



Cabinet

Date:	Thursday, 7 November 2013
Time:	6.15 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Cabinet are asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

2. MINUTES

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

RECOMMENDATION: That the minutes be approved and adopted.

FINANCE

3. FINANCIAL MONITORING 2013/14 (MONTH 6) (Pages 1 - 58)

4. TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2013/14 (Pages 59 - 72)

GOVERNANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

5. KEY MESSAGES FROM THE IMPROVEMENT BOARD (Pages 73 - 74)

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

6. FOXFIELD SCHOOL CONSULTATION (Pages 75 - 98)

7. **THE OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SCRUTINY REVIEW (Pages 99 - 140)**

CENTRAL AND SUPPORT SERVICES

8. **BYRNE AVENUE RECREATION CENTRE, BYRNE AVENUE, ROCK FERRY (Pages 141 - 150)**
9. **ASSET MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSALS (Pages 151 - 170)**

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

10. **PROPOSED PUBLIC HEALTH CONTRACTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2014/15 (Pages 171 - 180)**
11. **COMMISSIONING OF CALM MERSEYSIDE (Pages 181 - 184)**

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

12. **REABLEMENT AND DOMICILIARY CARE PROCUREMENT - CONTRACT AWARD (Pages 185 - 192)**

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

13. **OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR THE FUTURE TREATMENT OF WIRRAL'S KERBSIDE COLLECTED GARDEN WASTE (Pages 193 - 200)**

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

14. **HIGHWAY SERVICES CONTRACT 2014 - 2018: AWARD OF CONTRACT (Pages 201 - 208)**

Appendix 1 is an exempt appendix and will follow (see item 24)
Appendix 2 will follow.

15. **TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEMS AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT CONTRACT 2014 ONWARDS - OPTIONS APPRAISAL (Pages 209 - 222)**

NEIGHBOURHOODS, HOUSING AND ENGAGEMENT

16. **EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION PROVISION FOR 16 AND 17 YEAR OLDS (Pages 223 - 230)**
17. **PROGRESSING NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING INCLUDING STRATEGIC REVIEWS OF STREETSCENE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY (Pages 231 - 242)**
18. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 1)**

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

19. EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The following items contain exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

ECONOMY

20. REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THROUGH REGIONAL GROWTH FUNDING (1) (Pages 243 - 250)

21. REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THROUGH REGIONAL GROWTH FUNDING (2) (Pages 251 - 258)

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

22. EXEMPT APPENDIX - REABLEMENT AND DOMICILIARY SUPPORT PROCUREMENT - CONTRACT AWARD (Pages 259 - 262)

Appendix to agenda item 12.

Exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 as it contains commercially sensitive information.

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

23. EXEMPT APPENDIX - OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR THE FUTURE TREATMENT OF WIRRAL'S KERBSIDE COLLECTED GARDEN WASTE (Pages 263 - 264)

Appendix to agenda item 13.

Exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 as it contains commercially sensitive information.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

24. EXEMPT APPENDIX - HIGHWAY SERVICES CONTRACT 2014 - 2018

Appendix to agenda item 14 (To follow)

Exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 as it contains commercially sensitive information.

NEIGHBOURHOODS, HOUSING AND ENGAGEMENT

25. EXEMPT APPENDIX - EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION PROVISION FOR 16 AND 17 YEAR OLDS (Pages 265 - 266)

Appendix to agenda item 16.

Exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 as it contains commercially sensitive information.

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

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

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7 NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT	FINANCIAL MONITORING 2013/14 MONTH 6 (SEPTEMBER 2013)
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER	COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES
KEY DECISION	YES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report details the Monitoring position for Month 6 (ending 30 September 2013). There are separate appendices for Revenue and Capital.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Revenue:

That Cabinet is asked to note:

- a) that at Month 6 (September 2013), the full year forecast projects a General Fund underspend of £592,000 and if achieved at year end this should be earmarked against future Council restructuring costs.

That Cabinet is asked to approve

- a) the transfer of £100,000 of various reserves within the Regeneration and Environment Directorate to enhance the existing Open Golf Reserve ;

2.2 Capital

That Cabinet is asked to note:

- a) the spend to date at Month 6 of £11.90 million, with 50.0% of the financial year having elapsed.
- b) the impact of the revised Capital Programme realising a one off saving of £0.8 million in 2013/14.

That Cabinet is asked to agree:

- a) the revised Capital Programme of £44.185 million (Table 1 at 4.1);
- b) the re-profiling of a number of schemes into 2014/15, totalling £5.551 million.
- c) the use of additional grants (Sustrans £0.236 million, 3G sports pitches £0.230 million and HLF £0.395 million) to expand the respective programmes referred to in Table 2.

3 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Throughout the financial year Cabinet will receive monthly updates in respect of Revenue and Capital Monitoring. This is the first report for the 2013/14 financial year.

4 RELEVANT RISKS

- 4.1 The possible failure to deliver the Revenue Budget is a risk which will be mitigated by a number of actions including regular review and reporting, training for budget managers and use of a tracking system to monitor delivery of savings.
- 4.2 The possible failure to deliver the Capital Programme will be mitigated by the fortnightly review by a group of officers, charged with improving performance.

5 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 No other options were considered.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 No consultation has been undertaken relating to this report.

7 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 7.1 There are none arising directly from this report. These would be considered when planning and implementing specific schemes or projects.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The financial implications are detailed within the Appendices.
- 8.2 There are no direct staffing, IT or asset implications arising directly from this report.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Chief Finance Officer is under a personal duty under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 section 114A to make a report to the executive if it appears to him that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure.

10 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

11 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report. These are included in reports to Cabinet on individual schemes and in the Carbon Budget report.

12 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

13 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 To comply with legal requirements to ensure that expenditure is likely to be within the limit of resources available.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Revenue Monitoring 2013/14 Month 6 (September 2013)

Appendix B Capital Monitoring 2013/14 Month 6 (September 2013)

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring Cabinet – Capital Monitoring	Monthly reports since September 2012

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CABINET

7 NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT	REVENUE MONITORING 2013/14 MONTH 6 (SEPTEMBER 2013)
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER	COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES
KEY DECISION	YES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out the revenue position for 2013/14 at Month 6 (September 2013) and actions to minimise risk.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is asked to note and /or agree:

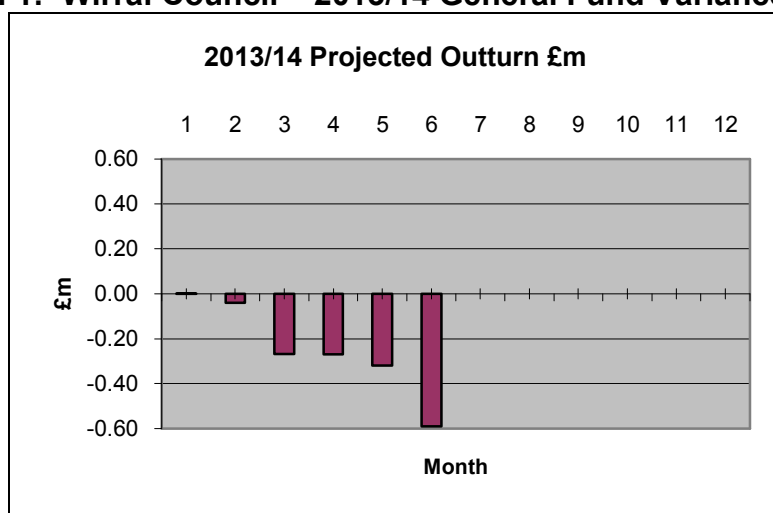
2.1 at Month 6 (September 2013), the full year forecast projects a General Fund underspend of £592,000 and if achieved at year end this should be earmarked against future Council restructuring costs

2.2 to approve the transfer of £100,000 of various reserves within the Regeneration and Environment Directorate to enhance the existing Open Golf Reserve.

3 OVERALL POSITION AT MONTH 6 (SEPTEMBER 2013)

3.1 Month 6 shows a projected General Fund underspend of £592,000 (compared to the month 5 position of a £320,000 underspend). A number of departmental underspends have been earmarked against ongoing or emerging financial issues. An allocation of £1.6 million against the £2 million savings profiling account (page 7 of the Budget Book and Forecasts 2013/16) is assumed.

Graph 1: Wirral Council – 2013/14 General Fund Variance, by month



4 CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET AND VARIATIONS

- 4.1 The Budget for 2013/14 was agreed by Council on March 5, 2013 and is detailed in [Annex 2](#); any increase in the Budget has to be agreed by full Council. Changes to the budget have occurred since it was set and these are summarised in the table below. These are detailed in [Annex 3](#).

Table 1: 2013/14 Original & Revised Net Budget by Department £000's

	Original Net Budget	Approved Budget Changes Prior Mths	Approved Budget Changes Month 6	Revised Net Budget
Chief Executive	8,240	-4,440	68	3,868
People - Adult Social Services	82,951	-138	-82	82,731
People – Children & YP, & Schools	91,738	-6,843	82	84,977
People – Asset Mgmt & Transport	-	5,534	-	5,534
People – Safeguarding	685	1,396	-	2,081
People – Sports and Recreation	8,904	-42	-	8,862
Places - Environment & Regulation	79,651	-51	-	79,600
Places – Housing & Comm Safety	15,342	-551	-	14,791
Places – Regeneration	5,134	-18	-	5,116
Transformation & Resources	12,424	5,153	-68	17,509
Corporate Growth & Savings	-3,252	-	-	-3,252
Net Cost of Services	301,817	0	0	301,817

- 4.2 A new Council structure has been introduced for 2013/14. The Budget Book and forecasts 2013/16 was published with a number of assumptions regarding service splits which have since been refined.
- 4.3 The main report will only comment on large variations (Red and Yellow items). The 'variations' analysis, over 27 budget areas, distinguishes between overspends and underspends. The 'risk band' classification is:
- Extreme: Overspends - **Red** (over +£301k), Underspend **Yellow** (over -£301k)
 - Acceptable: Amber (+£141k to +£300k), Green (range from +£140k to -£140k); Blue (-£141k to -£300k)

Table 2: Extreme Departmental Projected Budget variations

	Chief Exec	People	Places	Trans & Res	Total	Percent of total
Red Overspend	0	0	0	1	0	2.7%
Yellow Underspend	0	0	0	1	0	2.7%

The full Table is set out at [Annex 4](#)

Although no Directorate is currently forecasting an overspend position there is one Business Area forecast at red. This relates to the following: Transformation and Resources Business Processes currently forecast at £500,000 overspent (net of any other compensatory saving measures) due to a forecast unachieved savings option relating to court costs income. The Transformation and Resources yellow rating relates to treasury management savings from use of internal borrowing in lieu of borrowing and scheme slippage.

- 4.4 The reporting process identifies over or underspends and classifies them into risk bands. The projection is for no over or underspend for 2013/14, as set out in the table below, which records no departments as red or yellow:

Table 3: 2013/14 Projected Budget variations by Department £000's

Directorates	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	(Under) Overspend Month 6	RAGBY Classification	Change from prev mnth
Chief Executive	3,868	3,603	-265	B	-194
People - Adult Social Services	82,731	82,731	0	G	-
People – Children & YP, & Schools	84,977	84,977	0	G	-
People – Asset Mgmt & Transport	5,534	5,534	0	G	-
People – Safeguarding	2,081	2,132	51	G	51
People – Sports and Recreation	8,862	8,733	-129	G	-129
Places - Environment & Regulation	79,600	79,600	0	G	-
Places – Housing & Comm Safety	14,791	14,791	0	G	-
Places – Regeneration	5,116	5,116	0	G	-
Transformation & Resources	17,509	17,260	-249	B	-
Corporate Growth & Savings	-3,252	-3,252	0	G	-
TOTAL	301,817	301,225	-592		-272

4.5 Within the various directorates there have been the following developments:

- **Chief Executive's:** Underspend of £265,000 is currently forecast (Month 5 was forecast at £71,000). The movement relates mainly to Public Health Policy and Performance areas, vacancy/staffing and activity budgets.
- **People:** No overall variance is forecast at present (no change from previous month). Early implementation in 2013/14 of some measures to repay one-off funding, which supports the 2013/14 budget has occurred. These were originally scheduled to commence in 2014/15 and have enabled monies to be used as follows:
 - Adults: There are adverse costs relating to the Learning Disabilities (LD) area which, are being compensated for by savings in other areas. An action plan has been implemented by the Director to reduce the unit costs of high cost packages in negotiation with providers. A review of packages is also being prioritised to ensure provision is consistent with care requirements and additional NHS grant and other income has also offset some of the pressure. Progress on the action plan will be reported in future monitors. Accordingly £1.9m is currently projected as available in 2013/14. Any monies identified will be earmarked to contribute towards an adjustment to income of £2m to reflect the actual in year income performance as detailed in Annexe 12 or against the 2013/14 loan repayment.
 - Childrens: A number of variances are being covered by the corporate savings profiling account. £1.5 million is forecast to be available in the year to contribute towards bridging the 2013/14 loan in 2014/15.

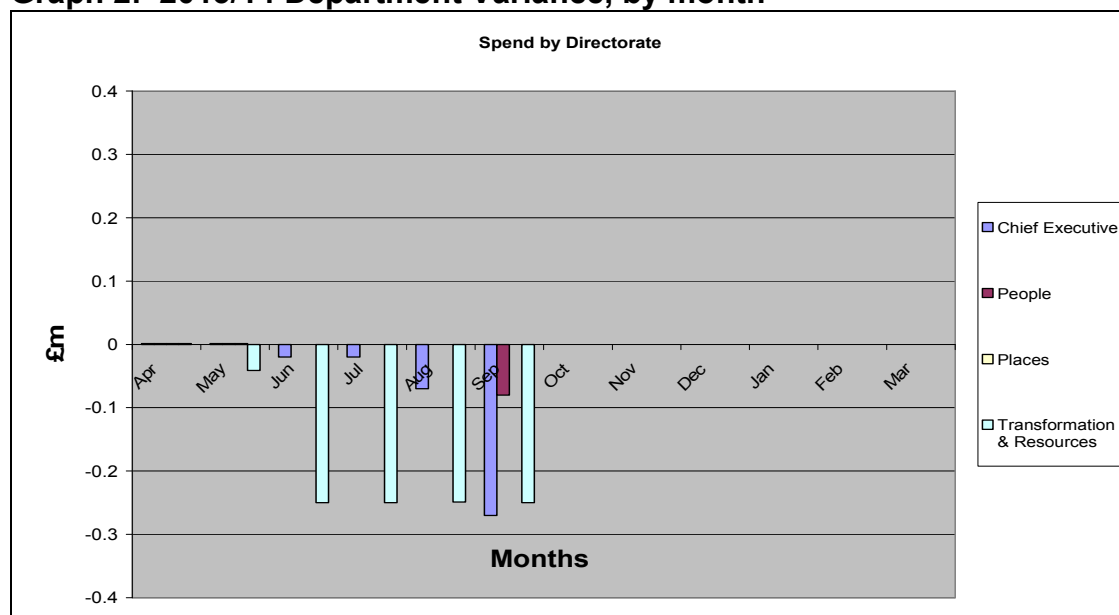
	Adults	Children	Total
Saving 2013/14	1.900	1.500	3.400
Use in 2013/14	-1.900	-0.000	-1.900
C/forward to 2014/15	0.000	1.500	1.500

- **Places:** The net saving forecast is nil (month 5 nil). A significant saving has been achieved as a result of the early implementation of savings relating to Supporting People. Approximately £1.3 million has been earmarked to resolve a number of issues listed in annex 12 which cover all directorates. Measures to fund these issues from 2014/15 onwards will require identification by Strategic Directors. A shortfall of £350,000 in car parking income is currently forecast

against the 2013/14 budget income target. A number of factors impacting on the income for car parking operations include strong competition, in some areas, from off-street private parking contractors; a general borough wide decline in ticket sales; less car traffic / car use and a shift to other forms of transport. This shortfall is presently being offset by compensatory savings within other Sections (Parks & Countryside, Environmental Health, and Waste) of the Environment and Regulation Service Area.

- **Transformation & Resources:** A £249K underspend is currently forecast (unchanged from Month 5), mainly as a result of insurance fund contract and capital financing savings.

Graph 2: 2013/14 Department Variance, by month



4.6 To complete the analysis, the table below sets out the position by category of spend/income. The largest area of variance remains supplies and services which incorporates the cost of care for adults and children.

Table 4: Projected Departmental Variations by Spend and Income

	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	RAGBY	Change from Previous
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Gross Expenditure					
Employees	138,120	138,145	25	G	561
Premises	16,996	17,061	65	G	162
Transport	7,657	7,620	-37	G	-9
Supplies and Services	129,043	128,826	-217	B	-802
Third Party Payments	122,689	121,629	-1,060	Y	102
Transfer Payments	140,990	140,896	-94	G	-108
Support Services	72,979	72,978	-1	G	46
Financing Costs	58,631	57,651	-980	Y	-480
Schools Expenditure	384,042	384,042	0	G	200
Total Expenditure	1,071,147	1,068,848	-2,299		-328
Gross Income					
Schools Income	381,447	381,447	-	G	-
Government Grants	183,194	183,136	-58	G	102
Other Grants and	35,096	36,451	1,355	Y	-126

Reimbursements					
Customer/Client Receipts	47,676	44,800	-2,876	R	96
Interest	870	640	-230	A	-230
Recharge Other Rev A/c	121,047	121,149	102	G	102
Total Income	769,330	767,623	-1,707		-56
Net Expenditure	301,817	301,225	-592		-272

Note: For explanations of red or yellow variances please see [Annex 4](#). Budget realignment has taken place in month 6 between employees and supplies and services to reflect allocation of centrally held inflation and savings previously held on holding code reported under employees.

4.7 Schools expenditure is funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant. As this grant is ringfenced any over/underspend will not impact on the General Fund.

4.8 After agreeing the 2013/14 budget, a number of budgetary issues were identified as requiring further corrective action. A number of items have been dealt with in previous monitors. Details of the issues are contained within [Annex 12](#).

5 IMPLEMENTATION OF 2013/14 SAVINGS – THREE TYPES

5.1 The delivery of the **March 5 Council** savings (Type 1) is so key to the Council's financial health, that they are being tracked at Council and Directorate level. The assumption is that, where there is slippage, the Strategic Director will implement replacement savings. The detail is at [Annex 5](#).

Table 5: Budget Implementation Plan 2013/14 whole Council (£000's)

BRAG	Number of Options	Aug 2013	Change from prev mnth	Approved Budget Reduction	Amount Delivered at Sept	To be Delivered
B - delivered	25	24	1	17,465	17,427	38
G – on track	37	32	5	20,895	10,832	10,063
A - concerns	6	12	-6	7,256	3,690	3,106
R - failed	2	2	0	2,729	1129	2,060
P – replacements for Red	1	1	0	0	650	650
Total at M6 Sep 13	71			48,345	33,728	15,917
<i>Total at M5 Aug 13</i>	<i>71</i>			<i>48,345</i>	<i>29,158</i>	<i>20,487</i>

Note: Budget Book page 56-58. Replacement savings cover shortfall in Court costs option

5.2 There are currently two savings options identified as red rated. They relate to

Review of Residential Care for Learning Disabilities (£300k)
Council Tax Court Costs (£2,429k)

5.3 **The one-off funding** in 2013/14 for Adults and Children, requires that they identify equivalent savings (Type 2) during 2013/14 for 2014/15. It is expected that some of the savings will start in 2013/14. As this is identified and delivered, it is presented in Table 6 below and detailed in [Annex 6](#):

Table 6: Replacing £13.7m one-off 2013/14 funding (£000's)

BRAG		Number of Options	Saving Proposed 2013/14	Saving Delivered 2013/14	Saving Proposed 2014/15	Saving Proposed 2015/16	Total Saving Proposed 2013/16
Adults	8.8	30	1,376	0	6,858	1,690	9,924
Children's	4.9	7	1,500	1,500	0	0	1,500
Use of 2013/14			-1,376				
Total	13.7	37	1,500	1,500	6,858	1,690	11,424

Note: Further proposals require identification Total proposals may end up being greater than target to allow for slippage. Any savings achieved in 2013/14 will firstly reduce any annexe 12 issues and then assist with loan repayments in 2014/15.

5.4 The **spending freeze** was extended into the 2013/14 financial year, for three reasons:

1. **Risk.** The increased level of financial risk in 2013 included items that introduced change from April 2013 for which there was no evidence on which to judge that the risk had diminished, remained the same, or increased.
2. **Closedown.** The outturn for 2012/13 was not available to Cabinet until June 13th. There was a risk that the outturn could be worse than the M11 forecast of a £7.4m overspend. The continued progress in financial management resulted in an actual 2012/13 overspend of £4.7m. An additional £0.9m was also identified for release from reserves. This has enabled £3.6m to be added to General Fund Balances.
3. **Change.** The 2013/14 budget has built in a greater level of savings than has ever been attempted in the Council's history. Although reasonable assumptions have been made, there is the danger that a worse case could occur.

5.5 Cabinet 10th October 2013 agreed that the spending freeze should be continued until further notice to aid good financial management.

5.6 The detailed freeze items are set out at Annex 7. The purpose of the exercise is to reduce any projected overspend, which by Section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003, is the duty of the Council, that is, all of its Members.

5.7 The 2013/14 Revenue Budget addressed a number of budget issues that were identified during the year. This has been done in a number of ways:

- Base budgets were increased by £8.0 million;
- One-off funding of £13.7 million (see paragraph 5.3 above);
- Suppressing Demand by £3.4 million.

Suppressed demand in Children and Young People totals £1.9m which is being managed during the year. 2012/13 saw improvement in care costs and transport, which resulted in bad budgets and budget growth pressures being less than anticipated. Budgets were also reduced where savings were achieved in 2012/13 in areas such as Children in Need, Traded Services, and general expenditure controls.

The remaining suppressed demand of £1.5million relates to DASS.

- 5.8 The 2013/14 budget includes a savings profiling account of £2 million and a Change Management Implementation Fund of £4 million. The majority of savings included within the budget were calculated on a full year basis. However it was known that a number of savings would only achieve a part year impact in 2013/14. This is particularly the case where staffing reductions were required. The delivery of savings is under constant review and Directorates are examining ways of funding any slippage before a call on central funding is requested. The latest forecast staffing savings slippage is estimated at £1.6 million and, should this not be financed internally by Directorates, will be earmarked against the Savings Profiling account (page 7 of the Budget Book and Forecasts 2013-16). This figure will be updated as the year progresses.
- 5.9 Due to the financial management processes outlined above, the budget position as reported in this and previous monitors remains stable.
- 5.10 Cabinet 19th September agreed the transfer of up to £1 million from the Efficiency Investment Fund to Regeneration and Environment to fund the implementation of the revised Street Cleansing contract as per the agreed 2013/14 budget savings option. A sum of £1 million was estimated to cover costs such as redundancies, part funding of the saving prior to contractual change date and any other transition costs.

6 CONTROL OF GROWTH

- 6.1 The impact of demographic change and financial cover for risk - that is outcomes that could be worse than assumed - was built into the budget as set out in Tables 7 and 8, and is detailed at [Annex 8](#). It is important that estimates of growth for 2013/14, made in November 2012, are checked against actual demand so that any over-estimate is revised accordingly. Equally, the funding to cover risk can only be accessed for 2013/14 where evidence can be adduced for that funding.
- 6.2 As part of the preparation for the 2014/15 budget, directorates are providing confirmation and supporting evidence for current and future year growth requirements. Once verified these requests will lead to formal release within the current year or inclusion within future estimates.

Table 7: Growth £000's

Department	2013/14 Budget	2013/14 Release	2014/15 Budget	2015/16 Budget
CYP Total	1,230	1,230	-	-
DASS Total	3,717	3,717	2,202	1,805
LHRAM Total	-	-	-	573
RHP Total	-	-	-	1,000
Technical Total	12	12	72	72
Finance Total	237	237	-	-
	5,196	5,196	2,274	3,450

Table 8: Risk £000's

Corporate Growth (Budget Book page 7)	2013/14 Budget	2013/14 Release	2014/15 Budget	2015/16 Budget
Pay Inflation	1,700	1,700	3,400	5,400
Superannuation Revaluation	0		2,500	2,500
Change Management Implementation Fund	4,000		-	
Savings Profiling	2,000	1,600	-	
Price inflation unallocated				1,000
Growth unallocated			726	-
	7,700	3,300	6,626	8,900

Notes: inflation incorporated into departmental budgets amounts to £2.464m. £1m pay inflation against T&Cs – investigation of alternative savings to allow pay award continue. £1.6m against employee profiling. £0.7m pay inflation relates to market supplements and other employee costs.

