure development. Campaigns to build on the higher levels of cycling already experienced in some area of Merseyside will also feature.

The new Merseyside Cycle Training and Promotion Service will also form part of the marketing strategy for cycling, presenting a positive opportunity to communicate the benefits of cycling and enabling greater activity.

9.12 Travel Awareness Campaigns

Awareness raising campaigns are an important element. As part of our communication strategy, this area of work will also include initiatives such as Walk to School Week and Car Free Day. Investment in awareness messages and association with Tavelwise will be particularly important in the next few years as an essential element of the communications approach.

The smarter choices, TravelWise programme, is a critical element in meeting the shared priorities.

- It reduces the risk of congestion by promoting the use of non single occupancy car travel;
- It supports air quality management by encouraging sustainable travel;
- It supports accessibility by covering access to education, work and healthcare through travel plans that inform and promote travel opportunities;
- It supports road safety by promoting safer travel to school and cycle training

10.0 MAKING USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology has an integral role in managing the network and relaying information to the public stakeholders.

Wirral is committed to introducing technology to assist in ensuring an efficient highway based network – evidenced by the following sections.

10.1 Urban Traffic Control Unit (UTC)

The Borough has invested, and continues to invest, significant funds into the Urban Traffic Control Unit based in Cheshire Lines building which has assisted in achieving the following objectives:

- a) Well maintained and reliable traffic signal equipment
- b) Active real-time control to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow
- c) Provide road safety traffic control measures
- d) Promote reliable journey times
- e) Provide accurate information

This Unit acts as a hub for traffic control and maintenance of traffic control systems, and other intelligent transport systems, linked to multiple central control systems.

The UTMC computer system is based upon UTC/SCOOT complemented by an extensive CCTV network. This system ensures capacity efficiency in the highway network. The system is used on the main strategic routes within the Borough. Each junction has been modified by our Urban Traffic Control engineers to ensure optimum efficiency. This is monitored on a regular basis to ensure the system is being used effectively.

The Traffic Systems team monitors and control the operation of signal installations using Split Cycle Optimum Offset Technique (SCOOT) to reduce congestion and delay. This ensures, as far as possible, that the traffic signals are operating correctly and that most faults are automatically recognised and reported to our maintenance contractors as soon as possible.

Additionally, an incident management system, COMET, has been customised for each individual junction and common sub-area in order to operate at its most efficient, and is continually monitored and modified as necessary in order to meet the changing demand.

Due to new technology and improved maintenance, the serious fault rate has significantly reduced on the network. Wirral Council have set traffic signal service standards, which include a two hour urgent maintenance priority on serious traffic signal faults.

10.2 Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)

There have been a number of improvements to our ITS capacity over the last few years. There have been benefits to a variety of road users including people with disabilities, bus passengers and general vehicle drivers, through improvements ranging from the installation of more efficient pedestrian/cyclist crossing controls and more responsive traffic signal equipment (SVD – selective vehicle detection) to computerised traffic control systems to reduce congestion and traffic delays. ITS will influence vehicle flows to take into account congestion and locations where pollution exceeds nationally acceptable limits. The use of ITS is regarded as a critical element in ensuring value for money and making the most of our existing assets and highways capacity. In addition, installations of CCTV (close circuit television) cameras have facilitated increasing opportunities to oversee and monitor the transport networks, and aided more effective and efficient management of transport when and where necessary.

At a local level Intelligent Transport Systems are being implemented in accordance with the Merseyside ITS Vision. This approach to developing an ITS strategy includes the following elements:

- Stakeholder consultation;
- ITS Vision;

- Network Inventory;
- ITS inventory;
- ITS package;
- ITS deployment plan.

The investment, expansion and collaborative use of intelligent transport systems are essential to address the network management duties of the Traffic Management Act and make the best use of existing assets.

The ITS tools that will be provided to manage the network efficiently include:

- SCOOT/UTMC – (including facilities for cyclists and bus priority);
- Common database (UTMC Complaint);
- Variable Message Signs (for both strategic and car park signing);
- Journey time monitoring;
- Air quality monitoring;
- Asset Management systems;
- Select Vehicle Detection (SVD);
- COMET.

These tools will enable:

- Strategy management – assisting operators in alleviating expected and unexpected traffic incidents;
- Automatic responses to events on the network;
- Route Journey Time Management – providing current journey times for predefined routes;
- Definition of day types using a calendar which stores traffic profiles and predictions;
- Data files to be exported for analysis off line;
- Map interfaces which can locate equipment items and incidents accurately on maps and allow strategies to be run directly;
- Live links to other systems including the Highways Agency QMISS database which is updated at 15 minute intervals;
- Exchange of data and travel information between systems.

10.3 Variable Message Signs

Wirral has recently invested in the development of an Enhanced Message System (EMS)/Variable Message System (NMS) strategy as an effective means of communicating with highway users to inform route choice, thus assisting them to make best use of the available highway capacity. Depending upon the message database it can provide information on a wide variety of events/incidents/roadworks to appropriately influence travel behaviour, with the primary function being to deliver early traffic information so that motorists can divert from their chosen course if necessary. This will be an integral part of the UTMC system. They will also have a secondary role for special events, major incidents, environmental requirements and carrying road safety messages.

Wirral Council have a total of 23 variable message signs located in the borough. Most recently Wirral and Merseytravel introduced variable message signs within the two Mersey Tunnels and on their approach roads linking the M53. The system interfaces the VMS with cross boundary authorities. The scheme is primarily related to the safety of drivers and better communication with users.

The variable message signs introduced on the inner cordon of the Town Centre play an important role in relaying information to drivers. The signs are used to inform motorists of various key messages, such as traffic information, incidents, events, coastal protection and road

safety messages. There are proposals to introduce a further 6 VMS in the town centre area through planning and regeneration.

The Variable Message and Car Park system will give Wirral a fully UTMC compliant system with a link to the corresponding system in Liverpool. Merseytravel is preparing a detailed scheme for the introduction of comprehensive Variable Message Signs within the two Mersey Tunnels and on their approach roads. The system will interface with VMS on adjacent highways. The scheme is primarily related to the safety of users and better communication with users. The in-tunnel signs will display pictorial images as well as words, in line with developing European standards.

10.4 Car Parking Management

The Council's Parking Policy and Strategy is available to view online or download from the Council's website, this document will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it continues to complement and secure delivery of parking policy dependant strategies linked to government legislation, the LTP and other local policies. The policy encompasses both off-street and on-street parking and provides a framework for parking management within the Borough. It is proposed that an ITS system will be developed to complement the parking provision within Birkenhead to direct visitors to appropriate parking provision within the town and reduce unnecessary traffic movements and congestion.

10.5 Vehicle Activated Signs

VAS are road signs that light up to warn drivers of a hazard, typically a speed limit or hazard near a school. The signs are activated if drivers travel above the speed limit, or too fast for local conditions, focusing the driver's attention back to the required speed. Research shows that VAS are effective in reducing drivers' speeds and casualties resulting from inappropriate speed.

10.6 COMET

The COMET database is the key component of a modern integrated traffic control centre. COMET provides co-ordination across all traffic control systems, allowing operators to control and monitor the network more easily, while delivering meaningful, timely and accurate information to the travelling public.

At the heart of COMET is a UTMC common database providing access to all traffic management related information and the ability to control and manage a wide range of different systems. COMET provides unprecedented levels of strategic control to effectively manage traffic and transport in the urban environment.

10.7 Emerge

Emerge is an online mapping tool, developed to enable local authorities to make the data held in COMET available to the general public over the internet so that they can check which car parks have parking spaces available. Although Wirral Council do not use this software, it is a tool which may be considered in the future.

10.8 Select Vehicle Detection

Merseytravel are currently conducting trials with Select Vehicle Detection (SVD) to allocate capacity priority to bus-based public transport at certain signalised junctions, typically along existing and proposed Quality Bus Corridors (QBCs). Journey times can be determined and displayed on variable message signs.

10.9 Bus/Ambulance Priority

The UTC system incorporates a Bus Priority facility, which can extend the green period beyond its normal maximum time to allow a detected bus through or alternatively recall the green signal to a bus approach. Bus detection can be carried out by either fitting a small device on each bus, called a TAG or Transponder, or by using special detection equipment, which requires nothing on the bus.

This priority facility has also been fitted to Wirral's Ambulance Service vehicles to improve response times on emergency calls. The UTC system also assists fire emergency vehicles on calls from the central Birkenhead Fire Headquarters.

10.10 Journey Time Monitoring

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) is a mass surveillance method that uses optical character recognition on images to read the licence plates on vehicles. ANPR is used by various police forces and as a method of electronic toll collection on pay-per-use roads, and monitoring traffic activity such as red light adherence in an intersection.

ANPR reads vehicle registration marks and compares them against a series of databases, for example Police National Computer, Driver Vehicle Licence Authority (DVLA) and local hot-lists. If a match occurs, appropriate police action by way of interception, or further intelligence gathering can be taken. We will look to use this data from ANPR cameras along with the DfT's ITIS. ANPR installation in the future may focus on our person delay indicator routes.

Merseyside Police currently have ANPR cameras located across the Borough including A540 Chester Road, M53 Junction 5 and Merseytunnel approaches.

We will look to use this data from ANPR cameras along with the DfT's ITIS data and other traffic counts sites across the city to develop a model of traffic on our roads.

10.11 Camera Enforcement

Camera enforcement is considered a critical element of the toolkit available to us to ensure the effects of congestion are minimised.

Camera enforcement is already used on Merseyside as part of the Merseyside Road Safety Camera Partnership with the aim of improving road safety by speed awareness and enforcement.

We are already considering the enforcement of bus lanes, recently enacted under the TMA. As further powers are enacted relating to moving offences, we will certainly consider the feasibility of these. Coming on stream are:

- Box junctions
- Banned turns
- Prohibition of stopping

10.12 Sharing of Information

The benefits of a centralised database of information displayed graphically are numerous and being able to share this formatted information makes it more tangible and easier to understand. The benefits of a centralised GIS database service are given below:

- Improved co-ordination of works in the highways
- Easier to Understand Data using graphical representation
- Simple and Centralised Data Storage
- Reduced/shared data management costs
- Improved Decision Making Process
- Reduce need for paper maps
- Faster and more flexible reporting/distribution
- Speed up 3rd Party Communications – “One Stop Shop” for information
- Improved Customer Service

Currently there are a number of discrete systems being used by key stakeholders, ranging from purpose built complex databases to simple spreadsheets. These systems have been developed normally in isolation to answer a specific issue and contain a vast amount of duplicate and often out of date information. The duplication of holding information in a number of separate databases leads to the obvious duplication in entering and maintaining the

information with all the associated direct costs not to mention the indirect cost to performance. In addition to the costs of maintaining multiple databases, the risk of data becoming corrupted or becoming out of date due to changes in circumstances, data entry error, etc increases exponentially. Work is currently undertaken to identify all sources of information with the ultimate aim of allowing these separate systems to be able to “talk” to each other.

This will give the benefit of encouraging better cross team working and sharing of information. Wider use GIS systems and the sharing of information will create in effect a “One Stop Shop” for information. The sharing of information with emergency services, the public and other stakeholders should allow for a well informed decision making process and must follow on after internal developments have progressed.

In parallel to our own internal actions, it is advisable to consider alternative options available in the market place for providing this “One Stop Shop” for information.

10.13 Confirm

Confirm provides capabilities for asset management, maintenance, planning and service delivery by monitoring a portfolio of assets (Highways Bridges & Structures, NRSWA Notices for Street Works, Property, Parks and Play Areas, Refuse Collection and Waste Management, Trees and Street Lighting) and allowing a more informed decision making process. Maintenance, refurbishment, acquisitions, disposals and day-to-day operation and management are all made more effective.

There are four main Modules within Confirm which are used to facilitate the co-ordination of works, these are:

Enterprise Maintenance Management System handles the portfolio of assets under one system and Confirm can offer links from this system into others such as contractors and customer relationship factions. These systems all link to GIS and the internet for the exchange of information. Standard and ad hoc reporting tools allow information within the system to remain easily accessible.

Highways Maintenance Management System is designed for the maintenance management of all highways and engineering assets including street, structures and street lights. It also includes a comprehensive NRSWA street works system.

10.14 CRM

Our Customer Relations Management System (CRM) enables Wirral to fulfil its customer facing responsibilities relating to traffic management, infrastructure assets and waste management services. The system is located in a purpose centred Call Centre at Cheshire Lines and agile officer working enables paperless activity in dealing with matters from beginning to end. The Streetscene finder is on www.wirral.gov.uk or 0151-606-22004.

10.15 MVM 2020

MVM is a search tool for planning and development use and acts to automate land searches. This allows for long term planning information rather than events and ad hoc road closures.

There is a need to ensure constant updates are made to the system and consider introducing new procedures to ensure accurate up to date project information is passed to the MVM updater to be loaded onto the system.

This system will shortly be updating to “M3” which remains essentially the same as existing MVM but with better links to improve sharing of information and cross-working.

10.16 Council’s Web Site

For more information please visit www.wirral.gov.uk.

11.0 THE FUTURE

11.1 Regeneration

The scale of regeneration in Wirral now and in the future presents an opportunity for Wirral to review how it is managing traffic on its roads.

As well as co-ordinating what is happening on our roads and managing existing traffic through the infrastructure we have introduced or are proposing to introduce, we are also trying to effect a culture change in people in how they make their transport choices. There are various documents detailing how we plan to achieve this, including our LTP and this document.

We do recognise though that in reducing congestion and minimising delay on our roads, a culture change in the way we work and live our ways be needed beyond just those activities that directly affect the highway. The improvements in technology have meant the growth of home or tele-working resulting in less people travelling on our roads. This type of behavioural change is likely to increase in the future, however, it is likely to be more than offset against increased car usage for leisure purposes and short journeys.

It is recognised that more innovative changes may be explored in the future to achieve what we want to. It is well known that the school run accounts for about a fifth of traffic on our roads in peak hours. Much in the same way flexible working means that the times that workers go to and leave work are staggered; staggering school times may improve conditions during peak times. Of course, we are trying to encourage modal shift away from the private car on the school runs.

The rate of regeneration in Wirral is unprecedented and what is working now on the highway may be not appropriate in a few years time. It is for this reason that we need to have regular reviews not only of our network but how we are doing things, ranging from signs and road markings to re-engineering processes. This is where monitoring is important to firstly establish a base-line and then to monitor how well we are doing, what has gone well and what hasn't.

It is clear that Wirral management of the network will need to further strengthen what are good relations with our partners as well as forging new ones.

Of particular note are plans under:

- HMRI
- Peel Holdings Ltd
- Neptune
- Birkenhead Town Centre Development

The clear aim of all of this is to reduce congestion and delays thereby keeping all traffic, not just motorised vehicles, moving on our roads. If we don't succeed then it will not be acceptable to those people that use our network and may even detrimentally affect future economic growth. The challenge will be to ensure that the TMA and NMD don't compete with all the other aspirations we have, such as reducing the number of people killed or injured on our roads, but that they all sit seamlessly together.

There will be issues as we strive to discharge our duties under the TMA. This includes resources, both financial and staffing, that we will have to address. This applies just as equally to all of our partners.

11.2 Transport Innovation Fund (TIF)

Despite an unsuccessful bid to the Government for Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) Pump Priming money in 2006, the Merseyside LTP partners continue to explore how the predicted growth in traffic, forecast as a consequence of increased economic activity, could be effectively managed in the future.

A key aspect of this work is the development of a strategic transport model that will predict where congestion will occur and when it will start to affect the economic growth of Merseyside, and enable different demand management measures to be tested.

A key element of TIF is the introduction of some form of congestion charging. Currently, there is no political support for the introduction of such in Merseyside.

Any future bid for TIF will be determined once the “Planning for the Future” project has been completed.

11.3 Road User Charging

The issue of road user charging is very much a contentious one. Whilst the congestion reducing benefits of road user charging have been cited as a success, it is too early to be able to state whether such a measure would be appropriate for Wirral.

As stated in Section 11.2, the feasibility of road user charging will be assessed as part of the Merseyside “Planning for the Future” project.

11.4 Monitoring and Managing Functions to meet National Indicators

A key aspect of future congestion management will be getting support from stakeholders, particularly local businesses. To this end, it is proposed to develop an effective communications strategy to engage stakeholders in the exploration of future economic growth and transport scenarios, including the potential role that road user charging could have.

Due to the timescales involved, it is highly unlikely that such a scheme would be proposed during the LTP2 period.

12.0 ACTION PLAN

Timescale

- Short - Up to one year
- Medium - Up to three years
- Long - Three years and beyond current LTP period

The Network			
Action	Aim	Timescale	Progress
Review Road Classification	Review A and B roads across the Borough to ensure that they are still appropriate for their classification	Short	Draft review is under consideration.
Review Road Hierarchy	Review road hierarchy for Wirral's roads based on level of use and function	Short	Road hierarchy has been established within the LTP. Subject to the agreement of the review of road classifications, the need for a further review may be appropriate before this hierarchy can be realised within projects.
Review traffic sensitive roads	Review the network of traffic sensitive roads, so they remain appropriate for current conditions	Short	Review of traffic sensitive roads to take place once road classification review concluded.
Review traffic regulation orders	Review existing traffic regulation orders to ensure that they are still relevant and amend/remove those that are out-dated	Short to Long	On-going.
Review speed limits	Ensure that speed limits are seen to be consistent and sensible to the public as well as ensuring that the correct limit is in place for the road type and usage	Short to Long	Study will be commissioned in 2008/09. The conclusion of study to be undertaken by 2011, in keeping with the DfT's deadline.
Primary Direction Signing/Static and JMS	Review Master Signing Plan for Borough to provide clear direction information to drivers so that they can reach their intended destination in the quickest time, taking into account the new developments coming on line	Short to Medium	On-going.
Cycle Network	Develop Wallasey District Cycle Network and implementation programme	Short	On-going.
Other signs and markings	Review signs and road markings to ensure that they are clear, concise, consistent and fit for purpose	Short to Medium	On-going. A strategy is to be developed on how this could be undertaken within existing resources. It is likely that this will concentrate on the major routes, i.e. A and B classified roads, with other minor roads being assessed when resources allow. There is also a necessity to evaluate sites which have a record of personal injury.

Traffic signals	Review signal timings for traffic signalised junctions across the Borough to ensure that they are operating at optimum levels	Short to Medium	A study will be instigated in 2008 to develop a strategy to systematically review signal timings.
Freight routes	Review and development of freight route to guide traffic to relevant destinations	Short	On-going
Person Delay Indicator route	Develop and implement interventions for the routes to reduce and manage congestion	Short to Medium	The Congestion Target Delivery Plan sets out the key issues and proposed interventions for Wirral's congestion corridor. This will require regular monitoring and review.
Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)	Development and adoption of strategies to manage and maintain our transport and highway assets	Short	A TAMP is currently being developed for adoption in 2008.
Investigate the feasibility of a GIS portal to access details of all works and events on the highway network	Provide a "One Stop Shop" whereby both internal and external interests can access up to date meaningful information to assist in co-ordination and forward planning	Short to Long	Exercise underway to identify sources of information across the Council for activities on the highway network.
Investigate feasibility of IT system to disseminate required information	Ensure that all meaningful information held by ourselves and other agencies is collated and made easily available to those that need it	Short to Long	An initial study will be commissioned in 2008 to identify whether there are already suitable IT platforms available or whether a bespoke one is needed.
Implement Car Park Guidance System	Implement variable message and fixed signs to guide drivers to available car parking spaces within Birkenhead Centre car parks	Short	Installation of car park signage will complement regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre by Castlewood Development.
Communicate Network Management Plan across Council and all stakeholders	<p>Ensure that all relevant people are aware of the TMA and NMD, and of the need to successfully discharge our duties.</p> <p>This will ensure that existing working practices will be reviewed in light of our NMD duty, i.e. timing of maintenance routines, meeting times and ensuring locations of those meetings have accessible transport links</p>	Short	On-going.

<p>Provision of travel information</p>	<p>Provide a portal that will allow commuters to make informed choices about their journeys, whether it is by car, walking, cycling, bus, train or ferry. This will complement the travel information already provided by Merseytravel.</p> <p>It is also the aim to provide up to date reliable information on road works and events on the highway network.</p> <p>The aim of this will be to facilitate reliable journey times for commuters and link into the Smarter Choices initiative championed in our LTP.</p>	<p>Short to Medium</p>	<p>Merseytravel already have a portal providing travel information for public transport.</p> <p>We will work with Merseytravel to provide up to date reliable information utilising the infrastructure currently being implemented, i.e. ANPR and CCTV cameras.</p>
<p>Traffic Managers Group</p>	<p>Share best practice</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>A Traffic Managers Group has been established for the Merseyside area.</p>
<p>Share Wirral's Network Management Plan with our partners and neighbours, as well as the North West Traffic Managers Group and the other interested parties</p>	<p>To enable that the development of network management plans by our neighbours and partners fit seamlessly and is consistent with our own approach</p>	<p>Short</p>	<p>Our Network Management Plan is to be made available through all avenues, and will be placed on our website.</p>

Enforcement			
Action	Aim	Timescale	Progress
Bus Lane enforcement	To consider the civil enforcement of bus lanes within Wirral	Short to Medium	A feasibility study is to be undertaken to look at the feasibility of enforcement bus lanes within Wirral.
Other moving offences	Undertake feasibility study on the level of resources required to undertake civil enforcement of moving offences allowable under Part 6 of the TMA.	Short to Medium	Dependent on Government legislation through Part 6 of the TMA.
Discussions to set up multi-agency enforcement team	To create a team involving various agencies to target enforcement at priority areas and to be able to react to unplanned events on the highway network	Short to Long	Instigated in 2007 the feasibility of setting up such a team is underway under the Department's Enforcement Plan.
Developer's Manual	<p>Development and adoption of Developer's Manual for commercial developers, planning consultants, community and environmental groups, householders and small entrepreneurs as well as local authority planners and designers.</p> <p>This Manual is intended to act as a "one stop" source of information from the "cradle to the grave" for planning applications</p>	Short to Medium	<p>On-going, led by the Planning Section.</p> <p>Transport and landuse SPD to act as best practice prior to formal adoption in 2009.</p>
Project Management	Develop procedures and processes to ensure that the aims of the TMA are considered in all projects, including buildability, affecting the highway network	Short	On-going.
Highway works	<p>Review NMAG to ensure that all works are co-ordinated effectively on traffic sensitive routes.</p> <p>Develop a co-ordination process for all highway works for the whole network.</p> <p>Develop process to co-ordinate highway works with events taking place on the network</p>	Short to Medium	<p>On-going.</p> <p>Regular meetings commenced in 2007 and meetings are scheduled for every 6 weeks.</p>
Place Traffic Manager on all consultee lists	Place the Traffic Manager as an essential consultee for all planned works and activities on the highway network, including development plans and strategies.	Short	It is the intention that this will be effective in 2008 and link in with NMAG.

Monitoring			
Action	Aim	Timescale	Progress
Review BVPI 100	Review of the Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI 100) that measures the number of days temporary traffic controls or road closures are in place on traffic sensitive streets, to ensure there is consistency amongst the partners in the way it is being measured and to see whether it is feasible to expand the monitoring of these controls and closures to include statutory undertakers works.	Short	On-going.
Develop new performance indicators	Ensure that the new initiatives and strategies that we introduce are working as well as we want them to.	Short to Medium	On-going. Indicators have been set for our Person Delay Indicator routes. Further indicators will be developed as appropriate.
BVPI 165	Ensure all new lowered kerb crossings for pedestrians are implemented to correct criteria	Short	On-going. Of great assistance in the accessibility for disabled persons.
NI 27 and 48 (LAA targets)	To achieve higher quartile rating than that presently recorded	Short to Medium	To co-ordinate all activity so as to have a positive effect on the personal injury accident record for users of the highway network.
Congestion monitoring	Undertake journey time surveys/traffic modelling on principal routes and in other strategic areas, to provide a basis for a model to measure congestion. Utilise CCTV etc to monitor congestion events	Short to Medium	Our Person Delay Indicator has been established. Further work will be undertaken to identify other congestion hotspots throughout the Borough.

Governance / Organisation			
Action	Aim	Timescale	Progress
Executive Member for Streetscene to act as TMA Champion	To ensure widespread support and awareness of the TMA and NMD at a senior level	Short	The implications of the TMA are to be communicated to senior officers across the Council Further awareness initiatives will be on-going.
Contingency Plans	Develop plans to deal with unplanned events that affect the highway network.	Short to Medium	Wirral already has contingency plans to deal with unplanned events with the Emergency Plan and undertakes stringent risk assessment

13.0 Traffic Managers for the Merseyside Local Authorities

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14.0 Merseyside Traffic Managers' Group

Terms of Reference

1. Oversee the implementation of the Traffic Management Act (the "Act") across Merseyside and co-ordinate input on progressing the Act, and the Network Management Duty (the "Duty") in particular, into the Local Transport Plan/Annual Progress Report process.
2. To review, propose and co-ordinate arrangements for the management of local road networks, the objective being to secure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic within Merseyside and to facilitate the safe and expeditious movement of traffic from and on to neighbouring authority networks. This will have regard to the practicability and other obligations, policies and objectives of the constituent local authorities. Traffic includes all road users: pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorised vehicles, whether engaged in the transport of goods or people.
3. To co-ordinate arrangements for making the best use of existing road space for the benefit of all road users and to consider actions that could be taken to make more efficient use of the network, or that would avoid, eliminate or reduce congestion or disruption and where possible, improve journey reliability.
4. To co-ordinate arrangements for controlling the occupation of the highway by Street and Road Works, special/planned events and other obstructions/incursions that may interfere with the safe and free flow of traffic giving due account to the statutory rights and reasonable demands of those parties needing to enter upon the highway or maintain and upgrade equipment within it.
5. To draft, review and/or determine specific policies, procedures, targets and objectives for improving traffic movement on local road networks with due recognition and consideration being given to the priorities of the National Street Works Highways Group (NSWHG) and the Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee (HAUC). To agree proposals for monitoring the effectiveness of arrangements and actions established to meet the requirements of the Act and the Duty.
6. To review the work and practices of other local traffic authorities in responding to the Act and to implement best practice as appropriate.
7. To establish and maintain working relationships with Traffic Managers in other authorities, the Highways Agency, Government Office North West and with other partners and stakeholders including the emergency services, utilities and bus operators who would have an interest in or be affected by the Act or the Duty.
8. To review all strategies and planning designed to meet requirements of both the Act and Duty to determine their consistency with wider local, regional and national policies and guidance (including Codes of Practice and Best Value Performance Indicators).

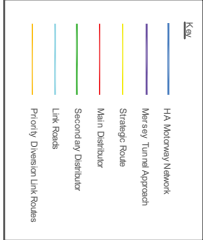
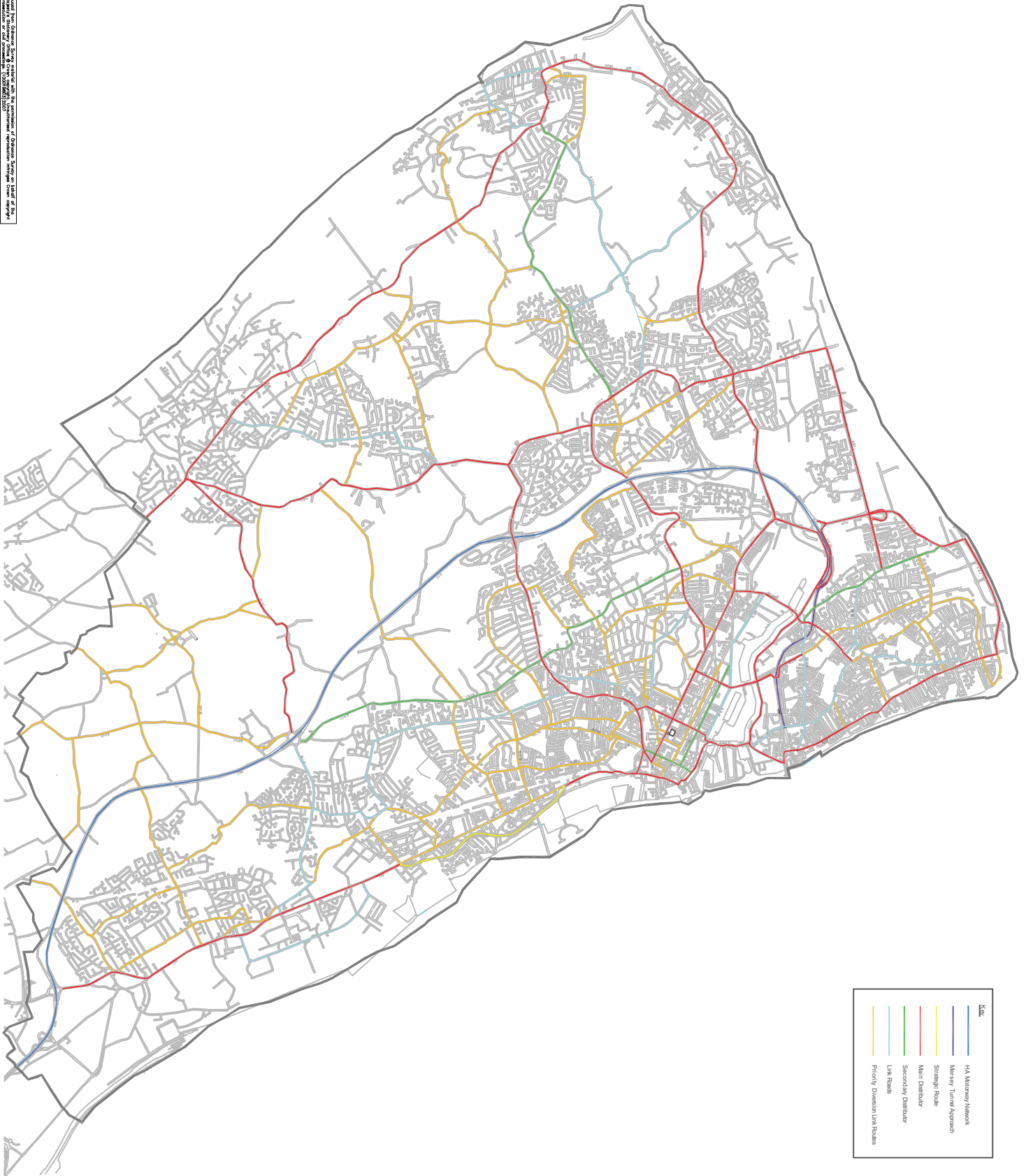
APPENDIX B


Criteria for Designation as a Traffic Sensitive Road

- (a) at any time, the estimated traffic flow is greater than 500 vehicles per hour per lane of carriageway, disregarding bus or cycle lanes;
- (b) it is a single carriageway two-way road, the carriageway of which is less than 6.5 metres wide, having a traffic flow or not less than 600 vehicles per hour;
- (c) it falls within an area covered by an order in respect of congestion charges;
- (d) is one of which more than 25% of the traffic flow consists of heavy commercial vehicles;
- (e) is one on which the traffic flow includes more than eighty buses per hour;
- (f) is designated by the local highway authority, as part of its winter maintenance programme, as one requiring the treatment of any part of it with salt or other chemicals when low temperatures are expected to prevent the formation of ice;
- (g) is within 100 metres of a critical signalised junction or a critical gyratory or roundabout system;
- (h) has a pedestrian traffic flow of at least 1,300 people per hour, per metre width of footway;
- (i) is on a tourist route or within an area where international, national or significant major events take place;
- (j) is classified an A or B road;
- (k) consists of no more than 100 metres of a side street that has a junction with an existing traffic-sensitive street, which was not designated as such solely by virtue of this sub-paragraph.