- 6.3 In preparation for the Open Golf 2014 the identification of funding for some operational preparatory expenditure is required. To avoid in year growth the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration directorate have identified a number of directorate reserves which could be reduced to provide additional funding of £100,000 for this purpose. This comprises of £37,000 relating to Trading standards, £45,000 from Highways and Environmental Health Reserves, £13,000 unused reserve relating to a Birkenhead Park bridge scheme and £5,000 energy reserve. Cabinet is therefore asked to approve the transfer of these monies between reserves to aid the funding of Open golf preparatory works.

7 INCOME AND DEBT

- 7.1 The Council's income arrangements with regard to non Council Tax and Business Rates were reviewed and reported to the 23 May Cabinet. Revenue and Income falls into the four broad areas shown below for reporting purposes.

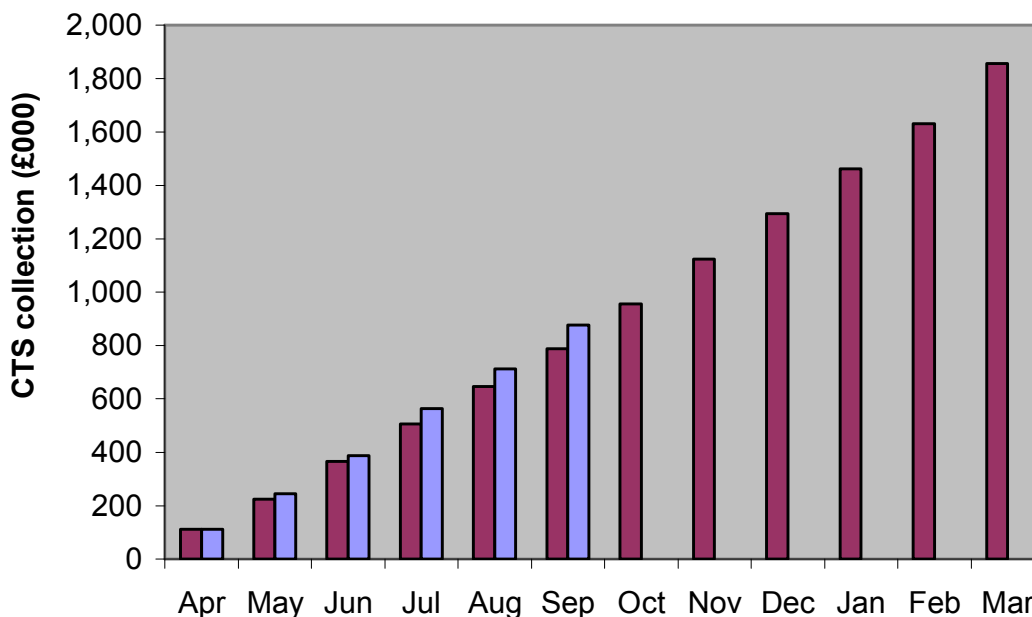
Table 9: Amount to be collected in 2013/14 £000's

	2013/14 Collectable £000	2013/14 Collected £000	%
Council Tax	135,505	74,633	55.1
Business Rates	70,565	41,384	58.6
Fees and charges – Adults	45,947	21,537	46.9
Fees and charges – all other services	37,151	25,972	69.9

- 7.2 There is a backlog of Accounts Receivable debt to be processed in the areas of fees and charges. Reporting will continue until a normal level of debt is reached. The detail is at [Annex 9](#).
- 7.3 A high risk income item is that required from residents who previously paid no Council Tax. The graph below tracks collection performance against the budget assumption.

Graph 3: Projected/Actual Council Tax Support Collection by month £000

Council Tax Support Collection 2013/14



- 7.4 The Council Tax Support Scheme was introduced in April. As this involves billing a large number of properties who have not previously paid Council Tax, having previously received benefit at 100%, an overall collection rate of 75% generating £2.8 million has been assumed. The forecast is that £1.86 million (66%) will be collected by 31 March with recovery actions post 31 March increasing the collection to the target figure. At 30 September collection was 28.5% which is ahead of target and equates to £877,156.
- 7.5 Recovery from non Working Age debtors is continuing as normal. Action taken to recover from those of Working Age that previously received 100% Council Tax Benefit is being taken. Repayment plans offering weekly/fortnightly instalments were offered to those contacting the Council; an additional 1,875 applications for Deduction of Benefits have been made since July.
- 7.6 Business Rates income collection was 58.7% during September. This is slightly higher than the 58.3% collected at the equivalent period in 2012/13. Comparisons will fluctuate as some payments received early last year in respect of Health Authority payments amongst others were paid in August. The taxbase has resulted in an extra £1 million to be collected in the first 5 months of this financial year. The timing of refunds may also affect the comparison. Recovery procedures have been tightened with debt being pursued earlier and the position is being closely monitored.
- 7.7 Issues regarding the collection of sundry debt were reported to Cabinet on 23 May 2013. The use of reserves has been earmarked to fund any increased need for debt write offs or increase to the bad debt provision. A significant amount of income has been received to reduce the level of debt and therefore the call on reserves.

8 MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

- 8.1 The Departmental Directors and the Chief Executive's Strategy Team will seek to identify actions to keep spend within the Budget allocated – these actions are detailed in Annex 10. Any spend freeze agreed decisions are reflected within the tables above.
- 8.2 It is proposed that, as part of the budget architecture, prudent budget management is rewarded at the year-end, with the ability to carry forward underspends. Equally, less than prudent budget management will require that departments fund any overspending from the following year's budget. The detailed guidance will be presented for approval following agreement of the updated financial regulations by audit and risk management committee.

9 CASHFLOW

- 9.1 Active cash flow management is a fundamental part of the Treasury Management Strategy. Borrowing for funding the 2013/14 capital programme, as in past years has been delayed via temporary use of internal reserves and cash balances. The consequence of this is that interest receivable will be below budget due to funds not being available for investment but this will be more than compensated for by reduced borrowing costs. Interest rates payable on investments have also declined during the year. A pilot study has commenced to introduce monthly expenditure and income profiled budgets within directorates. This it is hoped, will aid proactive spending decisions and assist to get income to arrive earlier to improve the Council's cashflow and earn additional interest income.

10 RELEVANT RISKS

- 10.1 The possible failure to deliver the Revenue Budget has been mitigated by:
- The training of cost centre managers to improve skill levels; four events on profiling and forecasting budgets have been delivered to over 160 cost centre managers with the next event planned on building next year's budget.
 - A specific tracking system of savings to ensure delivery;
 - Improvements to procurement compliance, to generate more savings and better monitoring information;
 - A monthly review by Chief Officers, and Cabinet, together with an improved Scrutiny regime, and greater transparency;
 - Individual monthly review by Cabinet Portfolio holder at portfolio meeting;
 - Agreement that Strategic Directors are to 'consume their own smoke' regarding slippage not covered from central funds;

11 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 11.1 Any option to improve the monitoring and budget accuracy will be considered.

12 CONSULTATION

- 12.1 No consultation has been carried out in relation to this report.

13 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

13.1 As yet there are no implications for voluntary, community or faith groups.

14 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL, IT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

14.1 Cabinet 18 February 2013 agreed a revised 2013/14 General Fund balance risk calculation of a minimum of £13 million. The level to be achieved by March 2014 is £17.7m.

Table 10: Summary of the projected General Fund balances

Details	£m	£m
Projected balance 31 March 2014 when setting the Budget 2013/14		+13.6
Add: Estimated increase following completion of 2012/13 revenue accounts	+3.6	+3.6
Add: Potential underspend, at M6		+0.59
Projected balance 31 March 2014 (Target per Cabinet 18/2/13 £17.739)		17.79

14.2 The current levels of Earmarked Reserves are shown in Table 11 with a full listing included at [Annex 11](#).

Table 11: Earmarked Reserves 2013/14

	Balance at 1 April 2013 £000	Movement in year £000	Current Balance 31 Sep 2013 £000
Housing Benefit Reserve	10,155	-	10,155
Insurance Fund	7,821	(5)	7,816
Efficiency Investment Rolling Fund	2,000	(1,000)	1,000
Grant Reserves	1,308	-	1,308
Management of other risks	29,228	(410)	28,818
School Balances and Schools Related	<u>14,264</u>		<u>14,264</u>
Total Reserves	64,776	(1,415)	63,361

14.3 The delivery of permanent savings on staffing budgets requires initial costs to be incurred for redundancy costs and where applicable pension. Provision of £5.5 million has been made for these costs and this remains the latest estimate for the implementation of the 2013/14 savings. Payments of £4.1 million have so far been incurred for these costs. The remaining costs will be incurred as staff continue to leave the authority during 2013/14.

15 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

15.1 The entire report concerns the duty of the Council to avoid a budget shortfall as outlined at paragraph 5.6. The Chief Finance Officer is under a personal duty under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 section 114A to make a report to the executive if it appears to him that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure.

15.2 If the Chief Finance Officer reports that there are insufficient resources to meet expenditure, the Council is prevented from entering into any new agreement which may involve the incurring of expenditure at any time by the authority, until the report is considered, and if the problem is ongoing until it is resolved.

16 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 16.1 This report is essentially a monitoring report which reports on financial performance. Any budgetary decisions, of which there are none in this report, would need to be assessed for any equality implications.

17 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

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

18 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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

19 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 19.1 The Council, having set a Budget at the start of the financial year, needs to ensure that the delivery of this Budget is achieved. This has to be within the allocated and available resources to ensure the ongoing financial stability of the Council. Consequently there is a requirement to regularly monitor progress so that corrective action can be taken when required which is enhanced with the monthly reporting of the financial position.

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ANNEXES

- Annex 1 Revenue Monitoring and Reporting Timetable 2013/14.
Annex 2 General Fund Revenue Budget for 2013/14 agreed by Council.
Annex 3 Changes to the Budget 2013/14 since it was set.
Annex 4 RAGBY Full Details
Annex 5 Savings tracker
Annex 6 Adults/Children's Replacing one-off 2013/14 funding
Annex 7 Freeze Outcomes
Annex 8 Growth and Risk
Annex 9 Income and Debt
Annex 10 Management actions
Annex 11 Earmarked Reserves – General Fund
Annex 12 Budgetary Issues

SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
From September 2012, the Revenue monitoring reports have been submitted monthly to Cabinet. Budget Council	5 March 2013

Annex 1 REVENUE MONITORING AND REPORTING TIMETABLE 2013/14

Period Number	Month	General Ledger Updated and Reports Available To Be Produced	Reports Available For The Executive Strategy Group	Reports Available For Cabinet
			Monthly	Monthly
1	April	May 8	May 28	June 13
2	May	Jun 7	June 18	July 11
3	June	Jul 5	Aug 13	Sept 19
4	July	Aug 7	Sept 24	Oct 10
5	August	Sept 6	Sept 24	Oct 10
6	September	Oct 7	Oct 22	Nov 7
7	October	Nov 7	Nov 26	Dec 12
8	November	Dec 6	Dec 17	Jan 16
9	December	Jan 8	Jan 21	Feb 11
10	January	Feb 7	Feb 25	Mar 13
11	February	Mar 7	TBC	TBC
12	Outturn (Provisional)	TBC	TBC	TBC

AGREED BY COUNCIL ON 5 MARCH 2013

Directorate/Service Area	Budget
Expenditure	£
Chief Executives	8,239,800
Families and Well Being	
Children and Young People	89,143,300
- Adult Social Services	82,950,800
- Safeguarding Plus Schools and Schools Grant	3,280,500
-Sports and Recreation	8,904,000
Regeneration and Environment	100,127,300
Transformation and Resources	12,423,500
Net Cost of Services	305,069,200
Corporate Growth	7,700,000
Corporate Savings	(10,952,000)
Budget Requirement	301,817,200
Income	
Local Services Support Grant	45,000
New Homes Bonus	2,119,500
Revenue Support Grant	106,968,000
Business Rtes Baseline	31,424,000
Top Up	39,739,000
Council Tax Requirement	111,357,800
Contribution from General Fund Balances	10,163,900
Total Income	301,817,200
Statement of Balances	
As at 1 April 2013	23,800,000
Contributions from Balances to support budget	(10,163,900)
Forecast Balances 31 March 2014	13,636,100

Annex 3 CHANGES TO THE BUDGET AGREED SINCE 2013/14 BUDGET SET

These comprise variations approved by Cabinet / Council including approved virements, budget realignments reflecting changes to the departmental structure and responsibilities, and expenditure freeze decisions, as well as any technical adjustments.

Table 1: 2013/14 Original & Revised Net Budget by Department

	Original Net Budget	Approved Budget Changes Prior Mths	Approved Budget Changes Month 6	Revised Net Budget
Chief Executive	8,240	-4,440	68	3,868
People - Adult Social Services	82,951	-138	-82	82,731
People – Children & YP, & Schools	91,738	-6,843	82	84,977
People – Asset Mgmt & Transport	-	5,534	-	5,534
People – Safeguarding	685	1,396	-	2,081
People – Sports and Recreation	8,904	-42	-	8,862
Places - Environment & Regulation	79,651	-51	-	79,600
Places – Housing & Comm Safety	15,342	-551	-	14,791
Places – Regeneration	5,134	-18	-	5,116
Transformation & Resources	12,424	5,153	-68	17,509
Corporate Growth & Savings	-3,252	-	-	-3,252
Net Cost of Services	301,817	0	0	301,817

Variations to the approved budgets 2013/14

Cabinet	Items	£m
n/a	Corporate and Democratic Services to be grouped within the Transformation and Resources Directorate where Direct management control for these areas lies	4.639
n/a	The Anti-Social Behaviour team is part of the Families and Well Being Directorate - Children and Young People and the budget has therefore been transferred from Housing and community safety.	0.569
n/a	Quality Assurance and Family Group Conferencing have been transferred from Specialist Services in Children and Young People to the Joint Safeguarding unit where direct management control lies.	1.396
n/a	A support post has also been transferred from Transformation and Resources to the Chief Executive's Directorate.	0.037
n/a	A number of training and legal posts have been transferred from Children and Young People to Transformation and Resources	0.353
n/a	Transfer of staffing budgets from DASS in Families & Wellbeing to Financial Services within Transformation & Resources	0.170
n/a	Transfer from T&R to Chief Executive. Funding for Community Engagement.	0.025
n/a	Realigning of the call centre recharge relating to the new garden waste service from Environment & Regulation to Transformation and change.	0.009
n/a	Transfer of staffing budgets from DASS in Families & Wellbeing to CYP.	0.010
n/a	Transfer of 2 Constituency Committee Posts to Chief Executive from CYP.	0.095
n/a	Transfer of budget from Waste & Environment Service Area to create new roles to lead Constituency Committees.	0.042
n/a	Staff transfer from CYPD to Financial services following recent restructure.	0.044
n/a	Transfer of Caretaker posts from Adult Social Services to CYP	0.082
	OVERALL IMPACT OF THESE DECISIONS	0.0

Virements below level requiring Cabinet approval

Cabinet	Items	£m

Annex 4 - RAGBY FULL DETAILS

Department	Number of Budget Areas	Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Yellow
Chief Executive	4	0	0	2	2	0
Adult Social Services	2	0	0	2	0	0
Children & Young People, & Schools	7	0	1	6	0	0
Safeguarding	1	0	0	1	0	0
Sports & Rec	1	0	0	1	0	0
Environment & Regulation	2	0	0	2	0	0
Housing & Comm Safety	1	0	0	1	0	0
Transformation & Resources	7	1	0	5	0	1
Corporate Growth & Savings	2	0	0	2	0	0
Total	27	1	1	22	2	1

RAGBY REPORTING AND OTHER ISSUES

The Red and Yellow RAGBY issues that are the subject of corporate focus are detailed in the following sections by

- Business Area (by Department identifying the service in the Council Estimates (Green Book).) and,
- Subjective Area (by the type of spend / income).

Business Area Reds

	Chief Executive	People	Places	Trans & Res	Total	Percent of total
Red Overspend	0	0	0	1	0	2.7%
Value £000s/ % Overall Net Budget				500		0.16

A shortfall on the court costs savings option has resulted in a red rating (Transformation and Resources).

Business Area Yellows

	Chief Exec	People	Places	Trans & Res	Total	Percent of total
Yellow underspend	0	0	0	1	0	2.7%
Value £000s/ % Overall Net Budget				749		0.29

Savings on treasury management due to use of internal borrowing and scheme slippage has produced a yellow rating (Transformation and Resources).

Subjective Area Reds

Expenditure

Customer/Client Receipts: The forecast of £2.79 million below budget is largely due to the £2m income adjustment referred to in paragraph 4.5 in the main report.

Subjective Area Yellows

Expenditure

Third Party Payments: The forecast £1.0 million underspend is a result of various savings within Adult Social Services, Children and Young People, and Transformation & Resources.

Other Grants and Reimbursements: The forecast of £1.3 million variance is due to expected over recovery of income within Adult Social Services.

Financing Costs: The forecast of £1 million underspend is due to capital programme slippage.

Annex 5 SAVINGS TRACKER

1 Summary

BRAG	Number of Options	Aug 2013	Change from prev mnth	Approved Budget Reduction	Amount Delivered at Sept	To be Delivered
B - delivered	25	24	1	17,465	17,427	38
G – on track	37	32	5	20,895	10,832	10,063
A - concerns	6	12	-6	7,256	3,690	3,106
R - failed	2	2	0	2,729	1129	2,060
P – replacements for Red	1	1	0	0	650	650
Total at M6 Sep 13	71			48,345	33,728	15,917
<i>Total at M5 Aug 13</i>	<i>71</i>			<i>48,345</i>	<i>29,158</i>	<i>20,487</i>

2 Detail

SAVINGS (TYPE 1) TARGETS – ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SAVINGS (201314)

Families and Well Being – DASS

Saving	Target £000	Comments / progress on implementation	BGAR	Amount delivered at M6 Sep 13 £000	To be delivered £000
Review of VCF Sector Grants	705	Implemented	B	705	0
Community Meals	169	All reviews have been completed and provision of community meals now ceased.	B	169	0
Review of Support for Carers	250	Letter issued and reviews progressed for one-off payments, payments not related to client assessed need, and payments to related individuals	G	250	0
Day Care and Day Services Transformation	750	Consultation completed and service proposals finalised	G	0	750
Charging for Non Residential Services	880	Implemented	G	300	580
Transport Policies	250	Additional grant funding CYP	G	0	250
Targeted Support through NHS Contracts	1,828	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All clients no longer requiring double handling identified. Contract performance to be monitored (£83k). - Use of Social Fund Grant Allocation. (£800k). - Service specifications and procurement schedule for re-ablement and domiciliary care in progress to enable contracts to be let from 1st October 2013. (£84k). - Targets implemented for residential placement numbers plus scheme of delegation. (£454k) - Continuing Health Care – correct application of law and policy. (£377k). 	<p>G</p> <p>B</p> <p>G</p> <p>G</p> <p>G</p>	800	1028

Assistive Technology	150	Charges now proposed from 1st October 2013, income target remains achievable.	G	0	150
Modernisation of leisure	429	Revised shift rotas have now been implemented. The delay in implementation is expected to result in slippage of £125k on this budget saving option.	G	304	125
Extra Care Housing/External Respite and Short-term Provision	300	- Extra Care Housing Provider Negotiations continue. - Revised Respite Policy to be produced and review the feasibility for block contracts for respite	G	0	300
Residential and Respite Care	160	Director implementing action plan to reduce Supported Living costs	G	0	160
Review of Equipment Service	100	Revised S75 in place for 2013/14 with Community Trust. Discussions commenced with NHS re revised hosting arrangements	A	0	100
Review of Residential Care for Learning Disabilities	300	LD packages currently overspending	R	0	300

Families and Well Being – Childrens

Saving	Target £000	Comments / progress on implementation	BGAR	Amount delivered at M6 Sep 13 £000	To be delivered £000
Education Psychology Service	80	This has been achieved through existing vacancies in the service.	B	80	0
Schools Budget	250	Reduction in Council contribution towards Schools PPM	B	250	0
Careers, Education and Advice	700	Contract renegotiation has achieved this saving for the full year.	B	700	0
Schools Music Service	21	Will be achieved on target.	B	21	0

Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre	23	Will be achieved on target.	B	23	0
Foundation Learning	121	Reduced commissioning has achieved this saving	B	121	0
Commissioning of Parenting Services	700	Reduced commissioning has achieved this saving	B	700	0
Youth Challenge	200	Reduced provision has achieved this saving	B	200	0
Short Breaks for Children with Disabilities	150	Reduced commissioning has achieved this saving	B	150	0
Area Teams for Family Support	200	Restructure is complete with slippage of £38k.	B	162	38
School Improvement and Income from Schools	160	The school improvement programme has been reduced. However there is a shortfall in the buy back from Academies in respect of PFI of £45k.	G	115	45
Youth and Play Services	687	Restructure complete, but slippage of £124k is anticipated in relation to late vacation of premises and employees not leaving 1 st April.	G	563	124
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	250	Confirmation that staff have left with slippage of £45k.	G	205	45
Children's Centres and Sure Start	1,576	There is slippage in relation to the Management restructure of £57k and slippage in the transfer of day care, £453k, for which tenders are being evaluated. There are concerns that only a small number have been received which would mean this option needs to be re-evaluated. However this slippage identified is likely to be sufficient for the year to March 2014 since staffing costs have already reduced and there has been an increase in income projections.	A	1066	510

Regeneration and Environment

Saving	Target £000	Comments / progress on implementation	BGAR	Amount delivered at M6 Sep 13 £000	To be delivered £000
Invest Wirral	352	This saving is on target – the funding relates to economic activities that are no longer continuing.	B	352	0
Home Insulation	926	Programme ended saving achieved	B	926	0
Apprentice Programme	420	Savings achieved	B	420	0
Pre-Planning Advice	10	Achieved	G	10	0
Pest Control	30	There is some of slippage on this budget saving due to a delay in the departure of an employee and the associated costs. It is expected that this slippage will be managed within existing budget resources.	G	26	4
Garden Waste Collection	582	Income target met and currently overachieving. Garden waste tonnages slightly below projections but drop in recycling credit income will be offset by subscription income and budget monitoring exercise has picked up necessary adjustments. Negotiations with Biffa over savings to be identified through fleet reduction are underway (to be completed by November 13).	G	582	0
Dog Fouling Enforcement	97	On target for savings to be achieved	G	85	12
Household Waste Collection	80	An increase in the charge for the ERIC services has been agreed and implemented. However, there is currently no capacity in IT to implement required changes to update CRM	G	60	20

		until end of August 2013 for bin charging element of project. Budget shortfall (est at £20K) will be met within existing budget provision.(Although there is an over achievement in income from schools waste as schools have not reduced their bin emptying requirements as much as anticipated).			
Handyperson Scheme	209	There is some slippage on this budget saving due to a delay in the departure of employees. It is expected that this slippage will be managed within existing budget resources. Services to the general public ceased trading in April/May after scheduled works had been completed. Any new referrals have been directed to the Local Authorities Approved Contracted List held by Trading Standards.	G	170	39
Trading Standards	71	This budget savings option involved the reduction of two posts within the section. One of these posts was already vacant and so the saving will be achieved. There will be some slippage with the saving on the other post due to a delay in the departure of an employee. It is expected that this slippage will be managed within existing budget resources.	G	65	6
Highway Maintenance	588	There is a small amount of slippage on this budget saving due to a delay in the departure of an employee. It is expected that this slippage will be managed within existing budget resources. The bulk of this saving will be achieved from a reduction in maintenance works. This reduction has already been built into the works plan of the service and will therefore, be	G	585	3

		achieved.			
Street Cleansing	1,000	The service changes have been implemented on time. Transitional costs will be covered by a transfer from the efficiency fund, if approved in September.	G	1000	0
School Waste	180	An income target has been created which will be monitored throughout the year. Currently there are no problems envisaged to achieving this saving.	G	180	0
Street Lighting	265	There is a small amount of slippage on this budget saving due to a delay in the departure of an employee. It is expected that this slippage will be managed within existing budget resources. The bulk of this saving will be achieved from a reduction in maintenance works. This reduction has already been built into the works plan of the service and will therefore, be achieved.	G	262	3
Highway Drainage	106	There is a small amount of slippage on this budget saving due to a delay in the departure of an employee. It is expected that this slippage will be managed within existing budget resources. The bulk of this saving will be achieved from a rationalisation of inspections. This rationalisation has already been built into the inspection programme and will therefore, be achieved.	G	97	9
Reduction in Parks Maintenance	450	There is a small amount of slippage on this budget saving due to a delay in the departure of an employee. It is expected that this slippage will be managed within existing	G	447	3

		budget resources. The bulk of this saving will be achieved from a reduction in maintenance works. This reduction has already been built into the works plan of the service and will therefore, be achieved.			
Housing Support for BME Communities	111	There is some of slippage on this budget saving due to a delay in the departure of employees. It is expected that this slippage will be managed within existing budget resources.	G	91	20
Car Parking	281	Although Car Parking Income is currently forecasting a shortfall against the 2013/14 budgeted income target, the reasons for the shortfall do not directly relate to the service changes made at the start of the year to achieve the savings option target of £281,000. These service changes included the reduction of a car parking administration post (1 FTE) and the reduction of expenditure on the car parking enforcement and cash collection contracts. Parking charges were also rationalised across the borough to bring all tariffs in line with Birkenhead and to remove the inequalities of low charges in West Wirral. The data collected to date shows that all of these changes have been successfully implemented and the expected savings of £281,000 will be achieved.	G	281	0

Transformation and Resources

Saving	Target £000	Comments / progress on implementation	BGAR	Amount delivered at M6 Sep 13 £000	To be delivered £000
Efficiency Investment Fund	4,400	Cabinet 8th November 2012 agreed to elimination of fund and growth and replacement by rolling fund.	B	4,400	0
Treasury Management	1,700	Built into budget to reflect the revised Capital Programme	B	1,700	0
Revenues and Benefits	550	This saving has been built into the budget and staffing levels are in line with its achievement.	B	550	0
Information Technology Service	210	Full savings for this budget option delivered in year one.	B	210	0
Marketing and Public Relations	167	Funding removed from budget	B	167	0
Tranmere Rovers Sponsorship	135	Sponsorship has ended.	B	135	0
Power Supplies - Contract Saving	11	A new supply contract is in place.	B	11	0
Area Forum Funding	391	Savings achieved	B	391	0
Council Tax Increase	2,600	Increase in Council Tax has been applied. Achieved as in year receipt based on accrual based billed council tax.	B	2,600	0
Council Tax: Discounts and Exemptions	2,284	Changes to discounts and exemptions are incorporated in the 2013/14 taxbase.	B	2,284	0
Reduction in External Audit Fees	140	The budget has been reduced to reflect the new contract and is expected to be fully realised in year.	G	0	140
Local Council Tax Support Scheme	2,785	Scheme introduced and progress being monitored as per section 7.3 above	G	0	2,785
Reducing Council Management	5,000	Savings profile weighted towards increased delivery in 2 nd half of year	G	1,800	3,200

		reflecting date of leavers Vacant posts are being pro rata'd over the year.			
Trade Union funding	-270	The funding for the Trade Unions has been built in with the costs to still be recharged across business areas at the end of the year.	G	-270	0
Reducing the Cost of Democracy	100	The cost of the Members Allowances has been reduced and the saving is expected to be achieved in this area.	G	0	100
The Mayor of Wirral	50	It is expected that Civic Services will be able to achieve this saving from June 2013 and there will be a drive to reduce overtime and supplies to achieve the saving.	G	0	50
Libraries and One Stop Shops	391	Staff savings at the budget level are evident in April monitoring.	G	391	0
Housing Benefits – Maximisation of Grant	2,000	Saving has been incorporated into the budget and is expected to be achieved.	G	2,000	0
Service Restructures	905	Broken down as: £50k Asset Mgmt – delayed restructure but the full £100k should be achieved during 2013-15 £292k HR delayed restructure but it is envisaged that the full saving of £584k will be achieved over the course of 2013-15. £263k related to RHP £300k for Legal Services, of which £100k relates to employees which is expected to be achieved through compensatory budgets with the restructure helping to achieve the £200k that is currently set aside	G G G A	333	572

		Legal/Court costs which are a very volatile area.			
Better Use of Buildings	100	Corrective actions have been identified to resolve unachieved savings from previous years, and this project is now on track	G	100	0
Transforming Business Support	500	Saving has been incorporated into the budget. Staff savings are expected and some have already been achieved. Further work is taking place to develop saving.	A	169	331
Reducing the numbers of Agency workers	500	The current saving in year is 71k up to September 2013. However, there are plans to bring a significant number of current contracts to an end later in year. Challenge is around how savings are allocated across departments.	A	71	429
Procurement	320	This saving has not progressed as anticipated, but compensatory savings are expected to be made during the year.	A	224	96
Workforce Conditions of Service	3,800	Negotiations with TUs are concluding. Target saving likely to be £3.7 million. Slippage depending upon agreement is likely. Challenge is around how savings are allocated across departments.	A	2,160	1,640
Council Tax: Court Costs	2,429	Current projections show full saving will not be delivered. 1.3M Compensatory savings will be made from staffing budgets (0.8M) and Treasury Management Budgets (0.5M) within Transformation and Resources.	R	1,129	1,300

Annex 6 ADULTS/CHILDREN'S REPLACING ONE-OFF 2013/14 FUNDING

ADULTS

Details	Proposed 2013/14 (£000)	Delivered 2013/14 (£000)	Proposed 2014/15 (£000)	Proposed 2015/16 (£000)	Comments / progress on implementation
Live savings					
Service Reviews (for development and future discussion with members)	1,014		3,530	900	
Management action	362		3,328	790	
Total all categories	1,376		6,858	1,690	

Note: 21013/14 monies may be allocated first to annexe 12 issues in 2013/14

CHILDRENS

Details	Proposed 2013/14 (£000)	Delivered 2013/14 (£000)	Proposed 2014/15 (£000)	Proposed 2015/16 (£000)	Comments / progress on implementation
Commissioning (saving achieved in advance)	250	250			Saving achieved in advance of 2014/15 requirement
Connexions/CEI AG (saving achieved in advance)	300	300			Saving achieved in advance of 2014/15 requirement
Transfer Pension costs to Schools Budget	100				Costs to be transferred as in 2012/13
Uncommitted Adoption Grant	200	200			As per Cabinet report June 2013
Further reduction in Schools PPM programme	200				Reduction taken into account in the available programme
Springboard / School Readiness add'l budget	400	400			Budget not committed

YOS bring forward service review	50	50			To be met from vacancies and spend controls
Other variances		100			Various minor budget variances
Total	1,500	1,300			

Annex 7 FREEZE OUTCOMES

No decisions have been made in 2013/14 which result in monies being transferred from directorate budgets to the freeze holding account.

Annex 8 GROWTH AND RISK

Growth £000's

Ref	Department/ Option Title	2013/14 Budget	2013-14 Release
	CYP		
5	Independent Reviewing Officers	90	90
6	Additional Social Worker Capacity in Wallasey District	315	315
7	Social Workers in Schools	75	75
8	Family Justice Review	100	100
9	Staying Put Policy	100	100
12	Foster Care	500	500
13	Youth Justice Board Costs	50	50
	CYP Total	1,230	1,230
	DASS		
2	Increase in Fees for Residential & Nursing Care to reflect a Fair Price for Care	1,000	1,000
4	Increase in Demand (Young Adults with Learning Disabilities)	944	944
5	Increase in Demand (Older People)	1,773	1,773
	DASS Total	3,717	3,717
	Technical		
3	Annual Property Uplift Biffa contract	12	12
	Technical Total	12	12
	Finance		
1	Reduction in HB Admin grant 2013/14	237	237
	Finance Total	237	237
		5,196	5,196

Risk £000's

Corporate Growth (Budget Book page 7)	2013/14 Budget	2013/14 Release
Pay Inflation	1,700	1,000
Change Management Implementation Fund	4,000	
Savings Profiling	2,000	1,800
Price inflation unallocated		
Growth unallocated		
	7,700	2,800

Annex 8 (Continued)

Inflation Allocated to Departments 2013-16			
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	£000	£000	£000
CYP			
PFI	140	140	140
Retirement Costs	80	80	80
Foster/Adoption	190	190	190
CYP Total	410	410	410
DASS			
Placements	15	15	15
Residential and Nursing Care	1,518	1,518	1,518
Transport	60	60	60
Total	1,593	1,593	1,593
Families and Well Being Total	2,003	2,003	2,003
Regeneration and Environment			
Biffa	413	413	413
Colas	48	48	48
Regeneration and Environment Total	461	461	461
Grand Total	2,464	2,464	2,464

Annex 9 INCOME AND DEBT

Council Tax

The following statement compares the amount collected for **Council Tax** in the period 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013 with the amount collected in the same period in 2012/13:

	Actual 2013/14 £	Actual 2012/13 £
Cash to Collect	135,505,000	125,864,848
Cash Collected	74,633,000	71,184,532
% Collected	55.1%	56.6%

Council Tax benefits has been abolished and replaced by Council Tax support and the numbers and awards as at 30 September 2013 are as follows:

Number of Council Tax Support recipients	38,217
Total Council Tax Support expenditure	£27,919,000
Number of pensioners	16,399
Number of vulnerable	6,668
Number of working age	21,818

The level of collection reflects the increased charges to those charge payers now in receipt of Council Tax Support and having to pay a minimum of 22% of the annual charge as well as the increased charges in respect of reduced discounts and exemptions. Overall there is an extra £10 million to be collected for 2013/14. Council Tax Support claimants of Working Age total 21,818, this includes 6,668 who receive maximum support leaving 15,150 paying at least 22%.

Business Rates

The following statement compares the amount collected for **National Non-Domestic Rates** in the period 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013 with the amount collected in the same period in 2012/13:

	Actual 2013/14 £	Actual 2012/13 £
Cash to Collect	70,564,835	68,227,482
Cash Collected	41,383,921	39,788,795
% Collected	58.7%	58.3%

Accounts Receivable

The table below shows the new department names and the split at what stage of the recovery cycle they are:

Description	Less than 28 days	1st reminder	2nd reminder	3rd reminder	Total as at 30.9.13
Chief Executive	£193,676	£10,857	£10,079	£562,182	£776,794
Neighbourhood	£11,706	£1,651	£105	£12,772	£26,234
Transformation	£4,764,655	£846,972	£29,952	£784,329	£6,425,908
Families	£4,221,474	£7,512,279	£462,550	£10,793,530	£22,989,833
Regeneration & Environment	£818,794	£191,837	£148,383	£2,744,092	£3,903,106
Policy and Performance					
Totals	£10,010,305	£8,563,596	£651,069	£14,896,905	£34,121,875

The above figures are for invoices in respect of the period up to the end of September 2013. Payments as well as amendments such as write-offs and debts cancellations continue to be made after this date on these accounts.

BENEFITS

The following statement details the number of claimants in respect of benefit and the expenditure for Private Tenants and those in receipt of Council Tax Benefit up to 30 September 2013:

	2013/14	2012/13
Number of Private Tenant recipients	31,516	31,757
Total rent allowance expenditure	£70,464,646	
Number under the Local Housing Allowance Scheme (<u>included in the above</u>)	12,195	12,010
	£27,757,984	
Number of Council Tax Support recipients	38,235	
Total Council Tax Support expenditure	£28,124,290	
Total expenditure on benefit to date	£98,588,936	

The following statement provides information concerning the breakdown according to client type as at 30 September 2013.

Private Tenants

Claimants in the Private Rented Sector	14,738
Claimants in the Social Rented Sector	16,869
Owner Occupiers	10,504

Total claimants by age group

under 25 years old	2,609
25 – 60 years old	21,887
over 60 years old	17,615

There are **42,111** benefit recipients in Wirral as at 30 September 2013.

Under Occupancy regulations

From 1 April 2013 property size criteria was introduced to working age tenants of social housing (Registered Providers). Where a claimant is deemed to be occupying accommodation larger than they reasonably require, Housing Benefit (HB) levels have been restricted as follows:

- One “spare” bedroom incurs a 14% reduction. In Wirral the current average is £12 weekly and there are 3,005 households affected;
- Two or more spare bedrooms incurs a 25% reduction – the Wirral average is currently £21 weekly and there are 724 affected;
- Out of a total social sector HB caseload of 16,869, 3,729 are currently affected by this. Numbers have reduced slightly as the reduction has, in some cases, been overridden due to the claimant's circumstances.

Housing Benefit Fraud and Enquiries – 01 April 2013 to 30 September 2013

New Cases referred to Fraud team in period	636
Cases where fraud found and action taken	31
Cases investigated, no fraud found and recovery of overpayment may be sought	250
Cases under current investigation	226
Surveillance Operations Undertaken	0
Cases where fraud found and action taken:	
Administration penalty	2
Caution issued and accepted	5
Successful prosecution	24
Summons issued for prosecution purposes	29

Discretionary Housing Payments

The tables below profile the position of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) administration and associated spend. DHP is not a payment of Housing Benefit and is funded separately from the main scheme. Whilst traditionally it was seen as a short term measure to financially assist those who had difficulty in meeting a rental shortfall, increasingly the nature of awards is changing as the impacts of Welfare Reform roll-out. The Department for Work and Pensions see such awards, for which the Government contribution has increased, in many cases as supporting people through the transition of reform, allowing them time to rebudget, increase their income or to secure a DHP award to help with moving costs.

The Government contribution for 2013/14 is £917,214 with an overall limit of £2,293,035 which the Authority must not exceed. In direct recognition of the impacts of the Reforms, the DWP also made a further £10 million Transitional Funding available for 2013/14, of

which Wirral's share is £64,000. Spend is closely monitored, with year end spend forecasted on a monthly basis. Whilst the percentage spend to date, at 33%, is lower than this time 2012/13, the escalating impacts of reforms such as Social Sector Size Criteria and wider increase in people struggling to manage financially as a result of a myriad of change, means that it is expected that Wirral will use up the full government contribution by year end. £35,000 has been allocated to Housing Options to meet rent deposits to enable people to move into sustainable tenancies and they have allocated £10,180 of this to date.

Data @ 01/10/2013										
Month	Awards Considered			DHP Awards in Payment	Current Awards	Committed awards up to 31/03/2014	% spent (committed) of Govt cont	Forecasted Y.E. spend	Annual Total Cont.	Cont remaining
	Total consid	Awarded	Refused							
April	62	26	36	65	£11,674.44	£16,883.88	2%	£198,794.07	£917,214.00	£888,655.68
May	228	103	125	136	£27,093.75	£41,845.90	5%	£242,440.53	£917,214.00	£875,368.10
June	296	122	174	230	£51,067.94	£79,329.82	9%	£314,732.44	£917,214.00	£837,884.18
July	358	143	215	355	£80,470.15	£122,073.16	13%	£371,305.86	£917,214.00	£795,140.84
August	387	210	177	680	£188,198.48	£257,560.21	28%	£598,786.48	£917,214.00	£659,653.79
September	158	86	72	785	£241,429.37	£306,388.10	33%	£611,101.95	£917,214.00	£610,825.90
Totals	1,489	690	799					Additional	£64,000.00	£64,000.00
									£971,214.00	£674,825.90

DHP Payment Type	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Baby Due	3	5	5	5	9	9
Benefit Cap	1	1	1	1	6	6
Change of Address	1	3	4	4	4	4
Disability	5	8	10	11	16	16
Income Tapers	4	6	7	9	14	15
Legislation change	4	5	7	8	11	17
LHA reforms	22	36	44	46	60	61
NDD	2	2	3	3	4	4
Reduced HB ent	6	14	16	17	21	21
Removal Costs					2	2
Rent deposit	4	10	13	16	21	24
Rent restrictions	33	61	84	126	156	186
Social Size criteria	2	24	87	138	263	303

Local Welfare Assistance

From April 2013, the discretionary Crisis Loans for Living Expenses and Community Care Grant elements of the Social Fund were abolished and replaced in Wirral by our new Local Welfare Assistance Support Scheme (LWA). For 2013/14 Wirral's scheme is supported by a £1,345,925 Government Grant. Wirral's scheme replaces cash payments in favour of suitable alternatives where at all possible e.g. through the provision of pre payment cards for food and fuel and direct provision of white goods. The scheme is to be reviewed to see how implementation has gone and for possible scheme alterations. The number of applications is rising on a week by week basis.

Annex 11 EARMARKED RESERVES - GENERAL FUND £000's

	Balance at 1 April 2013 £000	Movement	Balance at 31 Sep 2013 £000
Schools Balances	11,936	-	11,936
Housing Benefit	10,155	-	10,155
Insurance Fund	7,821	(5)	7,816
Budget Support	4,200	-	4,200
Intranet Development	3,161	-	3,161
Local Pay Review	2,296	-	2,296
Community Fund Asset Transfer	2,146	-	2,146
Efficiency Investment Rolling Fund	2,000	(1,000)	1,000
One Stop Shop/Libraries IT Networks	1,878	-	1,878
Supporting People Programme	1,105	-	1,105
Worklessness	1,085	-	1,085
Severance Pay	1,026	-	1,026
Stay, Work, Learn Wise	908	-	908
Intensive Family Intervention Project	871	-	871
Working Neighbourhood Fund	760	-	760
School Harmonisation	668	-	668
Schools Capital Schemes	581	-	581
Childrens Workforce Development Council	558	-	558
Apprentice Programmes 2 & 3	546	-	546
Home Adaptations	518	-	518
Dedicated Schools Grant Carry Forward	472	-	472
Planned Preventative Maintenance	463	86	549
ERDF Match Funding	444	-	444
Schools Automatic Meter Readers	415	-	415
Schools Contingency	370	-	370
Strategic Asset Review	366	-	366
Child Poverty	350	-	350
Business Improvement Grant	342	-	342
Local Area Agreement Reward	322	-	322
Schools Service IT	294	-	294
Homeless Prevention	271	-	271
Other Reserves	6,448	(496)	6,448
Total Reserves	64,776	(1,415)	63,361

Annex 12 BUDGETARY ISSUES

	Service area	Issue	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Resolution
People							
	Adults overstated income	Income was included at 100% of billed, rather than at the (lower) level of collection. Improved collection would reduce the loss but this should be evidence led.	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	Entered into M1 Monitor. 2013/14 from Directorate. 2014/15+ Bad debt provision will cover
	Legal Fees ex CYP Adults	Foster Care placements - with improved work routines, amenable to reduction. Learning Disabilities additional supported living packages	100 2,700	50 0	0 0	0 0	Funding from M3 increased grants Management actions resolving shortfall including additional NHS support, increased income and budget realignment. Future year impact being assessed
Places							
	RHP	Homeless Grant rolled into Formula Grant, but not taken out of budget. No solution.	221	221	221	221	2013/14 from forecast savings in M3 2014/15+ from grant adjustment
	Willowtree	Shortfall in accommodation budget; resolution depends on service and asset disposal	33	33	33	33	Agreed can be met from permanent budget reduction
	Car Parking	Income shortfall from changing market	350	350	350	350	Compensatory savings identified for 2013/14, potential growth request 2014/15+ if modelling indicates permanent change
Transformation							
	Market Supplements	Using Market supplements when appropriate to ensure the appointment, and retention, of key, statutory employees.	490	450	450	0	Reduced from £1m M1 Monitor based on latest estimates. From pay growth budget M3
	2012/13 T&C's	Non-achievement; count as part of 2014/15 target	300	0	0	0	2013/14 from forecast savings in M3
	2012/13 Trans Bus S	Non-achievement; count as part of 2014/15 target	300	150	0	0	2013/14 from forecast savings in M3
	2013/14 T&Cs	Shortfall in achievement; count as part of 2014/15 target	472	0	0	0	2013/14 from forecast savings in M3
	Facilities Management	Shortfall in achievement on closure of buildings; count as part of 2014/15 target	250	0	0	0	Agreed can be met from permanent budget reduction
	Council Tax Court Costs	Shortfall on 2013/14 savings option (Red Rated)	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	Compensatory savings from T&R in 2013/14, options being evaluated 2014/15 including possible growth request
Totals			8,516	4,554	4,354	3,904	

Solutions			2013/14	2014-15	2015/16	2016/17	
	Agreed redns	Willowtree Facilities Management	-33 -250	-33	-33	-33	Agreed can be met from permanent budget reduction
	In M1 monitor	Adults income – in 2013/14 funded from bad debt provision in later years	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000	2013/14 in year savings and bad debt provision
		Market Supplements funding from central budget for pay growth (page 7) Budget Book	-490	-450	-450	0	funding from central budget for pay growth (page 7) Budget Book
		T&Cs part funding from central budget for pay growth (page 7) Budget Book	-200	0	0	0	
		Foster Care placements	-100	-50	0	0	Funding from increased grants per Directorate M3
		Homeless Grant	-221	-221	-221	-221	2013/14 from increased balances forecast in M3 monitor in M3, 2014/15+ from grant adjustment
		Council Tax Court Costs	-1,300	-1,300	-1,300	-1,300	2013/14 compensatory savings from T&R staffing and treasury Management, growth request/budget adjustment 2014/15 +
		Car Parking	-350	-350	-350	-350	2013/14 compensatory savings within R&E parks & countryside, Environmental Health and Waste. 2014/15+ potential growth/budget adjustment request if modeling indicates permanent change
		Learning Disabilities additional supported living packages	-2,700	0	0	0	Management actions resolving shortfall including additional NHS support, increased income and budget realignment. Future year impact being assessed
		Remaining issues relating to 2013/14	-872	-150	0	0	Funded from increased balances forecast in M3 monitor
Current additional resource required from savings			0	0	0	0	

CABINET

7 NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT	CAPITAL MONITORING 2013/14 MONTH 6 (SEPTEMBER 2013)
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES
KEY DECISION	YES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the capital position for 2013/14 at Period 6 (September 2013) and actions to minimise risk.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet is asked to note:

- a) the spend to date at Month 6 of £11.90 million, with 50.0% of the financial year having elapsed.
- b) the impact of the revised Capital Programme which will realise a one off revenue saving of £0.8 million in 2013/14.

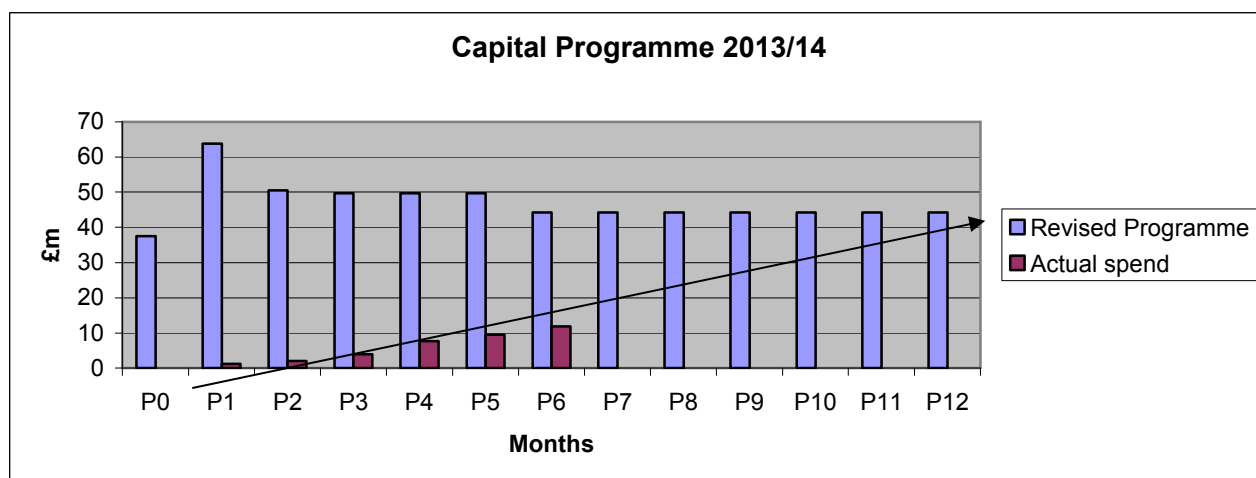
- 2.2 That Cabinet is asked to agree:

- a) the revised Capital Programme of £44,185 million (Table 1 at 4.1);
- b) the re-profiling of a number of schemes into 2014/15, totalling £5.551 million,
- c) the use of additional grants (Sustrans £0.236 million, 3G sports pitches £0.230 million and HLF £0.395 million) to expand the respective programmes referred to in Table 2.

3 OVERALL POSITION AT PERIOD 6 (SEPTEMBER 2013)

- 3.1 The projected capital forecast for the year, at Month 6 shows a potential outturn of no overspend or underspend.

Chart 1: Capital Programme spend below line of best fit



4 ORIGINAL AND PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2013/14

4.1 The capital budget for 2013-14 is subject to change. The Period 6 monitor reflects the programme agreed by this Cabinet on 10 October amended for the re-profiling and additional grants.