ANPR	=	Automatic Number Plate Recognition
CCMS	=	City Centre Movement Strategy
CCTV	=	Close Circuit Television
CEO	=	Civil Enforcement Officer
COMET	=	Central Office Management
COPPT	=	Computerised Operation and Processing Parking Tickets
CPE	=	Civil Parking Enforcement
DDA	=	Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
DfT	=	Department for Transport
DPE	=	Decriminalised Parking Enforcement
EMS	=	Enhanced Message System
GIS	=	Geographical Information System
HAMP	=	Highways Asset Management Plan
HAUC	=	Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee
ICM	=	Integrated Corridor Management
ITS	=	Intelligent Transport Systems
KSI	=	Killed or Seriously Injured
LTP	=	Local Transport Plan
MVM	=	Multi-tasking Virtual Machine / M3 = New Version
NLSAG	=	Non-Licensed Safety Advisory Group
NMAT	=	Network Management Approval Team
NMD	=	Network Management Duty
NRSWA	=	New Roads and Street Works Act (1991)
QBCs	=	Quality Bus Corridors
QMISS	=	Quantified Motorway Information Supply System
SAG	=	Safety Advisory Group
SCOOT	=	Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique
SPD	=	Supplementary Planning Document
SVD	=	Selective Vehicle Detection
TCSU	=	Traffic Control Signal Unit
TMA	=	Traffic Management Act (2004)
TTROs	=	Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders
UTC	=	Urban Traffic Control
UTMS	=	Urban Traffic Management and Control
VMS	=	Variable Message Systems

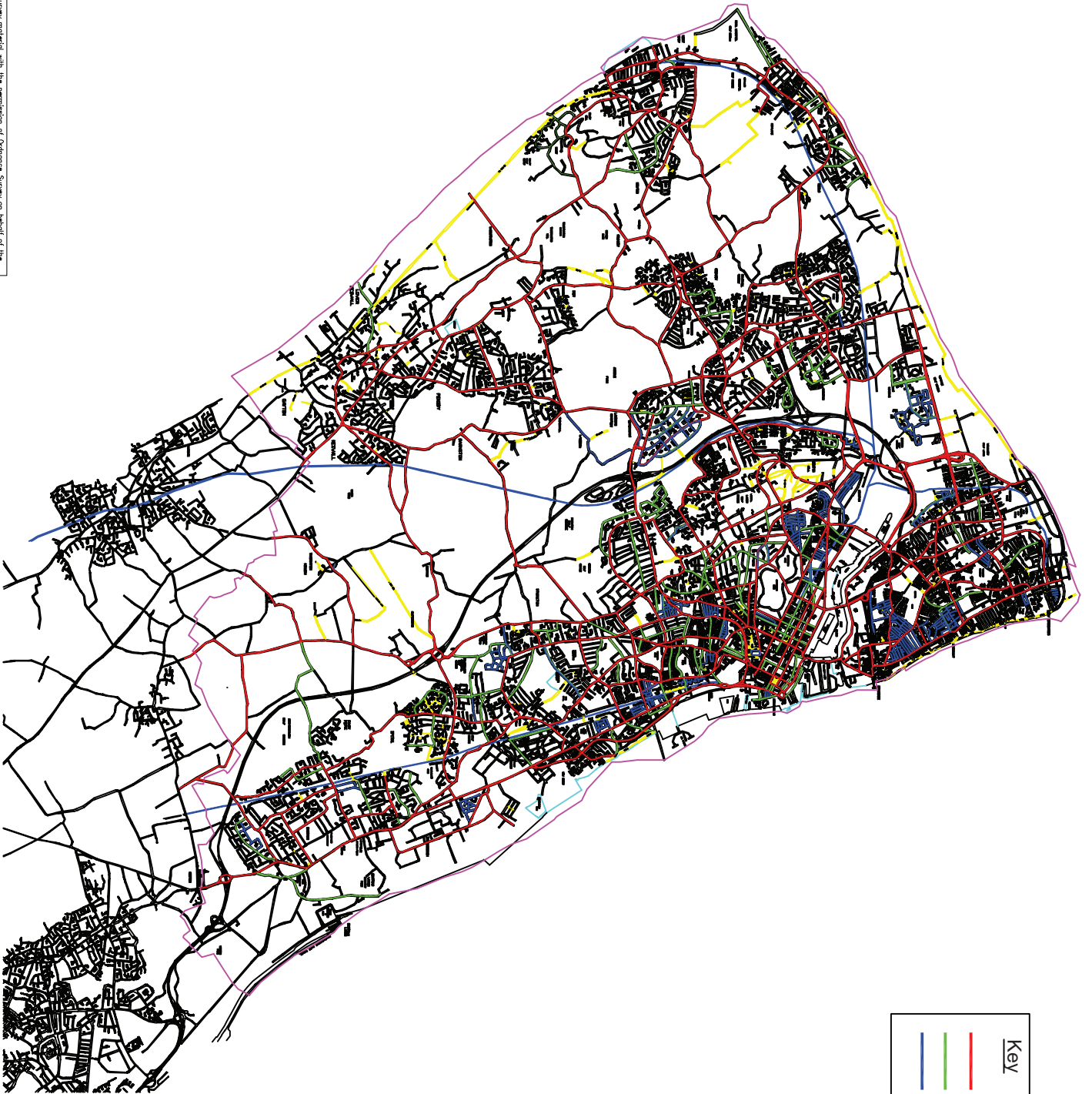
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 Metropolitan Borough of Wirral Technical Systems Department David Green Wirral Council, Central Business District, Wirral, Merseyside, L35 9EF Tel: 0151 493 3199	
WIRRAL COUNCIL NETWORK MANAGEMENT ROAD HIERARCHY PLAN	
Name: CA Checked: IS Approved:	Date: 15/07/2011 Scale: N.T.S. Drawing No.: TT/CA/00001

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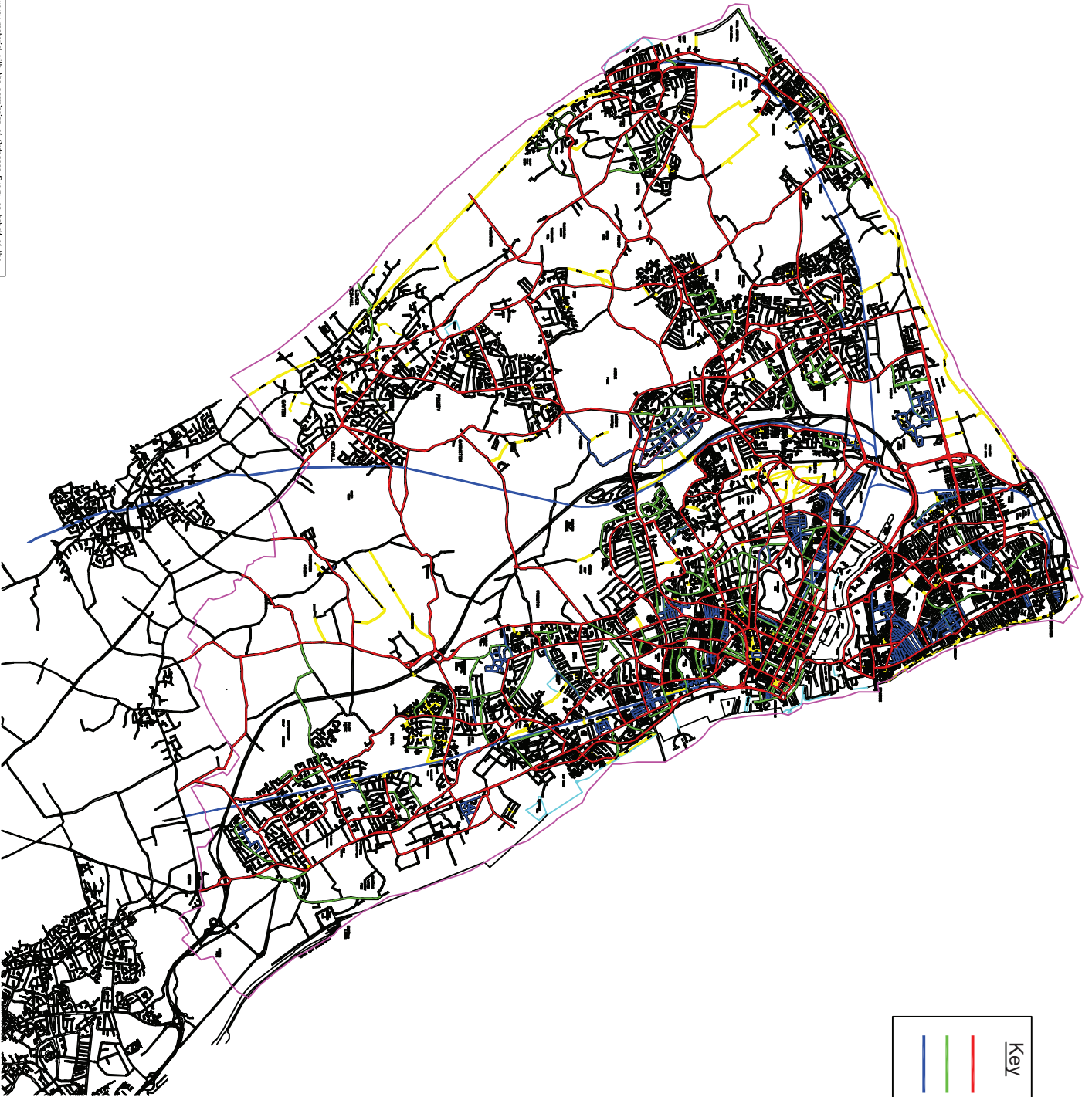
Key

- Fire Priority Routes
- Fire Secondary Routes
- Traffic Calmed Routes

<p style="text-align: center;">Wirral Council Network Management Emergency Services Priority Routes</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Metropolitan Borough of Wirral Technical Services Department</p> <p><i>David Green</i> Director</p> <p>Charter Line Building, Canning Street, Birkenhead, Wirral, Merseyside, CH41 1JF DX 728640 Birkenhead 12 Telephone 0151 606 2000 Fax 0151 606 2188</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Amendment</td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>By</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Auth.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Date</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Amendment		By		Auth.		Date					
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Key

- Fire Priority Routes
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Ref	Name	Street	SpanNumber	HeadroomActual	HeadroomSigned	HeadroomWidth
00003	Adelphi Street	Adelphi Street	1	4.42	0	0
00004	Allport Road	Allport Road	1	4.21	0	0
00004	Allport Road	Allport Road	2	4.02	0	0
00009	Ashton Park Footbridge	Ashton Park Footpath	1	4.1	0	0
00013	Bebington Road	Bebington Road	1	5.3	0	0
00014	Bedford Road	Bedford Road	1	4.27	0	0
00014	Bedford Road	Bedford Road	2	4.35	0	0
00015	Bidston Bypass north	Bidston Link Road	1	5.28	0	0
00015	Bidston Bypass north	Bidston Link Road	3	5.5	0	0
00016	Biston Bypass west	Fender Lane	1	4.8	0	0
00016	Biston Bypass west	Fender Lane	2	5.4	0	0
00021	Bidston Station Footbridge	Public Footpath	1	4.41	0	0
00021	Bidston Station Footbridge	Public Footpath	4	4.41	0	0
00022	Birket	Mid-Wirral Motorway	1	5.33	0	0
00027	Breck Road	Breck Road	1	5.33	0	0
00029	Bridge Street	Bridge Street	8	4.4	0	0
00031	Brimstage Lane	Mid-Wirral Motorway	1	5.09	0	0
00036	Bromborough Pool	New Chester Road	4	8.2		
00037	Bromborough Road	Bromborough Road	1	3.96	3.96	3
00039	Brook Street East	Brook Street East	1	4.4	0	0
00042	Carlett Park Footbridge	New Chester Road	1	5.7	0	0
00046	Chamberlain Street	Chamberlain Street	1	3.83	3.66	0
00048	Chester Street Underpass	Mersey Tunnel Exit	1	5.13	0	0
00056	Clatterbridge Farm Access	Clatterbridge Road	2	6.07	0	0
00058	Cleveland Street	Cleveland Street	2	4.48	0	0
00062	Corona Road Subway	New Ferry Bypass	1	2.21	0	0
00063	Corporation Road	Corporation Road	1	4.04	0	0
00066	Dell Underpass	Rock Ferry Bypass	2	5.08	0	0
00069	Duke Street	Duke Street	1	5.16	0	0
00070	Duke Street Park Station	Duke Street	1	4.5	0	0
00070	Duke Street Park Station	Duke Street	2	4.48	0	0
00073	Eastam Subway	Mid-Wirral Motorway	1	2.28	0	0
00074	Ellens Lane	Ellens Lane	1	3.35	3.2	2.93
00076	Eastam Rake north	Eastham Rake	1	5.04	0	0
00077	Eastham Viaduct south	Mid-Wirral Motorway	9	6	0	0
00078	Egerton / Morpeth Dock	Egerton Wharf	1	5.05	0	0
00079	A Bridge	Tower Road	1	5.04	4.88	0
00082	C Bridge	Tower Road	1	5.04	4.88	0

Ref	Name	Street	SpanNumber	HeadroomActual	HeadroomSigned	HeadroomWidth
00089	Fender Bridge north	Bidston Bypass	2	5.02	0	0
00096	Gorse Lane east	Gorse Lane	1	5.64	0	0
00097	Gorse Lane west	Gorse Lane	1	5.49	0	0
00098	Grange Road (Haymarket Tunnel)	Conway Street	1	4.44	0	0
00220	Woodchurch Pedestrian Subway	Mid-Wirral Motorway	1	2.43	0	0
00221	Woodchurch Road	Woodchurch Road	1	4.73	4.65	0
00222	Woodchurch School Sub	Mid-Wirral Motorway	1	2.43	0	0
00223	Woodchurch South	Woodchurch Road	1	5.1	0	0
00224	Woodchurch Viaduct	Woodchurch Road	4	8	0	0
00224	Woodchurch Viaduct	Woodchurch Road	5	8	0	0
00224	Woodchurch Viaduct	Woodchurch Road	8	8	0	0
0023A	Borough Road Tunnel	Town Link Viaduct	1	4.26	0	0
0043A	Carterton Road Ramp	Carterton Road	4	3.84	3.66	0
0065A	Dell Footbridge	Bridge Street	1	3.32	0	0
000G1	Dock Road Pipe Gantry 1	Dock Road	0	7.15	0	0
000G2	Dock Road Pipe Gantry 2	Dock Road	0	6.98	0	0
000G3	Bankfields Drive Pipe Gantry	Bankfields Drive	0	5.17	0	0
000G6	Dock Road South Pipe Gantry	Dock Road South	0	5.76	0	0
00102	Green Lane (Birkenhead)	Green Lane	1	4.06	3.9	0
00105	Hargrave House Farm	Farm Track	2	5.37	0	0
00106	Harrison Drive	Harrison Drive	1	3.82	0	0
00107	Heswall Hills Station	Brimstage Road	1	4.27	4.19	0
00109	Holmlands Drive Subway	Public Footpath	1	5.08	0	0
00111	Hooton Roundabout east	Mid-Wirral Motorway	1	5.46	0	0
00112	Hooton Roundabout west	Mid-Wirral Motorway	1	5.25	0	0
00116	Kings Parade Subway	Kings Parade	1	2.8	0	0
00118	Landican Farm Subway	Mid-Wirral Motorway	1	4.26	0	0
00119	Landican Lane Railway	Landican Lane	1	4.24	0	0
00120	Leasowe- Bidston Railway	Mid-Wirral Motorway	1	4.72	0	0
00121	Leasowe Road	North Wallasey Appr R	1	6.11	0	0
00121	Leasowe Road	North Wallasey Appr R	2	6.11	0	0
00121	Leasowe Road	North Wallasey Appr R	3	6.11	0	0
00122	Leasowe Road Subway	North Wallasey Appr R	1	2.44	0	0
00123	Leasowe Road Railway	Leasowe Road	1	4.61	4.5	0
00123	Leasowe Road Railway	Leasowe Road	2	4.68	4.5	0
00124	Links (Warren Park)	Unnamed	1	1.9	0	0
00127	Lingham Lane Footbridge	Lingham Lane	2	5.29	0	0
0012A	Bayswater Road	North Wallasey Appro	1	5.16		

Ref	Name	Street	SpanNumber	HeadroomActual	HeadroomSigned	HeadroomWidth
00130	Manor Drive	Moreton Spur	1	4.67	4.49	0
00136	Mill Lane (Wallasey)	Mill Lane	1	5.2	0	0
00137	Mill Road Footbridge	New Chester Rd	1	5.71	0	0
00138	Mollington Street	Mollington Street	1	7.25	0	0
00138	Mollington Street	Mollington Street	2	7.25	0	0
00139	Moreton North	Moreton Spur	2	5.05	0	0
00140	Moreton South	Moreton Spur	2	5.9	0	0
00141	Moreton East	Moreton Spur	2	5.41	0	0
00142	Moreton Road	Moreton Road	1	5.32	0	0
00143	Moreton Station (Pature Road)	Pasture Road	1	4.45	0	0
00145	New Ferry Road	New Ferry Road	1	5.16	0	0
00145	New Ferry Road	New Ferry Road	2	5.18	0	0
00151	Oakdale Road	Oakdale Road	2	7.3	0	0
00154	Pasture Road	Pasture Road	1	2.4	0	0
00155	Patten Street	Patten Street	1	4.12	0	0
00163	Poulton Viaduct	Docks Link	1	5.11	0	0
00163	Poulton Viaduct	Docks Link	2	5.68	0	0
00163	Poulton Viaduct	Docks Link	3	5.51	0	0
00164	Poulton Road	Poulton Road	1	5.38	0	0
00164	Poulton Road	Poulton Road	2	5.58	0	0
00165	Prenton Brook Farm Underpass	Mid-Wirral Motorway	1	3.58	0	0
00166	Price Street	Price Street	1	4.21	0	0
00168	Raby Hall Road	Raby Hall Road	2	5.1	0	0
00168	Raby Hall Road	Raby Hall Road	3	6.7	0	0
00170	Reeds Lane	Reeds Lane	1	2.5	0	0
00171	Rock Lane east	Rock Lane East	1	5.3	0	0
00171	Rock Lane east	Rock Lane East	2	5.22	0	0
00173	Rock Park Subway	Rock Ferry By Pass	1	2.21	0	0
00176	St Pauls Road	St Pauls Road	1	4.15	4.04	0
00177	Sandcliffe Road (Jockey Lane)	Sandcliffe Road	1	4.66	4.57	0
00179	Sandy Lane	Sandy Lane	1	4.89	0	0
00183	Sherlock Lane Footbridge	Sherlock Lane	1	5.36	0	0
0018A	Bidston Moss Viaduct	Mid Wirral Motorway	1	5.35	0	0
0018A	Bidston Moss Viaduct	Mid Wirral Motorway	6	5.35	0	0
00190	Station Road	Station Road	2	5.21	0	0
00190	Station Road	Station Road	3	5.17	0	0
00191	Storeton Hall Farm Access	Farm Track	2	5.08	0	0
00193	Thorburn Close Subway	Rock Ferry By Pass	1	2.14	0	0

Ref	Name	Street	SpanNumber	HeadroomActual	HeadroomSigned	HeadroomWidth
00195	Thornton Common Road	Thornton Common Rd	2	5.04	0	0
00195	Thornton Common Road	Thornton Common Rd	3	5.06	0	0
00199	Town Link east	Town Link Viaduct	1	5.05	0	0
00200	Town Link west	Town Link Viaduct	1	5.27	0	0
00200	Town Link west	Town Link Viaduct	5	5.02	0	0
00201	Union Street	Union Street	1	4.24	4.11	0
00203	Upton Road	Upton Road	2	5.07	0	0
00205	Vauxhall Bridge	Rivacre Road	1	5.16	0	0
00205	Vauxhall Bridge	Rivacre Road	2	5.16	0	0
00205	Vauxhall Bridge	Rivacre Road	3	5.89	0	0
00205	Vauxhall Bridge	Rivacre Road	4	5.16	0	0
00206	Vauxhall Entrance east	Vauxhall Access Rd	1	4.9	0	0
00207	Vauxhall Entrance west	Vauxhall Access Rd	2	5.1	0	0
00208	Vyner Road North	Bidston Hill	1	7.4	0	0
00211	Waterloo Place	Waterloo Place	1	4.05	3.65	0
00213	White Bridge	New Chester Road	1	5.25	0	0
00214	Whitehouse Lane	Whitehouse Lane	1	4.48	4.34	0
00218	Woodchurch Footbridge east	Woodchurch Road	5	5.52	0	0
00G11	Borough Road Sign Gantry	Borough Road	1	5.6	0	0
00G11	Borough Road Sign Gantry	Borough Road	2	5.47	0	0
0196A	Three Lanes End	Saughall Massie Rd	1	2	0	0
0204A	Upton Station (Old)	Unnamed	1	4.18	0	0

Ref	Name	Street	WeightRestriction	WeightRestrictionReason	Comments
00003	Adelphi Street	Adelphi Street	-1	Historical - Bridgeguard 1 ?	Made 3 span c1881. Weak bridge: Mandatory weight restriction 4 Ton / Axle or up to 6 Ton / Axle for PSVs (order c1970).
00030	Brimstage Footbridge	Unnamed	-1	owner advised by MBW.	Owned and maintained by Leverhulme Estates. Structure provides vehicle access to Brimstage Hall. 10T Weight Restriction (no TRO).
00069	Duke Street	Duke Street	-1		Single leaf rolling bascule bridge with two through trusses and cantilever footwalks. Redecked 1993. MDHC operate and maintain M&E system.
00072	Durley Drive	Durley Drive	-1	BD21 Assessment	Restricted to 13T GVW (All Emergency Service Vehicles exempt).
00060	Poulton (Bebington)	Dibbinsdale Road	-1	Environmental	Original bridge built 1835. Completely reconstructed using original masonry in 1980 (widened centre section from new imported masonry with concrete saddle).
00166	Price Street	Price Street	-1	Bridgeguard 3 - Interim	Two spans have cast iron beams. One span with wrought iron girders (assumed 1881 widening).
00187	Spital Road	Spital Road	-1	Historical- Bridgeguard 1/2?	Bridge at Spital Station. Weight restriction of 7.5 Ton on Spital Road (environmental reasons). Bridge Restricted to 20 Ton (historical restriction).

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 27TH NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

HIGHWAY AND ENGINEERING SERVICES PROCUREMENT EXERCISE – PROPOSED EFFICIENCY SAVINGS AND CONTRACT MOBILISATION UPDATE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Further to the decision by Cabinet on 16th October 2008 to award the new Highway and Engineering Services contract to Colas Limited, this report sets out in detail the proposed efficiency savings to be delivered through the new contract and provides an update on the contract mobilisation process on the run-up to the 1st April 2009 contract commencement.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Members will recall my previous report to Cabinet on 20th September 2007 which noted the conclusions reached by consultants Capita Symonds that a “single service with single provider” contract arrangement be introduced and achieved using a Restricted Procedure procurement route.

2.2 The “single service single provider” arrangement consists of bringing together all the separate service contracts into one single contract with a single provider with the Council retaining full client control. Potential efficiency savings in the Capita Outline Business Case were estimated at £3.6M over eight years and it was highlighted that such an approach would generate significant efficiencies particularly in terms of improved quality and increased output of work for the capital works allocations available and on the client side less staff will be required to manage a single strategic contract resulting in direct staff savings. Further detailed information relating to financial and staffing issues was subsequently presented to Cabinet on 1st November 2007.

2.3 In my most recent report to Cabinet on 16th October 2008, the outcome of the tender evaluation process was presented with the recommendation that the new contract be awarded to Colas Limited (Minute 246 refers).

2.4 In relation to the quantitative value for money assessment, the Financial Evaluation Model based on a typical basket of works indicated that Colas Limited were 25% cheaper than the second placed provider, Balfour Beatty. In addition, Colas Limited were cheaper than Wirral Council Operational Services Division by a similar margin even when taking into account the anticipated cost to the Council of closing down the in-house arrangements.

- 2.5 In terms of efficiency savings, a comparison of the anticipated cost of carrying out works during the current year 2008/9 using existing contract arrangements with the cost of carrying out the same work under the new contract was undertaken. This indicated that the same volume of work could be procured from the new Colas Limited rates for £550,000 less than under the existing contracts, resulting in a projected efficiency saving of £4.4M over the eight year contract period and confirmation that the efficiency savings proposed in the initial Outline Business Case will be realised.
- 2.6 In relation to the qualitative value for money assessment, Colas Limited also achieved the highest quality score with a submission highlighting their expertise in delivering similar Local Authority and Highways Agency maintenance contracts as well as a number of surfacing, street lighting and framework contracts for other Local Authorities with a total value of in the region of £145M per annum.
- 2.7 In advance of the report to Cabinet on 16th October recommending the award of the contract, an external Gateway 3 Investment Decision Review was undertaken by the 4Ps organisation. The purpose of the Review was primarily to validate the Council's approach to the procurement exercise including the evaluation of tenders, selection of preferred provider and confirmation of business case before the Investment Decision was made.
- 2.8 The conclusion of the Review was that "the Review Team finds that a successful procurement has been delivered, in a well managed manner. The project continues to meet Council objectives and will deliver value-for-money. The omens for success are good." A copy of the Review report is appended to this report.

3.0 PROPOSED EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

3.1 Capital and Revenue Works

3.1.1 The Council is spending £7.985M on Works during 2008/9 as follows:

- Highway Maintenance Revenue Programme = £4.602M
- LTP and Highways Capital Programme = £3.383M
(consists of £2.614M LTP plus £769k Highways Capital)

In relation to 2009/10 and going forward the total expenditure would depend upon the future LTP settlements and future Council decisions in relation to various highway budgets.

3.1.2 A large proportion of the Highway Maintenance Revenue allocation is used to improve the highway network and is therefore eligible for capitalisation in accordance with Accounting Standard FRS15: Tangible Fixed Assets. A complete review of the highway budgets is

now underway clearly identifying specific areas of both capital and revenue expenditure in line with this standard.

3.1.3 At Cabinet on 16th October a capitalisation figure of £1.5M was approved as part of the Director of Finance's Projected Budget 2009-11 (Minute 219 refers) and the revised expenditure can be summarised as follows:

Spend area	Total £000	Capitalised Revenue £000	Revised Total £000
Revenue Programme	4,602	-1,500	3,102
Capital Programme	3,383	+1,500	4,883

3.1.4 Based on this Revenue/ Capital split, the £550k per annum total efficiency saving stated in my previous report is broken down as follows:

- £220k per annum true revenue saving against Revenue Works expenditure (£1.76M over the eight year contract term) to contribute to corporate efficiency savings targets;
- £330K per annum efficiency saving against Capital Works expenditure (£2.64M over the eight year contract term) primarily to facilitate increased work output for the allocation available or possibly offset the effect of contract inflation in future years.

3.1.5 As highlighted in my previous report, additional non-cashable efficiency savings will be delivered through the new contract as all tendered rates include a built in 1.5% per annum Gerschon Efficiency Saving. This efficiency saving equates to approximately £1M over the eight year contract term depending on actual rates of inflation.

3.2 Client Staff Costs

3.2.1 As highlighted in previous reports, true revenue savings can be achieved as a result of a smaller client organisation being required to manage a single strategic contract. The Capita Outline Business Case predicted an approximate 25% reduction in staff over the eight year term of the contract and my report to Cabinet of 1st November 2007 (Minute 340 refers) confirmed the intention to achieve this "gradual down-sizing" with minimal need for redeployment/ redundancy based on the age profile of the employees concerned.

3.2.2 As a result of further clarification of the resource requirements for the new Client organisation, the anticipated reduction in staff numbers during the first two years of the contract are as follows:

Financial Year:	Annual reduction in staff number:	Cumulative revenue saving:
(Yr1) 2009/10	3 no FTE	£100k
(Yr2) 2010/11	3 no FTE	£80k + £100k = £180k
Totals	6 no FTE reduction in establishment from Yr 2 of contract	£1.36M over eight year term

3.3.3 Based on this analysis, *it is predicted the true revenue saving associated with Client staffing for 2009/10 will be £100k, rising to £180k per annum in 2010/11 giving a total cashable efficiency saving over an eight year contract term of £1.36M.*

3.3.4 It is important to note that further Client staff savings may be achievable beyond 2010/11 but these will be largely predicated on the potential to develop a Highways Asset Management ICT System in partnership with the new provider once the new contract has commenced.

4.0 CONTRACT MOBILISATION UPDATE

4.1 In my previous report to Cabinet on 16th October, a number of key issues requiring further consideration as part of the Contract Mobilisation process were highlighted as follows:

- Confirmation of the alternative depot proposal including the potential for an alternative use or even sale of sites to generate a capital receipt
- Confirmation of the process for terminating the in-house contract with Wirral Operational Services Division (OSD) including verification of actual close-down costs
- The need to align Technical Services Department budgets to reflect the rate schedules in the new contract
- The strategy to ensure a robust “intelligent client” team and processes are in place to effectively manage the new contract
- The HR and Communications Strategy to effectively manage the change process for in-house contractor (OSD) employees, including the importance of timely discussions with the new provider in relation to “at risk” employees in the Engineering Workshop and Transport Section

4.2 Due to the need to adhere to statutory Standstill Period procedures before engaging with the new provider, it has not been possible to progress negotiations on these matters as quickly as officers would have wished. Even so, a robust Contract Mobilisation Strategy is being developed based on a series of key workstreams and it is proposed that a verbal update on these matters will be provided at the meeting. The Contract Mobilisation Strategy key workstreams are as follows:

- OSD Close-down including Service Continuity

- OSD HR/ Change Strategy
- Forward Planning Work Programme
- Intelligent Client Processes and Management Systems
- Intelligent Client HR/ Change Strategy
- ICT Development including Financial Systems
- Legal/ Contract Finalisation
- Marketing and Communications
- Depot Strategy
- Transport Service

4.3 It is proposed that officers will report to future meetings on Contract Mobilisation progress in due course, including action taken against the 7 Recommendations from the recent Gateway 3 Review.

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

5.1 In terms of current spending, the Council is spending £7.985 million on works during 2008/9 as follows:

- Highway Maintenance Revenue Programme = £4.602M
- LTP and Highways Capital Programme = £3.383M
(consists of £2.614M LTP plus £769k Highways Capital)

5.2 In addition, the revenue staff costs associated with administering these works for 2008/9 are £1,655k.

5.3 Anticipated cashable efficiency savings are summarised in the table below:

Spend Area	Expenditure	Saving 2009/10
Revenue Works Programme	£3,102k	£220k
Client Staffing	£1,655k	£100k

5.4 The detailed financial implications can be summarised as follows:

- £220k per annum true revenue saving against Revenue Works expenditure (£1.76M over the eight year contract term)
- £100k true revenue saving associated with Client staffing for 2009/10 rising to £180k per annum in 2010/11 (£1.36M over the eight year contract term)
- £330K per annum efficiency saving against Capital Works expenditure (£2.64M over the eight year contract term)
- Anticipated 1.5% Gershon Efficiency Saving (non cashable) included in tendered rates equating to approximately £1million over the eight year contract term (dependent on actual rates of inflation)
- In-house contractor termination costs equating to £99k per annum over a minimum five year term as follows:

- Possible redeployment/ redundancy of employees and sale of stock costs less sale of vehicles = £102k one-off cost (possibly funded from first year savings)
- Reduction in Central Establishment Charges and Business Support contributions = £79,200 per annum loss of income
- The cost of external consultant support for the procurement exercise including Outline Business Case development, project management and legal assistance since January 2007 is approximately £125k of a total allocation of £200k from within existing Departmental budgets

5.5 The detailed staffing implications can be summarised as follows:

- Highway Maintenance Division (Client) staff – gradual down-sizing involving a 3 FTE reduction in establishment in 2009/10 and a further 3 FTE reduction in 2010/11 with minimal requirement for redeployment/ redundancy
- Operational Services Division – 76 employees to TUPE transfer to the new provider
- Engineering Workshop – 6 employees “at risk” and subject to potential redeployment/ redundancy

5.6 Even though the work of the Transport Section is outside the scope of this procurement exercise, Operational Services Division are the second biggest user of the Council’s transport fleet and account for approximately 40% of the Section’s workload.

5.7 This workload is spread amongst the team of 14 employees with none eligible for TUPE transfer, hence 5 employees may be “at risk” subject to redeployment/ redundancy depending on the future of the Section and its ability to secure alternative work, possibly from the new provider. It is also worth noting that a Council-wide review of transport provision is being led by the Director of Finance and an initial report is expected in the New Year.

5.8 Overall, it is imperative that early discussions take place with the new provider to determine the future of “at risk” employees in the Engineering Workshop and Transport Section and it is proposed that this issue will be included in a further report to Cabinet shortly.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Equal opportunities issues have been considered as part of the procurement process.

7.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct implications under this heading.

8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The provision of an effective highway maintenance regime particularly the street lighting network provides a positive contribution to community safety.

9.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct implications under this heading.

10.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Sustainability issues have been considered as part of the procurement process.

11.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct implications under this heading.

12.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no direct implications under this heading.

13.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

13.1 There are no direct implications under this heading.

14.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

14.1 The contract involves work locations throughout the borough.

15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That

- (1) the findings of the recent Gateway 3 Investment Decision Review be noted;
- (2) the proposed efficiency savings detailed in this report be noted and agreed; and
- (3) the latest position with respect to Contract Mobilisation be noted and officers' intention to report to future meetings on progress involving action taken against the Gateway 3 Review Recommendations be endorsed.

DAVID GREEN
DIRECTOR, TECHNICAL SERVICES

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4ps Gateway Review 3 – Investment decision

Version number: Final

Date of issue to PO: 10th October 2008

Authority: Metropolitan Borough of Wirral

4ps Gateway Review dates: 8th to 10th October 2008

4ps Gateway Review Team Leader: Vincent Hunt

4ps Gateway Review Team Members:

Andrew Callander

Martin Fox

In order to promote full and frank exchange of views during the gateway review process and for the purposes of deliberation and production of the recommendations contained herein, this gateway review report is confidential to the project owner in their capacity as employee of the procuring authority.



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Background

The aims of the project:

These include:-

- The market testing of the key highway and coastal defence maintenance services (excluding traffic signals)
- Integration of 6 term contracts which expire on the 31/3/09
- The delivery of cash savings to the Authority
- Better value in delivering the services with good levels of quality
- A partnership approach with the future provider

A relevant quotation from the Council's OBC is:-

"The Authority expects to achieve the following primary objectives from any new service contracts in the future:

- Sustained delivery of efficiency savings, contributing to the Authority's existing and future Efficiency Plans;
- An enhanced front-line service, whose strengths lie in an ability to be responsive, to co-operate proactively with officers and members and to improve customer satisfaction and perception within the Wirral community; and
- Ability for the client to retain an appropriate level of management and control."

The driving force for the project:

The Council required an efficient and effective highway and coastal maintenance contract; which could be shown to offer good value for money.

The procurement status:

The Council has completed tender evaluation and is about to award the contract

Current position regarding 4ps Gateway Reviews:

The project has had two Gateway Reviews and one Health Check since commencement

Purposes and conduct of the 4ps Gateway Review

Purposes of the 4ps Gateway Review

The primary purpose of a 4ps Gateway Review 3 is to confirm the business case and benefits plan now that the bid information has been confirmed and check that all the necessary statutory and procedural requirements were followed throughout the procurement process.

Appendix A gives the full purposes statement for a 4ps Gateway Review 3.

Conduct of the 4ps Gateway Review

This 4ps Gateway Review 3 was carried out from 8th to 10th October at the Cheshire Lines Building, Canning Street, Birkenhead. The team members are listed on the front cover.

The people interviewed are listed in Appendix B.

The Review Team would commend the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral for its ongoing and mature engagement with the Gateway Review process, which is being used by the Council as an integral part of the drive for efficiency and effectiveness.

The Review Team would also like to thank David Green, Mark Smith and Geof Kaufman for their enthusiasm and openness; and for the efficient arrangements. Further mention should be made of Sheila Jones, Lyn Ebbrell Jenny Williams and Barbara Parker for their considerable efforts in supporting the team. All interviewees are to be commended for their open and frank engagement with the process.

Conclusion

The Review Team finds that a successful procurement has been delivered, in a well managed manner. The project continues to meet Council objectives and will deliver value for money. The omens for success are good.

There is now a need to focus on mobilisation and implementation issues which include:-

- 🌐 Managing the staff transfer to the successful bidder
- 🌐 Developing , programming and implementing a new client management structure
- 🌐 Catalysing an appropriate partnering relationship with the contract
- 🌐 Overhauling future risk controls to reflect the evolution of the project now that the successful procurement phase is concluded
- 🌐 Applying the same level of robust project governance and resourcing to future activities

The following examples of good practice were found during the Review:-

- 🌐 **A successful procurement with strong market interest**
- 🌐 **Well managed process driven to achieve business benefits**
- 🌐 **Pro-active involvement of the audit section to approve each stage of the process and generate suggestions for improvement**
- 🌐 **Good use of virtual data room with on line access**
- 🌐 **A Gershon efficiency target of a cashable 1.5% per annum on the contractor**
- 🌐 **Robust tender assessment process with moderation**
- 🌐 **Good use of external advisors to bridge internal resourcing pressures**
- 🌐 **NEC3 Training for the client side**
- 🌐 **The proposed use of a Code of Conduct to reassure transferring staff of their rights and the Council's commitment to them**

A summary of recommendations can be found in Appendix C.

Status

The overall status of the Project is **Amber** - as defined below.

Red – To achieve success the project should take action immediately.

Amber – The project should go forward with actions on recommendations to be carried out the next 4ps Gateway Review of the project.

Green – The project is on target to succeed but may benefit from the uptake of recommendations.