Table 1: Capital Programme 2013/14 at Period 6 (September) £000's

	Capital strategy	Changes approved by Cabinet	Reprofiling to be approved	Other changes to be noted or approved	Revised Capital Programme
Invest to save	1,400	-400	0	0	1,000
Bids to release assets	1,053	2,457	0	-1,053	2,457
People – Adults	11,025	-9,125	0	0	1,900
People – CYP	10,286	6,388	-5,155	0	11,519
Places - Regeneration	5,979	5,162	0	0	11,141
Places - Environment	7,196	6,476	-396	723	13,999
Trans & Res -Finance	210	0	0	0	210
Trans & Res - Asset Mgt	315	1,249	0	395	1,959
Total expenditure	37,464	12,207	-5,551	65	44,185

4.2 A summary of the significant variations to be approved or noted by Cabinet for Period 6 is set out in Table 2.

Table 2: Requests to vary the 2013/14 programme £000's

	CHANGES TO BE APPROVED OR NOTED	EXPLANATION (A) POLICY (B) ITEMS PREVIOUSLY DEFERRED (C) ADDITIONAL FUNDING (D) RE-PROFILING (E) REDUCED REQUIREMENT
BIDS THAT RELEASE REDUNDANT COUNCIL ASSETS	-1,053	THE DEMOLITION SCHEMES FOR ROCK FERRY HIGH, STANLEY SPECIAL SCHOOL, BEBINGTON TOWN HALL AND LISCARD MUNICIPAL COULD BE FUNDED FROM THE "LAND ASSEMBLY AND RE-SALE" PROGRAMME AGAINST WHICH THERE ARE PRESENTLY NO COMMITMENTS. THIS WOULD SAVE APPROXIMATELY £0.1MILLION IN BORROWING COSTS IN 2014/15 (A)
TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES – ASSET MGT	395	RECEIPT OF HERITAGE LOTTERY FUNDING TO RESTORE THE MEDIEVAL REMAINS AT THE PRIORY (C)
PEOPLE - CHILDREN'S & YOUNG PEOPLE	-1,550	CONDITION/MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – 3 SCHEMES HAVE BEEN RESCHEDULED TO COMMENCE EASTER 2014 WITH A FURTHER SCHEME DELAYED UNTIL FEBRUARY 2014 (D)
	-1,300	FORMULA CAPITAL – A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF SCHEMES ARE STILL TO BE IDENTIFIED BY THE SCHOOLS (D)
	-150	THE CONTINGENCY SUM WILL NOT BE REQUIRED IN FULL THIS FINANCIAL YEAR BUT WOULD BE PRUDENT TO ROLL FORWARD INTO 2014/15.(D)
	-1,970	WIRRAL YOUTH ZONE – THE SCHEME IS STILL AT THE DISCUSSION STAGE (D)
	-130	FUNDING FOR 2 YEAR OLDS – TO DATE ONLY £0.480 MILLION HAS BEEN ALLOCATED TO PROVIDERS WITH THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE BALANCE WILL BE SPENT IN 2014/15. (D)
PEOPLE – ENVIRONMENT	-139	AIR QUALITY SCHEME – CONSTITUENCY EXPENDITURE TO BE REPHRASED TO 2014/15 AND ADDITIONAL RE-PROFILING ON SPECIFIC SCHEMES REQUIRING DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS (D)
	125	AIR QUALITY – RECEIPT OF SUSTRANS GRANT (ALREADY APPROVED CABINET 10 OCTOBER) (C)
	236	LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

	-200	PROGRAMME - AGREEMENT WITH MERSEYTRAVEL TO UTILISE PART OF THE 2014/15 GRANT. (C)
	230	BRIDGES – AWAITING THE RESULT OF COURT PROCEEDINGS REGARDING THE DELL UNDERPASS (D)
		WEST KIRBY/GUINEA GAP – RECEIPT OF ADDITIONAL GRANT TO CONSTRUCT 3G SPORTS PITCHES (C)
SIGNIFICANT VARIATIONS	-5,506	

- 4.3 There has been no change to the Government’s capitalisation directions. The qualifying criteria to ‘capitalise’ statutory redundancy costs prevent the Council from applying in 2013/14.
- 4.4 The latest position regarding the co-location of Pensby/Stanley schools was reported on 13 June. It highlighted the reason for the anticipated additional cost of £1.038 million and how these costs would be accommodated; £0.833 million grant, £0.120 million council resources and £0.085 million school contribution. Weekly risk management meetings are being held to monitor and mitigate against the effects of any further increases to the project costs.

5 PHASING OF THE PLAN – THE USE OF GATES

- 5.1 Officers have embarked on implementing a system – Concerto - that will tell how all the schemes in the capital programme are progressing. Instead of only having two scheme measures, being ‘start’ and ‘completed’, this will enable looking ‘inside the box’ and see the progress of a scheme. Table 3 examples the Gates for the Capital Receipts programme.

Table 3: example of five Gates for Capital Receipts

Gate	Activity by Quarters
Conceptual Stage	Identification of potential disposal
Approval Stage	Agreement in principal by Asset Review Board
Delivery Stage	Approval to disposal and method of disposal
Finished Stage	Agreement to final terms
Closure Stage	Legal completion and receipt of monies

- 5.2 The benefit of the system is that each scheme will be planned across the year(s), initially in Quarters, and progress can be tracked. Furthermore, all the schemes can be ‘added up’, so we will have a predicted phasing for the whole capital programme, over three years.
- 5.3 Having this information will enable us to intervene where schemes are slipping, navigate around ‘choke points’ where everything is happening at once and plan the funding of the programme so we can manage to finer tolerances. For example, historically, the Council has always carried a high level of capital receipts, to cover risk, rather than using them.

6 ACTUAL SPEND TO DATE – IS THE PROGRAMME ‘ON PLAN’?

- 6.1 Until the Concerto system is fully developed we will continue to use the general measure of progress introduced last year. The actual capital expenditure at Period 6 is £11.9m with 50% of the financial year having elapsed.

Table 4: Spend to date September (6/12 = 50%)

	SPEND TO DATE		COMMENTS ON VARIATION RAG
	£000	%	
INVEST TO SAVE	0	0	GREEN -ACCEPTABLE
BIDS TO RELEASE ASSETS	143	6	GREEN -ACCEPTABLE
PEOPLE - ADULTS	0	0	GREEN -ACCEPTABLE
PEOPLE - CHILDREN'S & YOUNG PEOPLE	4,710	41	GREEN -ACCEPTABLE
PLACES - REGENERATION	1,949	18	GREEN -ACCEPTABLE
PLACES - ENVIRONMENT	4,094	29	GREEN -ACCEPTABLE
TRANS & RES -FINANCE	4	2	GREEN -ACCEPTABLE
TRANS & RES - ASSET MGT	1,000	51	GREEN -ACCEPTABLE
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	11,900	27	

Table 5: Projected Outturn compared to Revised Budget £000's

	REVISED	PROJECTED	VARIATION
	BUDGET	OUTTURN	
INVEST TO SAVE	1,000	1,000	0
BIDS TO RELEASE ASSETS	2,457	2,457	0
PEOPLE - ADULTS	1,900	1,900	0
PEOPLE - CHILDREN'S & YOUNG PEOPLE	11,519	11,519	0
PLACES - REGENERATION	11,141	11,141	0
PLACES - ENVIRONMENT	13,999	13,999	0
TRANS & RES -FINANCE	210	210	0
TRANS & RES - ASST MGT	1,959	1,959	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	44,185	44,185	0

7 SCHEMES THAT ARE NOT KEEPING TO PLAN.

7.1 The purpose of this section is to highlight schemes that are not keeping to plan and the range of responses that are needed. At this point in the cycle there are no such schemes.

8 FINANCING OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

8.1 Table 6 summarises the financing sources and changes made to Period 6. The major changes proposed, since the capital programme was approved in March 2013 are:

- the use of unsupported borrowing to finance slippage and new schemes;
- the use of grant funding not required in 2012/13 which will fund the associated slippage in expenditure; and
- to deploy spare capital receipts.

Table 6: Revised Capital Programme Financing 2013/14 £000's

CAPITAL PROGRAMME FINANCING	CAPITAL STRATEGY	CHANGES APPROVED BY CABINET	BUDGET CHANGES TO BE APPROVED BY CABINET	REVISED 2013/14 PROGRAMME
UNSUPPORTED BORROWING	7,920	8,778	-2,309	14,389
CAPITAL RECEIPTS	3,121	3,844	-1,433	5,532
REVENUE AND RESERVES	888	881	-138	1,631
GRANT – EDUCATION	8,786	4,341	-2,573	10,554
GRANT – INTEGRATED TRANSPORT	1,136	5	-84	1,057
GRANT – LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT	695	395	236	1,326
GRANT – LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN	2,864	522	0	3,386
GRANTS – OTHER	12,054	-6,559	815	6,310
TOTAL FINANCING	37,464	12,207	-5,486	44,185

9 PROJECTED LONGER TERM CAPITAL PROGRAMME

9.1 Funding for the forecast 2013/14 to 2015/16 capital programme is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Capital Programme Financing 2013/14 to 2015/16 £000's

CAPITAL PROGRAMME FINANCING	2013/14 REVISED ESTIMATE	2014/15 REVISED ESTIMATE	2015/16 ORIGINAL ESTIMATE	TOTAL PROGRAMME
UNSUPPORTED BORROWING	14,389	6,691	1,300	22,380
CAPITAL RECEIPTS	5,532	4,271	1,000	10,803
RESERVE RESERVES	1,631	290	0	1,921
GRANT – EDUCATION	10,554	8,386	357	19,297
GRANT – INTEGRATED TRANSPORT	1,057	1,294	0	2,351
GRANT – LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT	1,326	676	0	2,002
GRANT – LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN	3,386	3,235	0	6,621
GRANTS – OTHER	6,310	11,092	0	17,402
TOTAL FINANCING	44,185	35,935	2,657	82,777

10 SUPPORTED AND UNSUPPORTED BORROWING AND THE REVENUE CONSEQUENCES OF UNSUPPORTED BORROWING

10.1 The cost of £1 million of Prudential Borrowing would result in additional revenue financing costs of £100,000 per annum in the following year. As part of the Capital Strategy 2013-14 to 2015/16 the Council has included an element of prudential borrowing. At Period 6 there is a sum of £22.4 million of new unsupported borrowing included over the next three years, which will result in approximately £2.2 million of additional revenue costs detailed at Table 8, if there is no change in strategy.

Table 8: Unsupported Borrowing Forecasts & Revenue costs £000's

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	TOTAL
NEW UNSUPPORTED BORROWING CUMULATIVE	14,389	6,691 21,080	1,300 22,380	-	22,380
CUMULATIVE ANNUAL REVENUE REPAYMENT COSTS		1,439	2,108	2,238	

However, the Unsupported Borrowing has to be divided into that for which there is planned support – a spend to save scheme – and the truly unsupported schemes.

Table 9: Analysis of Unsupported Borrowing

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	TOTAL
SPEND TO SAVE	5,057	820	300	6,177
OTHER BORROWING	9,332	5,871	1,000	16,203

11 CAPITAL RECEIPTS POSITION

11.1 The Council has worked with the Local Government Association (LGA) to review the Council's Assets – a report was presented to Chief Officers on May 7. A stand out comment was that the Council could realise £20 million from asset disposals by 2015, some of which has already been accounted for in Table 10 below. Work is being undertaken to identify which of the receipts in the table below are included in this assessment and a report is included elsewhere on this agenda.

11.2 The capital programme is reliant on the Council generating capital receipts to finance the future capital programme schemes. The Capital Receipts Reserve at 1 April 2013 contained £8.1 million of receipts. The table assumes the proposed spend, set out at 4.1 is agreed.

Table 10: Projected capital receipts position – funding requirement £000's

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
CAPITAL RECEIPTS RESERVE	8,100	4,068	7,247
IN - RECEIPTS ASSUMPTION	1,500	7,450	N/A
OUT - FUNDING ASSUMPTION	-5,532	-4,271	-1,000
CLOSING BALANCE	4,068	7,247	6,247

11.3 At the end of September the Council had received £1.035 million usable capital receipts which are detailed in Annex 4.

11.4 Details of the schemes to be funded by capital receipts in 2013/14 can be found in Annex 2.

12 RELEVANT RISKS

- 12.1 The possible failure to deliver the Capital Programme will be mitigated by the fortnightly review by a senior group of officers, charged with improving performance.
- 12.2 The generation of capital receipts could well be influenced by factors outside the authority's control e.g. ecological issues.
- 12.3 Capacity shortfalls are being addressed through the development of closer working with the LGA and Local Partnerships.

13 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 13.1 No other options have been considered.

14 CONSULTATION

- 14.1 No consultation has been carried out in relation to this report.

15 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 15.1 As yet, there are no implications for voluntary, community or faith groups.

16 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 16.1 The whole report is about significant resource implications. A Treasury Management report included elsewhere on the agenda provides details of an estimated underspend of £0.8 million in respect of borrowing.

17 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 17.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

18 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 18.1 An Equality impact assessment is not attached as there are none.

19 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 19.1 There are no carbon reduction implications arising directly from this monitoring report.

20 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 20.1 There are no planning and community safety implications arising directly from this monitoring report.

21 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

21.1 Regular monitoring and reporting of the capital programme will enable decisions to be taken faster which may produce revenue benefits and will improve financial control of the programme.

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SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Capital monitoring reports, from September 2012, are being submitted monthly. Capital programme submitted to Council	5 March 2013

ANNEXES

- Annex 1 Capital monitoring and reporting timetable 2013/14
- Annex 2 Revised Capital programme and funding source
- Annex 3 Deferred unsupported capital schemes
- Annex 4 Capital Receipts

Annex 1 CAPITAL MONITORING AND REPORTING TIMETABLE 2013/14

Period Number	Month	General Ledger Updated and Reports Available To Be Produced	Reports Available For The Executive Strategy Group	Reports Available For Cabinet
			Monthly	Monthly
1	April	May 8	May 28	June 13
2	May	Jun 7	June 18	July 11
3	June	Jul 5	Aug 20	Sept 5
4	July	Aug 7	Sept 24	Oct 10
5	August	Sept 6	Sept 24	Oct 10
6	September	Oct 7	Oct 22	Nov 7
7	October	Nov 7	Dec 2	Dec 18
8	November	Dec 6	Jan 19	Feb 4
9	December	Jan 8	Feb 1	Feb 17
10	January	Feb 7	Feb 25	Mar 13
11	February	Mar 7	TBC	TBC
12	Outturn (Provisional)	TBC	TBC	TBC

ANNEX 2 PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FUNDING CABINET 11 OCTOBER 2013

Department	Programme manage	Capital Strategy	Changes approved	Re-profiling to be approved	Other changes to be approved	Total Programme	Borrowing	Receipts	Revenue / Reserves	Education Grants	Integrated Transport	Local Sustainable Transport	Local Transport	Other Grant	Total Funding
Invest to save or core efficiency															
Replace Integrated Childrens System	Mark Ellis	1,000	-400			600	600								600
Energy schemes	Hazel Edwards	400				400	400								400
Invest to save or core efficiency Total		1,400	-400		-	1,000	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,000
Bids that release redundant council assets															
Demolish Stanley Special	Mike Woosey	275				275	275								275
Demolish Bebington Town Hall and Liscard Municipal	Neil Corser	378				378	378								378
Demolish ex Rock Ferry High	Mike Woosey	400				400	400								400
Strategic Asset Review	Jeff Sherlock		457			457	457								457
Land assembly and re-sale			2,000		-1,053	947		947							947
Bids that release redundant council assets Total		1,053	2,457	-	-1,053	2,457	1,510	947	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,457
Transformation & Resources Finance															
West Kirby and Conway OSSs	Mal Flanagan	210				210			210						210
Transformation & Resources Finance Total		210	-	-	-	210	-	-	210	-	-	-	-	-	210
Transformation & Resources Asset Management															
The Priory	Gwenda Murray		25		395	420	25							395	420
Rock Ferry Centre	Gwenda Murray	315	141			456			456						456
Arrove Park Changing Pavilion	Jeff Sherlock		100			100	100								100
West Kirby Concourse Roof	Jeff Sherlock		159			159	159								159
Wallasey Town Hall	Gwenda Murray		810			810	810								810
Liscard Hall	Jackie Smallwood		14			14			14						14
Transformation & Resources Asset Management Total		315	1,249	-	395	1,959	1,094	-	470	-	-	-	-	395	1,959
People - Children & Young People															
Children's centres	Jeanette Royle		25			25				25					25
Aiming Higher for Disabled Children	Dawn Tolcher	240	150			390				390					390
Condition/Modernisation	Jeanette Royle	4,500	1,047	-1,550		3,997			21	3,976					3,997
Family Support Scheme	Simon Garner		115	-55		60	60								60
Formula Capital Grant	Mike Woosey	2,000	535	-1,300		1,235			42	1,193					1,235
Schools- Access Initiative	Jeanette Royle		165			165				165					165

Park depot rationalisation	Mary Bagley	500			500		500								500
Landican Cemetery	Mary Bagley	-	82		82		82								82
Birkenhead Park Restoration	Mary Bagley	-	97		97		97								97
Hoylake Golf Course	Mary Bagley Jackie	-	30		30		30								30
Park Outdoor Gyms	Smallwood Jackie	-	167		167								167		167
Reeds Lane Play Area	Smallwood	-	61		61								61		61
Eastham Country Park	Christine Smyth	-	36		36								36		36
Royden Park	Christine Smyth	-	20		20								20		20
Floral Pavilion Stage & Orchestra Pit	Kate Carpenter	-	37		37		37								37
Cemetery Improvements	Mary Bagley		80	-80	0										0
Birkenhead Tennis Courts	Mary Bagley		90	-90	0										0
West Kirby/Guinea Gap			1,000	230	1,230		1,000						230		1,230
Leisure Equipment	Damien Walsh	63	-14		49					49					49
Places - Environment Total		7,196	6,476	-396	723	13,999	5,174	2,207	61	-	1,057	1,326	3,386	788	13,999
Places – Regeneration															
Think Big Investment Fund	Alan Evans		434		434		434								434
Clearance	Alan Lipscombe		2,199		2,199		830	560	47				762		2,199
Home Improvement	Alan Lipscombe		1,122		1,122		573	390	159						1,122
Disabled Facilities – Adaptations	Greg Cooper	2,929	604		3,533		1,904						1,629		3,533
Improvement for sale grants	Lisa Newman		380		380					380					380
Cosy Homes Heating	Ed Kingsley	250	119		369		119	250							369
Empty Property Interventions	Paul Jackson		334		334		121	125	60				28		334
New Brighton	David Ball		1,162		1,162		1,162								1,162
Maritime Business Park	Alan Evans	2,800	-1,625		1,175		400						775		1,175
Other Regional Growth Fund Schemes	Alan Evans		433		433								433		433
Places - Regeneration Total		5,979	5,162		11,141-	5,543	1,325	646	-	-	-	-	3,627		11,141
Grand Total		37,464	12,207	-5,551	65	44,185	15,442	4,479	1,631	10,554	1,057	1,326	3,386	6,310	44,185

Annex 3

Deferred Unsupported

Summary	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000	2015/16 £000	Totals £000
Invest to save or core efficiency	0	0	0	0
Bids that release redundant council assets	0	0	0	0
DASS	0	0	0	0
Finance	0	0	0	0
CYP	680	700	0	1,380
Law, HR & Asset Management	1,025	1,500	1,500	4,025
Regeneration	2,080	1,250	0	3,330
Technical Services	2,405	2,119	0	4,524
Total	6,190	5,569	1,500	13,259
Detail				
Invest to save or core efficiency	0	0	0	0
Bids that release redundant council assets	0	0	0	0
DASS	0	0	0	0
Finance	0	0	0	0
CYP				
Schools Development Programme				
Woodchurch Rd primary Foundn 2 classrooms	80	700	0	780
Woodslee Primary school ***	600	0	0	600
	680	700	0	1,380
Law, HR & Asset Management				
Cultural Services Assets ***	1,000	1,500	1500	4,000
The Priory	25	0	0	25
	1,025	1,500	1500	4,025
Regeneration				
Think Big Investment Fund	300	300	0	600
Improvements to Stock ***	950	950	0	1,900
Wirral Healthy Homes	105	0	0	105
Empty Property Interventions ***	125	0	0	125
Hoylake	600	0	0	600
	2,080	1,250	0	3,330
Technical Services				
Street Lighting	200	0	0	200
Bridges	250	0	0	250
Capitalised Highways Maintenance	1,000	1,000	0	2,000
Coast Protection	47	55	0	102
Parks, Cultural Services and Roads				
Arrowe Park changing facilities	500	800	0	1,300
Birkenhead tennis court	90	7	0	97
Cemetery infrastructure and landscaping	50	50	0	100
Birkenhead Park drainage	238	57	0	295
Frankby cemetery extension	30	150	0	180
	2,405	2,119	0	4,524
Less schemes now approved	(2,675)	(207)		(2,882)
Funding type:				
Unsupported Borrowing	3,515	5,362	1,500	10,377

*** Represents schemes now included in the Capital Programme.

Annex 4

CAPITAL RECEIPTS AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

	£000
6, The Grove, Wallasey	11
Land at the Carrs	12
Bridge Walks	15
Stringhey Road Car Park	19
Print Unit Equipment	30
Junction 1 Bidston Retail Park	32
Turntable Building	58
Bromborough Social Centre	75
Thurstaston Rangers Cottage	<u>310</u>
	562
Right to buy proceeds (Magenta Living & BBCHA)	473
Total usable receipts	1,035

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7 NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT	TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2013/14
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER	COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES
KEY DECISION	YES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents a review of Treasury Management policies, practices and activities during the first half of 2013/14.
- 1.2 It confirms compliance with treasury limits and prudential indicators being prepared in accordance with the revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the revised Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
- 1.3 It is estimated that there will be an underspend of £0.75 million from all Treasury Management activities in 2013/14.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Treasury Management Performance Monitoring Report be accepted in meeting the Council's obligations under the Treasury Management Code.
- 2.2 Members note the estimated underspend of £0.75 million in 2013/14 which has been incorporated into the Council Financial Monitoring report.

3 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Cabinet approves the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy at the start of each financial year. This identifies proposals to finance capital expenditure, borrow and invest in the light of capital spending requirements, the interest rate forecasts and the expected economic conditions. At the end of each financial year Cabinet receives an Annual Report which details performance against the Strategy. In accordance with the revised Treasury Management Code this Treasury Management mid-year review report is presented to Cabinet.

CURRENT ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

- 3.2 The UK economy showed some improvement, with consumer spending boosting growth. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the first quarter of 2013 was revised up to +0.4% and for the second quarter was +0.7%. Recent data

suggests a stronger rate in quarter three. Revisions by the Office of National Statistics to GDP back-data showed the UK avoided a double-dip recession in 2012, but that the downturn in 2008/09 was deeper than previously estimated. Growth is now still over 3% below its peak back in 2007. Some positive signs for household spending emerged. The deterioration in real earnings growth (i.e. earnings less inflation) slowed, which implied a slower erosion of purchasing power. Consumer confidence improved.

- 3.3 The annual Consumer Price Index for August (published September) was 2.7%. Inflation fell in line with expectations and is expected to remain close to this level throughout the autumn. Further out, inflation should fall back towards the 2% target as external price pressures fade and a revival in productivity growth curbs domestic cost pressures.
- 3.4 The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee have continued to hold the Quantitative Easing (QE) scheme at a total of £375 billion, whilst also maintaining the Bank Rate at 0.5%. There was no change to UK monetary policy with official interest rates and asset purchases maintained at 0.5% and £375 billion respectively. The main development for UK monetary policy was the start of Mark Carney's tenure as Governor and the implementation of forward guidance. Within the August Inflation Report, the Bank stated its forward guidance, the main element of which is to defer monetary tightening at least until the Unemployment Rate falls to a threshold of 7% (among a raft of caveats). The Bank projected that the probability of this happening would remain below 50% until 2016.
- 3.5 Whilst the outlook for the global economy appeared to have improved over the first half of 2013/14, significant economic risks remain, particularly in China and the Eurozone. The Chinese banking system is facing tighter liquidity conditions as officials seek to slow down rampant credit growth, and, despite the time gained by the European Central Bank to allow individual members and the Eurozone as a whole to reform their economies, the Eurozone debt crisis has not gone away. The region appears to be dragging itself out of recession and September's German general election passed with little incident but political uncertainties, particularly in Italy, could derail any progress towards a more balanced and stable regional economy. The US recovery appeared to be in train, but a lack of agreement on the federal budget by the end of September caused a partial government shutdown at the start of October, which could have an effect on GDP growth. Political risks also remain regarding the debt ceiling.

THE COUNCIL TREASURY POSITION

- 3.6 The table shows how the position has changed since 31 March 2013.

Table 1 : Summary of Treasury Position

	Balance 31 Mar 13 (£m)	Maturities (£m)	Additions (£m)	Balance 30 Sep 13 (£m)
Investments	71	(267)	267	71
Borrowings	(247)	24	0	(223)
Other Long-Term Liabilities	(56)	0	0	(56)
Net Debt	(232)	(243)	267	(208)

INVESTMENTS

- 3.7 The Treasury Management Team can invest money for periods varying from 1 day to 10 years, in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy, to earn interest until the money is required by the Council. These investments arise from a number of sources including General Fund Balances, Reserves and Provisions, grants received in advance of expenditure, money borrowed in advance of capital expenditure, Schools' Balances and daily cashflow/ working capital.
- 3.8 At 30 September 2013 the Council held investments of £71 million.

Table 2 : Investment Profile

Investments with:	31 Mar 13 £m	30 Jun 13 £m	30 Sep 13 £m
UK Banks	25	46	35
UK Building Societies	2	2	2
Money Market Funds	0	21	0
Other Local Authorities	36	24	26
Gilts and Bonds	8	8	8
TOTAL	71	101	71

- 3.9 The table below shows approximately where the investments came from.

Table 3 : Investment Sources

Usable Reserves	31 Mar 13 £m	30 Jun 13 £m	30 Sep 13 £m
General Fund	27	27	27
Earmarked Reserves	65	65	65
Capital Receipts Reserve	8	8	9
Capital Grants Unapplied	21	24	27
	121	124	128
Internal Borrowing in lieu of External Borrowing	(50)	(23)	(57)
Reserves Invested	71	101	71

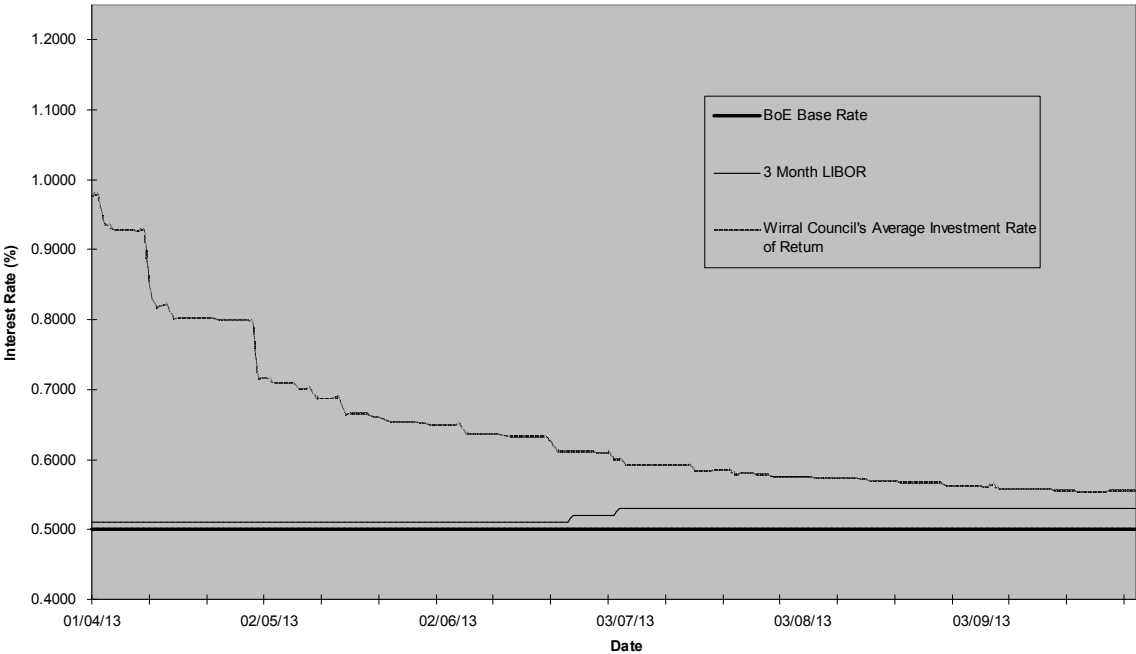
3.10 Of the investments, £30 million is invested in instant access funds, £33 million is invested for up to 1 year and £8 million is invested for longer than 1 year.

3.11 The rate at which the Council can invest money continues to be low, in line with the record low Bank of England base rate of 0.5%. The Council seeks to invest in more secure investments and this security brings a reduced investment return. This includes investing with other local authorities being ‘low risk yet allows for considerable returns’ when Wirral’s approach was recognised in Public Finance magazine in October 2013. This approach is in line with the Authority’s Treasury Management & Investment Strategy:

In accordance with Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) and best practice Wirral’s primary objective in relation to the investment of public funds remains the security of capital. The liquidity or accessibility of the Authority’s investments followed by the yields earned on investments are important but are secondary considerations.

3.12 The average rate of return on investments as at 30 September 2013 was 0.65% (at 31 March it was 0.79%). The graph shows how the Treasury Management Team rate of return compares favourably against the Bank of England base rate and the 3 month LIBOR (the inter bank lending rate).

Graph 1 : Investment Rate of Return in 2013/14



3.13 The Council maintains a restrictive policy on new investments by only investing in UK institutions A- rated or above and continues to invest in AAA rated money market funds, gilts and bonds. Counterparty credit quality is also assessed and monitored with reference to, credit default swaps; GDP of the country in which the institution operates; the country’s net debt as a percentage

of GDP; sovereign support mechanisms /potential support from a well-resourced parent institution; share price.

- 3.14 In April 2013 Fitch downgraded the UK's long-term sovereign rating by one notch from AAA to AA+, the second of the rating agencies to do so (Moody's had downgraded the UK's ratings in February to Aa1). In May Moody's downgraded the long-term rating of Co-op Bank by six notches from A3 to Ba3 which is sub-investment grade. The downgrade reflected the agency's opinion that the bank faced the risk of further substantial losses. In June the Co-op announced it had a £1.5 billion regulatory capital shortfall. Moody's downgraded the bank's long-term rating a further four notches to Caa1 whilst Fitch downgraded the long-term from BBB- to BB-.
- 3.15 The credit rating of the approved counterparties and the duration of which an investment may be made are under constant review. Moody's placed on review for downgrade Royal Bank of Scotland plc's and National Westminster Bank plc's long-term and standalone bank financial strength ratings. New investments with Royal Bank of Scotland plc and NatWest Bank plc are consequently restricted to a maximum period of **overnight**. Santander, Lloyds TSB and Bank of Scotland have a limit of 6 months. Barclays, Nationwide, HSBC and Standard Chartered are limited to 12 months. Where the Council had previously entered into a fixed term deposit with these institutions the investment will be allowed to mature as originally planned.
- 3.16 The Council's main bank account has now been transferred to Lloyds. Although, the Council's old current account with NatWest continues to operate to ensure a smooth transition. Both counterparties have an appropriate credit rating and will therefore continue to be used for shorter term liquidity requirements and business continuity arrangements.
- 3.17 The Treasury Management Team will continue to monitor the developing financial situation and make appropriate operational adjustments, within the approved Treasury Management Strategy, to maintain the security of public money and manage the associated risks while also maximising returns within these constraints.
- 3.18 The 2013/14 investment income budget has been set at £0.86 million, reflecting the low interest rates that are anticipated to continue throughout the financial year. At present income is set to achieve a figure of £0.61 million. The shortfall of £0.25 million is referred to in the Month 6 Revenue Monitoring Report.

Icelandic Investment

- 3.19 The Authority has £2 million deposited with Heritable Bank, a UK registered Bank, at an interest rate of 6.22% which was due to mature on 28 November 2008. The Company was placed in administration on 7 October 2008. Members have received regular updates regarding the circumstances and the latest situation. In March 2009 an Audit Commission report confirmed that the

Council acted, and continued to act, prudently and properly in its investment activities.

- 3.20 To date, £1,980,321 has been received with further payments due from the administrators, Ernst & Young. The amounts and timings of future payments are estimates as favourable changes in market conditions could lead to higher than estimated repayments.

Table 4 ; Heritable Bank Repayments

	£
Initial Investment	2,000,000
Actual Repayments Received	
As at 30 Sep 13	1,980,321
Remaining Principal	19,679

- 3.21 If Heritable Bank is unable to repay in full, a pre-emptive claim against Landsbanki Islands HF has been made for the difference. When the original investment was made it was with Landsbanki Islands HF providing a guarantee to reimburse the Council should Heritable be unable to repay. It should be noted that Landsbanki Islands HF is also in Administration.

BORROWING AND OTHER LONG TERM LIABILITIES

- 3.22 The Council undertakes borrowing to fund capital expenditure. However the use of internal resources in lieu of borrowing, in the main, continues to be the most cost effective means of funding capital expenditure. This lowers overall treasury risk by reducing both external debt and temporary investments. However, it is acknowledged that this position is not sustainable over the medium term and the Council expects to borrow for capital purposes. Therefore the borrowing options and the timing of such borrowing will continue to be assessed in conjunction with the Council's treasury advisor.
- 3.23 The Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) remains the Council's preferred source of borrowing given the transparency and control that its facilities continue to provide.
- 3.24 Other Long-Term Liabilities include the schools Private Finance Initiative (PFI) scheme and finance leases used to purchase vehicles plant and equipment. Under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) these are shown on the Balance Sheet as a Financial Liability and therefore need to be considered within any Treasury Management decision making process.
- 3.25 The Council has not entered into any new lease agreements during the first half of 2013/14.
- 3.26 The table shows Council debt at 30 September 2013.

Table 5 : Council Debt at 30 September 2013

Debt	Balance 31 Mar 13 (£m)	Maturities (£m)	Additions (£m)	Balance 30 Sep 13 (£m)
<u>Borrowings</u>				
PWLB	(76)	11	0	(65)
Market Loans	(171)	13	0	(158)
<u>Other Long Term Liabilities</u>	(56)	0	0	(56)

- 3.27 Given the latest projections and re-profiling in respect of the capital programme and the continuing use of internal funding in lieu of external borrowing, it is anticipated that in 2013/14 there will be a 'one-off' underspend of £1.0 million in respect of capital financing. £0.2 million relates to Minimum Revenue Provision saving in 2012/13, which has already been reported to this committee, therefore an additional £0.8 million is in respect of additional savings relating to 2013/14.

MONITORING OF THE PRUDENTIAL CODE INDICATORS

- 3.28 The introduction of the Prudential Code in 2004 gave Local Authorities greater freedom in making capital strategy decisions. The prudential indicators allow the Council to establish prudence and affordability within the Capital Strategy. The following indicators demonstrate that the treasury management decisions are in line with the Strategy, being prudent and affordable.

Net Debt and Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) Indicator

- 3.29 The CFR measures the underlying need to borrow money to finance capital expenditure. The Prudential Code stipulates that net debt (debt net of investments) should not, except in the short term, exceed the CFR for the previous year plus the estimated additional CFR requirement for the current and next two financial years.

Table 6 : Net Debt compared with CFR

	£m
CFR in previous year (2012/13 actual)	367
Increase in CFR in 2013/14 (estimate)	0
Increase in CFR in 2014/15 (estimate)	0
Increase in CFR in 2015/16 (estimate)	0
Accumulative CFR	367
Net Debt as at 31 Sep 2013	208

- 3.30 Net Debt does not exceed the CFR and it is not expected to in the future. This is a key indicator of prudence.

Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary Indicators

- 3.31 The Authorised Limit is the amount determined as the level of debt which, while not desired, could be afforded but may not be sustainable. It is not treated as an upper limit for debt for capital purposes alone since it also encompasses temporary borrowing. An unanticipated revision to this limit is considered to be an exceptional event and would require a review of all the other affordability indicators.
- 3.32 The Operational Boundary is the amount determined as the expectation of the maximum external debt according to probable events projected by the estimates and makes no allowance for any headroom. It is designed to alert the Council to any imminent breach of the Authorised Limit.

Table 7 : Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary Indicator

	Apr 13 (£m)	Jun 13 (£m)	Sep 13 (£m)
AUTHORISED LIMIT	440	440	440
OPERATIONAL BOUNDARY	425	425	425
Council Borrowings	247	228	223
Other Long Term Liabilities	56	56	56
TOTAL	303	284	279

- 3.33 The table shows that neither the Authorised Limit nor the Operational Boundary was breached between April 2013 and September 2013. This is a key indicator of affordability.

Interest Rate Exposure Indicator

- 3.34 The Prudential Code also requires Local Authorities to set limits for the exposure to the effects of interest rate changes. Limits are set for the amount of borrowing/ investments which are subject to variable rates of interest and the amount which is subject to fixed rates of interest.

Table 8 ; Interest Rate Exposure

	Fixed Rate of Interest (£m)	Variable Rate of Interest (£m)	TOTAL
Borrowings	(223)	0	(223)
Proportion of Borrowings	100%	0%	100%
Upper Limit	100%	0%	
Investments	8	63	71
Proportion of Investments	11%	89%	100%
Upper Limit	100%	100%	
Net Borrowing	(215)	63	(152)
Proportion of Total Net Borrowing	141%	-41%	100%

- 3.35 The table shows that borrowing is at fixed rates of interest and investments are split between fixed and variable rates of interest. This was considered to be a good position while interest rates were rising as the cost of existing borrowing remained stable and the investments, at variable rates of interest, generated increasing levels of income.
- 3.36 As the environment is one of low interest rates, the Treasury Management Team is working to adjust this position which is restricted by:-
 - the level of uncertainty in the markets makes investing for long periods at fixed rates of interest more risky and, therefore, the Council continues to only invest short term at variable rates of interest;
 - Many of the Council loans have expensive penalties for early repayment or rescheduling which makes changing the debt position a costly exercise.

Maturity Structure of Borrowing Indicator

- 3.37 The maturity structure of the borrowing has also been set to achieve maximum flexibility with the Authority being able to undertake all borrowing with a short maturity date or a long maturity date.

Table 9 : Maturity Structure of Borrowing

Borrowings Maturity	As at 30 Sep 13 (£m)	As at 30 Sep 13 (%)	2013/14 Lower Limit (%)	2013/14 Upper Limit (%)
Less than 1 year	18	8	0	80
Over 1 year under 2 years	5	2	0	50
Over 2 years under 5 years	26	12	0	50
Over 5 years under 10 years	24	11	0	50
Over 10 years	150	67	0	100
Total Borrowing	223	100		

Total Principal Sums Invested for Periods Longer than 364 Days

- 3.38 This indicator allows the Council to manage the risk inherent in investments longer than 364 days. The limit for 2013/14 was set at £30 million. Currently the Council has £8 million of investments which are for a period greater than 364 days during this period.

4 RELEVANT RISKS

- 4.1 All relevant risks have been discussed within Section 3 of this report.

5 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 There are no other options considered in this performance monitoring report.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There has been no consultation undertaken or proposed for this performance monitoring report. There are no implications for partner organisations arising out of this report.

7 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 7.1 There are none arising directly out of this report.

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

- 8.1 As reported in Section 3.18 the 2013/14 investment income budget has been set at £0.86 million and, at present, income is set to achieve a figure of £0.61 million representing a shortfall of £0.25 million.
- 8.2 As reported in section 3.27 the latest projections in respect of the capital programme and the continuing use of internal funding in lieu of external borrowing project that in 2013/14 there will be a 'one-off' underspend of £1 million in respect of capital financing.
- 8.3 A net saving of £0.75 million is projected. Of this sum £0.2 million relates to 2012/13 and has already been included in previous Council Financial Monitoring reports. The additional £0.55 million is reported in the Month 6 monitoring as a 'one off' saving for 2013/14.
- 8.4 There are no IT, staffing or asset implications arising directly out of this report.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 This report confirms compliance with treasury limits and prudential indicators. It has been prepared in accordance with the revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the revised Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
- 9.2 Treasury Management in Local Government is governed by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services and in this context is the "management of the Council's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks".

10 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 This a monitoring report on Treasury Management and as there are no equalities implications an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required.

11 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising directly out of this report.

12 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are none arising directly out of this report.

13 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

13.1 The Treasury Management Code requires public sector authorities to determine an annual Treasury Management Strategy and, as a minimum, to formally report on their treasury management policies, practices and activities to Council mid-year and after the year-end. These reports enable those tasked with implementing policies and undertaking transactions to demonstrate that they have properly fulfilled their responsibilities and enable those with responsibility/governance of the Treasury Management function to scrutinise and assess its effectiveness and compliance with policies and objectives.

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REFERENCE MATERIAL

Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services CIPFA 2011.
Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities CIPFA 2011.

APPENDIX

Through a lens, safely – article in Public Finance October 2013

SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet - Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2013/16	18 February 2013
Cabinet - Treasury Management Annual Report 2012/13	10 October 2013

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 Andrew Jepp

Through a lens, safely

Financial innovation offers councils some creative solutions – but it is essential to view these through a long-term lens to ensure stability

WITH MUCH RECENT publicity over households increasingly looking to payday lenders during difficult economic times, councils appear to be developing innovative finance solutions of their own. With less central government funding, authorities are diversifying their financial base and exploring new approaches to raising capital. But as I have previously noted, innovation comes with risks – so it is important for councils to view decisions through a long-term lens.

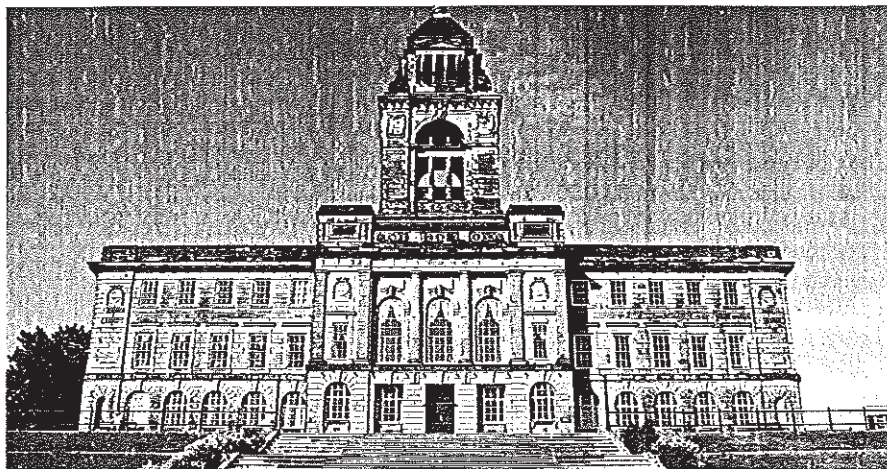
Wirral Borough Council, for example, currently loans out more than £30m of residents' taxes to other authorities in a series of low-interest loans. Interest rates typically lie at the 1% mark, which reflects the low-risk investment for the council, yet still allows for considerable returns.

Unsurprisingly, there is no shortage of demand for the service. The minimal interest rates offer considerable value for money in comparison to borrowing from other sources, and local authorities are keen to capitalise on the favourable conditions.

Municipal bonds also offer scope for financial innovation. While there is no collective municipal bonds agency in the UK, there are increasing calls to create an independent body to raise bonds for local authorities from the commercial market to reduce reliance on central funding.

But the borrowing market is just one tool local authorities are considering in view of declining budgets. Lord Heseltine's review argued for a rebalancing of responsibilities for economic development between central and local government, and offers good opportunities for increased innovation among authorities, which will allow for additional funding flexibility.

For instance, local enterprise partnerships empower local authorities through collaborative working. The European Structural and Investment Fund for England (2014–2020) will soon be available, and will enable councils to work with LEPs to win a share of the £5bn resource to invest into communities.



The long view: Wirral Borough Council's low-risk approach involves loaning out residents' taxes at 1% interest

The latest round of central government initiatives has created another lever of financial control. The partial localisation of business rates was introduced in April 2013 to motivate councils to promote local business growth. Not only will authorities be better able to respond to the needs of the local economy, but they will also keep a share of increased business rate income.

But while such proposals represent financial opportunities for local authorities, they are not a one-size-fits-all model, and can be costly if not fully aligned to individual communities' appetite for risk. Innovation inevitably brings new risks, and the key for financial stability in the long term is retaining buffers of resilience now. For example, councils can profit from greater control over business rates, but they will also find themselves at greater exposure should incomes fall.

Local authorities that do not experience economic growth might see a reduction in their business rates and a rise in council tax benefit claimants, compounding an already adverse financial situation. The dilemma for local government therefore is to manage both short- and long-term financial risks, and to balance their interdependencies. On the one hand, they must immediately maintain a resilient financial

position, and on the other, they must mitigate costly future social issues.

Risk-weighted reserving for liabilities and uncertainties is absolutely critical to sustainable financial management. Robust scenario planning is important to understanding 'financial risks' if authorities are to be prepared for a range of incidents – from natural events like fire or floods to continued delivery of children's day care.

Embracing new financial opportunities while remaining mindful of the economic resilience and risk appetite of the community is difficult. However, local authorities have demonstrated clear proficiency of their management capabilities in the past few years, and appear well placed to realise the benefits from financial innovation.

As councils respond to the pressure to deliver public services for far less, they must think creatively to maximise resources. Coupled with planning, future-proofing and risk management, financial innovation offers the opportunity not only to gain a healthier balance sheet, but also to deliver local services with a maximum impact for residents.

Andrew Jepp is director of public sector at Zurich Municipal

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LGA Wirral Improvement Board

Key Messages

The agenda for this meeting focussed on three key reports that updated Members of the Board on the progress that has been made by the Council to date and the work that will be undertaken in the future to ensure continued improvements.

The Board requested that a report be brought to the next meeting that would provide a public overview of both progress and the Council's future direction. The Board highlighted the importance of engaging with all members while developing the vision and future shape of the Council and the importance of ensuring, despite significant financial challenges, that the Council is equipped to deliver future priorities.

Effective Planning and Delivery of the Efficiencies

Joe Blott, Strategic Director for Transformation and Resources, updated the Board on the current planning for, and delivery of efficiencies over the next three years that will deliver budget stability for the Council.

This included updates regarding shared services, the key transformation projects, budget implementation and management of the overall programme. He emphasised the Council's new focus on the three year financial strategy.

The Board stressed the importance of ensuring capacity for the future and also clearly articulating the future model for the Council. The Board sought clarification regarding budget items which was provided by the Strategic Director. Further information will be provided to the Board regarding the principles upon which the Budget is being managed.

Demonstrating Corporate Health

Joe Blott then presented a report regarding the approach being taken to improving the Council's Corporate Health. The report examined both the key

constitutional and policy changes that have been made and how the culture change and Organisational Development programmes will embed these important changes across the workforce.

A detailed timetable for both the performance appraisal process and culture change programme will be provided to Improvement Board.

Effective Assurance Framework

Fiona Johnstone, Director of Public Health and Policy and Performance, reported on progress against delivering an effective assurance framework. This included an update on the Council's approach to performance Management and the Annual Governance Statement. An update report was also presented that detailed the progress made against all actions outlined in previous critical reports.

The Board emphasised importance of clear and concise performance information that can be easily integrated to ensure members can effectively monitor progress against corporate priorities.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7 NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	<i>OUTCOME OF STATUTORY NOTICE CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED RELOCATION OF FOXFIELD SCHOOL</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR TONY SMITH</i>
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting of 11th July 2013, Cabinet decided that following consultation with governing bodies, staff, parents and other stakeholders, statutory notices should be published regarding the proposed relocation of Foxfield Special School from its current site in Moreton to Woodchurch. Notices were published on 17th July 2013. This report describes the outcome of the subsequent representation period and recommends that the proposal be approved.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Foxfield School is located on Douglas Drive, Moreton, and is a local authority maintained special school for boys and girls aged 11 to 19, who have statements of special educational needs because of complex learning difficulties. The national Priority School Building Programme has given the Local Authority the opportunity to rebuild Foxfield School at a cost in the region of £7.5m. The current school is not purpose built, and increasingly not fit for purpose and the site is too small for a large construction project to be undertaken whilst the school and its pupils remain in its current building.
- 2.2 The Council's Special School Review in June 2010 concluded that any proposals to build new Special Schools for secondary aged pupils would consider the co-location on or adjacent to a Secondary School site. As a result of this recommendation and considering other sites in Wirral, a suitable piece of land owned by the Council has been identified which is adjacent to Woodchurch High School, Birkenhead.
- 2.3 The distance between the two sites is 2.5 miles therefore because it is greater than 2 miles in a straight line; this means that a "prescribed alteration" notice must be issued. Following delegated approval a formal consultation was carried out with the various stakeholders.

2.4 Delegated authority was obtained in May 2013 to undertake formal consultation with various stakeholders. This consultation ended on 20th June 2013 and was reported to Cabinet on 11th July 2013. Cabinet approved the publication of statutory prescribed notices, which were published on 17th July 2013.

3.0 PROPOSAL PUBLICATION

3.1 On 17th July 2013, prescribed alteration notices for the relocation of Foxfield School were published in the local press (Wirral Globe) and also published on-line at the Council's consultation website – <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/council-and-democracy/have-your-say/consultations/current-consultations/foxfield-school-relocation-proposal>

3.2 Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, in addition to the statutory proposal notice, a more detailed “complete proposal” must be produced. Copies of the notice and complete proposal were provided to the school, the Secretary of State, the Anglican and Catholic Diocesan bodies and all relevant persons and groups named in the guidance. The documentation was also made available on the Council's website (see above). The notice and complete proposal are attached as Appendix A.

3.3 Following the publication of notices, there is a statutory six week representation period during which objections or comments on any proposal can be sent to the Director of Children's Services. This was clearly stated on the notices. Any person can request a copy of the full proposal, however no requests were received.

4.0 OUTCOME OF THE REPRESENTATION PERIOD

4.1 The statutory representation period ended on 25th August 2013. During this time, the Director of Children's Services received one written comment in relation to the proposal.