As regards the recommendations of the previous Health Check the Council has arranged NEC 3 training for staff and is in the process of implementing a new client side organisational structure. Skills auditing work is still in progress.

Findings and recommendations

1: Business case and stakeholders

The current procurement of Highways Maintenance, Drainage, Coastal Protection, Street Lighting works continues to fit with Wirral's Corporate Plan and is still underpinned by the authority's strategic objective to create a Clean, Pleasant, Safe and Sustainable Environment.

The project is supported by a well written Outline Business Case, which was originally prepared by the Council's consultants, Capita, in September '07. This led to the development of a comprehensive procurement strategy, which has now been implemented up to the point of the forthcoming proposed contract award.

The business case forecast that the preferred option was capable of realising cumulative savings of approximately £3.3 million over the life of the project. This objective has been realised by the successful bid. This potential saving is based on the contractor receiving a consistent supply of work and assumes that inflation is fully funded (Baxter indexation), although this inflation total is effectively reduced for the Council by the contractor's commitment within the contract to realise an annual efficiency saving of 1.5%. The new contract will also allow the establishment of a streamlined client side management operation, which will produce a saving in client revenue costs. As such the project continues to be affordable and to offer value for money although the realisation of these benefits will be dependant on providing the commitment and resources to adequately manage the mobilisation and delivery of the contract.

The Review Team found that the procurement has been well organised and managed. The tender assessment process was particularly comprehensive and the team was impressed by the use of the Council's Audit function through-out the process.

The procurement has been complicated by the involvement of the Direct Service Organisation (DSO) bid. This has presented organisational challenges to the Council in preparing and assessing the tenders, which have been met, and will present further challenges in transferring the DSO highways staff to the successful contractor. Notwithstanding this the team found buy-in, a clear understanding of and commitment to the success of the project from all the Council Members and officers interviewed.

2: Assessment of the proposed solution

After a robust and thorough procurement the Council has a range of good bids from qualified suppliers. The Council has been pleasantly surprised by the cost and quality advantages of the winning bid; and has verified the validity of the prices.

The winning supplier has an impressive track record and may be building a regional presence with a potential eye on future work in the region.

The evaluation mixture of 70% price versus 30% quality has given the Council the opportunity to give appropriate and wide consideration to the winning bid; including the examination of a significant number of method statements. The financial evaluation was carried out by in-house accountants (Financial Services) based upon populating an Excel model of a representative basket of activities which would comprise a typical annual work flow.

The work about to be awarded to the successful bidder is as follows:-

- 🌐 Footway and carriageway repairs
- 🌐 Traffic sign (non illuminated and illuminated) installation/repair/cleaning
- 🌐 Street furniture (seats, barriers, guard rail)
- 🌐 Road lining/markings
- 🌐 Emergency response
- 🌐 Winter maintenance operations
- 🌐 Minor traffic improvement scheme construction
- 🌐 Structural maintenance schemes (footway/carriageway reconstruction)
- 🌐 Footway/carriageway resurfacing
- 🌐 Surface dressing/treatments
- 🌐 Gully cleansing/repairs and improvements to the highway drainage system
- 🌐 Street lighting maintenance/improvement schemes
- 🌐 Painting programmes for the Councils highway and coastal assets
- 🌐 Coast protection structures minor repairs

Traffic signaling is not included and is currently subject to a separate procurement exercise.

3: Review of current phase

The current phase of the contract has been well managed and should lead to a successful contract award.

A number of activities, which should have been commenced to take the project to the next stage, have been constrained until the status of the in-house bid is publically established and as a result there is a need for action to expedite activities required to ensure readiness for the next phase

A client development plan has been prepared outlining the proposed organisation required to manage the new contract. Familiarisation with the NEC contract has correctly been identified as a core requirement and training has been organised. It is also recognised that a skills assessment exercise is a key element of planning the new organisation, but this has yet to be completed. The staff required will be considerably less than current staffing levels, with reductions planned to be achieved through retirement, which may raise cover and continuity issues in terms of managing the new contract.

4: Risk management

There is a detailed Risk Register in place and this is available on the Council's intranet for access by authorised people on the Project Team and Project Board. The register is updated regularly with new risks added by members of the team.

This appears to include all relevant areas of risk for the current phase up to and including procurement, together with impact assessments and proposed mitigation measures identified. They have been categorised appropriately as:

- Asset Management;
- Financial;
- Human Resources;
- Legal;
- Specification;
- Operational Risk;
- Political;
- Procurement; and,
- Risk Management.

The Review Team observed that whilst this Risk Register identified risks associated with the above areas, it did not appear to reflect the next phase of the project, namely implementation. The Review Team therefore believe that an urgent refresh of the risk register is essential to identify impending implementation risks, and to close out risks that are no longer of direct relevance to the delivery of the contract, for example procurement risks.

This exercise also needs to ensure that continuity and contingency plans for the client side are under development and ultimately agreed with the key stakeholders and that the supplier's continuity and contingency plans have been assessed to confirm they meet the requirements of the Council.

The Review Team noted that the Risk Register was last amended on 23 September 2008. The Review Team also noted that the risk register in its entirety is typically issued to the Project Board, and whilst this demonstrates that risks are made available to Project Board members, the appropriateness of this approach should be reviewed.

The Review Team therefore consider that presentation of the "top ten" risks at Project Board in a more readily digestible format would be of benefit to focus attention on the key risks facing the contract, and to assure itself that the mitigation measures and actions are in place to address these risks. A useful project management tool that might assist in this regard is an "Executive Dashboard" which presents the priority risks in a simple format together with their current status and the proposed mitigating action to be taken. Similarly the dashboard could profile the "top ten" issues extracted from the Issues Log.

Recommendation: Following successful award of the contract a fundamental review of the risk register should take place to ensure that it reflects the evolution of the project.

Recommendation: That the "top ten" risks are reviewed at each Board meeting with the Board assuring itself that robust mitigation measures and actions are in place.

5: Readiness for next phase – readiness for service

The Council has begun to construct its post award client side and has taken on board the recommendations of the Gateway 2 Health Check review.

The Review Team noted that this Health Check (carried out in June 2008) recommended that the Council needs to be fully prepared for its “Intelligent Client” role. Whilst the Review Team note that the client function is under development and thought has gone in to the changes required within the Highways Department to perform this role, further work is required to ensure that the Council can perform its duties to maximise the benefit offered by the contract. As noted in the Health Check, advice should be sought from experts if necessary, and given time pressures to mobilise the highways maintenance contract soon, this remains a viable option that should be considered by the Council.

The Review Team would comment that there is a need to apply the same robust governance and project controls to the implementation phase as were applied to the procurement. This will include the need to apply explicit planning for the relevant internal and external resources. Work package breakdown should inform the development of appropriate Gantt charts and support the fundamental revision of the risk register. That is, new tasks bring new risks.

There is a danger that some stakeholders might consider that the project is over with the end of the procurement; but in a very real way a serious further phase has just begun.

A particular aspect of this is the need to convert the considerable goodwill existing between the Council as procurer and the successful bidder into a robust and constructive day to day partnership.

Thus, staff at all levels will need to be briefed, motivated and managed to exhibit appropriate behaviours towards the new contractor. In a similar vein the Contractor will be looking for leadership and boundary setting from the Council from day one. This may be a challenge to the Council whilst the client side is substantially “under construction”.

The Council has a major change management project ongoing in terms of the TUPE transfer of staff to the contractor. A good start has been made and the Council has considerable experience in the field. The Review Team would comment that the Council should health check its level of resources to the transfer. Since the contractor is applying for admitted body status for pensions (perhaps the largest worry for individuals); and data preparation is well advanced the omens are good.

The Review Team would suggest that asking individuals to sign a statement of their length of service, pension entitlement and pay grade/ bonuses etc would have advantages in terms of reassuring individuals of their entitlements but also removing data errors.

The Review Team has looked at the early drafts of the communications plan for the transfer and would comment that the systematic regular briefing of stakeholders as specified in a stakeholder matrix may hold advantages in terms of systemising the process.

The current Communication Plan this does not extend past contract award. A Communications Action List has been prepared to deal with the immediate staff issues presented by the TUPE process. There is a need to prepare an updated communications strategy and plan involving all the stakeholders and work strands to ensure that the proposed partnering arrangement with the successful contractor works at every level within both organisations

Recommendation:

The existing communication action list needs to be expanded into a communication plan covering all aspects of the mobilisation and implementation of the contract. The Council should also consider the use of a stakeholder matrix to keep communications at an accurate and regular level

The Council is to be commended for its idea of giving each employee a written commitment to treating them properly and respectfully during transfer. It is in everyone's interest that morale remains as high as possible before transfer and that existing service quality levels are maintained.

Recommendation:-

That the Council checks the adequacy of its resourcing for the staff transfer project and asks employees to approve their employment records

There will be change management aspects inside the new client side and certainly the Council will want client officers to exhibit new ways of working in future. The Review Team notes that there are good ideas in development and dedicated staff involved. The Council faces a challenge in terms of slimming down the client side through retirement whilst maintaining a consistent direction with the contractor and catalysing appropriate knowledge transfer (succession planning).

The proposed client side organisation has four units, Enforcement, Asset Management, Finance and Performance Management & Contract Management) reporting directly to the Assistant Director, who will be the first single point of contact with the contractor in the Maintenance Division.

The Council may wish to consider identifying one senior person below the Assistant Director to be responsible for coordinating dealings with the contractor on a day to day basis. The Review considers that there is a potential for ambiguity with four sections dealing with the contract under the Assistant Director.

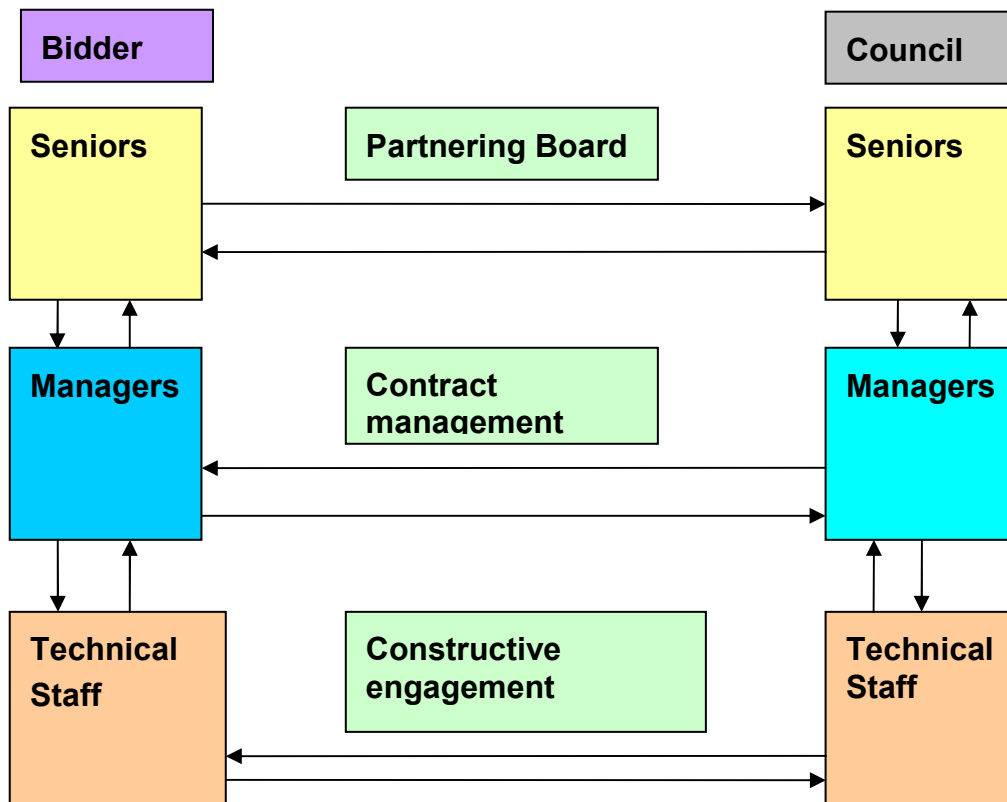
There may be value to the Council in defining the new behaviours from client officers and in terms of training and mentoring individuals to achieve them. Through such an approach the Council will achieve the lean client function it desires.

Recommendations:-

That the Council should resource and plan the introduction of the new client organisation and consider the option of having one senior manager responsible for coordinating the dealings with the contractor on a day to day basis

The process of implementing the new client side should include the identification of new client officer behaviours and the training of staff to achieve this standard at all levels of seniority. That any change management aspects applying are identified and addressed on a project managed basis.

A successful contractor engagement is illustrated below:-



The establishment of an accurate asset register will form a key step in migrating the contract from NEC3 Form B to Form D. This, by allowing the use of output specifications and target pricing, is a potential step to realising greater efficiencies through the contract. The purchase of such an asset management system will be expensive and initially resource intensive including:-

- The purchase price of the software (and hardware as appropriate)
- The need to deliver a comprehensive condition survey
- The need to interpret, analyse and manage the data
- The need to train staff

While the contractor will support the Council in the introduction of these systems it is important that any system is both "future proof" in terms of the renewal of the contract and is compatible with other Council processes & systems.

As such, there is a valid business case (payback) for this investment in terms of the ability to push risk to the contractor through renegotiation of the contract under NEC (to mutual benefit) but it will remain an expensive intervention. It is in the interests of the Council to retain control of key aspects of this system to enable it to re-procure in a smart way in the future. Grant aid may be available for the purchase of this system.

In order to work in partnership it is in the Council's interest to manage the contract through a competent client management IT system. The winning bidder can be involved in this, and may contribute a system or in kind. However, once again ultimate ownership and control of the Council's data should reside with the Council.

Recommendation:-

That the Council defines and executes its IT needs in terms of asset management and contract supervision. That these projects be robustly governed and have explicit resource plans, risk controls and identified future business benefits

The Council faces other challenges outside the immediate scope of this review including:-

- The need to resource an options appraisal on the future of the Transport Section since its workload will be significantly reduced by the outsourcing of the highway service
- The need to integrate the concept of area- based budgets into day to day operations without adversely affecting the routine and reliable commissioning of work necessary for an efficient operation
- The need to make highly demanding cuts in budgets without adversely affecting fixed overhead recovery by the contractor and consequently commitment to the contract

All of these challenges will exacerbate the heavy draw on internal resources.

The next 4ps Gateway Review is expected in the spring of 2009

APPENDIX A

Purpose of 4ps Gateway Review 3: Investment decision

- Confirm the business case and benefits plan now that the bid information has been confirmed.
- Check that all the necessary statutory and procedural requirements were followed throughout the procurement process.
- Confirm that the recommended contract decision, if properly executed within a standard lawful agreement, is likely to deliver the specified outputs/outcomes on time, within budget and will provide value for money.
- Ensure that management controls are in place to manage the project through to completion, including contract management aspects.
- Ensure there is continuing support for the project.
- Confirm that the approved procurement strategy has been followed.
- Confirm that the development and implementation plans of both the client and the supplier or partner are sound and achievable.
- Check that the business has prepared for the development (where there are new processes), implementation, transition and operation of new services/facilities.
- Confirm that there are plans for risk management, issue management and change management (technical and business) and that these plans are shared with suppliers.
- Confirm that the technical implications, such as 'buildability' for construction projects; and for IT-enabled projects information assurance, the impact of e-government frameworks (such as e-business and external infrastructure) have been addressed.

APPENDIX B

Interviewees

NAME	ROLE
David Green	Director of Technical Services
Mark Smith	Head of Streetscene and Waste
Mark Gandy	Group Auditor, Finance
Ray Williams	Corporate Procurement Manager
Colin Hughes	Assistant Borough Solicitor
Geof Kaufman	Project Advisor
Cllr Steve Foulkes	Leader of the Council
Tom Sault	Head of Financial Services
Emma Degg	Head of Tourism and Marketing
Brian Smith	Principal Assistant Engineer
Cllr Jean Quinn	Portfolio Holder
Ian Halton	Capita Symonds
Paul Bradshaw	Head of Human Resources

APPENDIX C

Summary of recommendations

Red – Take action immediately.

Amber – Take action by the next 4ps Gateway Review.

Green – Take action as required.

		Status (if appropriate)
Ref. No.	Recommendation	R/A/G
1.	Following successful award of the contract a fundamental review of the risk register should take place to ensure that it reflects the evolution of the project.	A
2.	That the “top ten” risks are reviewed at each Board meeting with the Board assuring itself that robust mitigation measures and actions are in place.	G
3.	The existing communication action list needs to be expanded into a communication plan covering all aspects of the mobilisation and implementation of the contract. The Council should also consider the use of a stakeholder matrix to keep communications at an accurate and regular level	G
4.	That the Council checks the adequacy of its resourcing for the staff transfer project and asks employees to approve their employment records	G

5.	That the Council should resource and plan the introduction of the new client organisation and consider the option of having one senior manager responsible for coordinating the dealings with the contractor on a day to day basis	A
6.	The process of implementing the new client side should include the identification of new client officer behaviours and the training of staff to achieve this standard at all levels of seniority. That any change management aspects applying are identified and addressed on a project managed basis.	G
7.	That the Council defines and executes its IT needs in terms of asset management and contract supervision. That these projects be robustly governed and have explicit resource plans, risk controls and identified future business benefits	G

NB: Full R/A/G definitions can be found in the status section.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 27 NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

PROVISION OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND RECYCLING CONTAINERS POLICY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval for a policy for the supply of waste and recycling receptacles to householders. The policy details the situations where residents will be charged for replacement or additional containers. This report also highlights the financial implications of current and future service demands for replacement bins and the rising cost of new bins as a result of increased oil prices.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Current Approach

Currently, Wirral Council operate under the following procedures, although no policy has ever been officially implemented:

2.1.1 Bulk Bins

Bulk refuse bins for multi-occupancy properties are leased to the property owners or management company by the Council's Waste Collection Contractor (Biffa) for an annual charge (currently £64 per Euro bin) under this leasing arrangement, Biffa will repair damaged bins free of charge.

2.1.2 Individual Wheeled Bins (green residual bins)

Green bins are given out free of charge to new dwellings upon requests via Streetscene. If a resident reports a missing bin then they must pay a charge (currently £27) for a replacement. However, if the resident states their bin went missing on collection day, then they will receive a replacement bin free of charge. If the resident requests a repair to their bin, such as the need for a replacement lid, wheels or cracked shaft, then the Council will repair or replace the bin free of charge. If the bin has been vandalised, such as set on fire, then the resident is required to replace their bin at their own expense. (Exceptions may arise, if for example, the bin was vandalised whilst awaiting a late collection). If residents have more than 5 people living in their household then they are entitled to additional provision. Currently additional bins are given free to householders. The amount of income generated from charging residents for the sale of green bins is negligible, suggesting that the current procedure may be being abused.

2.1.3 Individual Wheeled Bins (grey recycling bins)

Grey bins are given out free of charge to new dwellings upon requests via Streetscene. Grey bins are also provided free of charge to houses joining the recycling scheme through planned roll outs. Currently all lost, damaged or vandalised bins are replaced free of charge. This approach was taken to

minimise barriers to recycling and increase participation in the early stages of the alternate weekly collection scheme. Additional grey bins requested by larger households or households producing regular excess recycling are given free to the householder.

2.1.4 Individual Wheeled Bins (brown garden waste bins)

Brown bins are given out free of charge to new households upon requests via Streetscene, providing they can be added to an existing garden waste round. Brown bins are also provided free of charge to houses joining the recycling scheme through planned roll-outs. If a resident reports a missing bin then they must pay a charge (currently £27) for a replacement. However, if the resident states their bin went missing on collection day, then they will receive a replacement bin free of charge. If the resident requests a repair to their bin, such as the need for a replacement lid, wheels or cracked shaft, then the Council will repair or replace the bin free of charge. If the bin has been vandalised, such as set on fire, then the resident is required to replace their bin at their own expense. (Exceptions may arise, if for example, the bin was vandalised whilst awaiting a late collection).

2.2 Implications of Current Procedures

2.2.1 Since taking over the new waste contract, Biffa have struggled to secure annual leasing payments from a minority of property management companies (4%). It appears these companies never paid an annual charge to the previous contractor and the previous contractor made no attempts to pursue payment. Such companies are concerned that they will have to pass on charges to residents, and feel this is unfair as residents with individual wheeled bins have their bin provided free of charge initially.

2.2.2 In relation to the financing of replacement wheeled bins, Technical Services receive an annual budget for "*bins and waste containers*" (excluding litter bins) of £106k per annum. This budget was specified when residents only had one bin for residual rubbish and is insufficient to meet current demands, where 108,000 properties now have at least three wheeled bins and a further 25,000+ have at least two wheeled bins. At current levels of demand, the annual budget needed to cover all bin requests would be at least £260K from 2008/9 onwards and the 2007/8 budget is projected to be overspent by approximately £100K. It is important to note that oil price increases mean that the average cost of bins has risen by at least 30% over the passed two years and will have a significant effect on the effectiveness of future budget provision.

2.2.3 Many green residual bins, implemented around 12 to 15 years ago, are now wearing out and replacement bins are necessary, putting additional pressure on the bin replacement budget.

2.2.4 Most damaged grey bins have been covered under a 12-month warranty with the manufacturer. However this warranty has now expired for all bins delivered on the grey bin roll-out and the majority of brown bin roll-outs, meaning that the cost of replacing damaged grey bins is currently being funded by the Council.

2.3 Legislation and Obligations on Councils

2.3.1 Under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Council can specify the type and size of container that the resident must present their waste in, and can specify the type of waste to go in the container. The Council may also levy a charge to the resident for the provision of the waste receptacle. Alternatively, the householders may provide their own receptacle.

2.4 Summary of Local Authority Practices

2.4.1 Bulk Bins

A random telephone audit of 18 North West Local Authorities has revealed that only one Local Authority (Vale Royal) has an existing policy to cover the provision of bulk bins to residents. Out of the 18 surveyed, 9 local authorities did not charge for the provision of bulk bins and 9 did. However, out of the nine that made some sort of charge, 6 only made a one off charge to the developer of new multi-occupation properties. None of the 18 councils surveyed intended to charge multi-occs for the initial provision of shared recycling facilities, although some indicated charges might be levied at a later date for replacement bulk bins, or to cover repairs.

2.4.2 Individual Wheeled Bins

Councils have a wide range of procedures for the provision of individual wheeled bins. The only consistent approach was that the first container is provided free of charge (whether it be for recycling or residual waste) during initial mass roll-outs. A range of interesting approaches include:

- Some councils charge residents who require additional bins, even though they are entitled to more provision as a result of their additional bin policies. This approach has recently been recognised by the Ombudsman association as acceptable practice (Congleton July 2008).
- Many councils limit the entitlement to free replacement bins to 1 per household over a fixed period of time to reflect the life expectancy of the bin (usually 10 years). The limit is applied to the house address not the individual.
- Many councils apply a similar approach to Wirral by offering a free replacement bin if the bin goes missing on collection day. However, they put in place additional measures and restrictions to ensure residents are not attempting to acquire additional bins. In one council, this resulted in the discovery that 25% of bins were being claimed illegitimately.

3.0 PROPOSED POLICY

3.1 Policy Justification

Technical Services believe that the implementation of a clear and robust policy, within the confines of government legislation is required to reduce the financial risk facing the Council as a result of spiralling bin costs and abuse of current procedures. Immediate adoption of the policy will reduce the projected overspend of the Council in 2007/8 and subject to monitoring, should ensure the current budget provision for “bins and waste containers” is adequate from 2008/9 onwards, at least in the short to medium term. Should the policy be approved, I recommend it is implemented from 1st January 2009. This will give officers enough time to amend existing procedures and carry out briefings to Streetscene staff.

3.2 Multi-Occupation Dwellings: Roll-out of co-mingled recycling scheme

In order to encourage residents of multi-occupational dwellings to recycle, Technical Services propose to provide all existing dwellings with free recycling receptacles in the first instance. This provision is proposed to be funded by the Waste Capital Infrastructure Grant in 2007/8 (£100K) and 2008/9 (£150K). The £250K will be required to provide all multi-occupancy dwellings with bulk recycling bins, or 240 litre lockable wheeled bins.

Once delivered all recycling bins become the responsibility of the property owners (property management company, RSL, private landlord or property owner, mortgagee). Cleaning, maintenance, repair and replacement of the bins will be the responsibility of the property owner.

The property owner is responsible for ensuring that the bins are maintained to a standard that enables the waste contractor to empty them without undue risk to health and safety, or risk of damage to lifting equipment.

Security of the bins will be the responsibility of the property owner. If the dwellings have no obvious space for recycling provision, the landlord, owner, property management company or tenants association of the dwellings will be given 6 months notice to provide suitable storage on that property so that they are able to comply with Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The Council will offer a range of recycling solutions at this time to best accommodate the property management companies faced with space restrictions.

The multi-occupancy dwelling roll-out is due to be completed no later than June 2009. Any dwellings that come into existence after this time will be covered by sections 3.3 and sections 3.4 of this policy.

3.3 Bulk Bins for New and Existing Multi-Occupation Dwellings (residual waste)

Bulk bins can be purchased outright from the Council via the Council's waste collection contractor. Repairs for bulk bins become the responsibility of the purchaser, unless the repair is covered under warranty, or is the fault

of the waste collection contractor. If the bin requires a repair under warranty, the purchaser must deal directly with the bin manufacturer. If the bin has been damaged by the waste collection contractor, then the contractor will make good the damage or replace the bin.

The price of bulk bins will be advertised at all times on the Council's website, and can be obtained from the Council's Streetscene Call Centre.

Residents may provide their own receptacles for the presentation of waste but these receptacles must meet health and safety/ collection mechanism requirements of the waste collection contractor and be approved by them in advance of the first schedule collection.

Alternatively, opportunities exist for the owner, property management company or tenants association of the dwellings to lease bulk bins with the Council's waste collection contractor, or other receptacle suppliers. The repair and maintenance of bins is usually covered in such leasing arrangements.

The Council will not compensate any dwelling or occupants if that dwelling chooses to opt out of local authority waste collection services.

Any claims arising from damage to privately owned bins by the waste contractor can be reported via the Streetscene Call Centre on 0151 606 2004, and will be dealt with directly by the Council's waste collection contractor.

3.4 Bulk Bins for New Multi-occupational Dwellings (recyclable waste)

Following completion of the multi-occupancy roll-out outlined in section 3.2, developers will be charged for the provision of recycling containers to new properties and will be notified at the planning stage by the waste and recycling team. Developers will also be required to ensure adequate storage space is provided for the provision of recycling containers. Wherever practical, all new multi-occupation dwellings shall be put on the borough's alternate weekly waste collection scheme, where residual waste is collected on one week, and recyclable waste is collected on the alternate week.

3.5 Individual Wheeled Bins - All Colours

3.5.1 Bin Repairs

Residents will be entitled to free repairs (or free replacements to damaged wheeled bins) for the following issues:

- Damaged/ cracked / lost lids
- Damaged/ lost hinges
- Damaged/ lost wheels
- Cracked shaft arising from general wear and tear or frost damage.

3.5.2 Lost, Stolen or Vandalised Bins - Criteria for Free Bins

Requests by residents for replacement bins must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for a free replacement bin:

- There must not have been a previous request for a replacement bin within the past 7 years at that address.
- The resident must state they have lost their bin on collection day (or whilst awaiting a late collection).
- The resident must report their missing bin by 4pm on the following working day after the actual day of collection*.

** NB: At this point of contact, the request will be logged and the resident will be asked to call back (with the CRM number) after the next scheduled collection day if the bin does not turn up. If the request is for a residual bin, the call centre will mail out 5 disposable sacks that can be used in the mean time by the resident and presented at the designated collection point on the next scheduled collection day. Recyclable waste cannot be collected in disposable sacks. Residents will be advised of bring site locations and the location of the nearest household waste recycling centre.*

- The resident must state they had their address on their wheeled bin. (The house number as a minimum requirement, and ideally the street name.) Residents are to be informed that their address should be on their bin in the 2009 Calendar drop to all properties on the alternate weekly scheme to be completed in December 2008. All new bins delivered to properties will also include this instruction.
- Where a resident reports the theft of the bin from their own secure property, the Council will offer the resident a second hand bin free of charge, subject to availability. A crime number will be required.
- The Council may carry out pre or post delivery checks on all requests for new bins to qualify eligibility. Residents who are subsequently found not to be eligible for a free bin will be charged retrospectively.
- Where the Waste Collection Contractor has recorded they have damaged a bin (or the bin has fallen in the Refuse Collection vehicle), the resident will be entitled to a free repair or replacement. This information must have been at the point of collection by the waste collection crew. The contractor has a contractual obligation to report all bins damaged in this way.

3.5.3 Lost, Stolen or Vandalised Bins – Approach to Charging

Request for bins not meeting the criteria above will be chargeable to cover the cost of the bin, administration costs and delivery. This cost will be reviewed at least annually, due to the unstable price of bins, linked to the price of oil.

Residents may request up to 5 disposable residual waste sacks (as in section 3.5.2.) if they wish to attempt to recover their missing bin between the time of report and the next scheduled collection day.

All requests from private and social landlords for replacement bins will be chargeable, without exception.

Vandalised, dirty, burnt out and contaminated bins will not be replaced free of charge by the Council.

Homeowners or tenants moving into a new home are advised to ensure the developers or previous owners/ tenants or landlords have provided clean, empty and operational bins. This can be specified on tenancy agreements, or on legal documents listing the “fixtures and fittings” of a house during it’s sale. The Council will not provide free bins to residents moving home.

3.5.4 New Developments

All new developments will be charged for the provision of wheeled bins. This will be specified (along with costs) at the planning application stage. Developers will also be required to ensure adequate storage space is provided for the provision of residual and recyclable waste containers.

3.5.5 Additional Bins

3.5.5.1 Residual bins (green)

Households qualifying for an additional green bin will be charged a one off price to cover the cost of the bin, delivery and associated administrative costs. *This excludes those households requiring additional storage for medical waste, or waste directly associated with managing disabilities, which are entitled to a free bin.* Residents who have opted to take part in a Council waste audit may also be entitled to an additional bin free of charge. Residents will also be required to notify the Council of changes of address and change of circumstances that affect eligibility for additional containers.

3.5.5.2. Dry recycling bins/containers (grey)

One additional dry recycling container per household will be provided free of charge to properties on request, subject to approval by an authorised Council officer and associated checks. Requests for further additional containers will be assessed on an individual basis.

Free additional bins allocated to residents will be taken from refurbished or re-used stock when available. Bins will be washed out prior to delivery but may contain old house numbers and addresses/ markings. The resident will be required to re-number the bin upon delivery.

3.5.5.3 Garden Waste Bins (brown)

Additional garden waste bins can be provided to a resident upon request. The resident will be charged for the full cost of each additional bin, including delivery and associated administrative charges. All additional brown bins

will have a red lid, to denote that household is entitled to present the extra bin.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Latest projections of a “do nothing” approach would result in an additional revenue requirement in excess of £150K per annum to the existing budget provision. This policy intends to enable Technical Services to manage the bin provision services within existing budget in the future. The cost of providing receptacles to new homes is estimated to be around £40K per annum (based on the number of new dwellings in 2006/7).
- 4.2 The cost of providing free first time recycling receptacles to all existing multi-occupancy dwellings not yet on a co-mingled recycling scheme is estimated to be approximately £250K. Additional costs will also be incurred for signage and locking posts. £181K has already been allocated for this project from the 2007/8 Waste Capital Infrastructure Grant. Members are recommended to approve the remaining WCIG grant for 2008/9 £245K is prioritised for the provision of receptacles to multi-occ dwellings in order to complete the roll out as quickly as possible. The diversion of additional waste through this scheme will result in a minimum levy saving to the Council of £35K per year in landfill charges and landfill tax savings, growing to over £100K per year in the longer term.
- 4.3 Consideration has been given to providing existing multi-occupancy premises with free bulk bins. *However, it would cost the Council an additional £70K per year to cover all current leasing costs.* The introduction of recycling facilities to each complex, where weekly residual waste collections are to continue, should result in a reduction in the number of residual containers required by each complex, which will then result in a reduction in the annual leasing costs of these bins and a tangible saving back to the residents. The Council hopes this approach will encourage residents and property management companies to recycle as much waste as possible.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no specific implications under this heading. Residents who are on a bulk bin service also receive an enhanced service, to include doorstep, rather than kerbside collection.

6.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Technical Services will ensure that new developments are flagged up to the Waste and Recycling Team so they may be contacted regarding their obligations over the provision of waste containers and suitable storage. Adaptations to planning guidance may need to be considered to ensure adherence to this policy.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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

8.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

9.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

9.1 All activity proposed in this report supports the principles of the LA 21 Agenda, contributing positively to Wirral's Nottingham Declaration and sustainability plans.

10.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

11.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Bin rental charges are currently £66.75 per annum for a Eurobin and £41.08 for a Paladin bin. Usually 6 to 12 properties share one Eurobin, resulting in a weekly cost of no more than 21 pence. The vast majority of residents of multi-occupancy dwellings are used to paying this cost as an integral part of their "service charge". Many housing associations do not pass bin rental charges onto their tenants, and other low-income families in receipt of benefits to cover rent should not be affected.

12.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

12.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

13.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

14.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That

- (1) the Provision of Household Waste and Recycling Containers Policy detailed in section 3.0 of this report be approved for implementation by January 1st 2009; and
- (2) the prioritisation of the remaining 2008/9 Waste Capital Infrastructure Grant (WCIG) funding totalling £245K be approved for the provision of recycling receptacles to multi-occupancy properties.

DAVID GREEN
DIRECTOR, TECHNICAL SERVICES

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

27 NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING SUMMARY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. This is one of a series of reports submitted throughout the year presenting an overview of the performance of the Council in delivering the Vision for Wirral as set out in the Corporate Plan and is for the quarter-ended 30 September.

2. OVERVIEW

2.1. The main influence continues to be the economic situation. The financial pressures within the global economy have repercussions at national and local levels as the volatility of the world financial markets continues.

2.1.1 Wirral benefitted through exercising prudent financial management around cash flow and investments that realised additional income and a reduced need for temporary borrowing. However the impact upon the banking sector has placed at risk £2 million of investments with an Icelandic bank although there remains every possibility that this will be recovered.

2.1.2 The current, and projected, world economic position is placing additional pressures upon all who rely on the financial sector with implications for the delivery of the Wirral Investment Strategy, major investment schemes and the NewHeartlands initiative. As such the developing links with the thriving China economy present an opportunity for securing additional investment to Wirral.

2.1.3 Against this background the Council continues to seek to maintain progress in achieving the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan whilst recognising the impact on the building industry and, as a consequence, the worklessness priority.

2.2. The following sections report on the progress in delivering the priorities including the financial and risk issues with further details down to departmental level in the appendices. The underpinning projects are presently either on target or actions are in place to enable them to be achieved during the year. In terms of the supporting indicators again, of those presently measurable, most are on target.

2.3. The key issues highlighted and requiring to be addressed in the forthcoming period are the:-

- continuing development of the personalisation agenda;
- safe reduction of the number of looked after children;
- development and implementation of the strategic asset review;
- management of the potential overspends in 2008/09 within Adult Social Services, Children & Young People and Regeneration;
- decisions to enable the setting of the Council budget for 2009/10.

3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PERFORMANCE

- 3.1 On 13 March 2008, Cabinet agreed the Council's Corporate Plan which detailed how the vision 'of a more prosperous and equal Wirral, enabling all communities and people to thrive and achieve their full potential' would be achieved. The vision set five clear objectives, and identified eleven immediate priorities for improvement in the year ahead.
- 3.2 This section includes narrative and performance indicators on the priorities for improvement areas for 2008/09. The narrative includes the progress made to date, challenges remaining and further improvements to be completed.

3.3.1 Reduce worklessness

Progress made:

Wirral continues to make steady progress in reducing the number of Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Lone Parent claimants. However, reductions in these benefit groups have been negated by rises in Job Seekers Allowance claimants.

The Wirral Economic Development and Skills partnership (WEDS), through the Working Wirral programme has commissioned activity to support workless people into training and employment in line with the agreed priorities.

The reach out programme has achieved impressive outcomes which include supporting 1,016 workless residents from Wirral's most deprived communities into employment. It has also developed extensive partnership working by making referral to other organisations including Registered Social Landlords, Primary Care Trust and Merseyside Fire and Rescue. This activity has been enhanced by the launch of *Reach Out Plus* that provides in-work mentoring to priority groups such as lone parents and Incapacity Benefit recipients.

Challenges remaining:

The current global economic slowdown has led to a rise in unemployment in the UK and this is expected to get worse over the next twelve months, with JSA trends in Wirral rising above the national average.

WEDS continues to press central government to provide confirmation of funding for Working Neighbourhood Funding for 2009/10 and 2010/11 and have concern that further delay could significantly impact on future commissioning timescales.

Refresh discussions will commence shortly with regards to Wirral's Local Area Agreement, it is important to note that the worklessness target is an already challenging target and will be even more challenging due to the economic slow down. This improvement target will be discussed with Government Office in the refresh discussions.

How we're making further improvements:

Wirral will continue to support economically inactive residents to move into employment as well as supporting vulnerable residents who are in employment but have low or no qualifications and may struggle to return to the labour market if hit by the economic downturn. Wirral continues to work strongly with partners sub regionally to develop employment and skills policy, including developing a multi area agreement submission to central government and the Working Wirral programme will continue to be used to respond to local circumstances in line with council and investment strategy agreed priorities. Wirral is further improving its

engagement with employers to ensure they benefit from the range of support services offered locally.

3.3.2 Increase enterprise

Progress made:

Wirral continues to support enterprise growth through the Wirralbiz programme and the current LAA stretch targets have been achieved in terms of the number of new business starts and those which are still in operation after twelve months of trading.

Challenges remaining:

The current transitional funding for new business starts finishes in March 2009 and Wirral Council is working closely with the Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) to ensure that any future activity in Wirral is in line with the National Business Support Simplification Programme (BSSP) and also the activities funded by the Regional Development Agency.

Wirral also has a high proportion of small businesses who are not VAT registered and support for business will be tailored around the BSSP to support business growth. This is critical given the current economic slowdown.

How we're making further improvements:

We continue to work with the NWDA to ensure Wirral adds value to regional programmes to support businesses in Wirral to grow.

3.3.3. Increase levels of recycling

Progress made:

Recycling rates for July – September have increased to around 41%. This is an increase on the last quarter (39.86%), primarily due to good garden waste tonnages.

The doorstep survey of 6,000 residents has been completed and has identified that residents prefer to receive specific recycling information direct to their door.

Challenges remaining:

To continue to increase participation and decrease contamination particularly in areas of low uptake.

How we're making further improvements:

Multi Occupancy recycling will be rolled out from January – March 2009, this will help to increase levels of recycling. In addition on street recycling receptacles are to be introduced in main shopping areas to encourage the public to recycle while out and about early New Year

A study will take place in November 2008 to identify areas of low material capture throughout the borough; these areas can then be targeted with specific campaigns to increase participation.

A funding bid has been put into WRAP to support a communications campaign based on education and awareness using participation officers to reduce contamination levels and increase recycling rates.

3.3.4. Reduce the Council's carbon footprint

Progress made:

The Investment in Energy Efficiency Programme continues to reduce emissions, progress was reported to Cabinet in September.

On the 25 September 2008 Cabinet approved the creation of the Sustainability Unit within the Department of Law, H.R. and Asset Management to improve energy efficiency and to work with Businesses and the Community to raise awareness of the urgent need to reduce Wirral's Carbon footprint, to take action to reduce Carbon emissions and to sign up to the CRed community carbon reduction programme.

As detailed in the above report, part of the development of the Sustainability Unit is the establishment of a Climate Change Officer and a Sustainability (Cred) Liaison Officer. A report to the Employment and Appointments Committee has been drafted together with the production of Job Descriptions. The report is due to be presented to the committee on 3 December 2008.

Two Energy Awareness officers have been recruited and are now in post to push the energy savings message to staff. An environmental awareness poster campaign (as detailed below) has been produced and is currently being rolled out across the council.

Challenges remaining:

Energy costs have risen significantly over the last twelve months and are likely to add around six million pounds to the Council's annual expenditure. A large part of the authority's energy consumption is buildings related.

It is vital that the Climate Change and CRed officers are appointed and the Sustainability Unit set up as soon as is practicable within the new department. These two new posts are key to progressing NI 185, once the Sustainability (CRed) Liaison Officer has been appointed we will be able to complete the development of the Wirral CRed website and promote the scheme and CO2 emission reduction initiatives across the borough.

To ensure increased awareness of this priority amongst council staff and managers across the Council.

How we're making further improvements:

The Strategic Asset Review will consider energy conservation as a key consideration during the current review of all the Council's buildings and will make appropriate recommendations.

A waste energy survey is being conducted with council staff to get a baseline figure of staff's understanding of energy reduction methods.

Energy Saving week will take place 3–11 November, with 7 events across the council for employees. Target has been set for recruitment of 30 energy champions from throughout the organisation.

As part of the work of the Nottingham Declaration Working Group, which includes our partners Wirral PCT and Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust, a co-funded joint poster campaign has been produced around the themes contained within the Council's Climate Change Strategy of Awareness, Energy, Transport and Adaptation. The joint launch will take place in November 2008 to coincide with Energy Saving week.

3.3.5. Reduce number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents.

Progress made:

Numbers of people killed or seriously injured continued to fall. In the past quarter a successful pilot campaign of Bring Accidents down 2 zero has taken place. Results of this campaign showed that 74% of drivers preferred the new scheme with the voluntary 20mph speed limit to physical speed reducing measures and 89% of drivers thought that the scheme should be provided in other areas of Wirral.

Challenges remaining:

New locations need to be identified and agreed in order to roll out the Bring Accidents down 2 zero campaign.

How we're making further improvements:

Partners continue to work closely to monitor progress of this priority for improvement.

Working in partnership with the Police a Christmas Drink Driving campaign will be implemented over the next quarter and education programmes within schools will continue including Go Goliath and 4 Wheel Ed. Road Safety Officers are continually delivering Road Safety Education in primary and high schools across the Borough. A new Schools Road Safety Campaign to encourage children to walk to school will be implemented in the New Year.

In addition an anti-speeding and in car safety campaign in partnership with the Police during the month of October.

3.3.6. Promote greater independence and choice**Progress made:**

Progress this quarter against many key performance indicators is significantly improved upon the same period last year, in particular timeliness of payments. Staff have taken responsibility for the personalisation agenda and have been implementing changes and promoting their benefit throughout this period. This has resulted in an immediate impact on improved outcomes for service users.

A detailed project management methodology has ensured that changes were delivered to deadlines with robust impact and risk assessment, incorporating Equality Impact Assessments of the projects. The IDeA review of Healthier Communities reported "the Council's partnership with Wirral PCT is strong and mature with evidence of joint working".

Structured investment by DASS & Primary Care Trust to develop early an intervention network & a range of "transitional care services". The Home Assessment and Reablement Team is now in place and is embedding the reablement ethos across the whole range of provider services. This ensures timely transfers from hospital care and where appropriate, new pathways into these services which avoids the need for secondary care. There is a strong evidence base demonstrating improved outcomes from people who have used these services.

Challenges remaining:

The Department has commenced a major restructure to transform social care and continues to face significant financial pressures.

Capturing the new information required for a number of the new performance indicators in partnership with the PCT has been a challenge during this period.

How we're making further improvements:

The issue relating to partnership performance indicators is being resolved as a result of productive partnership working with the PCT.

A three year strategy has been adopted to address financial pressures, with the Efficiency Plan (Budget Stabilisation Strategy) monitored at Departmental level, linked to the Transformational Change Programme Board.

A steering group for the Joint Strategic Needs assessment has been established with a full time project manager appointed. The JSNA to be published shortly will address issues of equality and inclusion, with specific target groups highlighted amongst learning disabilities, mental health, older people and carers.

DASS has also undertaken to become a member of the Carers UK forum called Employers for Carers, which will demonstrate the Department's active involvement in setting positive practice standards and will hopefully encourage other local employers to follow. It is intended that this development will be marked by a communication to all staff about their rights as carer's via their November pay-slip which will in turn be reported upon as part of Carer's Rights Day in December 2008.

Work on early intervention continues to be prioritised for example the development of the System dynamic modelling tool based on Wirral's Dementia Pathways working with Care Services Efficiency Delivery Programme.

Key focus for the coming months will be the further development of integrated posts and work to reduce duplication across the health and social care economy as part of the Wirral Integrated Services Programme (WISP).

3.3.7. Raise overall educational attainment, particularly lower achieving young people**Progress made:**

At Key Stage 1 Levels 2+ and 3+ performance is slightly down. This is mainly the result of work undertaken to moderate assessments in order to ensure that a more accurate benchmark was established. A gender gap is apparent at KS1 which is in line with the national trend but the actual position will become clearer once the figures for Wirral's statistical neighbours are available.

At Key Stage 2 complete data for all schools is not available. The current position is that good progress has been made at level 4+ for all indicators. All of the indicators are above Fischer Family Trust (FFT) level B, with overall performance in English equivalent to the Fischer Family Trust (FFT) level D and a significant improvement for boys in all subjects.

The picture at Key Stage 3 is less clear because of the significant percentage of schools that received incomplete data for one or more subjects. Provisional indications are that we continue to perform better than the national figures but performance in 2008 has either remained static or dropped slightly. The recent announcements about the cessation of Key Stage 3 SATs will impact upon how we measure progress across this Key Stage and across secondary schools in the future.

At Key Stage 4 Wirral pupils have achieved over 50% (50.4%) for five GCSE subjects at A*-C grades, including English and Maths. Overall, 66% of students have achieved 5 A*-C grades. This is above the FFT level B. At A-level there has been a significant improvement in the percentage of pupils gaining A-C grades, from 63.7% in 2007 to 67.6% in 2008. The Average Point Score per student has also increased.

With regard to looked-after children, there continues to be a wide shortfall in performance:

- At Key Stage 2 they are, respectively, 23, 17 and 11 percentage points below the Wirral average for English, Maths and Science;
- At Key Stage 3, the gaps were 57, 44 and 49 percentage points.
- At Key Stage 4, provisional figures indicate that 10% of children achieved 5+ A*-C grades including English and maths compared to 8% in 2007 and 50.4% for all Wirral children. 51% achieved 5+ A*-G grades compared to 68% in 2007 and 98% for all Wirral children
- Further analysis of the performance of Looked After Children, using pupil-level FFT data and value-added data is being undertaken to see whether LAC pupils made the progress they should have done even though the overall outcomes are lower in 2008 than 2007.

Challenges remaining:

Improving the outcomes for Maths at all Key Stages will be a priority.

National Strategies through the Target Setting Guidance expect all schools to set targets at FFT-D, and SIPs in Wirral have engaged with schools so they set targets that are appropriately aspirational to FFT-D. The Government has also produced combined statistics for English and Maths, with the aim of ensuring that standards in both subjects are improved simultaneously.

There is also the challenge of increasing the proportion of pupils who make two levels progress across the Key Stages.

Improving the tracking and monitoring of the progress of Looked After Children, using FFT data is a priority to ensure that LAC achieve their potential, taking into account prior attainment. In addition improving the performance of National Challenge schools is also crucial.

How we're making further improvements:

Wirral, as with most other local authorities, has made its views clear on the KS3 marking issue and has submitted anecdotal evidence to the Sutherland Report Committee. There has been some significant variations in the performance of individual schools at Key Stage 3 (level 5+) which still needs to be analysed.

The attainment of looked-after children is examined on an individual basis and various factors that might affect performance are taken into account, such as level of attendance. Designated teachers for Looked After Children are in place. Schools have been given an additional £500 per pupil through their budgets to assist in work to support Looked After Children.

3.3.8. Safely reduce the number of looked after children

Progress made:

The number of children who are looked after at the year end (March 2009) is targeted to reduce to **590**. In September 2008 the position against the target was 608.

We expect to receive between 250 – 300 referrals each month; these are requests for a service. The target is that 71% of these referrals will proceed to an initial assessment (NI 68). A high percentage of work progressing to an initial assessment – confirms that people know what and when to refer to Social Care – and is indicative of a good understanding of criteria for referral. In September 2008 the position against the target was 53.3%.

Our target is to reduce the number of repeat referrals from 26% last year, to 23% or below. Low numbers of repeat referrals signifies that a request for service is fully and properly responded to – it evidences that thresholds are becoming appropriately lower, and prevents children and families being stuck in a revolving door. Some repeat referrals will always be appropriate, since it shows that cases are not remaining open unnecessarily; and people return to seek help when experiencing further difficulties. In September 2008 the position against the target was 25%.

Our target is to make sure (NI 59) 72% or more initial assessments are completed within 7 working days, and (NI 60) 80% or more core assessments are completed within 35 working days. In September 2008 are position against these targets was NI59 68.2% NI60 60%.

Compared to statistical neighbours, we would expect to have between 160 – 170 children to have a child protection plan. Best practice indicates that between 10 – 15% of children subject to a plan have been on the CPR previously (NI 65). The target is to have 6% or less, children who have ceased to be subject to a child protection plan during the year, who have been subject to a plan for two years or more (NI 64). In September 2008 the position against the target was NI65 16.2% NI64 2.8%.

Challenges remaining:

Safely reducing the numbers is not about delaying children becoming looked after when this is required to meet their needs – so, there may be relatively high numbers of children who become looked after, however the length of time children remain looked after is reduced, as appropriate plans, which include support, are put in place.

On a Team basis we will be identifying children whose plans need to be expedited to support their return home; remove the Care Order if they are safely living at home or to achieve permanence through adoption or Special Guardianship. There will be individual Team Targets based on known children's needs.

How we're making further improvements:

Developing a consistent approach and clear understanding about when to convene a case conference shows a good understanding of when the level of concern about a child and / or family warrants a child protection plan. Prompt convening of case conferences is evidence of children and families not being stuck in limbo, or experiencing drift once a decision is made that the level of concern is such that a case conference should be convened.

Each Team will consider all children who are subject to Section 20 (Children Act 1989) and review their circumstances through the Legal Gatekeeping process to identify whether parent/s are properly exercising PR/the child is safely supported within this arrangement.

The target is to reduce the number of children placed with parents to 110 by the end of 2009. This will involve consideration of all children's plans on a Team by Team basis, focusing on those children subject to an interim care order and living at home, and those children placed with parents for a long period of time – to determine whether there is evidence that they will be safely supported in the community with no order at all, or a supervision order. This will require the presentation of compelling evidence to Court, based on sound assessment and analysis.

3.3.9. Improve the use of the Council's land and assets

Progress made:

The principles that will guide the Council's Strategic Asset Review in the future have now been agreed. A working group of senior managers has been established to undertake seven area based reviews of the Council's public facing assets. These reviews are now complete and will be reported to Cabinet. The Strategic Development Plan for Leisure and Cultural Services was also approved this quarter and will be taken forward as part of the Strategic Asset Review.

Challenges remaining:

Routine maintenance and necessary structural repairs of the Council's building stock remains costly. There is a programme of planned preventative maintenance in place; however, given the age of many buildings it is inevitable that unforeseen problems will emerge causing unplanned restrictions on use. Energy costs have risen significantly in the last year adding significantly to the Council's annual expenditure budget. A large proportion of the Council's energy bill is buildings related.

How we're making further improvements:

A full review of the Council's office and administrative buildings (including Facilities Management arrangements) is underway with a view to moving to a smaller number of buildings and maximizing value for money.

The remaining Area reviews have commenced and are being expedited to ensure the Asset Review progresses on a Borough wide basis.

Discussions are underway with the PCT and the Police (and other potential public and voluntary sector partners) to explore opportunities for shared use of assets.

In addition Cabinet reports are being prepared on:

- An update on backlog maintenance (together with an action plan)
- A draft policy on community management and ownership of public assets
- A draft policy on asset disposals

3.3.10 Create a sustainable and stable budget, providing value for money

Progress made:

The Council Budget for 2008/09 was agreed in March and was supported by the s151 officer statement as being sustainable.

The regular financial monitoring updates have highlighted potential overspends and increased 'one-off' resources. The overspending is primarily in Adult Social Services as reported to Cabinet in September.

The Annual Efficiency Statement 2007/08 reported to Cabinet in June was submitted to, and subsequently, agreed by Government in July.

A review of the high spending areas as identified by the Audit Commission 'spend profiles' was reported to Cabinet on September 25.

The Director of Finance provides regular updates on the Projected Budget position to Cabinet and this is supported by regular liaison between Cabinet and Chief Officers to assess the implications and address the gap between likely spend and resources.

Challenges remaining:

To address the identified areas of overspending in 2008/09 to ensure overall spend remains within the resources available.

To report to Government the achievements in respect of NI 179. (the net value of ongoing cash releasing gains).

To agree a sustainable and stable budget for 2009/10 by March 10 2009.

How we're making further improvements:

The Director of Adult Social Services is providing regular updates to Cabinet on progress in stabilising the departmental budget.

Clarification now received around the reporting of NI 179 and a projection for 2008/09 is required in October.

The Projected Budget position is regularly reported to Cabinet with investment/saving decisions being taken at the appropriate times.

3.3.11 Improve the Council's budgeting process to fully reflect its priorities

Progress made:

The 2008/09 Council Budget resolution included references to, and linkages to, the Council priorities.

An Efficiency Investment Fund of £5.3 million was created as part of the 2008/09 budget with further amounts set aside for future years.

The Council strategies including the Customer Access Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, IT Strategy and Risk Strategy were revised in line with the agreed Corporate Plan and then approved by Cabinet on 23 July.

In September Cabinet re-affirmed that the Corporate Plan priorities for 2008/09 remain as the priorities for 2009/10.

The budget process has been further refined in terms of the information flow to Members and Officers. The regular updates give greater clarity and focus upon the key changes.

Challenges remaining:

The present financial climate is bringing additional pressures on the available Council resources and the delivery of the aims and objectives of the Corporate Plan. This links to the setting of a sustainable and stable budget for 2009/10.

How we're making further improvements:

The Efficiency Investment Fund is available for initiatives that require resources to deliver future benefits and to invest in the priority areas of the Council. This will continue as part of the budget setting process.

Any submissions for increased resources, including from the capital and IT programmes require a Business Case which is weighted towards meeting the agreed priorities.


3.4 This following section shows the performance indicators and key projects for the priority for improvement areas 2008/09.

3.4.1 Reduce Worklessness

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 152	Working age people on out of work benefits	17.74% (Lower is Better)	17.23%	17.84%	17.23%	Green	n/a	
NI 153	Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods (WNF)	35.22 (Lower is Better)	35.07	35.22	35.07	Green	n/a	

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Implementation of the Full Employment and Skills plan	Corporate Services	GREEN	

3.4.2 Increase Enterprise

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
LOCAL 4128	Number of new business start-ups supported through Wirral Biz or Business Link in Wirral as measured by data from both organisations	262	262	160	171	Amber		This is a demand led initiative. The performance over the last quarter recognises the increased demand for the service.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Implementation of the Enterprise Strategy	Corporate Services	GREEN	
Co-ordinate the implementation of local, sub regional and regional enterprise development and business support strategies	Corporate Services	GREEN	

3.4.3 Increase levels of recycling

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 191	Residual household waste per household	636 (Lower is Better)	600	315	287.35	Amber	n/a	Green waste & recycling is diverting more residual from landfill and we are performing better than expected.
NI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	34%	35%	36%	40.50%	Over Performing	n/a	The over-performance can be explained by unexpectedly high recycling yields coming on top of the anticipated seasonal increase in green waste. As such, no corrective action is required but we should adjust our year-end forecast. It is difficult to be precise at this stage but an increase of at least 1% on the 34% target seems justifiable. A further assessment will be made at Q3.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Increase participation in alternate weekly collection scheme	Technical Services	GREEN	
Promote waste minimisation initiatives to householders	Technical Services	GREEN	
Encourage recycling and minimisation of municipal waste	Technical Services	GREEN	

3.4.4 Reduce the council's carbon footprint

There are no performance indicators to report for this priority area at Q2.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Continue the Energy Efficiency Investment Programme	Technical Services	GREEN	
Develop and implement Wirral CRed initiative	Technical Services	GREEN	
Produce a Developer's Guide for Sustainable Development	Technical Services	GREEN	
Development of Sustainability Unit within Wirral Council	Technical Services	GREEN	

3.4.5 Reduce number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents

There are no performance indicators to report for this priority area at Q2.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Develop initiatives to deliver road safety education, training and publicity	Technical Services	GREEN	
Implement engineering measures to improve road	Technical Services	GREEN	
Work with Merseyside Police via the Accident Reduction Partnership to improve road safety	Technical Services	GREEN	



3.4.6 Promote greater independence and choice

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 130	Social care clients receiving Self Directed Support (Direct Payments and Individual Budgets)	322.3	241	255.2	155.6	Red	n/a	The Direct Payments Team is continuing to monitor the take up of Direct Payments and exploring reasons why people are opting not to enter into an agreement for a Direct Payment. Solutions to these barriers will then be explored in order to eliminate or reduce them. A Monitoring Group is established with a risk management action plan monitored on a monthly basis.. From April 2009 a Resource Allocation System (RAS) will be in place and Individual Budgets will be an option for all.
NI 135	Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer's service, or advice and information	18.0%	18%	10.0%	23.63%	Over Performing	n/a	Performance for this new national indicator has exceeded targets at present. Monthly monitoring of performance will continue, and consideration will be made to refresh targets as part of the LAA review.
NI 136	People supported to live independently through social services (all adults)	2185.80	2185.80	2161	2326.44	Amber	n/a	Currently over performing and corrective action is not required at present. Targets will be refreshed within the new Departmental Plan.

NI 146	Adults with learning disabilities in employment	8.3%	8%	6.0%	3.5%	Red	n/a	The next quarter (Q3) will show an increase due to people completing the JOBS (Jointly Overcoming Barriers equals Success) programme and entering the jobs market.
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Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Enablement and re-ablement	Adult Social Services	GREEN	
Carers Strategy	Adult Social Services	GREEN	
Access and assessment arrangements	Adult Social Services	AMBER	Clear timescales and plans to implement changes to the structure.
Promoting independence	Adult Social Services	GREEN	
Develop Self Directed Support services	Adult Social Services	AMBER	Action plan in place and monitoring group from April 2008 resource allocation system will be in place and individual budgets an option for all. Key element of personalisation agenda.
Implement the Strategic Framework for Health and Wellbeing	Adult Social Services	Awaiting Status	
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	Adult Social Services	GREEN	

3.4.7 Raise overall educational attainment, particularly lower achieving young people




PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 72	Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy	54%	48.3%	54.0%	48.3%	Red		Provisional*
NI 73	Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2		74%		74%		n/a	Provisional*
NI 74	Achievement at level 5 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 3		70.7%		70.7%		n/a	Provisional*
NI 75	Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths	52%	49.9%	52.0%	49.9%	Green		Provisional*
NI 83	Achievement at Level 5 or above in Science at Key Stage 3	76%	73.3%	76.0%	73.3%	Green	n/a	Provisional*

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 87	Secondary school persistent absence rate	(Lower is Better)	5.7%		5.7%		n/a	Provisional*
NI 92	Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest	31.5% (Lower is Better)	32.0%	31.5%	32.0%	Green	n/a	Provisional*
NI 93	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2		83.5%		83.5%		n/a	Provisional*
NI 94	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2		76.9%		76.9%		n/a	Provisional*
NI 95	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3		29.9%		29.9%		n/a	Provisional*
NI 96	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3		59.9		59.9		n/a	Provisional*
NI 97	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4		58%		58%		n/a	Provisional*
NI 98	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4		22.1%		22.1%		n/a	Provisional*
NI 99	Looked after children reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2	60%	61.5%	60.0%	61.5%	Green	n/a	Provisional*
NI 100	Looked after children reaching level 4 in maths at Key Stage 2	62.5%	61.5%	62.5%	61.5%	Green	n/a	Provisional*
NI 101	Looked after children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and maths)	13.5%	10.3%	13.5%	10.3%	Red	n/a	Provisional/Un-validated - The attainment of looked-after children is examined on an individual basis and various factors that might affect performance are taken into account, such as level of attendance. Designated teachers for Looked After Children are in place. Schools have been given an additional £500 per pupil through their budgets to assist in work to support Looked After Children.

*All audited data for attainment figures will be received in January.


Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Project plan to close the attainment gap where poverty affects achievement	Children & Young People	GREEN	
Strategies Intervention Project	Children & Young People	GREEN	
Ensure there are no schools in Ofsted categories	Children & Young People	AMBER	Intervention and support provided to the one school in a category.
Develop a range of intervention strategies to support underachieving and under attaining pupils	Children & Young People	GREEN	
develop literacy and numeracy via family learning programmes	Children & Young People	GREEN	

3.4.8 Safely reduce the number of looked after children

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 61	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption	68.0	68.0	50.0	50.0	Green	n/a	
NI 62	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placements	11% (Lower is Better)	13.0%	11%	13.2%	Red		We have identified all young people with two moves so far this year to be alert to their potential instability & are being extra vigilant about how we support them in their current placement to prevent them having a 3 rd move. This figure of 13.2% falls within the OFSTED "Very Good" category.
NI 63	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement	63.0	65.5	63.0	65.5	Green		
NI 68	Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment	71%	71.0%	71.0%	53.3%	Red		A review of data recording practice has been undertaken. A team by team analysis of performance against this target is being prepared monthly in order to more closely identify issues. As a result of this work it is anticipated that over future months improvements will occur.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Project plan to safely reduce the number of looked after children	Children & Young People	GREEN	

3.4.9 Improve the council's use of land assets

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
LOCAL 6275	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence	8.5	10.00		10.21	No target set for Q2		Detailed work is being undertaken with Departments and this should ensure that the figure is likely to continue a downward trend

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Undertake a Strategic Asset Review	Law, HR & Asset Management	GREEN	
Deliver and implement the people strategy	Law, HR & Asset Management	GREEN	

3.4.10 Create a sustainable budget, providing value for money

There are no performance indicators to report for this priority area at Q2.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Agree a budget which is sustainable, and which identifies resources for further developing Council Services.	Finance	GREEN	
Contain expenditure within agreed budgets and provide services to agreed standards.	Finance	AMBER	Potential DASS overspend of £3.6m reported to Cabinet on 4th September. Further report to November Cabinet
Review comparative data to ensure we provide our services most cost effectively taking into the needs of our community	Finance	GREEN	
Implement our procurement strategy to ensure that services and goods are acquired economically and efficiently, and if advantageous, in partnership with others.	Finance	AMBER	Further improvements in communication and co-ordination are taking place corporately in order to reinforce procedures and ensure that invoices are processed more efficiently. The Procure to Pay section is analysing information which will identify and classify service areas that do not forward invoices in a timely manner, allowing for targeted support and corrective action.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Implement agreed change programme which includes change, financial systems, customer access and IT development.	Finance	AWAITING STATUS BUT RED (PART)	Cabinet agreed 23 July to team to prepare scope for implementation of the HR System. Suspended due to non-acceptance by sponsor department. Update to Cabinet on 27 November.
Exceed government standards for Housing and Council Tax benefits and Council Tax collection.	Finance	GREEN	
Delivering the pay review	Law, HR & Asset Management	GREEN	

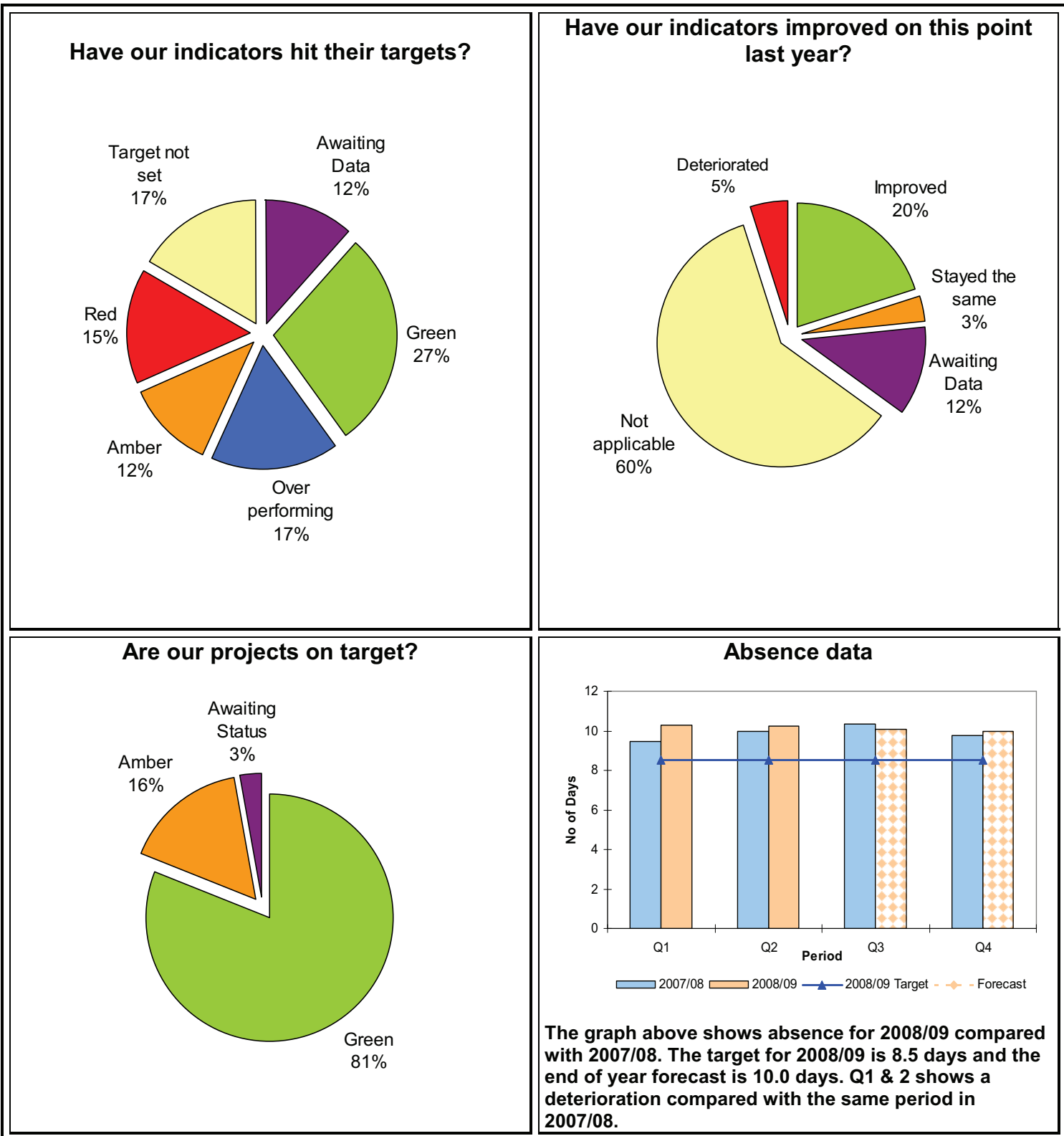
3.4.11 Improving the council's budgeting process to fully reflect its priorities

There are no performance indicators to report for this priority area at Q2.

Key Project	Lead Department	Quarter 2 status (green, amber or red - see below)	Corrective action (amber or red only)
Reflect the implications of the priorities in the Corporate Plan in our Medium Term Financial Plan and corporate planning processes.	Finance	GREEN	



3.5 Corporate Plan Performance Summary

3.5.1 The charts below show the overall council position for all key performance indicators and projects within the council's 2008/09 corporate plan at the second quarter.



3.6 Performance Exceptions

This section includes all corporate plan indicators which are red at Quarter 2 not including priority for improvement indicators. All other performance exceptions can be found in Appendix A.

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 15	Number of most serious violent crimes (PSA 23: Priority Action 1) per 1000 population	0.37 (Lower is Better)	0.44	0.18	0.22	Red	n/a	There has been a steady rise in the number of serious violence offences between the months July and September, 2008. Domestic Violence and Alcohol separately play their part in contributing to these figures but beyond that there remains no pattern to this offence. Performance in this area is subject to a monthly meeting of senior Police Officers in an effort to reduce the number of offences.
NI 117	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	7.4% (Lower is Better)	9.0%	9.0%	10.3%	Red		The Authority EET Action plan is in place which outlines partner responsibilities and contributions to achieving the NEET target. The Wirral Wise Programme, supported by ESF, has commenced, with its 3 strands of interventions targeted at young people who are NEET, aimed at progression via placements and work trials. The September Guarantee thresholds have been met in Wirral this year, with: 94.95% of Year 11 and 80.51% of 17 year olds having a recorded offer of a place in EET. Targeted action with vulnerable young people and within NEET hotspot areas continues. The annual Activity survey of Year 11 leavers which is continuing up to the November count date currently indicates over 90% of the cohort in Learning.
LOCAL 4049	Total number of homes acquired, demolished, refurbished or built as a result of HMRI investment	950	950	354	196	Red		Discussions with contractors to remedy outstanding snags with Group Repair improvements. They are virtually all complete and should report in Q3. Targeted marketing to increase Energy efficiency outputs.