“To whom it may concern may I first say how upset I am to find out yet another school is being built on our estate, why do we need 2 senior special schools with complex learning difficulties and as for people having time to review their concerns residents didn't even get a paper the week it was in so how are they supposed to know what is going on their doorstep I am an employer of WBC so that is the only way I knew also I have 2 children in Woodchurch who this affects as they are taking GCSE's. It just brings total disruptions to our estate again with Woodchurch being built, flats being demolished houses being built now a proposal to bring another school which would bring the total to 8 within one small area”.

Whilst the respondent indicates that some residents did not get a local paper, as part of the consultation process copies of the proposal were delivered to the Woodchurch one stop shop, library, post office and a number of local shops, this was in addition to the Council's website. There has also been a recent “letter drop” to residents who could be immediately affected as part of the planning process when they were invited to an open evening to discuss the proposals. Comments have been taken seriously about disruption, traffic, noise etc and are being discussed with the contractor who is operating the “Considerate Constructors Scheme”

4.2 As a prescribed alteration published in accordance with paragraph 9 of Part 1, Schedule 2 of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended 2009) (SI: 2007 No. 1289), under paragraph 30 of Part

2, Schedule 5 of SI: 2007 No.1289, the decision on the proposal for the transfer of site of Foxfield School rests with the Council's decision making body, which is Council's Cabinet.

5.0 DECISION MAKERS GUIDANCE

5.1 Statutory guidance for decision makers on prescribed alterations is attached as Appendix B. This guidance is currently under review by the DFE, but indicates that decision makers should consider the following factors:

- Has the statutory process been carried out properly?
- Effects on standards and school improvement?
- School Characteristics?
- Need for Places?
- Funding and Land?
- Special Educational Needs Provision?

These will be considered in turn.

5.2 Statutory process

The published notice is valid, and complies with the statutory requirements and adequate statutory consultation has been carried out prior to publication of the notice. The proposal is not related to any other published proposal and can be considered on its own.

5.3 Effects on Standards and School Improvement

The most recent Ofsted report ranks Foxfield School as "Outstanding". The Governing body of Foxfield School indicated that the proposed move would bring benefits to pupils education, including specialist classrooms and purpose-built accommodation for the needs of the pupils at Foxfield. The relocation also offers access to facilities to the co-located Woodchurch High School and with Meadowside School, which is located nearby.

5.4 School Characteristics

The proposal is solely for the relocation of Foxfield School, characteristics of the school will not change.

5.5 Need for Places

Indications show the numbers of pupils with CLD will rise therefore, the places available in Foxfield and Meadowside schools will meet the needs of the CLD population. The admission number for Foxfield has not been changed however, flexibility within the design to accommodate more pupils should the pupil population increase in the future.

Almost all pupils are transported from home by minibus from across the Borough, relocating Foxfield brings the travel to a more central location with good links to roads and the motorway.

5.6 Funding and Land

Funding for the relocation is being met by the Department for Education as part of the Priority School Building Programme. An additional amount has been identified

by the Council to re-provide hydrotherapy and swimming facilities which match the current provision and to ensure the capacity of the school will meet future needs.

Land for the new school building is owned by Wirral Council. As part of the Planning requirements consultation is being undertaken with statutory bodies such as Sport England.

Land and buildings currently occupied by Foxfield will be subject of further discussions.

5.7 Special Educational Needs Provision

The proposed rebuild of Foxfield meets the SEN requirements of the Borough and supports the benefits of co-location with a mainstream Secondary School.

6.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 6.1 Risks associated with obtaining planning permission on the proposed site have been identified. However, initial discussions with the planning authority have been positive given the specialist facilities the new school building would provide adjacent to the high school and improvements planned to the remainder of the site.
- 6.2 The failure to secure the site for the relocation could result in funding being withdrawn from this scheme.
- 6.3 The consultation process has raised a number of perceived risks these will be addressed by the two schools concerned and officers in the Local Authority to ensure that the proposals add to the overall quality of special education provision on Wirral.

7.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 The current Foxfield site was considered for the new building, however this would have meant that pupils would be required to use temporary accommodation and this is not advisable for pupils with complex needs. The site would also have restricted build option for the new school.
- 7.2 Other sites were explored for co-location but various factors such as transport routes, available land, complex PFI contracts and schools' expressions of interest to co-locate with a special school favoured the identified site.

8.0 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 See sections 3.0 and 4.0 above.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 9.1 The new building will provide more opportunities for specialist facilities to be made available to the most vulnerable groups at a location which is central to the Borough.

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

- 10.1 The cost of the new building will be met by the Department for Education with an additional amount being made available from Council Capital for additional

hydrotherapy facilities, demolition and additional pupil places. The school will also contribute to the new facility from its delegated budget. It is not planned to automatically increase numbers at the school, the modest proposed increase is to “future proof” the building, given its lifespan.

10.2 IT would be provided within the contract to a specification suitable for a special school.

10.3 As this is a relocation project, it is expected that all current staff will transfer to the new building.

10.4 The new building is being funded via grant and procured by the Education Funding Agency as part of a regional contract and will become a Council asset upon completion. The current site of Foxfield School will be considered for disposal or the possible use by another education establishment. This will be subject to a further report.

11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Council is required to publish statutory proposals for the relocation of school more than 2 miles from its current site.

12.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes as part of the earlier reports. Not relevant to the decision of this report.

13.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Increase in Carbon usage will be minimal due to the low energy building components being specified and the transfer from a less efficient building. No other environmental issues have been identified at this stage with the project.

14.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Planning approval will be necessary for the proposed construction.

14.2 Replacement of schools allow the most vulnerable accommodation to be removed and other security improvements carried out to ensure the site is safe and secure.

15.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

15.1 That the statutory prescribed alteration to transfer the site of Foxfield School from its current site in Moreton to the proposed site at Carr Bridge Road, Woodchurch, be approved. This recommendation is conditional to the grant of Planning Permission under Part 3 of The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 by November 2014.

15.2 That the Director of Children’s Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to ensure the prescribed procedures are followed, including requesting permissions from the Secretary of State in furtherance of the proposal.

16.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

16.1 The proposed site is the most suitable in terms of location for Foxfield School and will enjoy benefits from co-location with a main stream Secondary school.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Jeannette Royle**
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email: jeannetteroyle@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

- (1) Statutory Notice and Proposal
- (2) Statutory guidance for prescribed alterations

REFERENCE MATERIAL

- Consultation responses
- DfE guidance

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Delegated Approval	May 2013
Cabinet	11 July 2013

Consultation: Re-locating Foxfield School to Woodchurch

This report describes the option, outlines the timetable for consultation and possible implementation and tells you how to respond to consultation.

Dear Consultee,

Following a successful bid within the national Priority Schools Building Programme the Governing body of Foxfield School had asked the Council to look at moving Foxfield to a new, purpose built facility with more outdoor space. The possibility of relocating Foxfield to a new site in the Woodchurch area and co-located with Woodchurch High School has now been discussed between the Local Authority and the Governing body of Foxfield School, and so far all are agreed that relocation would be beneficial.

Because the proposed site is more than 2 miles away from Foxfield's existing site, we are consulting more widely with parents, staff, governors and other people related to Foxfield School in order to help decide whether Foxfield should relocate to the Woodchurch area.

Your views are important to us. Please take this opportunity to have your say.

Yours sincerely,



Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

The Consultation

We have tried to think of questions you may have about the option to relocate Foxfield School. We are also sure you will have plenty more! Please ask your headteacher, or write to the Local Authority at the address at the end of this leaflet.

What is Foxfield School?

Foxfield School is a local authority maintained community special school for boys and girls aged 11 to 19, who have statements of special educational needs because of complex learning difficulties.

Foxfield is located on Douglas Drive in Moreton, but serves the whole of Wirral. When last inspected by Ofsted in 2012, Foxfield was found to be a good school.

Why move? What are the benefits?

At present, Foxfield occupies a former middle school (St Thomas Becket) which has had several extensions and a number of refurbishments, and whilst the school makes good use of the existing facilities many are requiring updating and are presenting restrictions in teaching and supporting pupils.

Relocating to a new site would allow a brand new purpose built special school to be built, in the centre of Wirral. It would allow the school to provide places for 140 pupils. **Please see the location maps on page 3.**

Would any building work be needed?

Yes. A new school building will be constructed. Funding for this has already been identified from central Government. The Council has agreed to provide additional funding for a new school to provide 140 places and to ensure that facilities such as hydro-therapy and swimming can be replicated in the new school. All construction would be completed before Foxfield move in to the new facility, so that there is no disruption to children and staff.

There have been no planning applications made at this stage. We are asking for your views on the proposal to relocate Foxfield to the new site.

What is the legal process?

By law, a school can't relocate more than 2 miles in a straight line from the original site without publishing a "prescribed alteration" notice. The legal process involves a consultation with stakeholders before a decision is made whether to publish the legal notice for the transfer of site.

After the legal notice is published, at both sites and in local newspapers, there is another 6 weeks for people to make comments about the proposal to relocate the school.

This means that the final decision would be made by the end of August 2013. Due to the procurement process being used by the Education Funding Agency, the anticipated date for the school to move would be January 2015.

Would admissions change?

The process for admission to Foxfield would be the same as now. The new buildings would be modern, fit for purpose, and there would be places for 140 pupils.

Travel to school arrangements would continue as specified in the Authority's information booklets for parents however, the Authority is currently consulting on its transport policy which could lead to changes to the arrangements.

Would the school have a new name or uniform?

No, not unless the Governing body decide to do so.

What about existing staff?

As a re-location project, all existing staff would transfer to the new site, unless they move to another school or retire, just as in any other school.

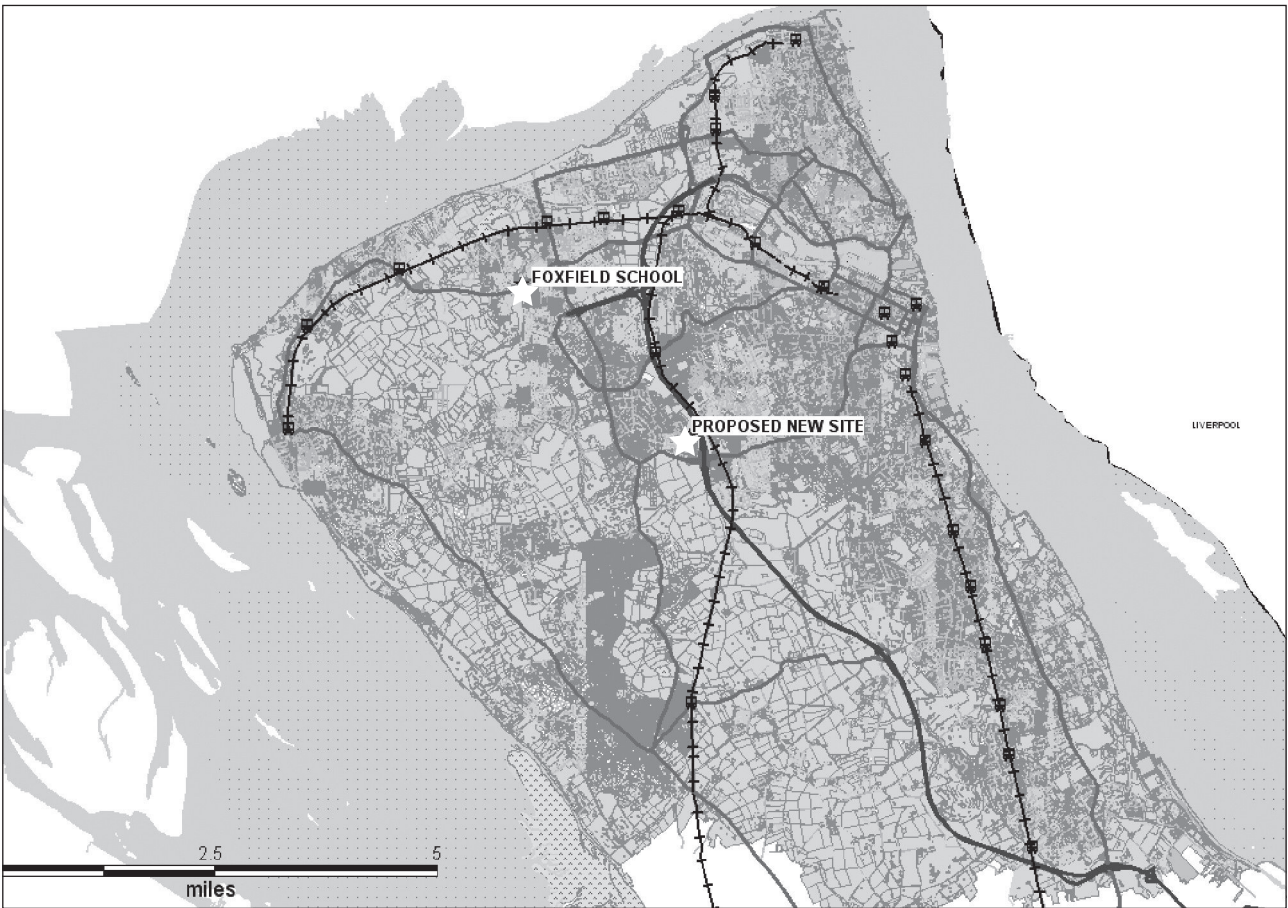
The Consultation

It is important for you to understand that a decision has not already been made. The Council's Cabinet will want to see the comments made during consultation before making any decision about what happens next.

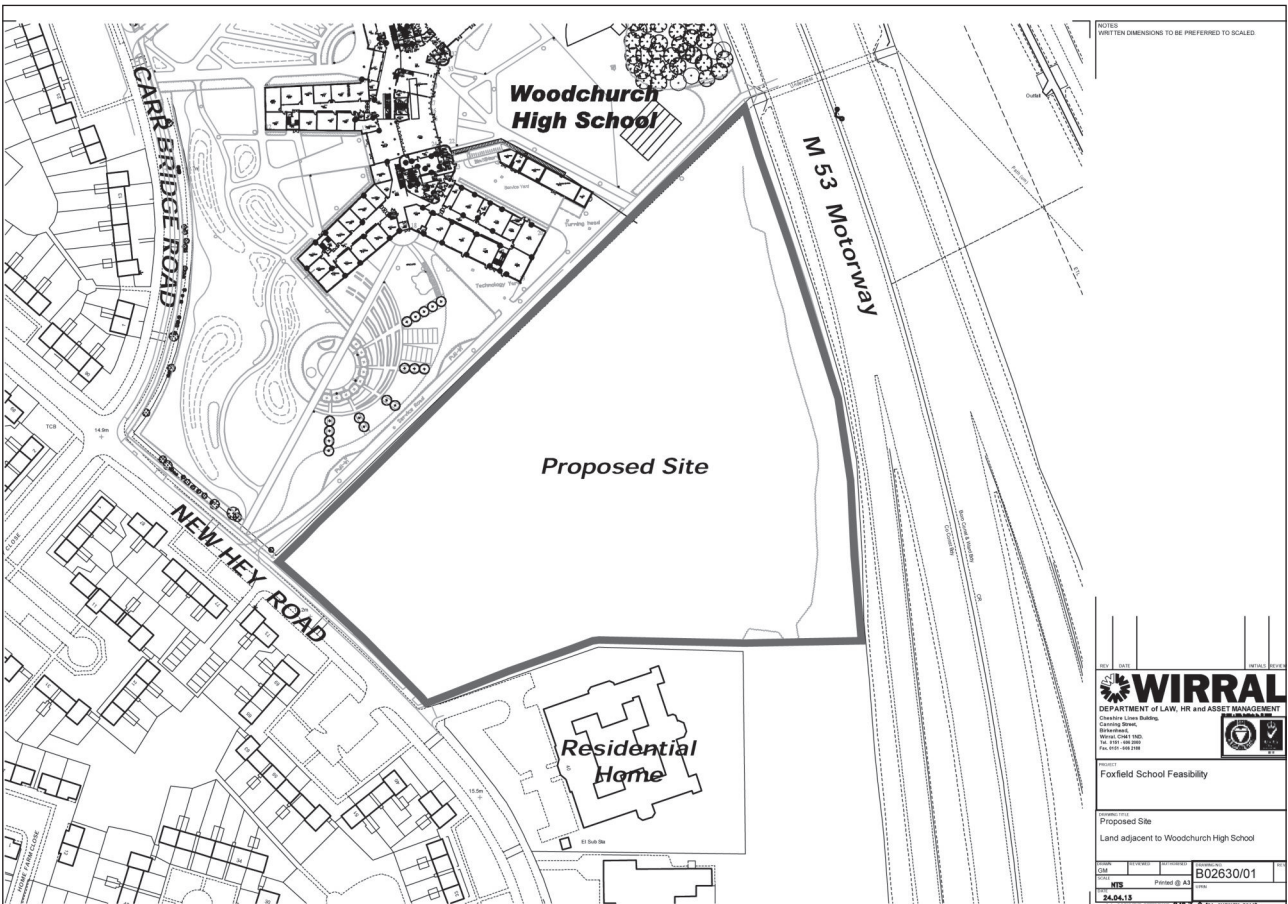
Finding out more

For more information about the options, you can find out more on the internet, where updates will also be posted. Go to: www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/council-and-democracy/have-your-say/consultations/current-consultations/foxfield-school-relocation-proposal

If you do not have access to the Internet at home, you can go to your local library where staff will help you log on and print out the information.



Map of Wirral showing the existing and proposed sites



Proposed site at Woodchurch

The Consultation leaflet will also be available to read at the following places:

Libraries

Woodchurch
Birkenhead Central
Moreton
Wallasey Central

Community Centres

Woodchurch
Moreton

One Stop Shops

Moreton
Upton

You can also look at the documents at Wallasey Town Hall. If you want more printed copies, please contact the Asset Management Team, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 4FD, **0151 666 5604**, or by email at jeannetteroyle@wirral.gov.uk.

What are the next steps?

Step 1: The first step is to distribute the consultation leaflet and ask for views and comments.

There will be a session at Foxfield School 15th May 2013 at 10am.

The meeting is an opportunity for parents, governors and other people directly related to the school to find out more information and talk to representatives of the Children and Young People's Department. A similar meeting will be held for school staff.

People associated with other local or special schools, and members of the public who want to, can write in with their views. Anyone who wants to can write and say what they think.

When the Consultation ends, all the views and opinions received in writing and at the consultation meeting will form part of a report to the Council's Cabinet. Cabinet members will read the report and decide what to do next. They may decide not to go further with this option at this stage. Members might make changes, consider other options put forward as part of the consultation, or they could decide to do more consultation.

Step 2: If Council's Cabinet decides to go ahead with this option, the Local Authority will publish a prescribed alteration notice. This notice is followed by six weeks for formal written objections and comments to be sent to the Director of Children's Services.

Step 3: After the six week representation period ends, the proposal, with the objections and comments, is sent to the Council's decision making body, which is Council's Cabinet. Cabinet can decide to:

- Approve the proposal
- Approve the proposal with changes
- Approve the proposal subject to other factors, such as obtaining planning permission
- Reject the proposal.

If Cabinet can't agree a decision, the Schools' Adjudicator will make the final decision. The Adjudicator is independent, and is appointed by the Government to make decisions on school proposals.

Step 4: If the proposal is approved, either by Cabinet or by the School's Adjudicator, it will be put into practice.

Having your say

What do you think? Please make sure your response is received by 20th May 2013.

You can write on your own, or you can join together with other people to write a joint letter. Your comments can be sent by post, by handing them in at your school or by email. If you find it helpful you can complete and return the feedback form on the next page. There is also a feedback form on the Council website:

www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/council-and-democracy/have-your-say/consultations/current-consultations/foxfield-school-relocation-proposal

The postal address for return of feedback forms or written comments is:

Foxfield Consultation, Director of Children's Services, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead CH41 1FD

Or by email to: jeannetteroyle@wirral.gov.uk

Please note: To make sure the Consultation is fully open and transparent, all the responses to this consultation will be made available for inspection.

Foxfield Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

School	Parent	Member of staff	Governor	Other person
Foxfield School				
Other (please state)				

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Foxfield School to a new building in Woodchurch? *Tick one box only.*

Yes **No**

Comments:

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

Please tell us your name and address, and email address if you have one.

We will not use your personal information for anything other than this consultation.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ **email:** _____

Please note: In order to ensure that this process is fully open and transparent, other people will be able to read all the responses to this consultation.

Address:

Foxfield Consultation, Director of Children's Services, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead CH41 4FD

Email:

jeannetteroyle@wirral.gov.uk

Make sure your response is received by: **20th May 2024** **Page 85**

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PROPOSALS FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS OTHER THAN FOUNDATION PROPOSALS: Information to be included in a complete proposal

Extract of Part 1 of Schedule 3 and Part 1 of Schedule 5 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended):

In respect of a Governing Body Proposal: School and governing body's details

1. The name, address and category of the school for which the governing body are publishing the proposals.

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In respect of an LEA Proposal: School and local education authority details

1. The name, address and category of the school .

Foxfield School, Community Special School, Douglas Drive, Moreton, Wirral, CH46 6BT

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

2. The date on which the proposals are planned to be implemented, and if they are to be implemented in stages, a description of what is planned for each stage, and the number of stages intended and the dates of each stage.

1 st January 2015 or nearest practicable date thereafter.
--

Objections and comments

3. A statement explaining the procedure for making representations, including —
- (a) the date prescribed in accordance with paragraph 29 of Schedule 3 (GB proposals)/Schedule 5 (LA proposals) of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), by which objections or comments should be sent to the local education authority; and
 - (b) the address of the authority to which objections or comments should be sent.

Within six weeks from the date of publication of this proposal (17 th July 2013), any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Julia Hassall, Director of Children's Services, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 4FD or by e-mail to specialreview@wirral.gov.uk .

Alteration description

4. A description of the proposed alteration and in the case of special school proposals, a description of the current special needs provision.

It is proposed to transfer Foxfield School to a new site located in New Hey Road, Woodchurch where a new facility will be built under the national Priority School Buildings Programme. Foxfield is a community Special School with 133 places for pupils across Wirral who have complex learning difficulties.

School capacity

5.—(1) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within any of paragraphs 1 to 4, 8, 9 and 12-14 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/paragraphs 1-4, 7, 8, 18, 19 and 21 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), the proposals must also include —

(a) details of the current capacity of the school and, where the proposals will alter the capacity of the school, the proposed capacity of the school after the alteration;

Not applicable

(b) details of the current number of pupils admitted to the school in each relevant age group, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of pupils to be admitted in each relevant age group in the first school year in which the proposals will have been implemented;

Not applicable

(c) where it is intended that proposals should be implemented in stages, the number of pupils to be admitted to the school in the first school year in which each stage will have been implemented;

Not applicable

(d) where the number of pupils in any relevant age group is lower than the indicated admission number for that relevant age group a statement to this effect and details of the indicated admission number in question.

Not applicable

(2) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within any of paragraphs 1, 2, 9, 12 and 13 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals) /paragraphs 1, 2, 8, 18 and 19 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), a statement of the number of pupils at the school at the time of the publication of the proposals.

Not applicable

Implementation

6. Where the proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary controlled school a statement as to whether the proposals are to be implemented by the local education authority or by the governing body, and, if the proposals are to be implemented by both, a statement as to the extent to which they are to be implemented by each body.

Not applicable

Additional Site

7.—(1) A statement as to whether any new or additional site will be required if proposals are implemented and if so the location of the site if the school is to occupy a split site.

The school will transfer to a new facility to be built on a new site located in New Hey Road, Woodchurch.

(2) Where proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary school a statement as to who will provide any additional site required, together with details of the tenure (freehold or leasehold) on which the site of the school will be held, and if the site is to be held on a lease, details of the proposed lease.

Not applicable

Changes in boarding arrangements

8.—(1) Where the proposals are for the introduction or removal of boarding provision, or the alteration of existing boarding provision such as is mentioned in paragraph 8 or 21 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/7 or 14 of Schedule 4 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) —

(a) the number of pupils for whom it is intended that boarding provision will be made if the proposals are approved;

Not applicable

(b) the arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children at the school;

Not applicable

(c) the current number of pupils for whom boarding provision can be made and a description of the boarding provision; and

Not applicable

(d) except where the proposals are to introduce boarding provision, a description of the existing boarding provision.

Not applicable

(2) Where the proposals are for the removal of boarding provisions or an alteration to reduce boarding provision such as is mentioned in paragraph 8 or 21 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/7 or 14 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) —

(a) the number of pupils for whom boarding provision will be removed if the proposals are approved; and

Not applicable

(b) a statement as to the use to which the former boarding accommodation will be put if the proposals are approved.

Not applicable

Transfer to new site

9. Where the proposals are to transfer a school to a new site the following information—

- (a) the location of the proposed site (including details of whether the school is to occupy a single or split site), and including where appropriate the postal address;

The school will occupy a single site to be located on New Hey Road, Woodchurch. See Map contained within consultation leaflet

- (b) the distance between the proposed and current site;

2.5 miles

- (c) the reason for the choice of proposed site;

Co-location next to a mainstream secondary school, Woodchurch High School and good transport links, central location within Wirral. Site is large enough to accommodate a school of the required size.