3.7 Corporate Plan Project Exceptions

Project	Priority for Improvement	Department	Status	Corrective Action
Progressing the production of the Local Development Framework		Corporate Services	AMBER	Full resource continues to be utilised
Develop neighbourhood management approach in deprived communities including education & enforcement		Technical Services	AMBER	Partnership approaches are being discussed but have not yet been implemented. The approach will be influenced by the imminent review of Wardens duties and responsibilities.
Develop and implement heritage strategy		Regeneration	AMBER	Tenders going out October/November

Project	Priority for Improvement	Department	Status	Corrective Action
Work of the Family Safety Unit		Regeneration	AMBER	This is an overall status for 2 other Family Safety / Domestic Violence Projects which are also Amber.
Achieve level three in ESLG		Corporate Services	AMBER	Ensure delivery of project plan through regular monitoring of hotspots and intervention where necessary
Customer Access Strategy		Finance	AMBER	Customer Care standards are being re-launched to all staff and to the public in October 2008. The revised Customer Access Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 23rd July. Both general website useage and e-citizen registrations are well in excess of original projections, indicating the growing importance of the web as an access channel. An upgrade to our current web software is under review in order to ensure optimum access and ease of use. This will further enhance the Council's web presence.

- 3.8. Customer feedback is now recorded on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and includes both complaints and compliments. Of the Stage 1 complaints these primarily related to Technical Services and service delivery issues in refuse collection. A total of 17 enquiries were received from the Ombudsman primarily around schools admissions (12). This reflects the normal cyclical trend with the admission enquiries under investigation. Of the compliments recorded the majority were for Adult Social Services.

4. FINANCIAL MONITORING

- 4.1. The net Council spend for 2008/09 is £299 million. The monitoring compares spend against the approved budget which includes growth and policy options as well as the agreed savings targets. When setting the 2008/09 budget the projected balances at 31 March 2009 were £5 million.
- 4.2. At 30 September the position, as detailed in Appendix B, is:-

Details	£million	£million
Projected General Fund balances at 31 March 2009 when setting the budget for 2008/09		5.0
Cabinet decisions		
26 June - Financial out-turn for 2007/08 showed an underspending and contribution to balances		+2.5
9 July - Release of Insurance Fund reserve to general balance		+3.0
23 July - Receipt of Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant to general balance		+1.3
23 July - Funding for street lighting energy and Children & Young People transport costs		-0.9
Projected variances / potential overspends		
Overspend		
Adult Social Services	+3.5	
Children & Young People	+1.7	
Regeneration	+0.6	
Underspend		
Treasury Management	-1.2	-4.6
Potential liability		
Reported to Cabinet 23 July in respect of fuel and energy costs in 2008/09		-2.6
General Fund balances at 31 March 2009 based upon the latest projections		3.7

- 4.3. The completion of the year-end accounts resulted in an increase in the projected balances at 31 March 2008 by £2.5 million. The main spending pressures within Adult Social Services more than offset by the increase in Housing Benefit grant and the benefits from Treasury Management activities.
- 4.4. The release of £3 million from the Insurance Fund reserve to the general balance is a result of the continuing improved performance in respect of

insurance and risk management. This improved performance evidenced by the annual Actuarial assessment and the potential liability for claims.

- 4.5. The receipt of the final payment of the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant of £1.3 million, which related to the 2007/08 financial year, was added to balances. In terms of fuel and energy costs it was agreed that £780,000 be provided from balances this year to meet the increased energy costs for street lighting in Technical Services and £125,000 for fuel costs relating to Children & Young People transport costs. Financial pressures were identified based upon the likely outcome of the energy contracts due to be tendered for in autumn 2008.
- 4.6. Within Adult Social Services the pressures of increasing demand for care services that resulted in an overspend in 2007/08 remain. In terms of savings there are issues around the achievement of the total required this year. The Director has reported this to Cabinet and whilst he is investigating alternative and one-off savings Cabinet has recognised the probability of a £3.6 million overspend primarily within Community Care.
- 4.7. Under Children and Young People the areas of Special Education Needs (SEN) including transport and the care of young people (which resulted in an overspend in 2007/08) and changes to court proceedings are projecting to overspend. The challenges from the employee related savings targets and impact upon existing vacancy control targets together with the service re-engineering savings brought forward from 2007/08 form the significant part of the projected overspend of £1.7 million. Actions taken so far have reduced this projection from £3 million and the Director is considering other options to reduce costs.
- 4.8. Within Regeneration income and energy costs are projected to be at variance with the budget and efforts are being made to contain spend within the budget allocated. However, the options proposed to deliver the Service Re-engineering savings targets brought forward from 2007/08 have yet to be approved meaning an overspend of £0.6 million is likely.
- 4.9. Treasury Management includes the management of cash flow and the need to borrow to fund investment has been re-engineered reducing the requirement for temporary borrowing. The savings achieved in 2007/08 continue and will deliver £0.5 million in 2008/09. Opportunities from the increased rates offered by the banking sector have been taken as a consequence of the improved cash management and at this stage of the year the additional income realised is in the order of £0.7 million. Whilst further benefits are anticipated the unpredictability in the financial sector means any surplus resources are now being invested in lower risk / lower return Government investments.

5. CAPITAL MONITORING

- 5.1. The capital programme for 2008/11 was approved by Council on 17 December 2007 and confirmed as part of the budget by Council on 3 March 2008. The monitoring, which is detailed in Appendix C, compares the original programme with the latest forecast which includes slippage from 2007/08 that was agreed by Cabinet on June 26.

Spend	Original Approval	Forecast June	Forecast September
	£000	£000	£000
Adult Social Services	2,952	3,696	3,815
Children & Young People	32,221	26,377	26,426
Corporate Services	410	1,160	1,160
Law, HR and Asset Mgt	1,860	2,111	2,111
Regeneration	29,079	36,876	36,876
Technical Services	11,318	12,589	12,589
Total programme	77,840	82,809	82,977

- 5.2. The resources table similarly compares the developing programme and reflects the agreed changes, including slippage of spend from 2007/08. The generation of capital receipts through the sale of assets is used to fund the programme and at this stage £4 million is included for use in 2008/09. Income from sales, whilst uncertain in the exact timing of receipt, offers flexibility in the timing of its use and can be used to either balance the current programme or to address future budgetary issues.

Spend	Original Approval	Forecast June	Forecast September
	£000	£000	£000
Borrowing	31,092	30,257	31,073
Grant – HMRI	9,800	8,900	8,900
Grant – Education	20,899	17,868	17,100
Grant – Other	11,636	21,368	21,487
Revenue	413	416	417
Capital Receipts	4,000	4,000	4,000
Total resources	77,840	82,809	82,977

- 5.3. The Director of Adult Social Services has commenced the consultation on a review of intermediate care that will also impact upon the decisions regarding adult accommodation provision. All schemes are therefore subject to review pending the outcome of the consultation.
- 5.4. The Building Schools for the Future (BSF) – One Pathfinder project continues to progress in accordance with the timescales agreed with the Department for Children, Schools and Families. With the Department having re-profiled the funding a start on site is expected early in 2009.
- 5.5. Under the national scheme to develop Children’s Centres Phase 1 and Phase 2 has now seen 17 of the 19 centres opened. The remaining two were re-programmed into 2008/09 and are at the tender stage.
- 5.6. The funding from the Department for Children, Schools and Families for the Primary Capital Strategy is anticipated to be clarified in September. The local authority strategy document having been submitted for consideration.
- 5.7. The Oval Sports Centre is undergoing a substantial programme of works both to the main building and to the creation of 5-a-side pitches. This has been the subject of well reported delays for a variety of reasons and report is to be

presented to Cabinet in December. The redevelopment of New Brighton is progressing well which includes the Floral Pavilion that is anticipated to open in November.

- 5.8. The Special Initiatives element of the programme includes schemes and related funding in respect of Objective One (£5.5 million) and the Single Regeneration Budget (£4.5 million). The schemes contribute towards the conclusion of the Merseyside-wide programme which is shown under 2008/09 but will be further refined as it is not due to complete until 2010.
- 5.9. The Housing Market Renewal Initiative (NewHeartlands) continues to progress although the impact of the worldwide and national financial situation is affecting developers. The size and nature of the programme requires both the programme and the funding to be more flexible with the re-phasing of expenditure and resources kept under review to maintain progress.
- 5.10. In terms of future years the proposals for addressing the Bidston Moss Viaduct are nearing conclusion with the Department for transport having ear-marked the scheme for funding, subject to the constituent authorities agreeing to a share of the funding. This was reported to, and agreed by, Cabinet on May 22.
- 5.11. Cabinet is advised that in accordance with the Constitution there is a request to approve variations in the capital programme in respect of Adult Social Services IT infrastructure funded from grant and the Bromborough Pool Bridge overspend from within the LTP allocation.

6. RISK MONITORING

- 6.1 The revised Corporate Risk Register was agreed by Cabinet on 13 March 2008. This was the baseline document and is reviewed quarterly with Appendix D highlighting progress and any additional issues identified.
- 6.2 For most of the risks the planned improvements in control actions have been implemented along with further identified actions to ensure that the risks are being controlled. Examples of positive developments include:-

Risk No.	Description	Positive Developments in Control Actions
1.	Death or serious injury to a service user, staff member, or anyone to whom the Council owes a duty of care.	The first IOSH Managing Safely Course was delivered in September. 6 revised health & safety arrangements completed and subject to consultation. Health & safety audits in Cultural Services completed.
2.	Failure to prepare adequately for/manage the impact of a pandemic.	Lists of critical employees have been identified for priorities for anti-viral drugs.
5.	The Council does not maintain arrangements for good corporate governance	A further risk management training session for Members was delivered on 24 July. Revised representation on Audit & Risk Management Committee was agreed for the September cycle.

8.	The strategies supporting our key priorities are not executed effectively	Key strategies were revised and reported to Cabinet on 23 July.
12.	We do not fully exploit all available resources, including technology.	Key strategies were reviewed and reported to Cabinet on 23 July. A standardised business case pro-forma for bid submissions has been introduced.
15.	Failure to execute the Council's Investment Strategy (or failure of the Strategy to deliver).	Managerial capacity and focus on the Investment Strategy was strengthened through the establishment of the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management in September.
17.	Failure in safeguarding arrangements (adult or child)	Two new posts for safeguarding adults with mental health challenges filled.
21.	Susceptibility of IT provision to disruption	Improvements to the controlled environment for the main IT suites have been implemented. A report on a possible new data centre for the authority has been drafted.
24.	Impact of volatility and downturn in the economy	Treasury management policies reviewed. Regular dialogue has been taking place with external investment consultants. Maturing investments have been placed with the Government. Enhanced monitoring of key budget areas has been introduced through the financial monitoring report.

6.3 Those areas where progress in implementing controls has not proceeded to timetable or where information is not available are:

Risk No.	Description	Areas where Control Actions have yet to be progressed
3.	Key Council services are not resilient to disruption and business continuity arrangements are inadequate.	As business continuity plans have not yet been received from the majority of departments the target date for finalising all plans has been put back to January 2009.
6.	Community expectations are not properly understood or managed well.	The programme for the sustainability appraisal of the LAA is slightly behind schedule.
9.	Partnerships are not well planned and we do not work effectively with others	Preparatory work for CAA regime is slightly behind schedule.
15.	Failure to execute the Council's Investment Strategy (or failure of the Strategy to deliver).	Membership of the Corporate Investment Group has been established. However its initial meeting has yet to take place.
19.	Failure to progress the regeneration of economically disadvantaged areas	Membership of the Corporate Investment Group has been established. However its initial meeting has yet to take place.
23.	Financial and environmental impact of delay in or failure to acquire and gain planning	No progress has been made by the MWDA in the acquisition of suitable sites.

	consents for sites needed to deliver the MWDA procurement programme	
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- 6.4 The following have been identified as having potential corporate significance and are subject to further review and consideration:-
- (i) Impact of volatility and a downturn in the economy
 - (ii) Susceptibility of IT provision to disruption.
 - (iii) Financial and environmental impact of delay in or failure to acquire and gain planning consents for sites needed to deliver the MWDA procurement programme.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no equal opportunities, human rights, community safety, local member support, local agenda 21 or planning implications arising directly from this report.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Wirral Corporate Plan 2008/11.
Appendix A – Performance Monitoring Summary.
Appendix B – Financial Monitoring Summary.
Appendix C – Capital Monitoring Summary.
Appendix D – Corporate Risk Monitoring Summary.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1. That Cabinet review the performance to date and identify any areas for further action.
- 9.2. That the variations in the capital programme in respect of Adult Social Services IT infrastructure funded from grant and the Bromborough Pool Bridge overspend from within the Local Transport plan (LTP) allocation be approved.
- 9.3. That the report, without appendices, for the quarter ending 31 December be presented to the Cabinet in February. The full report, which should include the detailed appendices, to be made available on the Virtual Committee.

STEPHEN MADDOX
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 27th NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PERFORMANCE MONITORING - DEPARTMENTAL SUMMARY**1 Adult Social Services**

Direction of Travel Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
0.00%	0	Improved by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Deteriorated by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Stayed within +/-2.5% of previous year's performance
27.27%	3	Awaiting data
72.73%	8	Not applicable
100.00%	11	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

Target Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
18.18%	2	Green (within +/-5% of the target)
27.27%	3	Amber (missed or exceeded target by more than 5% but less than 10%)
18.18%	2	Red (missed target by more than 10%)
9.09%	1	Over-performing (more than 10% of the target)
27.27%	3	Awaiting data
0.00%	0	Target not set
0.00%	0	Not Applicable
100.00%	11	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 39	Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates	3004.06		1502.00				
NI 40	Number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment	2275		2239				

NI 120a	All-age all cause mortality rate (Male)	735.00 (Lower is Better)	795.04	735	795.04	Amber	n/a	Evaluating this target over a short time frame e.g. quarterly needs to be considered with caution. This target should be considered on a longitudinal basis and not in isolation. A health inequalities action plan has been developed to address this issue.
NI 120b	All-age all cause mortality rate (Female)	513.00 (Lower is Better)	541.61	513	541.61	Amber	n/a	Evaluating this target over a short time frame e.g. quarterly needs to be considered with caution. This target should be considered on a longitudinal basis and not in isolation. A health inequalities action plan has been developed to address this issue.
NI 130	Social care clients receiving Self Directed Support (Direct Payments and Individual Budgets)	322.3	241	255.2	155.6	Red	n/a	The Direct Payments Team is continuing to monitor the take up of Direct Payments and exploring reasons why people are opting not to enter into an agreement for a Direct Payment. Solutions to these barriers will then be explored in order to eliminate or reduce them. A Monitoring Group is established with a risk management action plan monitored on a monthly basis.. From April 2008 a Resource Allocation System (RAS) will be in place and Individual Budgets will be an option for all.
NI 134	The number of emergency bed days per head of weighted pop	637 (Lower is Better)	637	312	308	Green	n/a	The Urgent Care Modernisation Team oversees economy wide initiatives relating to this target

								e.g. Days of care audit review currently being undertaken at WUHT by the SHA utilisation review team.
NI 135	Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer's service, or advice and information	18.0%	18%	10.0%	23.63%	Over Performing	n/a	Performance for this new national indicator has exceeded targets at present. Monthly monitoring of performance will continue, and consideration will be made to refresh targets as part of the LAA review.
NI 136	People supported to live independently through social services (all adults)	2185.80	2185.80	2161	2326.44	Amber	n/a	Currently over performing and corrective action is not required at present. Targets will be refreshed within the new Departmental Plan.
NI 146	Adults with learning disabilities in employment	8.3%	8%	6.0%	3.5%	Red	n/a	The next quarter (Q3) will show an increase due to people completing the JOBS (Jointly Overcoming Barriers equals Success) programme and entering the jobs market.
LOCAL 8431	Rate of Drug Related Offending	45.0%	45%	23%				
LOCAL 8432	Establish cohort of clients aged 16-35 with two or more episodes of self harm in the last 12 months who subsequently become engaged in meaningful social activities.	2	2	0	0	Green	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Psychiatric Liaison services have recently undergone a major expansion of the service, and it the intention of commissioners that the function of previously funded NRF funded post, focussing on self-harm, will be provided within that expanded service • • A multi-agency group has been established, which will oversee the implementation of this target and within

								<p>that process, there are potential challenges and risks including reaching agreement on the sharing of confidential information • Having established the cohort, the next stage of the process is to individually identify those people, and establish with whom they are in contact and their degree of social inclusion • A sub-set of indicators and outcome measures which will demonstrate the degree of social inclusion will need to be agreed by the multi-agency group, and subsequent agreement will then need to be reached with the provider for the collection of that data)</p>
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2 Children & Young People





Direction of Travel Summary


% PIs	No. of PIs	
19.05%	4	Improved by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
4.76%	1	Deteriorated by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
4.76%	1	Stayed within +/-2.5% of previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
71.43%	15	Not applicable
100.00%	21	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

Target Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
33.33%	7	Green (within +/-5% of the target)
0.00%	0	Amber (missed or exceeded target by more than 5% but less than 10%)
23.81%	5	Red (missed target by more than 10%)
0.00%	0	Over-performing (more than 10% of the target)
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
42.86%	9	Target not set
0.00%	0	Not Applicable
100.00%	21	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 61	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption	68.0	68.0	50.0	50.0	Green	n/a	
NI 62	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placements	11% (Lower is Better)	13.0%	11%	13.2%	Red		We have identified all young people with two moves so far this year to be alert to their potential instability & are being extra vigilant about how we support them in their current placement . This figure of 13.2% falls within the OFSTED "Very Good" category.

NI 63	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement	63.0	65.5	63.0	65.5	Green		
NI 68	Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment	71%	71.0%	71.0%	53.3%	Red		A review of data recording practice has been undertaken. A team by team analysis of performance against this target is being prepared monthly in order to more closely identify issues. As a result of this work it is anticipated that over future months improvements will occur.
NI 72	Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy	54%	48.3%	54.0%	48.3%	Red		Provisional
NI 73	Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2		74%		74%		n/a	Provisional
NI 74	Achievement at level 5 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 3		70.7%		70.7%		n/a	Provisional
NI 75	Achievement of 5 or more A*- C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths	52%	49.9%	52.0%	49.9%	Green		Provisional
NI 83	Achievement at Level 5 or above in Science at Key Stage 3	76%	73.3%	76.0%	73.3%	Green	n/a	Provisional
NI 87	Secondary school persistent absence rate	(Lower is Better)	5.7%		5.7%		n/a	Provisional
NI 92	Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage	31.5% (Lower is Better)	32.0%	31.5%	32.0%	Green	n/a	Provisional

	Profile and the rest							
NI 93	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2		83.5%		83.5%		n/a	Provisional
NI 94	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2		76.9%		76.9%		n/a	Provisional
NI 95	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3		29.9%		29.9%		n/a	Provisional
NI 96	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3		59.9		59.9		n/a	Provisional
NI 97	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4		58%		58%		n/a	Provisional
NI 98	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4		22.1%		22.1%		n/a	Provisional
NI 99	Looked after children reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2	60%	61.5%	60.0%	61.5%	Green	n/a	Provisional
NI 100	Looked after children reaching level 4 in maths at Key Stage 2	62.5%	61.5%	62.5%	61.5%	Green	n/a	Provisional
NI 101	Looked after children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and maths)	13.5%	10.3%	13.5%	10.3%	Red	n/a	Provisional/Unvalidated - The attainment of looked-after children is examined on an individual basis and various factors that might affect performance are taken into account, such as level of attendance. Designated teachers for Looked After Children are in place. Schools have been given an additional £500 per pupil through their budgets to assist in work to support Looked After Children.
NI 117	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	7.4% (Lower is Better)	9.0%	9.0%	10.3%	Red		The Authority EET Action plan is in place which outlines partner responsibilities and contributions to achieving the NEET target. The Wirral Wise Programme, supported by ESF, has commenced, with its 3 strands of

								<p>interventions targeted at young people who are NEET, aimed at progression via placements and work trials. The September Guarantee thresholds have been met in Wirral this year, with: 94.95% of Year 11 and 80.51% of 17 year olds having a recorded offer of a place in EET. Targeted action with vulnerable young people and within NEET hotspot areas continues. The annual Activity survey of Year 11 leavers which is continuing up to the November count date currently indicates over 90% of the cohort in Learning.</p>
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3 Corporate Services


Direction of Travel Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
20.00%	1	Improved by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Deteriorated by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Stayed within +/-2.5% of previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
80.00%	4	Not applicable
100.00%	5	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

Target Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
40.00%	2	Green (within +/-5% of the target)
0.00%	0	Amber (missed or exceeded target by more than 5% but less than 10%)
0.00%	0	Red (missed target by more than 10%)
60.00%	3	Over-performing (more than 10% of the target)
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
0.00%	0	Target not set
0.00%	0	Not Applicable
100.00%	5	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 152	Working age people on out of work benefits	17.74% (Lower is Better)	17.23%	17.84%	17.23%	Green	n/a	
NI 153	Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods (WNF)	35.22 (Lower is Better)	35.07	35.22	35.07	Green	n/a	
LOCAL 6227	The number of 'hits' recorded on the Wirral Tourism Website - www.visitwirral.com	5100000	2325837	969816	1162919	Over Performing	n/a	Please see report from Culture, Tourism and Leisure Scrutiny Committee dated 25th September 2008, Quarter One, Scrutiny

								and Monitoring.
LOCAL 6245	Number of jobs safeguarded.	400	442	200	221	Over Performing	n/a	
LOCAL 6247	Number of jobs created	276	578	138	289	Over Performing		

4 Finance




Direction of Travel Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
28.57%	2	Improved by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Deteriorated by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
14.29%	1	Stayed within +/-2.5% of previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
57.14%	4	Not applicable
100.00%	7	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

Target Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
42.86%	3	Green (within +/-5% of the target)
14.29%	1	Amber (missed or exceeded target by more than 5% but less than 10%)
0.00%	0	Red (missed target by more than 10%)
42.86%	3	Over-performing (more than 10% of the target)
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
0.00%	0	Target not set
0.00%	0	Not Applicable
100.00%	7	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 180	The number of changes of circumstances which affect customers' HB/CTB entitlement within the year.	1.08	1.90	0.54	1.17	Over Performing	n/a	Reflects a higher percentage of changes identified by Wirral than originally anticipated in this new PI. Will continue to review during year but no service delivery issue.
NI 181	Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and	16.4 (Lower is Better)	16.4	16.4	16.09	Green	n/a	

	change.							
LOCAL 2004	Number of complaints registered on Council's procedure	933 (Lower is Better)	930	551	440	Over Performing		Number of complaints lower and all departments working to continue to provide service standard that reduce complaints.
LOCAL 2063	Percentage of calls handled through the Call Centre.	95%	90%	95%	85.9%	Amber		Awaiting consideration of report at Employment and Appointments Committee in November to recruit additional staff on Streetscene team. In addition, recruitment process underway to backfill 3 vacant posts on the Revenues and Benefits team.
LOCAL 2067	Efficiencies gained through procurement.	£2200000	£2200000	£700000	£908140	Over Performing	n/a	Set to achieve target.
LOCAL 2069	Number of visits to the Council's website	61725	61725	59977	60090	Green	n/a	
LOCAL 2073	Percentage of Council Tax collected	96.8%	96.8%	56.6%	57.1%	Green		


5 Law, HR & Asset management

Direction of Travel Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
0.00%	0	Improved by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
100.00%	1	Deteriorated by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Stayed within +/-2.5% of previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
0.00%	0	Not applicable
100.00%	1	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

Target Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
0.00%	0	Green (within +/-5% of the target)
0.00%	0	Amber (missed or exceeded target by more than 5% but less than 10%)
0.00%	0	Red (missed target by more than 10%)
0.00%	0	Over-performing (more than 10% of the target)
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
100.00%	1	Target not set
0.00%	0	Not Applicable
100.00%	1	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
LOCAL 6275	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence	8.5 (Lower is Better)	10.00		10.21			Detailed work is being undertaken with Departments and this should ensure that the figure is likely to continue a downward trend.

6 Regeneration




Direction of Travel Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
33.33%	2	Improved by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
16.67%	1	Deteriorated by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Stayed within +/-2.5% of previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
50.00%	3	Not applicable
100.00%	6	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

Target Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
16.67%	1	Green (within +/-5% of the target)
16.67%	1	Amber (missed or exceeded target by more than 5% but less than 10%)
33.33%	2	Red (missed target by more than 10%)
33.33%	2	Over-performing (more than 10% of the target)
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
0.00%	0	Target not set
0.00%	0	Not Applicable
100.00%	6	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 15	Number of most serious violent crimes (PSA 23: Priority Action 1) per 1000 population	0.37 (Lower is Better)	0.44	0.18	0.22	Red	n/a	There has been a steady rise in the number of serious violence offences between the months July and September, 2008. Domestic Violence and Alcohol separately play their part in contributing to these figures but beyond that there remains no pattern to this offence. Performance in this area is subject to a monthly meeting of senior Police Officers in

								an effort to reduce the number of offences.
NI 20	Number of "Assaults with less serious injury" (including racially and religiously aggravated) offences per 1,000 population as a proxy for alcohol related violent offences	5.48 (Lower is Better)	5.32	3.04	2.66	Over Performing	n/a	This mirrors the trend developed over the last two years on Wirral were through intelligent targeting of resources we have been able to reduce the levels of violence.
NI 156	Number of homeless households living in Temporary Accommodation	18 (Lower is Better)	13	20	13	Over Performing	n/a	Improvement exceeds expectations. Homeless prevention work and concerted work to move people on is paying dividends. Action will continue aiming to ensure improvement is sustained however the credit crunch may have a detrimental effect on homelessness due to re-possession.
LOCAL 4049	Total number of homes acquired, demolished, refurbished or built as a result of HMRI investment	950	950	354	196	Red		Discussions with contractors to remedy outstanding snags with Group Repair improvements. They are virtually all complete and should report in Q3. Targeted marketing to increase Energy efficiency outputs.
LOCAL 4128	Number of new business start-ups supported through Wirral Biz or Business Link in Wirral as measured by data from both organisations	262	262	160	171	Amber		This is a demand led initiative. The performance over the last quarter recognises the increased demand for the service.
LOCAL 4206	Number of reported incidents of anti-social behaviour	17917 (Lower is Better)	17822	8959	8911	Green		This target is the subject of a monthly meeting focussed upon areas suffering the highest levels of anti social behaviour. This is an action focussed meeting and attended by a number of different agencies on Wirral.



7 Technical Services


Direction of Travel Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
33.33%	3	Improved by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Deteriorated by more than 2.5% on previous year's performance
0.00%	0	Stayed within +/-2.5% of previous year's performance
44.44%	4	Awaiting data
22.22%	2	Not applicable
100.00%	9	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

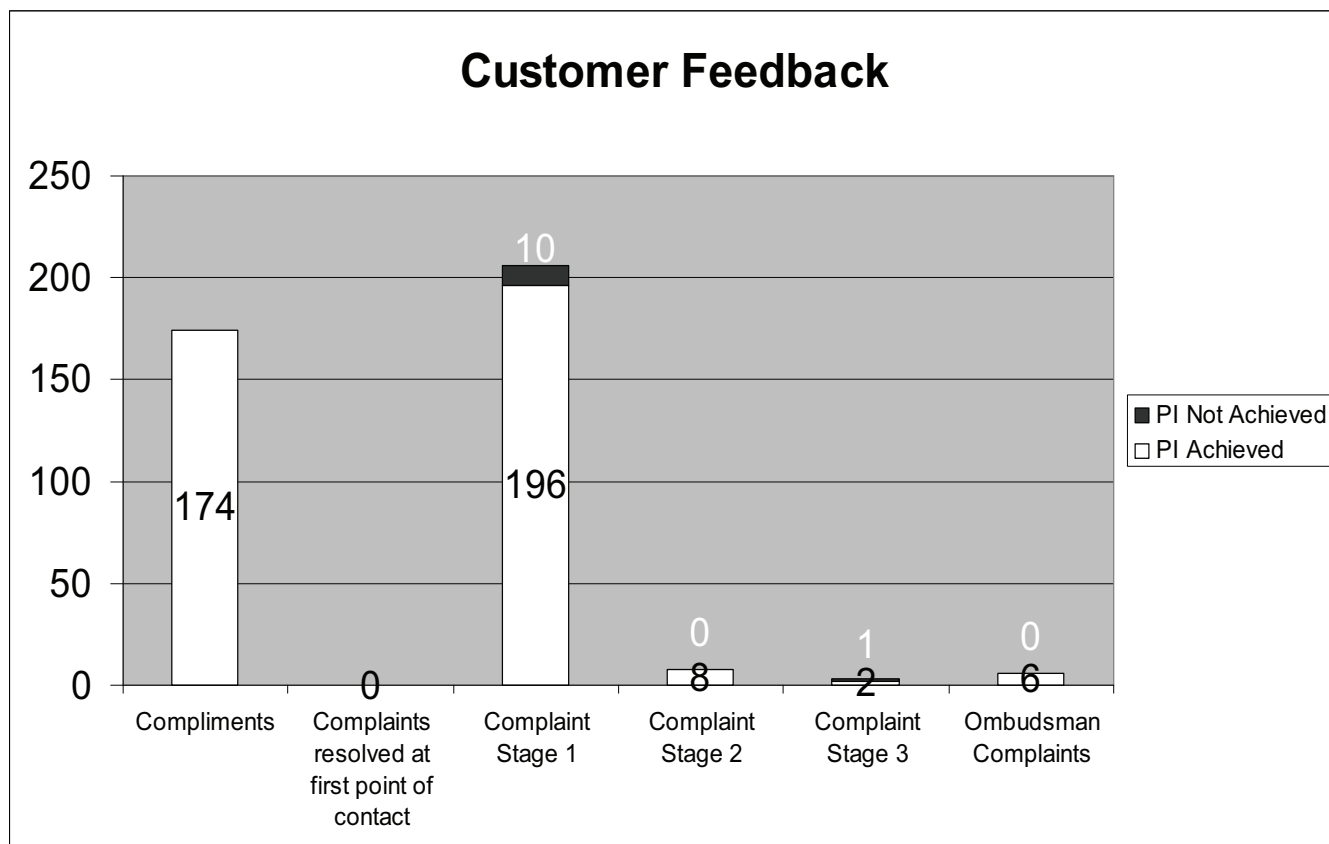
Target Summary

% PIs	No. of PIs	
22.22%	2	Green (within +/-5% of the target)
22.22%	2	Amber (missed or exceeded target by more than 5% but less than 10%)
0.00%	0	Red (missed target by more than 10%)
11.11%	1	Over-performing (more than 10% of the target)
44.44%	4	Awaiting data
0.00%	0	Target not set
0.00%	0	Not Applicable
100.00%	9	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 2 Target	Quarter 2 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 157a	% of planning applications determined within 13 weeks for Major applications	70%	70%	70%	76.9%	Amber		Steady improvement in performance has been maintained. Results are now reflecting the re-engineering improvements to the service introduced with effect from 1st April 2008.
NI 157b	% of planning applications determined within 8 weeks for Minor applications	80%	80%	80%	76.1%	Green		Steady improvement in performance has been maintained. Results are now reflecting the re-engineering improvements to the service introduced with effect from 1st April 2008.

NI 157c	% of planning applications determined within 8 weeks for Other applications	85%	85%	85%	87.6%	Green		Steady improvement in performance has been maintained. Results are now reflecting the re-engineering improvements to the service introduced with effect from 1st April 2008.
NI 191	Residual household waste per household	636 (Lower is Better)	600	315	287.35	Amber	n/a	Green waste & recycling is diverting more residual from landfill and we are performing better than expected.
NI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	34%	34%	36%	40.50%	Over Performing	n/a	The over-performance can be explained by unexpectedly high recycling yields coming on top of the anticipated seasonal increase in green waste. As such, no corrective action is required but we should adjust our year-end forecast. It is difficult to be precise at this stage but an increase of at least 1% on the 34% target seems justifiable. A further assessment will be made at Q3.
NI 195a	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter)	8%		7%				Second survey has not yet taken place. It will be completed by end of November when results can be recorded.
NI 195b	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of detritus)	10%		10%				Second survey has not yet taken place. It will be completed by end of November when results can be recorded.
NI 195c	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of graffiti)	7%		7%				Second survey has not yet taken place. It will be completed by end of November when results can be recorded.
NI 195d	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of fly posting)	1%		1%				Second survey has not yet taken place. It will be completed by end of November when results can be recorded.

COMPLAINTS AND CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

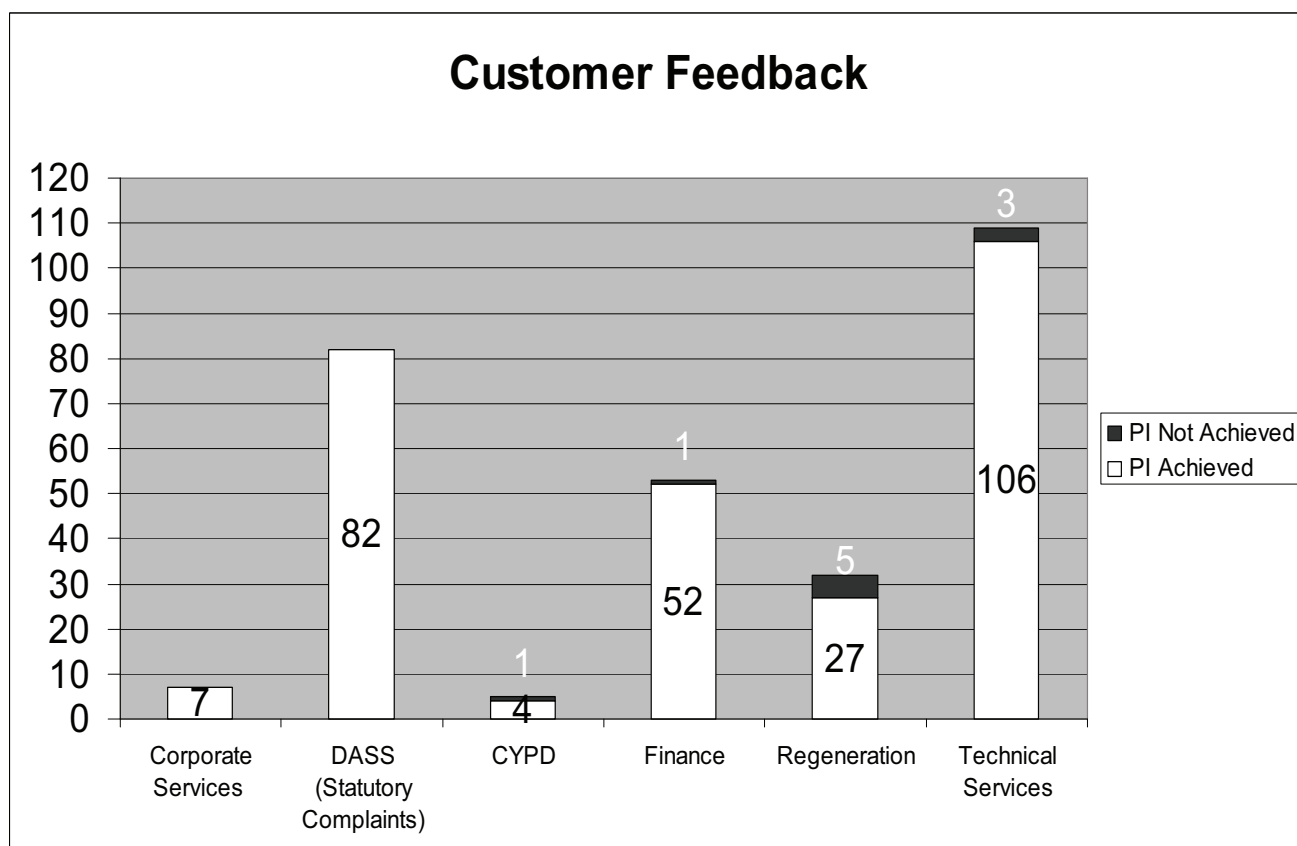
1. Customer feedback received (2nd Quarter 01 Jul 08 – 30 Sep 08)

The figures in the graph above show the number of customer feedback contacts across all departments and the proportion of these which were responded to within the given service level agreement (Achieved/Not Achieved).

- Customer feedback is logged at initial point of contact on the Council's CRM system wherever possible, or forwarded to the relevant departmental coordinator for logging. Use of the CRM has provided a consistent system for recording; tracking; updating; reporting and analysing these interactions for effective action to be taken to reduce complaints numbers and respond to customer comment.
- Compliments – historically under-reported but efforts being made to encourage staff to start officially recording positive feedback directly or via departmental coordinators. There has been a significant increase (67%) in reported compliments since the first quarter which reflects the efforts made to give positive customer comments greater prominence.
- Complaints resolved at first point of contact – historically under-reported but, again, 'front-line' staff being encouraged to actively record their expertise in diffusing potential complaints by offering immediate solutions to the customer.
- Complaint Stages 1 to 3 – any complaints recorded through the Council's corporate complaint procedure across all access channels. Resolution target of 15 working days per complaint stage. Further analysis of these complaints is detailed in the departmental breakdowns. There are 9 further complaints for this period still awaiting resolution. This total number of complaints received (226) compares favourably with the previous quarter's total (248), representing a 9% decrease.
- CYPD/DASS Statutory complaints are not included in this report as they are handled under legislation outside the Council's corporate complaints' policy. For comparison there were 82 Statutory complaints received for this period.

- Ombudsman Complaints – complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) for investigation and finding (resolution target of 28 working days to respond to LGO’s enquiry). All 6 responses sent to the LGO in this period were responded to within the target. There are a further 11 ombudsman enquiries still being investigated.
- As recommended by the LGO procedures have been put into place to record where complaints have resulted in a change to Council policy or process, which will be reported at a departmental level, again historically this has not been a focus for complaint reporting and there is only one change to report currently. This concerns a stage 1 complaint made about the refuse collection service which resulted in the council’s contractor (BIFFA) agreeing to deploy a specialist collection vehicle to ensure consistency of future collections in a particular street and prevent additional complaints.

2. Stage 1 Complaints by Department (2nd Quarter 01 Jul 08 – 30 Sep 08)

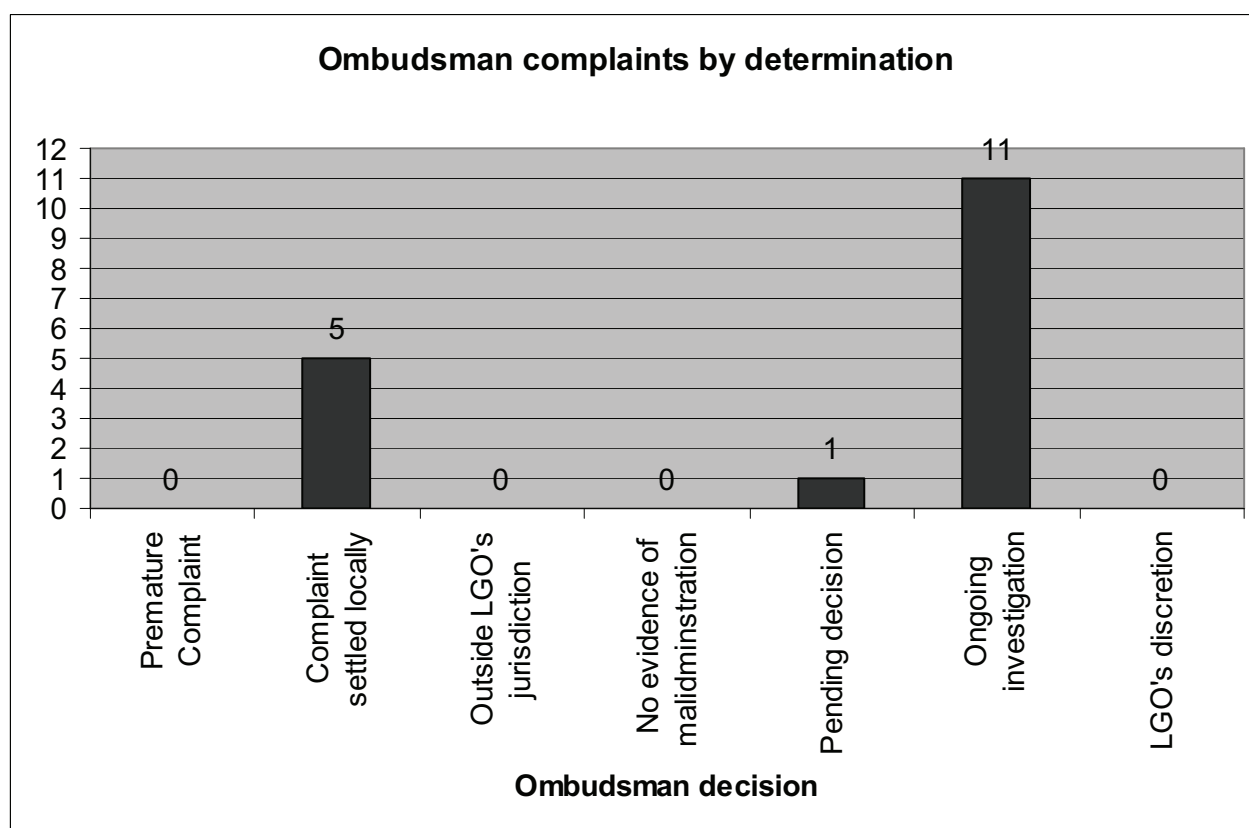


The figures in the graph above show the number of corporate complaint stage 1’s received by individual departments and the proportion of these which were responded to within the given service level agreement (Achieved/Not Achieved).

Further analysis is offered in the departmental breakdown of complaint types; service areas and ward volumes.

3. Complaints to the Ombudsman (2nd Quarter 01 Jul 08 – 30 Sep 08)

The decisions received from the LGO in the reporting period are as shown:



A total of 17 enquiries were received from the Ombudsman Service in this period, and these were relating to the following service areas:

- 12 about Schools Admissions (CYPD)
- 2 about Planning (Technical Services)
- 2 about Care Services (DASS)
- 1 about Drainage and Coastal Protection (Technical Services)

6 responses were sent to the ombudsman in the reporting period, all within the 28 day timescale. Of these 5 were 'settled locally' i.e. resolution found to the satisfaction of all parties, without the need for a formal decision from the ombudsman. The ombudsman has yet to provide a decision for the 6th enquiry responded to.

For the same period 11 of these enquiries are still being investigated, of which 10 concern Schools Admissions (CYPD) and 1 relating to Care Services (DASS).

Seasonal factors have contributed to the large proportion of enquiries concerning schools admissions (CYPD).

FINANCIAL MONITORING SUMMARY

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This is one of a series of reports submitted throughout the year presenting an overview of the financial performance of the Council. It details any variations and provides a summary of the overall implications for the General Fund.

2. FINANCIAL MONITORING

2.1 Cabinet on 3 April 2008 agreed that I would provide this summary report to Cabinet and to Finance & Best Value Overview Committee following the end of each quarter and that it would compare spend against the approved budget. To support this each departmental Chief Officer provides an update on their departmental budget that includes references to growth items, savings and any other variations from the approved budget.

2.2 Members of Cabinet, Finance & Best Value Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Committee chairs also receive a monthly Financial Monitoring Statement.

3. FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/09

3.1 Subsequent to the agreement of the budget at Council on 3 March 2008 there were variations to reflect the final levies and the re-allocation of central and departmental recharges to reflect the agreed savings in departmental budgets. On 25 September Cabinet agreed to the transfer of budgets following the creation of the Department of Law, Human Resources and Asset Management. The table shows the Budget reported to Council with the Current Budget reflecting the decisions of Council and the changes referred to.

Expenditure	Council Budget	Current Budget
	£	£
Adult Social Services	86,671	86,434
Children & Young People	70,560	70,560
Corporate Services	6,422	5,112
Finance	20,526	21,048
Law, HR and Asset Management	0	1,105
Regeneration	41,229	41,229
Technical Services	35,609	35,529
Treasury Management	11,755	11,755
Merseytravel	25,311	25,311
Local Pay Review	4,546	4,546
Contribution (from) balances	(4,102)	(4,102)
Net Expenditure	298,527	298,527

4. FINANCIAL MONITORING 2008/09

4.1 Progress on implementing Policy Options

4.1.1 The growth and policy options agreed as part of the budget have been, or are in the process of being, implemented. In respect of Corporate Services the expansion of participatory budgeting through the Area Forums and the You Decide initiative was reported to Cabinet in July with the present round of Forums considering the spending of the resources.

4.2 Progress on delivering savings

4.2.1 The savings target for Adult Social Services in £4.5 million and the proposals are essentially on target to be achieved during the financial year. There are, however, issues around the implementation of some of the savings which, if not in place during the summer, put at risk their successful delivery in 2008/09. The Director presented a detailed report to Cabinet on 4 September and is investigating alternative and one-off savings that can be achieved.

4.2.2 Within the Children and Young People Department target of £4 million are a number that involve a re-structuring of service areas and will impact upon employees. The timing of the implementation and the scale of these savings is placing additional pressures upon the existing vacancy control targets. The Director is considering other options in order to offset any increased costs in 2008/09.

4.2.3 All departments have a saving to be achieved through better, more efficient procurement and all are addressing the targets with the support of the Corporate Procurement Unit.

4.3 Impact of any Cabinet decisions that have budgetary implications

4.3.1 Cabinet on 26 June agreed a report of the financial out-turn for 2007/08 following the completion of the year-end accounts. Overall this resulted in an increase in the projected balances at 31 March 2008 by £2.5 million. The main spending pressures being within Adult Social Services but were more than offset by the increase in Housing Benefit grant and the benefits that accrued from Treasury Management activities.

4.3.2 Cabinet on 9 July agreed releasing £3 million from the Insurance Fund reserve to the general balance. This is a result of the continuing improved performance in respect of insurance and risk management as reflected in the annual Actuarial assessment and the potential liability for claims.

4.3.3 On 23 July a report was presented to Cabinet on fuel and energy costs. It was agreed that £780,000 be provided from balances this year to meet the increased energy costs for street lighting in Technical Services and £125,000 for fuel costs relating to Children & Young People transport costs. Financial pressures were identified based upon the likely outcome of the energy contracts due to be tendered for in autumn 2008. The same meeting also

agreed that the receipt of the final payment of the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant of £1.3 million be added to balances.

- 4.3.4 As at the end of September the decisions affecting the agreed budget in respect of the allocation of the £5.3 million Efficiency Investment Budget were:-

Department	Area	£000
Children & Young People	Accommodation	250
	Early Years and Somerville Centre	25
Corporate Services	Senior management	225
	Tourism & Marketing	149
Finance	Government Connect	29
	Insurance cover	88
Law, HR and Asset Mgt	Skills Audit	40
	Sustainability Unit	80
Regeneration	CCTV control room	97
	Parks Gateway review	40
Technical Services	Section 106 strategy	40

4.4 Variations from the approved budget

- 4.4.1 The following sections highlight the issues in those areas of the budget that are identified as key risks in delivering the objectives of the department within the available resources. All are subject to closer monitoring because of the volatile nature of either demand or cost or because in recent years they have experienced pressures in keeping to the agreed budget.

4.4.2. Adult Social Services

The pressures of increasing demand for care services that resulted in an overspend in 2007/08 remain within community care services. With the issues highlighted previously around the savings the present projections indicate a £3.5 million overspend.

The Director presented a detailed report to Cabinet on 4 September including the actions being taken to mitigate the projected overspend. Cabinet noted this and regular updates on progress are being presented to Cabinet.

4.4.3. Children and Young People

The areas that are the most volatile remain as Special Education Needs (SEN) and care services in respect of Looked After Children. In terms of SEN and including transport a variation of £0.4 million is identified. Budget pressures from the care of young people resulted in an overspend in 2007/08 and with changes to court proceedings now project an overspend of £0.6 million.

The impact of the savings is affecting employee budgets and, as highlighted previously, is placing pressures on the achievement of vacancy control

targets. With challenges from delivering service re-engineering savings from 2007/08 these form the significant part of the projected overspend totalling some £1.1 million.

The Director has put in place actions that have reduced the projected overspend from £3 million in June to £1.7 million and continues to address this overspend. As last year, this will be from a combination of spending reduction measures and the maximisation of grant opportunities.

4.4.4 Corporate Services

A report was presented to Cabinet on 25 September on the budget virements required as a consequence of the creation of the Department of Law, Human Resources and Asset Management. On the budget remaining there are no variations to report upon at this stage.

4.4.5. Finance

The spend, and associated Government grant, in respect of Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit payments includes the largest individual budgets in the Council. The service is subject to numerous performance and control measures to ensure that individuals receive the benefits to which they are properly entitled and the Council maximises the grant opportunities.

In previous years continuing improvements have been made through a combination of the opportunities offered by the Integrated Tax and Benefits System, improvements and efficiencies to the management and handling of claimants through the Customer Access channels and the maximisation of grant support from the Government. This is within the savings agreed for 2008/09 onwards.

4.4.6 Law, Human Resources and Asset Management

A report was presented to Cabinet on 25 September on the budget virements for the Department. The budget included the additional allocation to meet the financial pressures identified in the Coroner Service although this area continues to be closely monitored. At this stage there are no variations to report.

4.4.7. Regeneration

Income generation is a key element of the budget with factors outside the control of the Council and culture is the largest energy user within the non-schools budget, a cost that remains largely outside the control of the Department.

At this stage income and energy costs are projected to be at variance with the budget and efforts are being made to contain spend within the budget allocated. In respect of the Service Re-engineering savings targets brought

forward from 2007/08 the options for consideration have yet to be approved meaning an overspend of £0.6 million is likely.

4.4.7. Technical Services

The budget is reliant upon income from car parking and planning and, as in previous years, the Director is highlighting shortfalls in these areas which will be difficult to accommodate from within the departmental budget.

The impact of rising energy prices continues to give cause for concern and was reported to Cabinet in July. At this stage this has been seen in the street lighting energy contract for which additional resources were made available.

4.4.8. Treasury Management

Cash flow management and the need to borrow to fund investment has been re-engineered. This reduced the requirement for temporary borrowing, and the savings achieved in 2007/08 continue, delivering £0.5 million in 2008/09.

The opportunities offered by the increased rates offered by the banking sector have been taken as a consequence of the improved cash management. At this stage of the year the additional income realised is in the order of £0.7 million. Given the unpredictability in the financial sector any surplus resources are now being invested in lower risk / lower return Government investments.

4.5. **Other issues**

4.5.1 Local Pay Review

The progress on implementing the Local Pay Review, including Job Evaluation and Harmonisation, has regularly been reported to Cabinet and is expected to be within the financial projections. Phase 1 has been agreed and was implemented during August. When details of Phase 1 are confirmed part of the total sum available for the Review will be allocated to individual departments.

4.6 **Issues affecting future financial years**

4.6.1 The pressures on care services and energy budgets have been highlighted in separate reports to Cabinet. The Directors involved will report progress in these areas and particularly energy as the revised contracts are agreed.

4.6.2 The revised Medium Term Financial Strategy was reported to Cabinet in July and the projected Budget continues to be updated and reported to Cabinet.

5. **FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 When setting the 2008/09 budget the projected balances at 31 March 2009 were £5 million and the latest position is as follows:-

Details	£million	£million
Projected General Fund balances at 31 March 2009 when setting the budget for 2008/09		5.0
Cabinet decisions		
26 June - Financial out-turn for 2007/08 showed an underspending and contribution to balances		+2.5
9 July - Release of Insurance Fund reserve to general balance		+3.0
23 July - Receipt of Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant to general balance		+1.3
23 July - Funding for street lighting energy and Children & Young People transport costs		-0.9
Projected variances / potential overspends		
Overspend		
Adult Social Services	+3.5	
Children & Young People	+1.7	
Regeneration	+0.6	
Underspend		
Treasury Management	-1.2	-4.6
Potential liability		
Reported to Cabinet 23 July in respect of fuel and energy costs in 2008/09		-2.6
General Fund balances at 31 March 2009 based upon the latest projections		3.7

5.2 There are no additional staffing implications arising from this report.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

**WIRRAL COUNCIL - ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09
POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2008**

SUMMARY

The Department has identified financial pressures of £9m which are being addressed through the transformational change programme. At the time of writing the projected budget deficit for 2008/09 is £3.5 million. This assumes that all Budget Efficiencies/Projects agreed by Council on 3 March 2008, and those that carried over from 2007/08 are delivered without slippage and that there is no further increase in FACS compliant demand. Significant progress is being made to deliver the savings and reduce expenditure. However there has been an increase in demand over the summer, in both health and social care, which if sustained may impact on the Department's ability to safely deliver these savings in this financial year.

POLICY OPTIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Older People Parliament	20	

SAVINGS TARGETS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Re-organisation of fieldwork teams	250	Locality structure for DASS agreed following lengthy consultation and implementation will commence in October.
Continuing E-Monitoring & Care Procurement process	100	E-Monitoring solutions being rolled out with Independent providers. Evidence of reduced expenditure however new demand is offsetting this.
Choice through Individualised Care and Direct Payments	200	Savings arise through increased take-up of Direct Payments and people assessed as paying the full cost choosing to make their own arrangements. Local targets agreed and action plans in place.
Ensure funding is correctly allocated between PCT and DASS	200	Ongoing application of Continuing Health Care and Joint Funding criteria. Savings achieved as a result of full year impact of Panel decisions made in 2007/08.
Reduction in Management & Support costs	425	Locality structure for DASS agreed and implementation will commence in October.
Reduce posts in HR and staff development	250	New structure for Finance & Performance Branch agreed by Chief Executive on 18 April 2008. On target.
Reduce admin posts in SWIFT Team	150	New structure for Finance & Performance Branch agreed by Chief Executive on 18 April 2008. On target.
Care Services Procurement - joint working with PCT	100	Discussions being held with Wirral PCT in relation to Integrated Commissioning as part of the Transformation Programme.

Capital Strategy (residential care)	250	Strategy agreed by Cabinet in June. On target.
Increase in non-residential care charges	1,324	New charging policy implemented in January 2008. On target.
Review of out-of-home activities (day services)	700	Project currently being developed. At risk of slippage in 2008/09. One-off efficiencies being investigated.
Corporate procurement target	545	Discussions held with Corporate Procurement Team to identify projects to take forward.

BRIDGING FINANCE

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Increase in non-residential care charges	928	Increase in fees effective 2009/10.

CABINET DECISIONS

Date	Details	£000
4 Sept 2008	Noted probability of overspends occurring in 2008/09 (£3.5m) and 2009/10 (£0.8m).	
25 Sept 2008	Creation of the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management	-222

VOLATILE AREAS / POTENTIAL VARIATIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Community care	3,250	This is the underlying over-commitment on the Community Care Budget. Action Plan developed to reduce spending through reviews, re-ablement and tighter controls on Access.
Utility costs in care homes	250	This pressure has increased due to further rises in gas and electricity prices.

JOHN WEBB
DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

**WIRRAL COUNCIL - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT
FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09
POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2008**

SUMMARY

The projected budget deficit for the Children and Young People's Department is £1.7m. Budgets continue to be reviewed. Work is ongoing to examine and quantify slippage within a number of grant funded spend plans. This may create opportunities to improve the current budget position. Many of these reductions are "one-off savings" and in the medium term the overall position remains a challenging one.

POLICY OPTIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Youth Parliament	20	Decisions to be taken on spend by young people.

SAVINGS TARGETS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Reduce sickness levels	100	Sickness levels and the impact on Agency costs are being monitored
Facilities management – Children's Homes	25	Repair and maintenance budget reduced.
Independent residential care	650	The target for residential placements has reduced from 47 to 39. There are currently 49.
Closure of Poolwood Children's Home	500	The home closed in December 2007
Staff savings from reviews in Social Care (£573k)	2,123	The savings in Family support, Youth Offending, CAMHS and Support are being implemented.
Staff savings from reviews in Participation and Inclusion (£528k)		Savings in BIP, Play Services and Social Welfare have been implemented. The costs of joint funded places with schools have been reviewed.
Planning and Resources (£421k)		Support posts have been reduced and vacant posts deleted.
Learning and Achievement Savings in Music service, support at Acre Lane and Early Years (£601k)		Posts have been reduced. In addition Music Tuition Charges increased and some posts funded from grant.
Procurement	583	This includes residential care (N.W. Auth. Consortium) and work with the Council's Procurement Unit. Progress will be reported separately.

BRIDGING FINANCE

Details	£000	Comments / progress
None		

CABINET DECISIONS

Date	Details	£000
9 July 2008	Energy Price Rises - Fuel costs SEN transport	125

POTENTIAL VARIATIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Outstanding Service Re-engineering	486	Unidentified / one-off savings in 2007-08 carried forward into the new year.
Vacancy Control	660	Staffing savings delete over £700,000 in vacant posts. The vacancy control of £1m and sickness reduction target of £100,000 is challenging.
Home to School Transport	350	The budget overspend in 2007/08 resulted in part from more taxi journeys. These are likely to continue.
Children's Homes	330	There are additional staff costs arising in part from the care plans for young people.
Independent Residential Care	100	The number of placements are not reducing as quickly as required in the budget plan
Legal, Court and Medical Fees	150	These budgets are under pressure. A budget to cover the additional cost of child court proceedings has been created. This will be reviewed in year.
Computer software costs	50	There has been an increase in maintenance and license costs, some areas are no longer grant funded.
Emergency Duty Team	160	This represents the department's share of additional staff costs in 2007/08. This is a joint service with Adult Social Services and is currently being reviewed.
Standards Fund	300cr	Some allocations carried forward from 2007/08 have enabled savings to be made in 2008/09.
Surestart	200cr	It is possible to use some Surestart allocations to offset existing eligible costs within Social Care.

HOWARD COOPER
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

**WIRRAL COUNCIL - CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09
POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2008**

SUMMARY

There are no variations to be highlighted at this time.

POLICY OPTIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Local Area Agreement	200	The LAA Board approved bids in June to assist in the delivery of the Local Area Agreement. The balance will be agreed at a future meeting.
You Decide Area Forum	220	Initiative delivering more choice to local people about services. You Decide is currently being promoted and this round of Area Forums is looking to allocate the resources.
Assistance for Remploy	6	Officers are assessing the current position.
Support for Wirral's Veterans	15	Support for a programme of events for Wirral Veterans including enabling attendance at National Veterans Day in June and the Wirral Tribute to Veterans Day.

SAVINGS TARGETS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Strategic Development staff	75	Budgets reduced in Corporate Services
Corporate Policy restructure	60	Budgets reduced in Corporate Services
Transformational Change	30	Budget reduced in T/change.
Tourism and Marketing	60	Budgets reduced in Corporate Services
Supplies & Services savings including procurement	64	£40k identified and relevant budgets reduced. £24k savings yet to be identified

CABINET DECISIONS

Date	Details	£000
25 Sept 2008	Creation of the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management.	-803

VOLATILE AREAS / POTENTIAL VARIATIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
None		

**J WILKIE
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

**WIRRAL COUNCIL - FINANCE DEPARTMENT
FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09
POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2008**

SUMMARY

Spend is anticipated to be contained within the overall budget allocated. Savings are essentially achieved and efforts continue to try and ascertain other areas of financial benefit.

POLICY OPTIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Council Tax discount	40	Increased number of applicants presently being assessed.

SAVINGS TARGETS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Corporate ICT staffing	100	Achieved. Staffing changes made.
Housing / Council Tax benefit subsidy	600	Achieved. Continuing improvements from improved service delivery and maximising grant opportunities.
Integrated IT system – staffing and contract	380	Achieved. Reduced staffing and revised contract effective 2008/09.
Cash collection at OSS	30	Achieved. Alternative facilities provided.
Call centre staffing	80	Achieved. Staffing numbers reduced.
IT Systems support	200	Achieved. New contractual arrangements in place for 2008/09.
Procurement	306	Addressing areas to identify savings including insurance tenders.

CABINET DECISIONS

Date	Details	£
None		

VOLATILE AREAS / POTENTIAL VARIATIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Housing and Council Tax Benefit	120million	The size and nature of the budget make this a key area within the departmental budget. Performance in this area is closely monitored. The financial climate has seen an increase in applicants.

**IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

**WIRRAL COUNCIL – DEPARTMENT OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09
POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2008**

SUMMARY

There are no variations to be highlighted at this time.

POLICY OPTIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Carbon footprint	115	From technical services and programmed to be spent by the year-end.

SAVINGS TARGETS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Integrated Payroll operation	50	Budgets were reduced prior to the creation of the new department and included for reference.
Review of Central Services	50	
Review of Legal Services	40	
Skills specific training.	25	
Supplies & Services savings including procurement	84	£60k identified and relevant budgets reduced. £24K savings yet to be identified.

CABINET DECISIONS

Date	Details	£000
23 July 2008	Ending of SLA Wirral Partnership Homes – Virement from Treasury Management	+148
25 Sept 2008	Creation of the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management	+991
25 Sept 2008	Transfer of carbon reduction policy option from Technical Services	+115

VOLATILE AREAS / POTENTIAL VARIATIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Asset Management		The disposal of land is traditionally a volatile area and remains closely monitored throughout the year.
Coroners Service		The budget was increased for 2008/09, having overspent in previous years. It continues to be closely monitored.

**BILL NORMAN
DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

**WIRRAL COUNCIL - REGENERATION DEPARTMENT
FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09
POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2008**

SUMMARY

At this stage pressures identified on delivering the prior year service re-engineering savings and procurement savings as well as meeting increasing energy costs and the reliance upon achieving income targets. Potential overspend of £0.6 million identified in respect of the savings targets.

POLICY OPTIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Anti-dog fouling measures	40	The section has taken delivery of a new quad bike for enforcement and cleaning. Improved signage, publicity and reward cards for dog owners are currently being produced.
Allotment sustainability	40	Appointment of a part time Community Development Officer for 2 years to liaise with allotment holders. Due to start in November 2008.
Get into reading	75	Three year funding, at £25,000 a year, being the Council's contribution to the "Get into Reading" project. Progressing as planned.
Improve access pathways	30	Environmental improvements to be made to public open spaces to improve or provide additional access pathways and additional tables and seating. Improvements completed at Leasowe Common.
Clean-Ups play areas	20	A pilot scheme responding flexibly outside normal hours, for children's play areas during periods of high use. Progressing as planned.
Heritage issues	20	A sum of £5,000 for the continued development of the Heritage Group and £15,000 for the delivery of a Heritage Strategy for Wirral in 2008/09, in consultation with the Heritage Group)

SAVINGS TARGETS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Community Support Officers	105	Reduction of support costs to Police, budget reduction implemented.
Change from grants to loans - staff re-assignment	86	Budget reduction implemented.
Alleygating Programme	66	Support reduced to residual maintenance, reduction implemented.
CCTV Control room	51	Review of hours, reduction implemented.
Improved use of IT	29	Budget reduction implemented.
Finance Monitoring Post	27	Budget reduction implemented.
Housing Strategy	14	Budget reduction implemented.

Procurement	443	Budgets yet to be reduced
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CABINET DECISIONS

Date	Details	£
None		

VOLATILE AREAS / POTENTIAL VARIATIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Repairs and Maintenance	1,173	Will continue to be monitored during the year.
Energy costs	1,503	This area will be monitored closely during the year. Energy efficiency schemes could produce some savings in 2008/09. Concerns about future energy costs.
Cultural Service Income Levels	9,094	Continues to be monitored closely as income levels can vary significantly mainly because of adverse weather conditions. Minor variations can be absorbed by the department but major variations may result in a potential under-recovery of income. Delays in completing the Oval could have implications in 2008/09.
Service re-engineering	634	Various options have been submitted for consideration but as yet none have been agreed. Potential overspend.
Procurement saving	443	Several budgets are wholly funded by grant or produce significant levels of income. Reducing the expenditure lines without consideration of the grant or income implications could result in reduced income levels, negating the effect of the budget reduction. To date no procurement savings have been identified.

ALAN STENNARD
DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

**WIRRAL COUNCIL - TECHNICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09
POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2008**

SUMMARY

Budget monitoring reports during 2007/08 identified deficits within the operational services of car parking and building & development control fee income. There are continuing problems in the areas of land charges, building control and general procurement savings which are under review and Cabinet will shortly receive a report on land charges, planning delivery grant and other minor budget amendments. It is unlikely that the variations identified from the above can be fully accommodated within existing resources and the Cabinet report will propose alternatives for rationalising matters.

POLICY OPTIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Carbon Reduction	115	Transferred to Law, HR and Asset Mgt.
Graffiti Removal	30	To be spent by the year-end

SAVINGS TARGETS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Traffic management	35	
Energy conservation	5	
Building and Development Control administration	50	
Highways maintenance	75	
Waste contract mgt/admin	45	All the savings, other than procurement, have been incorporated in to the departmental budgets.
External services income	55	
Review of waste budgets	142	
Streetscene / grass cutting contract extended	30	
School crossing patrols	32	
Health & safety admin	30	
Increase car park charges	100	
Development control	50	
Instigate CRM project	50	
Review admin in view of IT	30	
Highways maintenance	283	
Procurement	225	

CABINET DECISIONS

Date	Details	£000
9 July 2008	Impact of Energy Price Rises –Street lighting	+780
25 Sept 2008	Creation of the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management	+34
25 Sept 2008	Carbon reduction policy option to Law, HR and Asset Management	-115

VOLATILE AREAS / POTENTIAL VARIATIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Planning Delivery Grant	209	Grant discontinued and will be the subject of a Cabinet report along with land charges and building control fee income

Building Control Fees	200	Declining income due to the effect of the national and local economic situation.
Land Charges	150	Declining income due to the effect of external factors on the housing market.

DAVID GREEN
DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

**WIRRAL COUNCIL - TREASURY MANAGEMENT
FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09
POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2008**

SUMMARY

Currently the Treasury Management spend is projected to be produce an underspend this year. There are two main areas of potential volatility / variation which are highlighted below that are being closely monitored and are subject to fluctuations based upon changes in the global economy.

POLICY OPTIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Match funding pot	200	Central allocation increased and is available for use.

SAVINGS TARGETS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
None		

BRIDGING FINANCE

Details	£000	Comments / progress
None		

CABINET DECISIONS

Date	Details	£000
23 July 2008	Ending of SLA Wirral Partnership Homes – Virement to Corporate Services	-148

VOLATILE AREAS / POTENTIAL VARIATIONS

Details	£000	Comments / progress
Investment Income	700	The constantly changing financial environment hinders accurate projections of the investment income achievable in the year. At 30 September secured £3.44m against a target of £2.7m. Investments now being placed in more secure but lower return areas.
Temporary Borrowing	500	Due to better cash flow management the requirement to borrow on a temporary basis has almost been eliminated. This should generate an annual saving of approximately £500,000.
Minimum Revenue Provision		Government changes to the calculating of the minimum revenue provision may have an impact on revenue. This impact will be assessed in the coming months and will be reported at later date.

**IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

CAPITAL MONITORING SUMMARY

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This is one of a series of reports submitted throughout the year providing an update on the progress being made in delivering the capital programme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Cabinet on 3 April 2008 agreed that I would provide this summary report to Cabinet and to Finance & Best Value Overview & Scrutiny Committee following the end of each quarter and that it would compare progress against the approved programme. To support this each Chief Officer provides an update on their elements of the programme including references to the approval, any variations, progress (including implications for future years) and funding.

3. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/11

- 3.1. The capital programme for 2008/11 was approved by Council on 17 December 2007 and confirmed as part of the budget by Council on 3 March 2008. Other than the impact of decisions by Council / Cabinet the revisions relate to slippage resulting in both the spend and the resources being similarly slipped.

4. COUNCIL / CABINET DECISIONS

- 4.1. The Capital Programme 2008/11 and Capital Financing Requirements 2008/09 were agreed by Cabinet on 12 December 2007 and updated as part of the Estimates 2008/09 that was reported to Cabinet on 21 February 2008.
- 4.2. On March 13 in the Projected Budget 2009/10-2010/11 report the previous decision to capitalise £3.6 million of highways maintenance was revised so that it reverts to being a revenue liability from 2009/10.
- 4.3. On May 22 a report detailing the Schools Capital Funding 2008/09 was provided by the Director of Children & Young people. The same meeting also agreed to provide financial support for the works to the Bidston Viaduct. This major initiative, subject to a final decision by the Department for Transport, will require a Council contribution of £2.9 million between 2009/12.
- 4.4. On June 26 the Capital Out-turn and Determinations report was submitted as part of the year-end accounts for the 2007/08 financial year and detailed the slippage into the 2008/09 financial year.

- 4.5. On September 25 the budgets for the Department of Law, Human Resources and Asset Management were established including the transfer of those elements within the capital programme.
- 4.6 Cabinet is advised that in accordance with the Constitution there is a request to approve variations in the capital programme in respect of Adult Social Services IT infrastructure funded from grant and the Bromborough Pool Bridge overspend from within the LTP allocation. A report is to be presented in December on the Oval Sports Centre scheme.

5. CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY

- 5.1. The table compares the original programme approved as part of the Budget with the latest forecast spend position that incorporates permanent changes to the programme due to slippage and Cabinet approvals.

Spend	Original Approval	Forecast June	Forecast September
	£000	£000	£000
Adult Social Services	2,952	3,696	3,815
Children & Young People	32,221	26,377	26,426
Corporate Services	410	1,160	1,160
Law, HR and Asset Mgt	1,860	2,111	2,111
Regeneration	29,079	36,876	36,876
Technical Services	11,318	12,589	12,589
Total programme	77,840	82,809	82,977

- 5.2 The resources table similarly compares the developing programme and reflects the agreed changes, including slippage of spend from 2007/08. The generation of capital receipts through the sale of assets is used to fund the programme and at this stage £4 million is included for use in 2008/09. Income from sales, whilst uncertain in the exact timing of receipt, offers flexibility in the timing of its use and can be used to either balance the current programme or to address future budgetary issues.