- (d) the accessibility of the proposed site or sites;

Centrally located within Wirral with good transport links.

- (e) the proposed arrangements for transport of pupils to the school on its new site; and

Travel to school arrangements will be as specified in the Authority's information booklets for parents (subject to the outcome of a consultation on changes to the travel policy). Where the child's Statement of Special Educational Needs sets out how the child travels to school, this requirement will continue to be met.

- (f) a statement about other sustainable transport alternatives where pupils are not using transport provided, and how car use in the school area will be discouraged.

A School Travel plan will be completed.

Objectives

10. The objectives of the proposals.

To transfer Foxfield School to a new site located in New Hey Road, Woodchurch where a new facility will be built under the national Priority School Buildings Programme.

Consultation

11. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including—

- (a) a list of persons who were consulted;
- (b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- (c) the views of the persons consulted;

- (d) a statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with; and
- (e) copies of all consultation documents and a statement on how these documents were made available.

- a) Parents and carers of children attending Foxfield School, Meadowside School and feeder special primary schools; ward and parliamentary representatives, all statutory consultees.
- b) See Appendix 1 (presentation and notes from meeting)
- c) See Appendix 2 (Responses pdf files)
- d) All applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposal to consult were complied with.
- e) See Appendix 3. The documents were placed on the Wirral website, and hard copies were sent to the schools named in a), ward and parliamentary representatives and made available on request to other parents. An advertisement was placed in a local newspaper notifying that the consultation was taking place.

Project costs

12. A statement of the estimated total capital cost of the proposals and the breakdown of the costs that are to be met by the governing body, the local education authority, and any other party.

Estimated at £7.5 million. The Local Authority will provide £1 million and the remainder will be provided by the Education Funding Agency.

13. A copy of confirmation from the Secretary of State, local education authority and the Learning and Skills Council for England (as the case may be) that funds will be made available (including costs to cover any necessary site purchase).

Appendix 4.

Age range

14. Where the proposals relate to a change in age range, the current age range for the school.

Not applicable

Early years provision

15. Where the proposals are to alter the lower age limit of a mainstream school so that it provides for pupils aged between 2 and 5—

- (a) details of the early years provision, including the number of full-time and part-time pupils, the number and length of sessions in each week, and the services for disabled children that will be offered;

Not applicable

- (b) how the school will integrate the early years provision with childcare services and how the proposals are consistent with the integration of early years provision for childcare;

Not applicable

- (c) evidence of parental demand for additional provision of early years provision;

Not applicable

- (d) assessment of capacity, quality and sustainability of provision in schools and in establishments other than schools who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage within 3 miles of the school; and

Not applicable

- (e) reasons why such schools and establishments who have spare capacity cannot make provision for any forecast increase in the number of such provision.

Not applicable

Changes to sixth form provision

16. (a) Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school provides sixth form education or additional sixth form education, a statement of how the proposals will—

- (i) improve the educational or training achievements;
- (ii) increase participation in education or training; and
- (iii) expand the range of educational or training opportunities for 16-19 year olds in the area;

Not applicable

(b) A statement as to how the new places will fit within the 16-19 organisation in an area;

Not applicable

(c) Evidence —

- (i) of the local collaboration in drawing up the proposals; and
- (ii) that the proposals are likely to lead to higher standards and better progression at the school;

Not applicable

(d) The proposed number of sixth form places to be provided.

Not applicable

17. Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school ceases to provide sixth form education, a statement of the effect on the supply of 16-19 places in the area.

Not applicable

Special educational needs

18. Where the proposals are to establish or change provision for special educational needs—

- (a) a description of the proposed types of learning difficulties in respect of which education will be provided and, where provision for special educational needs already exists, the current type of provision;

The proposal is to reprovide the existing provision on a new site in a new building for children with complex learning difficulties.

- (b) any additional specialist features will be provided;

None

- (c) the proposed numbers of pupils for which the provision is to be made;

133

- (d) details of how the provision will be funded;

Maintained School

- (e) a statement as to whether the education will be provided for children with special educational needs who are not registered pupils at the school to which the proposals relate;

No

- (f) a statement as to whether the expenses of the provision will be met from the school's delegated budget;

Yes

- (g) the location of the provision if it is not to be established on the existing site of the school;

New site on New Hey Road, Woodchurch

- (h) where the provision will replace existing educational provision for children with special educational needs, a statement as to how the local education authority believes that the new provision is likely to lead to improvement in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children; and

The new building will be purpose built to meet the needs of pupils with complex learning difficulties, replacing a former middle school converted to a special school which has a number of buildings, many of which are no longer suitable to deliver teaching, learning and support to children with these needs.

- (i) the number of places reserved for children with special educational needs, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of such places.

133

19. Where the proposals are to discontinue provision for special educational needs—

- (a) details of alternative provision for pupils for whom the provision is currently made;

Not applicable

- (b) details of the number of pupils for whom provision is made that is recognised by the local education authority as reserved for children with special educational needs during each of the 4 school years preceding the current school year;

Not applicable

- (c) details of provision made outside the area of the local education authority for pupils whose needs will not be able to be met in the area of the authority as a result of the discontinuance of the provision; and

Not applicable

- (d) a statement as to how the proposer believes that the proposals are likely to lead to improvement in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children.

Not applicable

20. Where the proposals will lead to alternative provision for children with special educational needs, as a result of the establishment, alteration or discontinuance of existing provision, the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals in terms of—

- (a) improved access to education and associated services including the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment with reference to the local education authority's Accessibility Strategy;
- (b) improved access to specialist staff, both educational and other professionals, including any external support and outreach services;
- (c) improved access to suitable accommodation; and
- (d) improved supply of suitable places.

- a) The building will be single storey and purpose built to meet the needs of children with complex learning difficulties. Each classroom will have access to external space. Medical facilities will be improved, with improved sensory areas and withdrawal rooms. Enhanced building features will improve heating, lighting and ventilation controls.
- b) Location of new site is central to Wirral which will improve transport links for staff and is also close to Arrowe Park Hospital for access to medical professionals.
- c) See a)
- d) New building will have potential to accommodate 140 pupils if required although there the number will be maintained at 133 for the foreseeable future.

Sex of pupils

21. Where the proposals are to make an alteration to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of one sex only becomes an establishment which admits pupils of both sexes—

- (a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single sex-education in the area;

Not applicable

- (b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education; and

Not applicable

- (c) details of any transitional period which the body making the proposals wishes specified in a transitional exemption order (within the meaning of section 27 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975).

Not applicable

22. Where the proposals are to make an alteration to a school to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of both sexes becomes an establishment which admits pupils of one sex only—

(a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single-sex education in the area; and

Not applicable

(b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education.

Not applicable

Extended services

23. If the proposed alterations affect the provision of the school’s extended services, details of the current extended services the school is offering and details of any proposed change as a result of the alterations.

The new building will allow the school to offer additional places in their afterschool and short break facilities. It will also offer community access to hydrotherapy facilities and specialised sports facilities.

Need or demand for additional places

24. If the proposals involve adding places—

(a) a statement and supporting evidence of the need or demand for the particular places in the area;

Not applicable

(b) where the school has a religious character, a statement and supporting evidence of the demand in the area for education in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denomination;

Not applicable

(c) where the school adheres to a particular philosophy, evidence of the demand for education in accordance with the philosophy in question and any associated change to the admission arrangements for the school.

Not applicable

25. If the proposals involve removing places—

(a) a statement and supporting evidence of the reasons for the removal, including an assessment of the impact on parental choice; and

Not applicable

(b) a statement on the local capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

Not applicable

Expansion of successful and popular schools

25A. (1) Proposals must include a statement of whether the proposer considers that the presumption for the expansion of successful and popular schools should apply, and where

the governing body consider the presumption applies, evidence to support this.

(2) Sub-paragraph (1) applies to expansion proposals in respect of primary and secondary schools, (except for grammar schools), i.e. falling within:

- (a) (for proposals published by the governing body) paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 2 or paragraph 12 of Part 2 to Schedule 2;
- (b) (for proposals published by the LA) paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 4 or 18 of Part 4 to Schedule 4 of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

Not applicable

**WIRRAL****PUBLIC NOTICE****EDUCATION AND INSPECTIONS ACT 2006
PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER FOXFIELD SPECIAL SCHOOL
TO NEW HEY ROAD, WOODCHURCH**

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Wirral Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Foxfield Community Special School, Douglas Drive, Moreton, Wirral, CH46 6BT from 1st January 2015 or nearest practicable date thereafter.

It is proposed to transfer Foxfield School to a new site located in New Hey Road, Woodchurch where a new facility will be built under the national Priority School Buildings Programme. Foxfield is a Community Special School with 133 places for pupils across Wirral who have complex learning difficulties.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from local libraries, Wallasey Town Hall, and from the Wirral Council website at www.wirral.gov.uk. You can also request a copy by writing to the address below.

Within six weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Julia Hassall, Director of Children's Services, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 4FD or by email to specialreview@wirral.gov.uk

**Julia Hassall,
Director of Children's Services**

Dated this day 17 July 2013

Explanatory notes

1. The purpose of this notice is to relocate Foxfield Special School to New Hey Road, Woodchurch, Wirral.
2. Travel to school arrangements will be as specified in the Authority's information booklets for parents (subject to the outcome of a consultation on changes to the travel policy). Where the child's Statement of Special Educational Needs sets out how the child travels to school, this requirement will continue to be met.
3. The Authority's information booklets for parents are available on request by calling 0151 606 2020 during office hours or online at www.wirral.gov.uk/schooladmissions
4. This proposal is subject to the following being agreed: Local Planning Permission, Secretary of State approval to depart from the Unitary Development Plan and Sport England Approval.

www.wirral.gov.uk

2013APR13JUS

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	<i>THE OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SCRUTINY REVIEW</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>THE CHAIR OF THE FAMILIES AND WELLBEING POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE</i>

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.0 This report provides background information regarding the report of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Review, which has been approved by the Families and Wellbeing Policy & Performance Committee and referred to Cabinet for further consideration.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7th November 2012, Members agreed to undertake an in-depth Scrutiny Review regarding the outcomes for Looked After Children in the Borough.
- 2.2 Members agreed that a Task & Finish Group should be formed to undertake the detailed work. The members of that group were:
- Councillor Wendy Clements (Chair)
 - Councillor Walter Smith
 - Councillor Pat Williams
- 2.3 On the 21st January 2013, a further meeting of the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee approved the Scope for the Review.

3.0 EVIDENCE GATHERING AND REPORT

- 3.1 The Task & Finish Group Members commenced by meeting with groups of children in care and with care leavers. Further meetings have been held with foster carers and with a range of officers responsible for service delivery. In addition, two visits to schools were arranged.
- 3.2 The Final Report, 'The Outcomes for Looked After Children' was presented to the meeting of the Families and Wellbeing Policy & Performance Committee on 9th September 2013. The relevant draft minute from that meeting is:

The Committee considered the report of the Members of the Looked After Children Task & Finish Group providing background information regarding the Final Report.

Members of the Task & Finish Group had met with groups of children in care and with care leavers. Further meetings had also been held with foster carers and with a whole range of officers responsible for service delivery. In addition, two visits to schools were arranged. The Panel members expressed their thanks to all those who had assisted the review by so readily giving their time, experience and suggestions.

The Final Report, 'The Outcomes for Looked After Children' was attached as an appendix to the report.

The Children's Services Director, Ms Julia Hassall indicated that this review had proved really purposeful and this report would be used within the Department to shape future services for Looked After Children.

She further reported that the Children in Care Council was due to meet on the 24 September 2013 and looked after children were speaking to elected members, she extended the invitation to Members of the Committee to attend if they wished to do so.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents and recommendations of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Review be noted;**
- 2) the Looked After Children Scrutiny Report be referred to the next appropriate Cabinet meeting;**
- 3) an update report regarding the progress being made towards the implementation of the recommendations be presented to this Committee in September 2014.**

4.0 REFERRAL TO CABINET

- 4.1 As agreed by the Families and Wellbeing Policy & Performance Committee, the Scrutiny Report 'The Outcomes for Looked After Children', which is attached as an appendix, has been referred to Cabinet for further consideration.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) Cabinet is requested to support the contents and recommendations of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Review;
- (2) Cabinet requests Officers to develop and implement an Action Plan to implement the recommendations contained within the report.

**THE OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN
SCRUTINY REVIEW**



A report produced by
**THE FAMILIES AND WELLBEING
POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

*August 2013
FINAL REPORT*

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
THE OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN
SCRUTINY REVIEW
FINAL REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

At the meeting of the former Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7th November 2012, Members agreed to undertake an in-depth Scrutiny Review to investigate the outcomes for Looked After Children in the Borough. As a result, a Task & Finish Group comprising three Members has held over twenty meetings with relevant officers and partners as well as some children in care and care leavers in order to obtain appropriate evidence.

An Executive Summary of the findings follows, together with the recommendations arising from this Review. The Report then sets out the background to the original brief, as well as the methodology adopted for gathering the evidence. This is followed by the main body of the Report which details the key findings of the Review and the evidence gathered in support of the recommendations of the Task & Finish Group Members.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Context: The primary focus of this Scrutiny Review is to assess the outcomes for the Borough's Looked After Children, of which, as at 12th August 2013, Wirral Council had responsibility for 670. Central to the evidence-gathering for the Review were meetings with young people currently in care and with care leavers. This evidence has been under-pinned by the information gained from meetings with foster carers and officers. This Report aims to reflect both the positives and the concerns of the young people supplemented by the views of the service providers. There is much evidence that the Council discharges its duties well. However, some challenges remain and the recommendations included in this Report are aimed at improving the service further.

Aspiration: A recurring theme throughout the Review has been the need to provide greater aspiration for the Borough's Looked After Children. Concerns of a similar nature were expressed by young people, foster carers, teachers and officers, summarised by one care leaver who told the Members that "when you are in care, you are always put down and told that you could not achieve". Whilst the Task & Finish Group Members were told of many examples of aspirational support provided to the children in care, challenges clearly remain. There is a desire that greater aspiration for the Borough's Looked After Children becomes embedded within the practices of the Council and its partners. As well as ensuring that children in care are kept safe, there should also be a goal to inspire those children, especially those in long-term care. There was a view among Members that the Local Authority, as the Corporate Parent, should aim to deliver care that is "what you would want for your own children".

Foster Carers: The young people told the Members that they experienced very strong support from their foster carers but this was not universal. There was some anecdotal evidence of very strong relationships which had formed between carers and the young people, some continuing well beyond the time period when the young person was formally cared for by that carer. One area of development for the Local Authority is to enable foster carers to further enhance their skills in order to meet the considerable challenges which they can face.

The provision of training for carers is obviously a key role which the Council undertakes. It is proposed that greater emphasis could be placed on increasing the attendance at training sessions. An option for the future could be to change the policy so that fees will continue to be paid only if minimum training requirements are met on an annual basis. At the same time, there could be further encouragement for carers to attend sessions in other ways. This may involve holding sessions at different times of the day, at different venues, offering childcare facilities, ensuring sessions are always of high quality, offering the availability of peer mentors and so on. Specific areas where some foster carers could play an enhanced role include the teaching of life skills to the young people, such as budgeting, cookery skills and so on. Additional support and advice from foster carers in helping young people to evaluate options for training and employment is also encouraged.

The Members heard from a number of professionals who argued that foster carers and social workers should have special training if the child in care has designated special needs. As a consequence, the Members have concluded that there should be greater training and monitoring for foster carers who care for children with certain medical and behavioural needs. A programme should be put in place to identify those carers who have specific skills and enable further training to those carers who require enhanced skills. In terms of placements, it is clearly advantageous if the individual needs of the child can be best supported by foster carers who have relevant skills.

The Social Care Process: Key to the outcome for children in care is the stability in placement and in contacts. The Members were informed that, in recent years, the Council has been able to retain more children in stable placements. However, there were a significant number of comments related to the importance of continuity of social worker contact for the children in care. One young person told the Members that "there are so many people in and out of your life". There was anecdotal evidence that, for a number of young people, social workers had changed more often than they would have preferred. One professional agreed when saying "for many Looked After Children, their stories are fragmented with different schools and different social workers".

Members have been informed of the steps that are being taken by the Strategic Directorate to hopefully address the high level of turnover in some teams, including the enhancement of the role, improved training opportunities, reduced manager to social worker ratios as well as remuneration. However, in addition, the organisational structure can contribute to the stability of care for a child. Therefore, the Members request that further consideration be given to organisational changes that could be made with the aim of keeping transitions for the child to a minimum.

Communication between social workers and the young people was highlighted on a number of occasions. The ability of young people to contact their social worker was repeatedly emphasised. The availability and consistency of information relating to financial entitlements for the young people was also stressed. Consideration should also be given to enhancing the modes of communication by considering the use of Apps and texts as well as the Internet, in order to consolidate information flow.

Post-16 Support: A number of witnesses expressed concern regarding the timing of the transition of the transfer of Looked After Children to the Pathways Team in preparation for leaving care. For 16 and 17 year olds, there is a lot of change when they are doing GCSEs and looking for further education, training or employment. In the case of Looked After Children, they are also expected to prepare for leaving care by transferring to the Pathways Team once they are 16 years old. Members have, therefore, concluded that it would be beneficial for there to be greater flexibility around the timing of transition to the Pathways Team, based on each young person's individual needs.

Although there was positive feedback from young people regarding the role of the Pathways Team, there was also a strong message from a number of young people of a desire to have someone available to provide additional support if needed. "It is silly that at 18 years old, they assume that you are OK to be on your own"; "in a normal family, you do not get told to go when you are 18" and "not having a family to turn to is very hard" were comments from three young people. Perhaps the pointer towards improving the service is emphasised by further comments from two young people: "we need someone to listen and to come to your flat if necessary" and "I am unusual because I want to be on my own. However, there is still a need for someone to be available if you need them".

Members warmly welcome the proposals to support payments based on the Staying Put principles that are now being developed for Wirral. This should enable those young people who wish to stay with their foster parents post-18 to do so. However, the Task & Finish Group Members urge that, although personal advisers are available post-18, further options be considered in order to provide young people with access to more one-to-one support and opportunities for "drop in" facilities for Care leavers. This could include a greater use of peer mentoring for Care leavers or further use of the independent Visitor Service.

Education: The value of educational outcomes to any young person is clearly important. This is no different for Looked After Children. However, at both national and local levels, there is a dramatic difference between the educational attainment of Looked After Children and non-Looked After. In Wirral in 2012, 64.8% of all children achieved 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C including English and Maths. The equivalent attainment for Looked After Children was 12%. For many of these young people, there are so many significant events taking place in their young lives.

During this Review, the Members visited both the Observatory and Woodchurch High School. The ethos and the extensive support provided to support Looked After Children at both schools was hugely impressive. However, among the wider cohort of young people attending schools across the Borough with whom the Members met, there was a very mixed response regarding the relationship with the Designated Teacher at their school. Some young people had a supportive relationship whereas some young people did not know who their Designated Teacher was and others had a poor relationship.

Evidence arose that partnership working was not always strong and that improved mutual understanding of the roles of teachers and social workers would be beneficial. The Members heard observations that a closer working relationship between schools and social workers, in the interests of the children in care, would be beneficial. Therefore, in order to strengthen the relationship between schools and social care, the Members recommend that lines of communication are strengthened, commencing with regular meetings between Designated Teachers and District Managers.

In order to enhance the educational outcomes of Looked After Children, it is expected that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be prepared for each child in care. The PEP is a record of what needs to happen for Looked After Children to enable them to fulfill their potential and reflects any existing education plans, such as a statement of special educational needs. Members urge that a greater emphasis should be placed on raising the profile of the PEP and ensuring that the value of the plan is better understood by all those responsible for the welfare of a young person.

The attention of Members was also drawn to the need to identify children who require additional support at the earliest opportunity and subsequently to provide the appropriate early interventions. Looked After Children are at high risk of having missed out on early years provision. There is recognition that a greater emphasis should be placed on ensuring that screening is improved to ensure that all vulnerable children, including Looked After Children, are identified and receive appropriate interventions to make sure that children are more able to communicate and to promote emotional literacy at an early age.

16+ Employability: Members heard from several sources of the excellent work being carried out by the Employability Team in order to encourage Care leavers in their journey through education, training and employment. Despite that, some challenges remain. As at April 2013, the proportion of care leavers aged 16–19 in Wirral being in employment, education or training was 62%.

The importance of building self-confidence in Looked After Children was heard repeatedly throughout the Review. One way of achieving increased confidence levels is to provide relevant experiences in order to prepare a young person for further training and eventually for work. It is understood that there is an offer of one week's placement to Looked After Children to work with the Inclusion Team based at Moreton Family Centre. However, a similar process is not repeated across other parts of the Council. It is suggested that, as the Corporate Parent, the Council could provide greater opportunities for internships and job experience across all Departments, in addition to apprenticeships. It is also suggested that procurement arrangements could be used to encourage companies to offer work experience, internships and apprenticeships to care leavers.

Housing: Some of the young people reported low expectations about finding "somewhere nice to live in the future", while other Care leavers highlighted instances of concern regarding the quality of accommodation. The Members, therefore, stress the importance of Care leavers needing a safe and suitable place to live of their choosing.

In considering the evidence found during the Review, the Panel Members have formulated the recommendations identified on pages 7 to 10.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is anticipated that the Strategic Director for Families & Wellbeing will be responsible for delivering all of the approved recommendations. As a result, this is not specified individually for each recommendation.

Aspiration

Recommendation 1 – Aspiration for Wirral’s Looked After Children

As part of its role as a Corporate Parent, Wirral Council will place aspiration for the Borough’s Looked After Children at the heart of its decision-making processes. The Council will work with all relevant partners to encourage them to adopt the same principle.

(Reference Section 6.1, page 16)

Foster carers

Recommendation 2 – Incentivising Attendance at Training Sessions for Foster Carers

In order to ensure the continuous professional development of foster carers, consideration should be given to amending the policy so that fees for foster carers will continue to be paid only if minimum training requirements are met on an annual basis. A revised training strategy and coordinated programme should be put in place to support this proposal.

(Reference Section 6.2, page 17)

Recommendation 3 – Promotion by Foster Carers of Independent Living Skills and Employment / Training Opportunities

Greater emphasis should be placed on assisting foster carers to promote independent living skills to Looked After Children who are approaching the time of leaving care. Foster carers should also be encouraged to become more aware of the employment and training opportunities available to young people and provide appropriate support.

(Reference Section 6.2, page 18)

Recommendation 4 – Enabling Foster Carers to Support Each Other

Further consideration should be given to ways in which foster carers can be empowered to support each other, either through face-to-face discussions or the greater use of the online environment, such as the development of an online Forum.

(Reference Section 6.2, page 18)

Recommendation 5 – Care Placements for Looked After Children with Special Educational or Behavioural Needs

When care placements are being considered, it is important that potential carers have the appropriate skills to support children with special needs or behavioural issues. Suitable training and support should be made available to relevant carers and placements should be made with those carers who have the specific skills.

(Reference Section 6.2, page 19)

Social Care

Recommendation 6 – Organisational Structure and Stability of Social Worker Contact

Consideration should be given to whether the realignment of Social Care teams can contribute towards greater stability of care for a child with regard to social worker contact so that transitions from one team to another are kept to a minimum. It is hoped that the current re-modeling and realignment of the social care workforce will contribute towards this aim.

(Reference Section 6.3, page 21)

Recommendation 7 – Financial Entitlements for Looked After Children

Advice to Looked After Children regarding financial entitlements should be available, consistent and timely. The North West Regional initiative on financial support and entitlements is welcomed.

(Reference Section 6.3, page 21)

Recommendation 8 – Communication with Looked After Children

In order to improve the provision of information to the Borough's Looked After Children, Wirral Council is encouraged to further develop the 'Right Side of Care' website alongside the introduction of new forms of communication such as Apps and texts.

(Reference Section 6.3, page 22)

Post-16 Support

Recommendation 9 – Transfer to the Pathways Team

Recognising the educational importance of Year 11, an assessment should be carried out regarding the merits of providing a gradual transition to the Pathways Team focused on both the school year and the needs of the young person rather than on the 16th birthday of the care leaver.

(Reference Section 6.4, page 24)

Recommendation 10 – Post-18 Support

The reduction of support for Looked After Children at 18 years old represents, to some care leavers, a "cliff-edge". Whilst the planned introduction of a 'Staying Put' policy in Wirral is warmly welcomed and although personal advisers are available post-18, the Strategic Director for Families & Wellbeing is asked to consider options for the ability of young people to access more one-to-one support and opportunities for "drop in" facilities for Care leavers.