Resources	Original Approval	Forecast June	Forecast September
	£000	£000	£000
Borrowing	31,092	30,257	31,073
Grant – HMRI	9,800	8,900	8,900
Grant – Education	20,899	17,868	17,100
Grant – Other	11,636	21,368	21,487
Revenue	413	416	417
Capital Receipts	4,000	4,000	4,000
Total resources	77,840	82,809	82,977

6. PROGRESS ON THE PROGRAMME

3.2 Adult Social Services

3.2.1 The Director in his report to Cabinet on 12 June on Transforming Social Care referred to a review of intermediate care requiring revisions to the plans for Poulton House. Consultation has commenced that will also set the agenda for places like Girtrell Court and will impact upon the decisions regarding the adult accommodation provision. All schemes are therefore subject to review pending the outcome of the consultation.

3.2.2 Adult Social Services have been notified of the award of an IT Infrastructure Grant for the three years 2008/09 to 2010/11. This is to support effective information sharing between health and social services.

3.3 Children & Young People

3.3.1. A report on the Schools Capital Funding for 2008/09 was presented to Cabinet on 22 May which provided details of all aspects of the programme and the plans for the current financial year.

3.3.2 The Building Schools for the Future (BSF) – One Pathfinder project continues to progress in accordance with the timescales agreed with the Department for Children, Schools and Families. A start on site is expected early in 2009.

3.3.3. Under the national scheme to develop Children's Centres Phase 1 and Phase 2 has now seen 17 of the 19 centres opened. The remaining two were re-programmed into 2008/09.

3.3.4. A major element of the programme is the Formula Capital allocated to schools. The implementation of individual projects is managed jointly by the school and the Council and comprises of a larger number of essentially smaller value schemes. The timing of the schemes is largely down to the schools so the level of spend can vary from the initial projections and some schemes and resources have now been re-profiled into 2009/10.

3.3.5 The Targeted Capital programme to build teaching accommodation at West Kirby Grammar and Wirral Boys Grammar experienced delays in the works which are expected to complete this financial year.

3.3.6 The funding from the Department for Children, Schools and Families for the Primary Capital Strategy is anticipated to be clarified in the autumn. The local authority strategy document having been submitted for consideration.

3.4 Corporate Services

3.4.1 The Think Big Investment Fund is the re-launched Business Rates support allocation. To date 2 firms have received grant support this year.

3.5 Law, Human Resources and Asset Management

3.5.1 The most significant area is Property Maintenance and the 2008/09 programme was agreed by Cabinet on 12 June. This builds upon the

Condition and Health and Safety surveys and ranks the priority areas for works in the current year.

- 3.5.2 The Strategic Asset Review is presently being developed for consideration by Cabinet with the underlying principles reported in October and more detailed proposals to follow.

3.6 **Regeneration**

- 3.6.1 The Oval Sports Centre is undergoing a substantial programme of works which has been the subject of various reports. The contractor has submitted a claim for increased costs and the potential overspend will be the subject of a report to Cabinet in December. The redevelopment of New Brighton is progressing well which includes the Floral Pavilion that is anticipated to open in November.

- 3.6.2 The Special Initiatives element of the programme includes schemes and related funding in respect of Objective One (£5.5 million) and the Single Regeneration Budget (£4.5 million). Schemes such as New Brighton Promenade are within these allocations and contributing towards the conclusion of the Merseyside-wide programme of schemes. Whilst shown under 2008/09 the programme will be further refined as it is not due to complete until 2010.

- 3.6.3 The Housing Market Renewal Initiative (NewHeartlands) continues to progress although the impact of the worldwide and national financial situation is affecting developers. The size and nature of the programme requires both the programme and the funding to be more flexible with the re-phasing of expenditure and resources kept under review to maintain continuity of progress.

3.7 **Technical Services**

- 3.7.1 The Highways Structural Maintenance Programme 2008/09 was approved by Cabinet in March 2008 and updated in June when the plans for Road Safety schemes were also agreed.

- 3.7.2 The increased scope, including unforeseen works plus additional surfacing, replacement parapet pillar and drainage system cleansing contributed to an overspend of £86,000 on the Bromborough Pool Bridge scheme. As this is more than 10% of the contract sum the Contract Procedure Rules require this to be reported to Cabinet for information. The spend can be contained within the allocation available.

- 3.7.3 In terms of future years the proposals for addressing the Bidston Moss Viaduct are nearing conclusion with the Department for transport having earmarked the scheme for funding, subject to the constituent authorities agreeing to a share of the funding. This was reported to, and agreed by, Cabinet on May 22.

4. FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Capital Programme for 2008/09 reflects the programme reported other than the following for which Cabinet approval is now required:-
- a) Adult Social Services – increase in programme for IT infrastructure funded by grant.
 - b) Technical Services – overspend of £86,000 which is in excess of 10% of the contract sum met from within the existing allocation.
- 4.2 There are no additional staffing implications arising directly from this report.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

APPROVED PROGRAMME

Schemes	Approved 2008/09	Revisions 2008/09	Forecast 2008/09	Actual To date	Approved 2009/10	Approved 2010/11
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adult Social Services	2,952	+863	3,815	53	127	134
Children & Young People	32,221	-5,795	26,426	8,440	39,425	33,939
Corporate Services	410	+750	1,160	489	500	500
Law, HR and Asset Management	1,860	+251	2,111	694	2,610	3,610
Regeneration	29,079	+7,797	36,876	18,920	14,407	13,612
Technical Services	11,318	+1,271	12,589	1,842	7,712	8,639
TOTAL	77,840	+5,137	82,977	30,438	64,781	60,434
Funding						
General Resources	21,529	-1,131	20,398		13,742	14,196
Supported Borrowing	7,893	+610	8,503		12,682	15,788
Prudential Borrowing	5,670	+502	6,172		1,300	0
Grants – Education	20,899	-3,799	17,100		26,665	21,101
Grants – HMRI	9,800	-900	8,900		8,300	7,500
Grants – Other	11,636	+9,851	21,487		2,042	1,799
Revenue, reserves and contributions	413	+4	417		50	50
TOTAL	77,840	+5,137	82,977		64,781	60,434

APPROVED BY COUNCIL / CABINET - DECISIONS TO VARY THE PROGRAMME

Date	Details	£
February 21	Budget Cabinet confirmed the programme approved in December 2007	77,840
March 13	Capitalisation of highways maintenance returned to revenue from 2009/10	-3,656
April 3	Waste infrastructure grant allocated for 2008/09 and noted allocations for 2009/10 and 2010/11.	+551
May 22	Schools Capital funding agreed including in principle for Park and Pensby Schools.	
May 22	Bidston Moss Viaduct scheme financial support from the Council confirmed for 2009/12.	
June 26	Business Rates transferred from Regeneration and reclassified as Think Big Investment Fund	
June 26	Slippage from 2007/08 into 2008/09 financial year.	
	Social Care IT Infrastructure Grant 2008/09 £119,102, 2009/10 £126,626 and 2010/11 £134,097.	

SUMMARY

The approved programme for 2008/09 comprises Girtrell Court, Poulton House and Adult Accommodation funded by prudential borrowing. The report to Cabinet on 12 June 2008 referred to an initial review of intermediate care that proposed a new model for services. This requires revisions to the existing plans for Poulton House and consultation is starting with people who use Girtrell Court. The outcome of the consultation will set the agenda for the future and whilst the outcome is outstanding, forecast expenditure has been shown as the sum of approved and revised.

Wirral has been allocated Social Care IT Infrastructure Capital Grant to be used for capital expenditure to continue to develop IT infrastructure to support effective information sharing between health and social services. Cabinet is requested to note the grant allocation and to approve a variation to the capital programme to take account of Wirral's allocations.

APPROVED PROGRAMME

Schemes	Approved 2008/09	Revised 2008/09	Forecast 2008/09	Actual To date	Approved 2009/10	Approved 2010/11
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
In House Residential (Poulton House)	1,952	-454	1,498	5	0	0
Girtrell Court	1,000	-	1,000	0	0	0
Adult Accommodation	-	1,198	1,198	48	0	0
Information Management	-	119	119	0	127	134
TOTAL	2,952	863	3,815	53	127	134
Funding						
Prudential Borrowing	2,952	744	3,696		0	0
Grant	-	119	119		127	134
TOTAL	2,952	863	3,815		127	134

APPROVED BY COUNCIL / CABINET - DECISIONS TO VARY THE PROGRAMME

Date	Details	£
June 26	Slippage from 2007/08 (Poulton House b/f as part used in 2007/08)	723,000
	Social Care IT Infrastructure Grant 2008/09 £119,102, 2009/10 £126,626 and 2010/11 £134,097.	

COMPLETED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on schemes completed including actions
None	

PROGRESS REPORT ON APPROVED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on progression of schemes and any variations
Poulton House & Adult Accommodation	Approved schemes are subject to review following the outcome of the consultation.

JOHN WEBB
DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

SUMMARY

The Schools Capital programme 2008/09 was reported to Cabinet on 22 May which set out in detail the revised plans for the current financial year. The most significant change in the programme related to the Building Schools for the Future scheme at Woodchurch which has been re-profiled by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. At this point in the financial year the spend projections are likely to be in accordance with that forecast.

APPROVED PROGRAMME

Schemes	Approved 2008/09	Revisions 2008/09	Forecast 2008/09	Actual To date	Approved 2009/10	Approved 2010/11
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Children's Homes	450	11	461	0	0	0
Children's Invest-To-Save	1,400	-1,255	145	0	1,300	0
City Learning Centres	50	471	521	130	0	0
Condition / Modernisation	6,628	1,264	7,892	2,395	3,679	3,679
Formula Capital	5,878	-1,692	4,186	1,673	4,592	4,592
Extended Schools	550	25	575	294	582	301
Schools – Access Initiative	611	-57	554	112	611	611
Schools – Property Maintenance	400	10	410	223	400	400
Schools – Boiler Renewals	250	-11	239	56	250	250
Schools – Health and Safety	200	75	275	0	200	200
Building Schools for the Future	11,625	-11,106	519	126	16,203	7,167
Private Finance Initiative	50	0	50	14	50	50
West Kirby Grammar – Teaching Acc	1,300	-81	1,219	726	0	0
Wirral Grammar Boys – Teaching Acc	265	1,174	1,439	1,147	0	0
Primary Reorganisation	400	-53	347	0	250	250
Primary Capital Strategy	0	0	0	0	4,838	7,216
Poulton Schools	0	0	0	0	1,000	0
Harnessing Technology	993	0	993	0	1,084	1,176
National Grid for Learning	133	0	133	0	133	133
Computers for Pupils	0	1,447	1,447	624	0	0
Integrated Children's Scheme	0	247	247	67	0	0

Computers for Social Workers	0	57	57	0	0	0
Old Final Accounts	50	0	50	19	50	50
SEN and Disabilities	0	0	0	0	2,000	6,000
Specialist Schools	150	18	168	20	0	0
Playing Field Refurbishments	488	203	691	222	0	0
Oaklands Centre	350	0	350	0	0	0
Youth Capital Fund	0	843	843	75	182	182
Children's Centres Phase 1	0	73	73	89	0	0
Children's Centres Phase 2	0	807	807	306	0	0
Children's Centres Phase 3	0	347	347	31	717	443
Early Years Quality and Access	0	1,239	1,239	0	1,239	1,239
Adult Learning	0	40	40	41	0	0
Music Service Scheme	0	109	109	25	65	0
TOTAL	32,221	-5,795	26,426	8,440	39,425	33,939
Funding						
General Resources	4,336	-1,355	2,981		2,283	1,283
Supported Borrowing for Year	5,173	610	5,783		9,127	11,505
Prudential Borrowing	1,400	-1,255	145		1,300	0
Grant – Education	20,899	-3,799	17,100		26,665	21,101
Revenue, Reserve, Contributions	413	4	417		50	50
TOTAL	32,221	-5,795	26,426		39,425	33,939

APPROVED BY COUNCIL / CABINET - DECISIONS TO VARY THE PROGRAMME

Date	Details	£
16 April	Scheme & Estimates approved for Brackenwood, Liscard and Stanton Road Primary schools.	
22 May	Schools Capital funding 2008/09 report approved including Park and Pensby Schools.	
12 June	Scheme & Estimates approved for Children's Centres at Eastway Primary and Lingham Primary	
26 June	Cabinet agreed the slippage from 2007/08 to 2008/09 capital programme	

COMPLETED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on schemes completed including actions

PROGRESS REPORT ON APPROVED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on progression of schemes and any variations	£
Woodchurch Pathfinder BSF	Re-profiling of scheme from 2008/09 to later years by DCSF. Start on site early 2009.	-11,106
Formula Capital	Re-profiling of schemes from 2008/09 to later years	-2,265
Children's Invest to Save	Re-profiling of schemes from 2008/09 to later years	-1,000
Children's Centres	17 of 19 centres are now complete. 2 remaining satellites are approved and contracts in place.	
Primary Capital Strategy	Funding is subject to DCSF approval of LA Strategy document (DCSF response is anticipated September 2008)	

HOWARD COOPER
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

SUMMARY

The most significant areas of the programme are in respect of the development of schemes in West Wirral and the allocation of the Think Big investment Fund for which grants have been allocated during September.

APPROVED PROGRAMME

Schemes	Approved 2008/09	Revisions 2008/09	Forecast 2008/09	Actual To date	Approved 2009/10	Approved 2010/11
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
West Wirral Schemes	200	211	411	124	200	200
IT Software Management	210	0	210	161	0	0
IT Projects	0	101	101	158	0	0
West Kirby Coast	0	47	47	40	0	0
Hoylake Golf Resort	0	4	4	0	0	0
Think Big Investment Fund	0	387	387	6	300	300
TOTAL	410	750	1,160	489	500	500
Funding						
General Capital Resources	200	649	849		500	500
Prudential Borrowing	210	101	311		0	0
TOTAL	410	750	1,160		500	500

APPROVED BY COUNCIL / CABINET - DECISIONS TO VARY THE PROGRAMME

Date	Details	£
June 26	Business Rates transferred from Regeneration and reclassified as Think Big Investment Fund	300
June 26	Cabinet agreed the slippage from 2007/08 to 2008/09 capital programme	750
September 4	Support for Business from the Thinking Big Fund	
September 25	Support for Business from the Thinking Big Fund	
September 25	Virement from Corporate Services to Department of Law, HR & Asset Management	

COMPLETED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on schemes completed including actions

PROGRESS REPORT ON APPROVED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on progression of schemes and any variations
Hoylake Golf Resort	An exempt report to Cabinet 9 July updated Members on progress towards a Golf Resort in Hoylake

JIM WILKIE
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

SUMMARY

The most significant area of the programme is that on Property Maintenance. The programme of works is based upon priorities identified from the condition surveys and the health & safety surveys and the 2008/09 programme was agreed by Cabinet on 12 June. This includes a contingency for unplanned schemes or emergency works resulting from condition surveys. In terms of Building modernisation it is anticipated that schemes will be determined from the Strategic Asset Reviews that are to be carried out across on a geographic basis over the coming year. The sum retained within the capital programme for One Stop Shops remains available for building works resulting from service delivery within Bebington.

APPROVED PROGRAMME

Schemes	Approved 2008/09	Revisions 2008/09	Forecast 2008/09	Actual To date	Approved 2009/10	Approved 2010/11
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Property Maintenance	1,510	0	1,510	580	1,510	1,510
Disabled Access Provision	100	0	100	3	100	100
Building Modernisation	250	0	250	0	1,000	2,000
One Stop Shops	0	242	242	0	0	0
Cheshire Lines & Corporate Archive	0	9	9	111	0	0
TOTAL	1,860	251	2,111	694	2,610	3,610
Funding						
General Capital Resources	1,860	251	2,111		2,610	3,610
Prudential Borrowing	0	0	0		0	0
TOTAL	1,860	251	2,111		2,610	3,610

APPROVED BY COUNCIL / CABINET - DECISIONS TO VARY THE PROGRAMME

Date	Details	£
June 26	Cabinet agreed the slippage from 2007/08 to 2008/09 capital programme	251
September 25	Virement from Corporate Services to Department of Law, HR & Asset Management	

COMPLETED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on schemes completed including actions

PROGRESS REPORT ON APPROVED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on progression of schemes and any variations
Property Maintenance	Cabinet 12 June 2008 approved the Property Maintenance programme for 2008/09

BILL NORMAN
DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

SUMMARY

The main element is the Housing Market Renewal Programme which is focused on Clearance and Improvements to existing stock. A change in the level of funding from NewHeartlands in 2008/09 has resulted in a reduction in the programme which will impact on the current year and potentially future years. Cabinet of 9 July agreed to make available up to £1.5m from Council resources to maintain momentum during 2008/09, to be returned in 2009/10 from HMRI funding and it is highly likely that this will be needed. This will place pressures on future years but will ease as the programme slows down after the initial start in North Birkenhead.

The new Floral Pavilion is almost complete and is due to open on 13 December. Cabinet is advised of a potential overspend that on the Oval Sports Centre that will be the subject of a detailed report in December. The various Objective 1 programme and SRB programme schemes are progressing well and will be finalised on 31 December 2008 and 31 March 2010 respectively.

APPROVED PROGRAMME

Schemes	Approved 2008/09	Revisions 2008/09	Forecast 2008/09	Actual To date	Approved 2009/10	Approved 2010/11
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Improvements to stock	2,500	170	2,670	841	3,380	3,380
Clearance	15,800	-4,136	11,664	7,480	9,477	8,682
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,250	377	1,627	457	1,250	1,250
Business Rates Support	300	-300	0	0	0	0
Floral Pavilion	7,952	-70	7,882	4,046	0	0
Landican Cemetery	300	-11	289	2	0	0
Football Facilities	17	0	17	0	0	0
Wirral Tennis Centre	380	0	380	41	0	0
West Kirby Concourse	280	0	280	0	0	0
Property Maintenance	300	0	300	63	300	300
Energy Efficiency Schemes	0	99	99	18	0	0
Oval Sports Centre – 5-a-side	0	560	560	511	0	0
Oval Sports Centre – Refurbishment	0	105	105	337	0	0
Frankby Cemetery	0	259	259	241	0	0
Birkenhead Park	0	619	619	197	0	0
Birkenhead Central Library	0	181	181	186	0	0
Community Safety	0	100	100	0	0	0

Objective 1	0	5,301	5,301	3,590	0	0
SRB	0	4,543	4,543	813	0	0
Other Schemes	0	0	0	97	0	0
TOTAL	29,079	7,797	36,876	18,920	14,407	13,612
Funding						
General Resources	10,062	-1,396	8,666		5,357	5,362
Prudential Borrowing	960	912	1,872		0	0
Grant – HMRI	9,800	-900	8,900		8,300	7,500
Grants – Other	8,257	+9,181	17,438		750	750
TOTAL	29,079	7,797	36,876		14,407	13,612

APPROVED BY COUNCIL / CABINET - DECISIONS TO VARY THE PROGRAMME

Date	Details	£
June 26	Business Rates transferred from Regeneration and reclassified as Think Big Investment Fund	300
June 26	Cabinet agreed the slippage from 2007/08 capital programme	

COMPLETED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on schemes completed including actions

PROGRESS REPORT ON APPROVED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on progression of schemes and any variations
Birkenhead Park	Only some remedial works and retentions remain outstanding.
Floral Pavilion	Progressing well with the gala opening in December.
Oval Sports Centre	Issues have been regularly reported with the opening anticipated in autumn. The contractor has submitted a claim for costs and a report will be presented to Cabinet in December 2008.

ALAN STENNARD
DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

SUMMARY

There is presently one major variation to report upon. This is in respect of the scheme for Bromborough Pool Bridge as costs have risen due to unforeseen, and additional works in excess of the 10% tolerance requiring Cabinet approval. The £86,000 can be contained within the LTP allocation without deferring any other schemes. Overall, it is anticipated that by the end of the year the outturn will be closely in line with the agreed budget.

The West Kirby Marine Lake scheme is subject to the granting of statutory licences and will proceed as planned this year.

Waste Infrastructure includes the purchase of bins at multi occupational properties, recycling facilities in schools and retail areas and the purchase of two specialist waste inspection vehicles.

APPROVED PROGRAMME

Schemes	Approved 2008/09	Revisions 2008/09	Forecast 2008/09	Actual To date	Approved 2009/10	Approved 2010/11
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
LTP – Accessibility	137	0	137	59	150	155
LTP – Air Quality	955	0	955	88	560	445
LTP – Congestion	737	0	737	326	196	213
LTP – Road Safety	3,620	500	4,120	820	4,161	5,340
LTP – Transportation	610	0	610	80	1,440	1,531
Capitalised Highway Maintenance	3,656	0	3,656	0	0	0
Highways Structural	500	0	500	300	500	500
Street Lighting Columns	300	0	300	41	300	300
Coast Protection	55	0	55	5	55	55
Energy Schemes	148	220	368	89	0	0
West Kirby Marine Lake	500	0	500	34	250	0
Micro Regeneration	100	0	100	0	100	100
Waste Infrastructure	0	551	551	0	0	0
TOTAL	11,318	1,271	12,589	1,842	7,712	8,639
Funding						
General Resources	5,071	720	5,791		2,992	3,441
Supported Borrowing for Year	2,720	0	2,720		3,555	4,283

Prudential Borrowing	148	0	148		0	0
Grant	3,379	551	3,930		1,165	915
TOTAL	11,318	1,271	12,589		7,712	8,639

APPROVED BY COUNCIL / CABINET - DECISIONS TO VARY THE PROGRAMME

Date	Details	£000
March 13	Capitalisation highways maintenance returned to revenue from 2009/10	-3,656
April 3	Waste Infrastructure £551,000 funded from capital grant	551
May 22	Bidston Moss Viaduct scheme supported with allocation of funding for 2009/12	2,886
June 26	Cabinet agreed slippage from 2007/08 to 2008/09 capital programme.	720

COMPLETED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on schemes completed including actions
Bromborough Pool Bridge	Increased scope including unforeseen works (increased deck preparation and material consumption, working around uncharted gas main) plus additional surfacing, replacement parapet pillar, drainage system cleansing contributed to the overspend of £86,000. This is more than 10% of the contract sum requiring Cabinet approval. The spend can be contained within the LTP programme with no schemes deferred as a consequence.

PROGRESS REPORT ON APPROVED SCHEMES

Schemes	Comments on progression of schemes and any variations
Local Transport Plan	The infrastructure programme was agreed by Cabinet in March whilst amendments were approved in June along with the approval of the road safety schemes.

DAVID GREEN
DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

CORPORATE RISK MONITORING SUMMARY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. This is one of a series of reports submitted throughout the year providing an update on actions to manage risks identified in the Corporate Risk Register.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Cabinet on 3 April 2008 agreed that I would provide this summary report to Cabinet and to Audit & Risk Management Committee following the end of each quarter. To support this each Chief Officer provides an update on their actions to address the identified risks and any 'new' risks which merit consideration for inclusion in the Corporate Risk Register.

3. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

3.1 The revised Corporate Risk Register (CRR) was agreed by Cabinet on 13 March 2008. This was the baseline document and is reviewed quarterly by the Corporate Improvement Group (CIG) in line with the performance management cycle and highlights and exceptions are reported to Members.

4. PROGRESS ON THE ACTIONS BEING TAKEN

4.1 As well as recording the existing key controls and contingencies the CRR also indicates those additional actions which need to be implemented in order to manage the most significant risks down to acceptable levels

4.2 The main areas of positive movement in controlling the existing risks are:

Risk No.	Description	Positive Developments in Control Actions
1.	Death or serious injury to a service user, staff member, or anyone to whom the Council owes a duty of care.	The first IOSH Managing Safely Course was delivered in September. 6 revised health & safety arrangements completed and subject to consultation. Health & safety audits in Cultural Services completed.
2.	Failure to prepare adequately for/manage the impact of a pandemic.	Lists of critical employees have been identified for priorities for anti-viral drugs.
3.	Key Council services are not resilient to disruption and business continuity arrangements are inadequate.	Business continuity plans have been received from the department of Children & Young People and Adult Social Services.
4.	Changing need and demand for	A project plan is in place to reach level 3 of

	services (driven by legislative, social and demographic change) is not managed effectively	the Equality & Diversity standard for local government by March 2009. Revised departmental planning template has been drafted and is out for consultation.
5.	The Council does not maintain arrangements for good corporate governance	A further risk management training session for Members was delivered on 24 July. Revised representation on Audit & Risk Management Committee was agreed for the September cycle. The Annual Governance Statement was approved by Cabinet on 26 June.
6.	Community expectations are not properly understood or managed well	The authority has considered and drafted its response to the final round of CAA consultation. The Partnership has volunteered to take part in a CAA self-evaluation toolkit pilot. A project plan is in place to reach level 3 of the Equality & Diversity standard for local government by March 2009. Revised departmental planning template has been drafted and is out for consultation The Community Engagement Action Plan is being superceded by a Comprehensive Engagement Strategy.
7.	Failure to achieve sustainable budgets, in line with priorities and take difficult decisions.	The Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy were compiled and approved by Cabinet on 23 July.
8.	The strategies supporting our key priorities are not executed effectively	Key strategies were revised and reported to Cabinet on 23 July.
9.	Partnerships are not well planned and we do not work effectively with others	The authority has considered and drafted its response to the final round of CAA consultation. The Partnership has volunteered to take part in a CAA self-evaluation toolkit pilot. Enhanced guidance on grants was produced and an initial training event held in September.
11.	We do not recruit and retain appropriate staff or develop them effectively.	The electronic skills audit tool has been procured and is currently being piloted.
12.	We do not fully exploit all available resources, including technology.	Key strategies were reviewed and reported to Cabinet on 23 July. A standardised business case pro-forma for bid submissions has been introduced.
14.	Failure to plan and manage performance (CPA) and finances in accordance with plans and budgets	The latest quarterly report on progress in implementing the Use of Resources Action Plan was put before Audit & Risk Management Committee on 30 September.

15.	Failure to execute the Council's Investment Strategy (or failure of the Strategy to deliver).	Managerial capacity and focus on the Investment Strategy was strengthened through the establishment of the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management in September.
16.	Major error in investments and administration of Merseyside Pension Fund	The Statement of Investment Principles was reviewed and no changes were required. An initial Member training event was held in September. A report on employee representation in governance arrangements was approved by the Pensions Committee on 29 September.
17.	Failure in safeguarding arrangements (adult or child)	Two new posts for safeguarding adults with mental health challenges filled.
18.	Failure to deliver the Local Pay Review	Phase 1 was implemented on time in August 2008. Phase 2 is currently behind discussed with schools.
19.	Failure to progress the regeneration of economically disadvantaged areas	Managerial capacity and focus on the Investment Strategy was strengthened through the establishment of the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management in September.
20.	Failure to maximise recycling.	The recycling headline project plan was implemented and a trade waste officer recruited in June. A 'Tidy Business' campaign signposting businesses to recycling launched. A series of events promoting home composting have been held.
21.	Susceptibility of IT provision to disruption	Improvements to the controlled environment for the main IT suites have been implemented. A report on a possible new data centre for the authority has been drafted.
24.	Impact of volatility and downturn in the economy	Treasury management policies reviewed. Regular dialogue has been taking place with external investment consultants. Maturing investments have been placed with the Government. Enhanced monitoring of key budget areas has been introduced through the financial monitoring report.

4.3 Those areas where progress in implementing controls has not proceeded to timetable or where information is not available are:

Risk No.	Description	Areas where Control Actions have yet to be progressed
3.	Key Council services are not resilient to disruption and business continuity arrangements are inadequate.	As business continuity plans have not yet been received from the majority of departments the target date for finalising all plans has been put back to January 2009.
6.	Community expectations are not properly understood or managed well.	The programme for the sustainability appraisal of the LAA is slightly behind schedule.
9.	Partnerships are not well planned and we do not work effectively with others	Preparatory work for CAA regime is slightly behind schedule.
11.	We do not recruit and retain appropriate staff or develop them effectively.	The online application tool is now to be implemented as part of the new HR system.
15.	Failure to execute the Council's Investment Strategy (or failure of the Strategy to deliver).	Membership of the Corporate Investment Group has been established. However its initial meeting has yet to take place.
19.	Failure to progress the regeneration of economically disadvantaged areas	Membership of the Corporate Investment Group has been established. However its initial meeting has yet to take place.
23.	Financial and environmental impact of delay in or failure to acquire and gain planning consents for sites needed to deliver the MWDA procurement programme	No progress has been made by the MWDA in the acquisition of suitable sites.

5. VARIATIONS TO THE RISK REGISTER

5.1 The following risks were reported to the Corporate Improvement Group as having potential corporate significance and incorporated into the Register:-

- (i) Impact of volatility and a downturn in the economy.
- (ii) Susceptibility of IT provision to disruption.
- (iii) Financial and environmental impact of delay in or failure to acquire and gain planning consents for sites needed to deliver the MWDA procurement programme.

Additional Actions to Control Corporate Risks

Corporate Risk	Description of Control Action	Officer Responsible	Target Date	Status	Comments
2. Failure to prepare adequately for/manage the impact of a pandemic.	Engage with independent social care providers to develop their own plans	Jenny Ricketts	June 2008	Implemented	Consultation events held to engage with providers on 16 May and 20 June.
17. Failure in safeguarding arrangements (adult or child)	Develop formal links and training to the Wirral Multicultural Centre staff (protect communities at risk of social exclusion)	Rick O'Brien	Mar 2009	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Appoint Safeguarding Adults Coordinator	Rick O'Brien	Sep 2008	Implemented	Co-ordinator in post.
	Appoint Mental Health Capacity Act Coordinator	Rick O'Brien	Sep 2008	Implemented	Co-ordinator in post.

Additional Actions to Control Corporate Risks

Corporate Risk	Description of Control Action	Officer Responsible	Target Date	Status	Comments
17. Failure in safeguarding arrangements (adult or child)	Child Death Overview Panels	Caroline McKenna	1st April 2008	Implemented	CDOP fully implemented by DCSF required date.
	LSCB programme for disseminating learning from serious child care incidents	Caroline McKenna	September 2008	On target	External facilitator to deliver overview training - Sep 2008, ongoing training programme to be designed by this date.
	Improved audit and scrutiny capacity governed through LSCB	Caroline McKenna	September 2008	On target.	Focus & workplan of Performance and Scrutiny sub group being refreshed. CAF / QA officer recruited.
	New internal controls re S118 IRO reporting	Caroline McKenna	September 2008	On target	S118 process fully in place by September, trigger system (pre 118) being implemented at the same time.
	New Child Care Risk Management Procedure introduced	Julia Hassall	September 2008	On target	Procedure produced. Internal system to underpin this expected to be completed by target date.

Additional Actions to Control Corporate Risks

Corporate Risk	Description of Control Action	Officer Responsible	Target Date	Status	Comments
4. Changing need and demand for services (driven by legislative, social and demographic change) is not managed effectively	Introduce Equalities Strategy Policy & Standard	Jim Wilkie	Ongoing	Green	Permanent E&D co-ordinator appointed. E&D Policy introduced in 2007 and being refreshed in Dec 2008. Plan in place to achieve level 3 by March 2009.
	Renew and improve corporate service planning process to ensure that trends are anticipated and the impact of legislative and policy change considered	Jim Wilkie	Ongoing	Green	Planning process improved for 2007/8 and new corporate plan produced. Plan will be refreshed in 2008. Improvement priorities refreshed in Sept 2008 and corporate plan to Cabinet on 15/01/09
	Annual review and refresh of key delivery plans including LAA / corporate and departmental plans	Jim Wilkie	Ongoing	Green	2 nd generation LAA signed off following a robust process. Corporate and departmental plans developed in new form for 2007/8 and are being refreshed for 2008/9, due 15/01/09. Departmental plan template out for consultation.
6. Community expectations are not properly understood or managed well	Undertake preparatory work for CAA regime	Russ Glennon	Ongoing	Amber	Preparations underway (including negotiation of LAA) final CAA consultation now underway. Initial response to be approved at cabinet 16/10/08.

Corporate Risk	Description of Control Action	Officer Responsible	Target Date	Status	Comments
					Partnership taking part in CAA self-evaluation toolkit pilot as preparatory work.
	Introduce Equalities Strategy Policy & Standard	Russ Glennon	Ongoing	Green	Permanent E&D co-ordinator appointed. E&D Policy introduced in 2007 and being refreshed in Dec 08. Project plan in place to achieve level three by March 2009.
	Renew and improve corporate service planning process to ensure that trends are anticipated and the impact of legislative and policy change considered	Russ Glennon	Ongoing	Green	Planning process improved for 2007/8 and new corporate plan produced. Plan will be refreshed in 2008. Departmental plan template out for consultation
	Progress in Community Engagement Action Plan to be monitored regularly	Russ Glennon	Ongoing	Amber	Plan being superseded by comprehensive engagement strategy. Andy Mills from PCT now seconded part time to corporate policy team to support CES.
	Conduct sustainability appraisal of the LAA	Russ Glennon	Ongoing	Amber	ESAG group created to manage sustainability appraisal programme. Graham Gladden nominated as chair and agreed by LAA Programme Board. Programme slightly behind schedule.

Corporate Risk	Description of Control Action	Officer Responsible	Target Date	Status	Comments
9. Partnerships are not well planned and we do not work effectively with others	Undertake preparatory work for CAA regime	Russ Glennon	Ongoing	Amber	Preparations underway (including negotiation of LAA) final CAA consultation now underway. Initial response to be approved at cabinet 16/10/08. Partnership taking part in CAA self-evaluation toolkit pilot as preparatory work.
10. Failure to manage and improve image and reputation	Centralisation of control of corporate marketing	Emma Degg	April 09		Preparations underway to centralise all marketing activity. Departmental engagement variable.
15. Failure to execute the Council's Investment Strategy (or failure of the Strategy to deliver).	Establish Corporate Investment Group	Jim Wilkie	October 08		Membership of the Corporate Investment Group has been established. However its initial meeting has yet to take place.
	Increasing managerial capacity and focus on Investment Strategy by transfer of a number of functions to new department	Jim Wilkie	September 08		The new Department of Law, HR and Asset Management was established in September
19. Failure to progress the regeneration of economically disadvantaged areas	Establish Corporate Investment Group	Jim Wilkie	October 08		Membership of the Corporate Investment Group has been established. However its initial meeting has yet to take place.

Corporate Risk	Description of Control Action	Officer Responsible	Target Date	Status	Comments
	Increasing managerial capacity and focus on Investment Strategy by transfer of a number of functions to new department	Jim Wilkie	September 08		The Department of Law, HR and Asset Management was established in September
22. Adverse effect on Council budgets of rising energy prices	Conduct Strategic Asset Review and implement recommendations	Stephen Maddox	Not known		

Additional Actions to Control Corporate Risks

Corporate Risk	Description of Control Action	Officer Responsible	Target Date	Status	Comments
5. The Council does not maintain arrangements for good corporate governance	Implement enhanced risk-based audit programme	David Garry	Ongoing		
	Deliver further risk management training for Members	Tom Sault (Mike Lane)	Ongoing	On target	Session delivered on 24 July. Further session expected in October 2008
	Representation on Audit & Risk Management Committee reviewed and improved		July 2008	On target	Council agreed revisions for September cycle of meetings
	Produce annual governance statement	David Garry	July 2008	Implemented	Presented to Cabinet on 26 June
7. Failure to achieve sustainable budgets, in line with priorities and take difficult decisions	Establish criteria for investment e.g. from Efficiency Investment Budget	Ian Coleman	April 2008	Implemented	COMT agreed upon a 3 year investment profile
	Implement enhanced financial reporting	Tom Sault	April 2008	Implemented	Arrangements reported to Cabinet on 3 April
	Refine / review financial management arrangements	Tom Sault	July 2008	Implemented	Arrangements reported to Cabinet on 3 April
	Review Medium Term Financial Plan	Tom Sault	July 2008	Implemented	Approved by Cabinet 23 July
8. The strategies supporting our key priorities are not executed effectively	Review Capital Strategy	Tom Sault	July 2008	Implemented	Approved by Cabinet 23 July
	Implement common timetable for review process	Tom Sault	April 2008	Implemented	Review dates reported to Cabinet on 3 April.
9. Partnerships are not well planned and we do not work effectively with others	Deliver enhanced guidance and training regarding grants	Pete Molyneux	Sep. 2008	On target	Guidance issued and first training event in September

11. We do not recruit and retain appropriate staff or develop them effectively	Finance Department training plan	Stephen Rowley	Ongoing		Regular review of training opportunities
	Workforce Plan	Stephen Rowley	July 2008	Implemented	Contribution to Council plan
12. We do not fully exploit all available resources, including technology	Undertake review of individual strategies	Various	July 2008	Implemented	Key strategies reported to Cabinet July 2008
	Introduce common business case pro-forma	Tom Sault	July 2008	Implemented	Standardised / revised form for bid submissions produced
	Further integration of key strategies and plans	Corporate Imp Group	Dec 2008		
16. Major error in investments and administration of Merseyside Pension Fund	Update Statement of Investment Principles	Peter Wallach	Aug 2008	Implemented	SIF reviewed. No changes required.
	Deliver 2008 member training programme	Peter Wallach	Ongoing	Ongoing	Event in September. Further events are scheduled.
	Governance representation	Peter Wallach	Oct 2008	Implemented	Reported to Pensions Committee 29 September
21. Susceptibility of IT provision to disruption	Environmental improvements	John Carruthers	Ongoing		Improvements to controlled environment (air-conditioning etc) introduced
	Back-up facilities	John Carruthers	Ongoing		Data centre report to Cabinet in October
24. Impact of volatility and downturn in the economy	Review of the treasury management policies	Mark Goulding	Ongoing		Policies reviewed
	Liaison with appointed external consultants	Mark Goulding	Ongoing		Regular dialogue held with consultants
	Enhancement to monitoring of key budget areas	Tom Sault	Ongoing		Included within financial monitoring report
	Use of Direct Debit to improve reliability of income	Malcolm Flanagan	Ongoing		Successful initiative with Council tax bills in 2008
	Active encouragement of applications for support	Malcolm Flanagan	Ongoing		Increase in numbers being managed
	Invest in lower risk / lower return areas	Mark Goulding	Ongoing		Maturing investments being placed with Government

Additional Actions to Control Corporate Risks

Corporate Risk	Description of Control Action	Officer Responsible	Target Date	Status	Comments
19. Failure to progress the regeneration of economically disadvantaged areas	Implement 'Lovell' agreement	Ian Platt	Under review	Implemented	Agreement completed by end March 2008. Lovells now on-site undertaking preliminary investigations. Building work commences July 08. The effects of economic conditions (e.g. credit crunch) on delivery will be monitored.

Additional Actions to Control Corporate Risks

Corporate Risk	Description of Control Action	Officer Responsible	Target Date	Status	Comments
1. Death or serious injury to a service user, staff member, or anyone to whom the Council owes a duty of care.	Institute Of Safety and Health (IOSH) Managing Safely training to all Managers and Supervisors below Head of Service	Mark Camborne	April 2008 onwards	Pilot course in June 2008. 1 st course in Sept 2008	1 further course available in 08 and 5 planned for 2009. First course now certificated by IOSH
	Further review and development of H&S arrangements	Mark Camborne	Not known	6 revised H&S arrangements out for consultation	All 6 should be ratified at Corporate H&S Committee in Oct 08. Review of additional arrangements underway
	Continuing audits of H&S management	Mark Camborne	Not known	A schedule of audits is being implemented	Audits in leisure services completed, libraries will begin in October 08. Tech Services underway. Finance started.
2. Failure to prepare adequately for/manage the impact of a pandemic.	Identify priorities within workforce for anti-viral drugs	Mark Camborne	Oct 2008	Completed	Have compiled lists of critical employees from DASS, CYPD Cems & Crems & Registrars. Currently working on next level of critical employees but unlikely to be seen as a priority externally.

3. Key Council services are not resilient to disruption and business continuity arrangements are inadequate.	Finalise the corporate Business Continuity Plan for Wirral	Mark Camborne	Nov 2008	On Track	To go to COMT/Elected Members Nov/Dec respectively
	Finalise all Departmental Business Continuity Plans	Mark Camborne	Oct 2008	Delayed	Have received information from DASS, CYPD still awaiting from other depts. Revising this target date until Jan 2009 after the corporate BC plan is agreed.
	Ensure external agencies have cohesive continuity arrangements	Mark Camborne	Aug 2008	On Track	Letters sent out and follow up work underway to ensure critical partners have BC plans in place
	Conduct tabletop exercise to test the efficiency of plans	Mark Camborne	Mar 2009	On Track	To be possibly merged with EP exercise
20. Failure to maximise recycling	Produce recycling headline project plan	Mark Smith	June 2008	completed	Monitored on regular basis
	Increase participation through improved collection service reliability & effective community engagement	Mark Smith	Mar 2009	On track	Missed bins per 100000 have reduced and demonstrate positive direction of travel and citizen's survey revealed improvement in customer satisfaction

	Deliver education and awareness campaigns to promote waste minimisation	Mark Smith	To be advised	on track	Home composting promotion and Wirral Show roadshow completed. 3 community events in SOA areas inc. home compost bin giveaway completed. Love Food Hate Waste campaign (Merseyside wide) planned leading up to Christmas. Schools recycling awards to be re-launched as more general environment awards in March 09 inc waste min initiatives. Schools recycling DVD given to all schools and new recycling scheme re-launched.
	Encourage recycling and minimisation of municipal waste	Mark Smith	Mar 2009		Trade waste officer in post from June and launched tidy business campaign to signpost businesses to recycling etc Trial of new Council complex scheme to be launched October with full roll-out by April. MWDA BREW funding application for a trade waste bring site trial unsuccessful.
22. Adverse effect on Council budgets of rising energy prices	Implement phases 2/3 of IEEP	Tony Dodd	Mar 2012 (phase 2)	On track	Phases 2/3 currently being implemented
	Street lighting energy efficiency projects	Kevin Ellis	To be advised	On track	Projects are presently being implemented.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 27 NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

PROJECTED BUDGETS 2009-2011

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report presents the projected budgets for 2009-2011 to coincide with the period of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR).

2. BUDGET 2008-09

- 2.1. The summary budget for 2008-09 as agreed by the Council on 3 March 2008 is as follows:

	£m
Base Budget	302.6
Resources	
Formula Grant	147.4
Area Based Grant	28.4
Council Tax	123.2
Collection Fund	- 0.5
Use of Balances	<u>4.1</u>
	302.6

3. COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW

- 3.1. The Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 2007, was announced on 9 October 2007. An initial report on the Pre Budget Statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer including the CSR was presented to the Cabinet on 1 November 2007. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) announced the three year provisional Local Government Finance settlement on 6 December 2007 and the final settlement on 24 January 2008.

4. **VARIATIONS IDENTIFIED FOR 2009-2011**

- 4.1. **Inflation** –Provision is included for pay and prices at 2% and for income at 3% for 2009-2011.
- 4.2. **Capital Financing** – Cabinet on 12 December 2007 agreed the capital programme for 2008-2011 at an additional financing cost.
- 4.3. **Highways Maintenance** – provision is included for the transfer of highways expenditure of £2.2m to the revenue budget from the capital budget.
- 4.4. **Waste Disposal** – The waste disposal levy is projected to increase by 15.4% per annum.
- 4.5. **Pension Fund** - The Pension Fund has been actuarially revalued as at 31 March 2007. The phased implementation of the revised contribution rates over three years was agreed by the Cabinet on 12 December 2007.
- 4.6. **Merseytravel** – The Merseytravel levy is projected to increase by 4% per annum.
- 4.7. **Invest to Save Schemes** – The Cabinet has agreed a number of invest to save schemes which will reduce expenditure by £0.8m in 2009-10 and by a further £0.4m in 2010-11.
- 4.8. **Private Finance Initiative** – Increase in PFI payments of £0.4m in 2009-10 and a further £1m in 2010-11 as the PFI reserve reduces.
- 4.9. **Benefits Subsidy** – The Department for Work and Pensions has announced that benefits subsidy will be reduced by 3% per annum in real terms, 5% per annum in cash for certain elements of the subsidy, a reduction of £0.7m per annum.
- 4.10 **Local Area Agreement** – Options for the use of the Reward Grant, the revenue element of which is estimated at £1.9m for each of 2009-10 and 2010-11 will be discussed by the LAA Board on 19 November 2008.
- 4.11. **Energy** – The increased cost of fuel and energy has been estimated at £9m in 2009-10 as reported to Cabinet on 9 July 2008.
- 4.12. **Foster Care Fees** - Cabinet on 4 September 2008 agreed to an increase in foster care payments of £0.5m for 2009-10.
- 4.13. **Other Unavoidable Growth** – A number of relatively minor items of unavoidable growth of less than £0.2m will arise. These should total less than £1m.

5. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

5.1. There are a number of other developments which are likely to impact on the financial position of the Authority over the period 2009 to 2011. The impact of these issues will be reported to the Cabinet as and when they are resolved. Some of the potentially most important issues are:-

- (a) Implementation of Local Housing Allowance from 1 April 2008 which was reported to Cabinet on 12 December 2007.
- (b) Revised Local Government Pension Scheme introduced from 1 April 2008.
- (c) Review of the calculation of the Minimum Revenue Provision which was reported to Cabinet on 16 April 2008.
- (d) Review of the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme. A consultation paper on a revised scheme to commence in 2009 was reported to the Cabinet on 29 November 2007. A further consultation paper has been received which if implemented could result in a grant of £0.2m in 2009-10 and £0.5m in 2010-11.
- (e) Replacement of Planning Delivery Grant with the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant which was reported to Cabinet on 25 September 2008.
- (f) Review of Supporting People Grant to be undertaken in 2009 with the grant to be absorbed into the Area Based Grant from 2009-10.
- (g) A Bill has been introduced to implement supplementary business rates following the White Paper which was reported to Cabinet on 29 November 2007.
- (h) Review of the Area Cost Adjustment.
- (i) Review of the population statistics to include the effects of recent migration, which was reported to the Cabinet on 16 April 2008.
- (j) Review of the funding of social care with proposals to be released in 2009.
- (k) Transfer from the PCT of responsibility for the commissioning of social care for adults with learning disabilities from 2009-10. Agreement with the PCT on the scale of the transfer has to be reached by 1 December 2008.
- (l) Transfer of the responsibilities of the Learning and Skills Council to Local Authorities from 2010.
- (m) Introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy from 2009.

(n) Implementation of International Financial Reporting Standards from 2010 which will increase leasing costs.

5.2. Many of these developments could impact on the grants receivable for 2009-2011. The grants announced by the DCLG as part of the three year financial settlement are only indicative.

6. **BALANCES**

6.1. The balances for 2008-09 have been set at £5m but the Audit Commission has restated its view that balances should be a minimum of 2% of the net revenue budget which for Wirral would be £6m.

6.2. The financial out-turn for 2007-08 was reported to Cabinet on 26 June 2008 indicating a net underspending of £1.6m, and additional late grant notifications totalling £0.6m.

6.3. Increased energy and fuel costs for 2008-09 estimated to total £3.5m were reported to Cabinet on 9 July 2008.

6.4. The Insurance Fund annual report was presented to Cabinet on 9 July 2008 incorporating a transfer of £3.0m from the Insurance Fund to the General Fund.

6.5. The receipt of additional Local Authority Business Growth Incentive grant totalling £1.3m was reported to Cabinet on 23 July 2008.

6.6. Cabinet on 4 September 2008 agreed a projected overspending of £3.5m in 2008-09 on Adult Social Services, of which £0.8m will continue into 2009-10. Cabinet on 16 October 2008 agreed to bring forward the closure of Feltree House thus reducing the projected overspending in 2008-09 by £0.2m and in 2009-10 by £0.5m.

6.7. Following the Audit of the Accounts for 2007-08 the capitalisation of highways improvements has been reduced from £3.7m to £1.5m in 2008-09 as reported to Cabinet on 16 October 2008.

6.8. Cabinet on 6 November 2008 agreed to fund the following improvement teams from the Efficiency Investment Budget in 2008-09.

	£000
Procurement and Creditors	1,022
Change	635
Customer Services Development	183
Adult Social Services Reform	<u>360</u>
	2,200

In 2009-10 the cost of the Adult Social Services Reform Team will increase to £518,000. Funding of these teams from the Efficiency Investment Budget will allow the original funding to be added to balances.

	£m
Balances as at 1 April 2008	5.0
Out-turn 2007-08	1.6
Additional Grants	0.6
Insurance Fund	3.0
Energy and Fuel	- 3.5
LABGI	1.3
Adult Social Services	- 3.3
Highways Improvements	- 2.0
Improvement Teams	<u>2.2</u>
	4.9

7. EFFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

- 7.1. The gap between projected expenditure and anticipated resources will need to be bridged by a combination of savings and/or increased Council Tax.
- 7.2. Cabinet on 13 March 2008 agreed the following efficiency targets for 2009-11 but reserved the right to vary these targets during the year.

Department	Target 2009-10	Target 2010-11
	£000	£000
Adult Social Services	4,620	3,780
Children and Young People	2,350	1,920
Corporate Services	710	580
Finance	740	600
Regeneration	3,060	2,500
Technical Services	1,620	1,320
	13,100	10,700

- 7.3. The efficiencies agreed in preparing the budget for 2008-09 included £0.9m in Adult Social Services which will become effective from 2009-10.
- 7.4. Cabinet on 9 July 2008 agreed an invest to save scheme in energy conservation involving capital expenditure of £355,500 to produce annual revenue savings of £89,300. This is the only invest to save scheme which has been proposed during 2008-09.
- 7.5. Cabinet on 16 October 2008 agreed a number of efficiencies:-

	£m
Children Residential Care	0.7
ERIC Service	0.5
Housing and Council Tax Benefit	0.6
Treasury Management	0.5
General Efficiencies	<u>0.6</u>

7.6 Cabinet on 6 November 2008 agreed a number of efficiencies:-

	£m
Supported Living	1.0
Reform Care Grant	1.5
Corporate Procurement Contracts	1.5
General Efficiencies	<u>0.5</u>
	4.5

7.7. I am assuming an annual Council Tax increase of 4%. 2.9

7.8. The CSR states that the Council Tax capping limit will remain at 5%.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1. The projected budgets for 2009 to 2011 are compiled from the base budget for 2008-09 approved by Council on 3 March 2008, the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2009-2012 agreed by the Cabinet on 23 July 2008, and updated for the issues outlined in this report. The projected budgets are shown in the Appendix.

9. **STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. There are none arising from this report.

10. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1. There are none arising from this report.

11. **HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

11.1. There are none arising from this report.

12. **LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

12.1. There are none arising from this report.

13. **COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

13.1. There are none arising from this report.

14. **PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

14.1. There are none arising from this report.

15. **LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS**

15.1. There are none arising from this report.

16. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1. Comprehensive Spending Review – Treasury – October 2007

Medium Term Financial Strategy – 2009-2012 – July 2008
Formula Grant Settlement 2008-09 –DCLG – January 2008
Estimates 2008-09 – March 2008

17. **RECOMMENDATION**

That the projected budgets continue to be reported to the Cabinet in line with the agreed financial and performance management timetable.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

FNCE/267/08

WIRRAL COUNCIL

PROJECTED BUDGETS 2009-2011

	2009-2010	2010-2011
	£m	£m
Base Budget	299.6	322.2
Increased Requirements		
Pay Inflation	3.4	3.3
Price Inflation	3.6	3.6
Capital Financing	3.1	3.3
Highways	2.2	-
Waste Disposal	2.2	2.5
Pension Fund Revaluation	0.5	0.5
Merseytravel	1.0	1.0
Private Finance Initiative	0.4	1.0
Benefits Subsidy	0.7	0.7
Energy and Fuel	9.0	-
Foster Care	0.5	-
Area Based Grant	2.7	- 0.4
Supporting People	10.3	-
Unavoidable Growth	1.0	1.0
Efficiency Investment Fund	<u>2.9</u>	<u>2.9</u>
	343.1	341.7
Reduced Requirements		
Income Inflation	-1.0	-1.0
Invest To Save	- 0.8	- 0.4
LABGI	- 0.2	- 0.3
Children Residential Care	- 0.7	-
ERIC Service	- 0.5	-
Housing & Council Tax Benefit	- 0.6	-
Treasury Management	- 0.5	-
General Efficiencies	- 2.0	-
Supported Living	-1.0	-0.3
Reform Care Grant	-1.5	
Corporate Procurement		
Contracts	<u>-1.5</u>	<u>-</u>
Forecast Expenditure	332.8	339.7
Balances	<u>1.1</u>	<u>-</u>
	333.9	339.7
Resources		
Formula Grant	152.7	157.9
Area Based Grant	41.4	41.0
Council Tax	123.2	128.1
Forecast Resources	<u>317.3</u>	<u>327.0</u>
Shortfall		
Council Tax Increase	16.6	12.7
Efficiencies required	4.9	5.1
	11.7	7.6

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 27 NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report details the method used to calculate the Tax Base for the 2009/2010 Council Tax and recommends a figure for tax setting purposes.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. The Tax Base is used to calculate the individual amounts of Council Tax that need to be raised to cover expenditure. Within the Council Tax are amounts for the Precepting Authorities (Police, Fire and Rescue). These Authorities are formally advised as to the Tax Base to allow them to calculate their own requirements.
- 2.2. The legislation requiring this calculation is the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992. This requires the Authority to declare by means of Council resolution the Tax Base it will use to calculate the tax level. Council must make this resolution no later than 31 January in the year preceding the Tax.
- 2.3. The calculations below show the numbers of dwellings in each band. The number of likely discounts, reliefs and exemptions to be awarded is then taken into account. These figures are used with the proportions for each band to arrive at an equivalent number of Band D properties. This equated figure is adjusted for the collection rate and is the Council Tax Base.
- 2.4. The figures used are an estimate based on the valuation list of 16 September 2008. There will be amendments that need to be undertaken and these continue to take place throughout the year.

3. THE CALCULATION OF THE TAX BASE

- 3.1. The Valuation List contains 145,132 properties (144,430 in 2007). Within each band there is an assessment made of how many reductions, reliefs and exemptions apply. These reduce the number of dwellings proportionately. 25% discounts for single dwellings, 50% discount for no residency, 100% for exemptions and one band reductions for disabled relief all contribute to this reduction. This figure is then converted to a Band D equivalent by using the ratio of each band charge.

3.2.

	VALUE	No. of Properties	No. of Discounted Dwellings	Band Ratio	Band D Equivalent
A	Up to £40,000	58,623	47,364.75	6/9	31,567.50
B	£40 - £52,000	30,745	26,776.00	7/9	20,825.8
C	£52 - £68,000	27,055	24,27.25	8/9	21,574.4
D	£68 - £88,000	13,007	11,810.00	1	11,810.0
E	£88 - £120,000	8,040	7,382.50	11/9	9,023.1
F	£120 - £160,000	4,290	3,972.75	13/9	5,738.4
G	£160 - £320,000	3,108	2,888.50	15/9	4,814.2
H	Over £320,000	264	221.50	18/9	443.0
		145,132			105,805.4
	Add contributions for Government Dwellings				4.0
	Add Band A Disabled Relief Band D equivalent				54.0
	Total				105,863.4

3.3. The total Band D equivalent is then adjusted by the estimate of the collection rate for 2009/2010 to give the Council Tax Base. Having taken into consideration previous experience and current collection rates, I recommend no change in the projected collection rate of 98.5%. The collection rate is the rate that best reflects collection over more than just the current year and will therefore take longer than 12 months to achieve. I can confirm that all previous years collections have ultimately met or exceeded the agreed projections and I am satisfied that this will be achieved for this year also.

3.4. The calculation for 2009/2010 is $105,863.4 \times 98.5\% = 104,276$.

For information the Tax Base in previous years was as follows:-

2003/04 :	103,171	2004/05:	103,701	2005/06:	104,582
2006/07	104,781	2007/08:	104,256	2008/09:	104,009

4. SETTING OF THE TAX

4.1. The level of Council Tax is set at each Budget Council. The Budget Council for 2009/2010 is scheduled for 2 March 2009.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. The approval of the Tax Base allows the Authority to continue with its tax collection.

6. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

6.1. There are none arising from this report.

7. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. There are none arising from this report.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

8.1. There are none arising from this report.

9. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are none arising from this report.

10. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

10.1. There are none arising from this report.

11. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

11.1. There are none arising from this report.

12. LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

12.1. The report has no specific implications for any Member or Ward.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1. Local Government Finance Act 1992
Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992
AMA Policy Finance Circular 109/92

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council be recommended that:

- (1) the Council Tax Base for 2009/10 be approved; and
- (2) in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the figure calculated by this Authority as its Tax Base for the year 2008/2009 shall be 104,276.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

FNCE/251/08

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 27 NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

INSURANCE FUND BUDGET 2009/10

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report sets out the elements which make up the Insurance Fund, the cost of running the Risk & Insurance Section and the budget for 2009/10.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 Local Authorities are allowed to set aside financial provisions to cover self-insured losses.
- 2.2. By self-insuring an Authority avoids paying insurers' administration, profit margins and Insurance Premium Tax on predictable levels of claims. Furthermore only rarely do external insurers return any premium irrespective of the profits generated by a policy.
- 2.3. Wirral has operated an insurance fund since its foundation and was one of the first authorities to adopt a high degree of self-insurance when large excesses on liability and material damage insurance were negotiated in the 1980s.
- 2.4. Self-funding is a fundamental element of the risk management strategy. It provides a greater incentive to deal with risk more effectively since any reduction in claims directly benefits the Authority.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 3.1. To achieve best value in funding insurable losses a mixture of external and self-insurance is needed.
- 3.2. The Authority wholly self-insures those risks that have the capacity to generate low value losses. In respect of risks that have the potential to produce catastrophic losses, the Council undertakes to meet the cost of all claims in any given year up to an agreed figure. Insurers meet all costs above this sum.
- 3.3. External insurance premia are met by the Insurance Fund and are recharged to departments together with self-insurance premia.

4. SELF FUNDED RISKS

4.1. Detailed below are the principal risks for which the Council currently self-insures together with the maximum sum the Council might have to pay for losses in any given financial year. It should be noted that expenditure in respect of claims for a given year will be spread over several subsequent years.

4.2. TYPE OF INSURANCE	ANNUAL AGGREGATE DEDUCTIBLE
Combined Liability	£4,250,000
Material Damage & Business Interruption (Fire)	£ 500,000
Material Damage & Business Interruption (Storm/Flood/Burst Pipes)	£1,000,000
Comprehensive Motor	£ 280,000
Fidelity Guarantee	£ 25,000
Loss/Damage to Equipment	Unlimited
Glazing (Schools)	Unlimited

4.3. Cover against damage by storm, flood and burst pipes and for business interruption was introduced from 30 June 2008. The deductible in respect of Fire was reduced from £1,000,000 to £500,000 from the same date.

5. CLAIMS AND PREMIA

A comparison of the premia charged and claims incurred in recent years in respect of the three principal risks covered by the Insurance Fund follows. The premia and claims for the years in question are highlighted.

5.1. COMBINED LIABILITY

5.1.1 This policy was placed with Zurich Municipal on 1 April 2005, following a competitive tender. The contract is subject to a Long Term Agreement that lasts until 31 March 2010. Insurance Fund contributions are reviewed annually and between 2001/02 and 2004/05 the level of contribution rose sharply as a result of claims increasing in both number and estimated cost. Improvements in the claims experience from 2005/06 onwards have enabled the level of self-insurance to be negotiated down from a peak of £7.1 million to a maximum of £4.25 million.

Year	Premium £000		Expected final costs (actuarial) £000
	External Insurance**	Insurance Fund	
2004/05	360	6,000	1,265
2005/06	286	4,000	987
2006/07	314	3,250	1,019
2007/08	236	3,300	1,602
2008/09	261	3,200	1,453
2009/10	270	2,800	N/K

** Exclusive of claims handling charges.

5.1.2 The figures in the column of the right 'expected final costs actuarial' are taken from the latest actuarial report prepared in June 2008. These figures are much more positive than those contained in the 2007 actuarial report. For example, in the 2007 report, the actuary was indicating that the expected final costs for 2007/08 were likely to be £2.949m. By the time of the 2008 report, they had revised their forecast for 2007/08 down to £1.602m.

5.1.3 It is fair to say that actuarial models have struggled in recent years to cope with the huge and unprecedented increase in claims numbers and then the very sharp decrease. When claims numbers were increasing between 2001 and 2004, I had to moderate the figures that the actuaries were indicating would need to be set aside to pay for claims. Had this not been done the Authority would have ended up putting even more money into the Insurance Fund than was ultimately needed to meet losses for those years.

5.2. MATERIAL DAMAGE & BUSINESS INTERRUPTION

5.2.1. The material damage policy was tendered in 2008 with the result being an extension of cover to include damage from storm, flood and burst pipes and business interruption losses. The contract is subject to a Long Term Agreement that expires in June 2013. The expectation is that premium rates will continue at the existing level. Insurance Fund contributions are reviewed annually and rose until 2006 to recover a shortfall caused by large losses sustained in the 2003/04 insurance period. Contributions fell significantly in 2007/08 and despite the Insurance Fund taking on an increased exposure through the extensions of cover I am not increasing the level of contribution in 2009/10.

Year	Premiums £000		Expected final costs £000	
	External Insurance	Insurance Fund	External Insurer	Insurance Fund
2004/05	365	570	0	75
2005/06	338	570	0	80
2006/07	318	570	0	30
2007/08	328	340	0	42
2008/09	382	340	N/K	N/K
2009/10	384	330	N/K	N/K

5.2.2. The material damage policy was tendered in 2008. The result was an extension of cover to include damage from storm flood and burst pipes and business interruption losses. The contract is subject to a Long Term Agreement which expires in June 2013. The expectation is that external premium rates will continue at the existing level. Insurance Fund contributions are reviewed annually. They rose between 2004 and 2006 to recover a shortfall of over £400,000 which arose in the 2003/04 insurance period when the Council suffered losses of almost £3m. Claims in subsequent years have been modest and contributions have also fallen sharply since 2006/07. The surpluses generated since 2004/05 have enabled the Fund to accept the additional exposure of £500,000 each year for losses from storm flood burst pipes and business interruption without any increase in the annual contribution.

5.3. **COMPREHENSIVE MOTOR**

This policy was placed with Zurich Municipal on 1 April 2005, following a competitive tender. The contract is subject to a Long Term Agreement that expires on 31 March 2009. The contract will need to be remarketed before that date and no significant change in the external premium is anticipated. Departments contribute a minimum of £500 for damage incurred to their own vehicles and any third party claims, the excess level varying according to the risk profile of the driver. The Insurance Fund contribution is reviewed annually and the reduction in 2005/06 reflected the transfer of a significant part of the fleet to Wirral Partnership Homes.

Year	Premium £000		Costs £000		
	External Insurance	Insurance Fund	Department	Ins. Fund	Insurer
2004/05	55	180	49	143	0
2005/06	49	81	44	86	0
2006/07	52	81	36	84	0
2007/08	55	81	35	60	0
2008/09	49	81	N/K	N/K	N/K.
2009/10	50	90	N/K	N/K	N/K

6. **OTHER**

6.1. In addition to the three main classes of insurance the Authority also procures external insurance for smaller risks such as loss of money, fidelity guarantee and ICT equipment and self-insures other risks including loss of equipment and damage to glazing. These risks generate a modest level of losses and the premia remain fairly stable over a period of years.

7. **PROVISIONS**

7.1 Many claims are not settled within the financial year in which they arise. In the case of legal liabilities, claims may not even be reported in the year in which an incident occurs. Thus the total cost of all claims relating to a given year will be spread over several subsequent financial years.

- 7.2. Provisions have to be made in respect of losses previously incurred but which will be settled in future financial years. Without such provisions the Council would not have the funds available to meet these future claims costs.
- 7.3. The provisions are based on claims data held by the Risk & Insurance Section taken at the end of each financial year. After rising between 2001/02 and 2004/05 they have fallen significantly each year since 2005/06.
- 7.4. A funding study has been undertaken by professional actuaries each year to evaluate whether the sum held to meet Liability losses is sufficient. In addition to commenting on the adequacy of provisions for losses in previous years the funding study recommend the sum which needs to be invested in the Insurance Fund to meet the cost of claims for the current year.
- 7.5. On 9 July 2008 the Insurance Fund Actuarial Review was reported to Cabinet. This highlighted the continued improvement in the ability to defend insurance claims and that the annual external assessment of the amount needed to fund anticipated liabilities for current and future years showed a reduction. The 2008 study showed that the improvements, which released £1.4 million to Council balances in 2007/08, had been sustained.

Class	Provisions		Surplus
	Actual 31/03/08	Suggested 31/03/08	
Combined Liability	£13,691,463	£ 9,243,000	£4,448,463
Fire	£ 2,277,000	£ 2,000,000	£ 277,000
Motor	£ 252,000	£ 252,000	£ 0
Total	£16,220,463	£11,495,000	£4,725,463

- 7.6. Cabinet agreed to use £1 million of the surplus to support resilience projects and £750,000 to increase the reserve to meet liabilities relating to periods where the Council is uninsured. This reduced the surplus to £2,975,000 and Cabinet agreed that the remaining surplus be transferred to General Fund balances.
- 7.7. Cabinet is advised that there is the possibility that fraudulent claims could increase if the economy contracts significantly as this was the experience of similar occurrences in the 1980's and 1990's.

8. ADMINISTRATION

- 8.1. In addition to promoting the effective management of risk within the Authority the Risk and Insurance Section places and administers all external insurance policies, manages the Insurance Fund and oversees the handling of all claims.
- 8.2. The Risk and Insurance Officer has negotiated an early expiry of the insurance broking and consultancy with Aon Limited to avoid having to tender for a broker at the same time as running two major insurance procurement

exercises. A new fixed price contract will be implemented shortly at an estimated cost of £20,000 per annum.

- 8.3. The costs of the Risk & Insurance Section are charged to the Insurance Fund and are recharged to departments in the form of a percentage overhead on insurance premia. For 2009/10 the relevant percentage will be approximately 6.7% which is virtually unchanged from 2008/09.
- 8.4. Below is a breakdown of the estimated costs of the section for 2009/10.

Staffing & overheads	£281,000
Risk & Insurance Consultants	£ 20,000
Total	£301,000

9. INSURANCE FUND BUDGET 2009/10

- 9.1. The table below shows the estimated budget for 2009/10 compared with the base budget for 2008/09.

	2008/09 Base £000	2009/10 Base £000
Schools	1,160	1,154
General Fund	3,592	3,588
Total	4,752	4,742

- 9.2. The 2009/10 budget is essentially the same as 2008/09 as the increased cover is offset by the savings in Property Insurance as reported to Cabinet on 22 May 2008.
- 9.3. The Director of Children's Services is considering an alternative method of recharging insurance premiums for individual schools which could result in a transfer from the Departmental Budget to the Schools Budget of about £400,000.
- 9.4. In terms of the projections the Motor and Engineering contracts are to be tendered during 2009/10 but no significant increases are anticipated. All other contracts are subject to Long Term Agreements which act to contain the risk of any significant changes to premia. In the medium term there could be upward pressure on external premiums if recession in major economies causes insurers' investment returns to continue falling and reinsurance costs to rise.

9.5. During the course of the current financial year it is anticipated that fire settlements will be received for losses relating to the 2003/04 policy year. This includes for the fire at Rock Ferry High School. As the Insurance Fund has adequate provision in this area the sums received would be available for transfer to the General Fund.

9.6. The Insurance Fund revenue budget for 2009/10 is shown in the Appendix.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1. The Insurance Fund Budget for 2009/10 is shown in the appendix.

10.2. Cabinet on 9 July 2008 agreed to the transfer of £2,975,000 from the Insurance Fund to General Fund balances.

11. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

11.1. There are no direct staffing implications.

12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

12.1. There are no direct equal opportunities implications.

13. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

13.1. Not applicable.

14. LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

14.1. There are no implications for any Members or wards.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 15.1. (i) Correspondence with Aon Risk Services.
(ii) Risk & Insurance Section Database.
(iii) Zurich Municipal and Teceris Claims Management claims records.
(iv) IRMG actuarial report 2008.

16. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

16.1. There are none arising out of this report.

17. RECOMMENDATIONS

That

- (1) the continuing improvement in the position of the Insurance Fund be noted; and
- (2) the Insurance Fund budget for 2009-10 be agreed;

WIRRAL COUNCIL

INSURANCE FUND BUDGET

Base Budget 2008/09Base Budget 2009/10**Expenditure**

<u>Class of Insurance</u>	<u>External Premiums</u>	<u>Insurance Fund Contributions</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>External Premiums</u>	<u>Insurance Fund Contributions</u>	<u>Total</u>
Liabilities	393,000	2,730,000	3,123,000	408,000	2,800,000	3,208,000
Fire	376,000	340,000	716,000	384,000	330,000	714,000
Motor	49,000	81,000	130,000	50,000	71,000	121,000
Other	279,000	204,000	483,000	230,000	168,000	398,000
Management Account			300,000			301,000
Total Expenditure			<u>4,752,000</u>			<u>4,742,000</u>

Income

Schools	(1,160,000)	(1,154,000)
General Fund	(3,592,000)	(3,588,000)
Total Income	<u>(4,752,000)</u>	<u>(4,742,000)</u>

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