(Reference Section 6.4, page 24)

Recommendation 11 – Independent Visitor Service

The profile of the Independent Visitor Service should be raised in order to provide additional support for young people and to present opportunities for greater continuity in support.

(Reference Section 6.4, page 25)

Recommendation 12 – Ownership of the Pathway Plan

In order to remove the sentiment held by some young people that the Pathway Plan is targeted at them rather than with them, more attention is needed to ensure that the young person 'owns' the Pathway Plan, with enough support being provided by the social worker to enable that to happen. It is suggested that development work is undertaken with the Pathway Team to enable this transformation.

(Reference Section 6.4, page 25)

Education

Recommendation 13 – The Relationship between Schools and Social Workers

More emphasis should be placed on developing stronger working relationships between schools and social workers, enabling better lines of communication. In particular, regular meetings between Designated Teachers and District Managers would provide a basis for progress.

(Reference Section 6.5, page 27)

Recommendation 14 - Raising the Profile of the Personal Education Plan (PEP)

A greater emphasis should be placed on raising the profile of the Personal Education Plan (PEP) and ensuring that the value of the plan is better understood by all those responsible for the welfare of a young person.

(Reference Section 6.5, page 28)

Recommendation 15 – Consistency of Reviews for Looked After Children

Consideration should be given to holding the PEP Review and the LAC Review at the same time wherever possible. The Task & Finish Group welcomes the work underway to improve the PEP in line with best practice in other Authorities and recommends ways are found to enhance sharing of the data required between school and social worker.

(Reference Section 6.5, page 28)

Recommendation 16 - Attendance at Parents' Evenings

The expected arrangements for attendance at Parents' Evenings ought to be specified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP).

(Reference Section 6.5, page 29)

Recommendation 17 – Personal Education Allowance

Alongside Pupil Premium, the Personal Education Allowance (PEA) represents a valuable resource to help Looked After Children achieve the educational results of their peers. The Looked After Children Education Service (LACES) team is encouraged to both analyse the effectiveness of the PEA funding and seek to ensure the funding is accessed by all of the Looked After Children who would potentially benefit.

(Reference Section 6.5, page 29)

16+ Employability

Recommendation 18 – Increasing the Capacity of the Employability Team

As the statutory duty to provide support to 20 and 21 year old Care leavers is introduced, the proposal to increase the capacity of the Employability Team with a peer mentor and an apprentice is fully supported.

(Reference Section 6.6, page 31)

Recommendation 19 – Opportunities for Work Experience

Wirral Council, as a Corporate Parent, is encouraged to identify and promote opportunities for internships and work experience for Looked After Children and Care leavers within the Council. Consideration should also be given to the Council's procurement arrangements in order to encourage similar opportunities in other companies.

(Reference Section 6.6, page 31)

Recommendation 20 – Higher Education

Greater emphasis should be placed on inspiring more Care leavers, for whom it is the appropriate route, to attend Higher Education. Consideration should be given to the opportunities that there may be to provide Care leavers with appropriate experiences early in the sixth form (or before).

(Reference Section 6.6, page 32)

Recommendation 21 – Employment Opportunities for All

The principle of seeking the right opportunities for individual Care leavers is supported, with an equal emphasis being placed on vocational avenues as well as academic learning.

(Reference Section 6.6, page 32)

Housing, Health and Youth Support

Recommendation 22 – Screening for Vulnerable Children

Consideration ought to be given to ways in which screening can be improved to ensure that all vulnerable children, including Looked After Children, are identified and receive appropriate interventions to make sure that children are more able to communicate and to promote emotional literacy.

(Reference Section 6.7, page 34)

Recommendation 23 – Supporting Care leavers in obtaining tenancies

Models of good practice from elsewhere should be explored in order to further support care leavers in obtaining tenancies.

(Reference Section 6.7, page 34)

Recommendation 24 – Sharing Accommodation

The feasibility of using the 'Right Side of Care' website to include the facility for offering opportunities for sharing accommodation should be investigated.

(Reference Section 6.7, page 34)

Recommendation 25 – Monitoring of the Quality of Accommodation

The process for housing young people who are leaving care should ensure that adequate monitoring and checking is taking place with young people to make sure that reasonable expectations of accommodation are being met.

(Reference Section 6.7, page 35)

3. MEMBERS OF THE TASK & FINISH GROUP

Councillor Wendy Clements (Chair)



As we began this Review, we were conscious that every Councillor is a Corporate Parent to the children and young people who are in the care of Wirral Council. This responsibility is not only to keep them safe, but to ensure that their lives are better than they would have been if not Looked After. Those of us who are parents know how much we strive to give our children opportunities to thrive and make their way in the world.

This Scrutiny Panel has spent a great deal of time to discover how that works for our Looked After Children. Thank you to all the people who gave so generously of their time, including Children and Young People. In particular, we are very grateful to the following young people who gave us their time and shared their views so powerfully: Kim, Katie, Beth, Dawn, Amy, Liam, Chantelle, Matt, Sarah, Shannon, Davina, Liam and Steven.

We have heard about excellent work and we've found areas to celebrate, but also have recommendations as to how things could be better. In reading our recommendations please remember that the whole Council is the Corporate Parent and our call to each Member and Officer of the Council is that the work of the Corporate Parent should affect every area of operation in order to care properly for our children.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Other Panel Members were:

Councillor Walter Smith



Councillor Pat Williams



4. BACKGROUND AND ORIGINAL BRIEF

At the meeting of the former Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7th November 2012, Members discussed the possibility of commencing an in-depth Scrutiny Review regarding the outcomes for Looked After Children.

An in-depth Scrutiny Review had been previously undertaken regarding the Outcomes for Children in Foster Care. A report of the work done by a Members' working group was produced in April 2008. Subsequent reports have been provided to the former Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2008 and January 2010 giving an officer response on the progress towards implementing the recommendations from the Members' Report.

By November 2012, it was considered appropriate to undertake a follow-up review on this related issue. The three Party Spokespersons volunteered to form a Task & Finish Group to undertake the Review. The Scope Document for the Scrutiny Review, attached as Appendix 1 to this Report, was agreed by the meeting of the former Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21st January 2013. It was intended that the new Review will investigate the steps which the Council and other partners are already taking and consider further actions that may be feasible in order to improve the outcomes for Looked After Children.

5. METHODOLOGY FOR THE REVIEW

The Panel has employed a number of methods to gather evidence:

5.1 Meetings with Young people and carers

- Care leavers (Children in Care Council) at Moreton Family Centre
 - A group of Care leavers at the Conway Centre
 - A group of Looked After Children at the Observatory School
 - A group of Foster Carers plus Sheila Khan (Team Manager, Wirral Fostering Service)
- In addition, a short questionnaire was completed by 11 members of the Children in Care Council.

5.2 Visits to Schools

The following schools were visited:

- Woodchurch High School
 - Rebekah Phillips (Headteacher, Woodchurch High School)
 - Dan Heydon (Designated Teacher, Woodchurch High School)
 - Elaine Reeve (Teaching Assistant / Learning Mentor for Looked After Children, Woodchurch High School)
- The Observatory School
 - Elaine Idris (Headteacher, Observatory School)
 - Tom Harney (Chair of Governors, Observatory School)
 - Suzanne Furlong (Designated Teacher, Observatory School)
 - Ann Baird (Pastoral Manager, Observatory School)
 - A group of Looked After Children

During these visits, issues have been discussed with Headteachers, Designated Teachers, Governors and some Looked After Children. Both of the visits were very constructive and highlighted issues relevant to the Review.

5.3 Meetings with Officers

A series of individual meetings has taken place at which the Task & Finish Group Members could discuss relevant issues with key officers from Wirral Borough Council. In addition, Simon Garner, Acting Head of Children's Social Care Branch) provided advice to the Panel Members during both the initial planning stage and the closing phase of the Review. Those interviewed during the course of the Review were:

- Tuesday 8th January 2013
Vivian Stafford (Strategic Service Manager: Post-16 Commissioning and Economic Generation, Wirral Borough Council)
- Tuesday 8th January 2013:
Brian Ronson (Team Manager, Pathway Team, Wirral Borough Council)
- Monday 14th January 2013:
Fiona O'Shaughnessy (Inclusion Manager, Children's Inclusion Service, Wirral Borough Council)
Dave Walker (Inclusion Officer, Children's Inclusion Service, Wirral Borough Council)
Jeanette Geary (Inclusion Officer, Children's Inclusion Service, Wirral Borough Council)
- Monday 21st January 2013:
Simon Garner (Acting Head of Children's Social Care Branch, Wirral Borough Council (and Chair of the North West After Care Forum)

- Tuesday 5th February 2013:
Anne Patterson (Acting Service Manager, Quality Assurance & Safeguarding Unit, Wirral Borough Council)
Deborah Caulfield (Independent Reviewing Officer)
Joanne Leighton (Independent Reviewing Officer)
Rebecca Hardy (Independent Reviewing Officer)
- Tuesday 5th February 2013:
Pat Rice (Head of Response, Wirral Borough Council)
Joanne Day (Operations Manager, Response Team, Wirral Borough Council)
Pat Manning (Specialist Substance Misuse Worker, Response Team, Wirral Borough Council)
- Wednesday 20th February 2013:
Pat Jones (Head of Targeted Youth Support Services, Children & Young People's Department, Wirral Borough Council)
Kathy Gill (YISP - Youth Inclusion Support Panel Manager, Children & Young People's Department, Wirral Borough Council)
Steve Pimblett (Strategic Service Manager, Integrated Youth Support, Children & Young People's Department, Wirral Borough Council) – Part meeting only
- Monday 4th March 2013:
Phil Sheridan (Virtual Headteacher – Secondary, Children & Young People's Department, Wirral Borough Council)
Steve Dainty (Virtual Headteacher – Primary, Children & Young People's Department, Wirral Borough Council)
- Tuesday 12th March 2013:
Paula Basnett (Manager, Invest Wirral and Foster Carer)
- Tuesday 12th March 2013:
Julie Webster (Deputy Director of Public Health, NHS Wirral)
Gareth Hill (Public Health Manager, NHS Wirral)
Lucy Tomlinson (Public Health Manager, NHS Wirral)
- Monday 18th March 2013:
Sheila Jacobs (Supported Housing Manager, Wirral Borough Council)
- Wednesday 27th March 2013:
Simon Fisher (Service Manager Children with Disabilities, Wirral Borough Council)
Graham Teare (Residential Homes Manager, Children & Young People Department, Wirral Borough Council)
Debbie Pearce (Children with Disabilities Team Manager, Children & Young People Department, Wirral Borough Council)
- Tuesday 23rd April 2013:
Hazel Griffiths-Jones, (Clinical Lead for Looked After Children, Wirral Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services - CAMHS, Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust)
- Tuesday 23rd April 2013:
Gareth Jones (Apprenticeship and Skills Manager, Children & Young People Department, Wirral Borough Council Manager)
Paul Arista (16 – 19 Manager, Children & Young People Department, Wirral Borough Council)

5.4 Written Evidence

The Review was also informed by written evidence including committee reports, Government documents and briefing papers from officers.

6. EVIDENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Aspiration for the Borough's Looked After Children

What the young people said....

- “There is a stereotype about Looked After Children and there are few positive messages.”
- “Tell a Looked After Child that they will do bad and they will do bad”. “When you are in care, you are always put down and told that you could not achieve.”
- “There should be more aspiration for Looked After Children. A friend went to College but was kicked off the course because she did not work. She did not work because she was told that she could not do it.”

What the Members welcomed....

- Work to raise the aspiration of Looked After Children towards higher education is taking place in schools and in the Employability Team. However, more remains to be done.
- Aspiration towards educational attainment for Looked After Children is a high priority in those schools that were visited.
- The successful Takeover Day which gives children, including those Looked After, the opportunity to get involved with decision-making and to aspire to become future leaders for their community.

What the Members suggest for future developments....

One of the recurring themes throughout the evidence-gathering stage of the Review has been the need to provide greater aspiration for the Borough's Looked After Children. In addition to the comments received from the young people, as highlighted above, other comments were received from a variety of sources:

“It is important to give them positives and to give them confidence”. Foster Carer

“There needs to be greater aspiration among partners for these children”. Social Care Professional

“The numbers going to university are increasing but are still relatively small. It is an issue that is discussed at the Children in Care Council in order to spur on other young people. However, there are still young people who believe that they cannot go to university because they are in care”. Social Care Manager

“In some cases, although there is good care provided by the foster carer, some carers do not have aspirations for education”. Teacher

Whilst the Task & Finish Group Members were told of many examples of aspirational support provided to the children in care, challenges clearly remain. A teacher at one school described the opportunities for some Looked After Children to undertake a visit to Liverpool John Moores University in order to raise aspirations. At an individual level, there were very positive examples of foster carers encouraging young people to succeed.

In October 2012, the Department for Education issued the Charter for Care leavers. In particular, the Charter focuses upon aspiration in the following statement:

To believe in you

We will value your strengths, gifts and talents and encourage your aspirations. We will hold a belief in your potential and a vision for your future even if you have lost sight of these yourself. We will help you push aside limiting barriers and encourage and support you to pursue your goals in whatever ways we can. We will believe in you, celebrate you and affirm you.

Wirral Council has responded by agreeing to sign up to the principles of the Charter. The delivery of these principles into a practical Action Plan remains a challenge for the Council as is the measurement of the future impact of the Charter. However, the Panel Members stress that, in particular, greater aspiration for the Borough's Looked After Children should be embedded within the practices of the Council and its partners. As well as ensuring that children in care are kept safe, there should also be a goal to inspire those children, especially those in long-term care.

Recommendation 1 – Aspiration for Wirral's Looked After Children

As part of its role as a Corporate Parent, Wirral Council will place aspiration for the Borough's Looked After Children at the heart of its decision-making processes. The Council will work with all relevant partners to encourage them to adopt the same principle.

6.2 The impact of foster carers

What the young people said....

- Some young people experienced very strong support from their foster carers but this was not universal.
- “My foster carer spoilt me rotten”.
- Some care leavers were still with their foster carer post-18. Others were able to stay only if they paid weekly lodgings.
- Priority and additional resources being given to foster carers’ own children were seen as unfair. “Foster carers treat us far from their own”.
- “The foster carer used to lock the kitchen door at night”
- Attendance of foster carers at training sessions could be improved. This was particularly noted for connected carers.

What the Members welcomed....

- There were very clear demonstrations of appreciation towards their Foster Carers shown by some of the children in care.
- The numbers of foster carers attending training sessions has improved, although it is recognised that further work remains to be done.

What the Members suggest for future developments....

Training for foster carers

Training for foster carers is delivered by a number of different providers. Each foster carer is expected to complete ‘core’ training as a part of their registration. Currently, all registered foster carers receive a ‘skills’ based fee, which is separate from the fostering allowance.

Although the numbers of foster carers attending training sessions has improved it was reported that there is a significant shortfall in attendance. This is most pronounced among connected or kinship carers (extended family members) among whom there is a particular reluctance to participate in formal training sessions as the child is viewed as part of the family. In the period between July 2012 and July 2013, of the total of 536 foster carers, only 154 (approximately 29%) had attended formal training sessions. However, of the 154, many had attended a number of different sessions. Therefore, it is clear that there is good engagement in the training process from that minority of carers.

An option for the future could be to change the policy so that fees will continue to be paid only if minimum training requirements are met on an annual basis. At the same time, there is also a strong case to provide further encouragement for carers to attend sessions in other ways. This may involve holding sessions at different times of the day, at different venues, offering childcare facilities, ensuring sessions are always of high quality, offering the availability of peer mentors and so on. It is important that the Council reinforces the importance of training to all foster carers.

Recommendation 2 – Incentivising Attendance at Training Sessions for Foster Carers

In order to ensure the continuous professional development of foster carers, consideration should be given to amending the policy so that fees for foster carers will continue to be paid only if minimum training requirements are met on an annual basis. A revised training strategy and coordinated programme should be put in place to support this proposal.

Preparation for Independence

Some of the young people reported their uncertainty regarding life skills, such as budgeting, cookery skills and so on. Further comments from young people are documented later in Section 6.4 (Post-16 Support) particularly with regard to money management and budgeting. Although the provision of life skills training is available from providers such as the Youth Offending Service, additional support would be beneficial. Foster carers have an opportunity to help prepare young people for greater independence. As an example, one care leaver has reported that the strangest experience was being in a room on their own for the evening, as in a busy foster home you were rarely alone. Such experiences could be prepared for in advance. The Members suggest that carers are in an ideal position to provide additional support to promote and develop independent living skills in those young people approaching the time to leave care.

There was also evidence that increased engagement with the Employability Team may enable foster carers to become more aware of employment and training opportunities that may be available to Looked After Children. Additional support and advice from foster carers could help young people to evaluate options for training and employment. A regular network, parents' evenings and newsletters for foster carers would provide the basic information for the carers to undertake that role more fully.

Recommendation 3 – Promotion by Foster Carers of Independent Living Skills and Employment / Training Opportunities

Greater emphasis should be placed on assisting foster carers to promote independent living skills to Looked After Children who are approaching the time of leaving care. Foster carers should also be encouraged to become more aware of the employment and training opportunities available to young people and provide appropriate support.

Enabling Foster Carers to Support Each Other

As outlined above, there is obviously a major role for a formal training programme in order to enhance the skills of foster carers. However, there was also evidence that some foster carers may benefit from greater empowerment in the form of learning from other carers. It has been proposed greater networking and the development on a local online forum, available only to foster carers in Wirral, could help to provide additional support to carers. One foster carer explained:

“Fostering can be lonely and the Forum will enable foster carers to swap ideas. Although there is supervision available from the social worker every six weeks it would be very helpful, in addition, to talk to other foster carers”.

Although the Fostering Network provides an online forum, it is understood that, as the annual fee is £86, many foster carers do not subscribe. Members, therefore, support the principle of developing a localised online Forum which has already been proposed by a group of foster carers in Wirral. It is anticipated that company sponsorship could offset the costs of the Forum.

Recommendation 4 – Enabling Foster Carers to Support Each Other

Further consideration should be given to ways in which foster carers can be empowered to support each other, either through face-to-face discussions or the greater use of the online environment, such as the development of an online Forum.

Looked After Children with Special Needs

A significant number of the children placed into care have special needs or behavioural issues.

Referring to foster carers, one witness who works with children with such requirements explained:

“If they understood the trigger points and the special needs of the young people it would make my job so much easier”.

The Members heard from a number of professionals who argued that foster carers and social workers should have special training if the child in care has designated special needs. As a consequence, the Members have concluded that there should be greater training and monitoring for foster carers who care for children with certain medical and behavioural needs. A programme should be put in place to identify those carers who have specific skills and enable further training to those carers who require enhanced skills. In terms of placements, it is clearly advantageous if the individual needs of the child can be best supported by foster carers who have particular skills.

Recommendation 5 – Care Placements for Looked After Children with Special Educational or Behavioural Needs

When care placements are being considered, it is important that potential carers have the appropriate skills to support children with special needs or behavioural issues. Suitable training and support should be made available to relevant carers and placements should be made with those carers who have the specific skills.

6.3 The Social Care process

What the young people said....

- Some difficulties in contacting social workers were experienced.
- Contact with all social workers was not a positive and supportive experience.
- “The level of support varies depending on the social worker”.
- “There needs to be better social worker contact. The social workers always have other things to do”.
- “If a young person is not rebellious they are not seen as a priority. There needs to be a way of contacting the social workers and being treated as a priority”.
- Social workers have been changed too often.
- “There are so many people in and out of your life”.
- “Over time, we have contact with so many social workers”. One care leaver had been in care for approximately ten years. During that time she has had 6 or 7 social workers.
- Being cared for out-of-borough resulted in one young person feeling isolated.
- Foster care is definitely not the solution for all children in care. Residential Care has been far more suitable for some young people.
- There was some positive feedback regarding the continuous relationship provided by the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO).
- Confidentiality was a big issue for some of the young people. “Lots of stories about why you are in care are made up”.
- “It would be good if Looked After Children got a travel card”
- The questionnaire showed that only some of the young people do discuss their future plans with social workers and foster carers.
- There was some negative feedback regarding young people being told what they are entitled to, including financial support.
- “The Inclusion Service is brilliant”
- The Children in Care Council is a very positive experience for those who participate. “It shows that the professionals are now listening to the young people”.

What the Members welcomed....

- There is a high level of engagement with the Children in Care Council.
- The successful implementation of the ‘Right Side of Care’ website for the use of Wirral’s children in care.
- The Inclusion Team is able to build strong relationships with young people over a long period of time.
- In recent years, the Council has been able to retain more children in stable placements.
- There is recognition of the strong challenge that is provided by the Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) in Wirral.
- Staffing levels among the Independent Reviewing Officers has been increased in order to further support the challenge which they are able to provide.
- The successful Residential Providers Forum has become a template for other Local Authorities.
- Although there needs to be more joined up thinking between health, education and social care, it is anticipated that the new organisational structure for Special Educational Needs will assist in this process.

What the Members suggest for future developments....

Stability of Social Worker Contact

During the Review, there were a significant number of comments related to the importance of continuity of social worker contact for the children in care. The availability of social worker time to individuals when required was equally highlighted. One young person summarised the comments of several others when he told the Members that:

“There are so many people in and out of your life”.

A professional reinforced the point by stating:

“Some Looked After Children have a large turnover of social workers. As a result, some of those children see themselves as inconvenient baggage”.

And another added:

“For many Looked After Children, their stories are fragmented with different schools and different social workers”

Members have been informed of the steps that are being taken by the Strategic Directorate to hopefully address the high level of turnover in some teams, including the enhancement of the role, improved training opportunities, reduced manager to social worker ratios as well as remuneration. However, in addition, the organisational structure can contribute to the stability of care for a child. For example, if there is a separate assessment unit from the care management team, then due to the transfer to the new team, the child will be subject to a change of social worker. Therefore, the Members request that further consideration be given to organisational changes that could be made with the aim of keeping transitions for the child to a minimum.

Recommendation 6 – Organisational Structure and Stability of Social Worker Contact

Consideration should be given to whether the organisation of Social Care teams can contribute towards greater stability of care for a child with regard to social worker contact so that transitions from one team to another are kept to a minimum. It is hoped that the current re-modeling and realignment of the social care workforce will contribute towards this aim.

Financial Entitlements

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families wrote to all Local Authorities in October 2012 requesting that Councils consider increasing the care leavers' grant to at least £2000 and review the figure annually with the Children in Care Council. At that time, the rate in Wirral was £1500 and approval is now being sought to raise it to £2000. The Members support this approach.

Comments emerged during the Review from the young people and from some professionals to suggest that there is a lack of clarity regarding the financial entitlements for children in care and care leavers. It is acknowledged that work is taking place among Local Authorities in the North West Region to review guidance to financial support and entitlement. It is understood that a local guide will be produced based on the regional model. Again, this approach is welcomed. However, it is suggested that further work is required to ensure that consistent information is available and is actually received by the young people. It is also interesting to note that the previous Scrutiny Review, entitled 'Scrutiny of the Outcomes for Children in Foster Care, produced in 2008, included a recommendation to "Ensure that looked-after children are aware of their financial entitlement".

Recommendation 7 – Financial Entitlements for Looked After Children

Advice to Looked After Children regarding financial entitlements should be available, consistent and timely. The North West Regional initiative on financial support and entitlements is welcomed.

Communication with Looked After Children

Linked to the previous recommendation is a more general point on communication to the children in care and to care leavers. It was suggested that there should be a greater emphasis placed on monitoring and evaluating the information that Looked After Children are actually receiving. Much of the information to carers and young people is currently delivered by email, telephone and written communication. It is perhaps timely to consider the use of Apps and texts as well as the Internet, in order to consolidate information flow.

Recommendation 8 – Communication with Looked After Children

In order to improve the provision of information to the Borough's Looked After Children, Wirral Council is encouraged to further develop the 'Right Side of Care' website alongside the introduction of new forms of communication such as Apps and texts.

6.4 Post-16 Support

What the young people said....

- Those who had already left care recorded that they had very little money at that time.
- Care leavers should be better prepared, for example, in budgeting.
- There was some very positive feedback regarding the Leaving Care Team. “The Leaving Care worker was brilliant”; “The social worker from the Pathways Team has been great”.
- When leaving care, one young person felt isolated and without any emotional support. “There was no help with money or support”
- “It is silly, that at 18 years old, they assume that you are OK to be on your own”.
- There is a perception of a “cliff-edge” at 18 years old for some young people. “We have to move out at 18 even if you’re not ready. We’re still kids”.
- “In a normal family you do not get told to go when you are 18”.
- More support should be available post-18. There were requests for more financial support to be available until the age of 21.
- “Not having a family to turn to is very hard”.
- Some young people welcomed the First Home Grant (also known as care leavers’ grant).
- “There should be a benefit for care leavers”.
- “We need someone to listen and to come to your flat if necessary”.
- “I am unusual because I want to be on my own. However, there is still a need for someone to be available if you need them”.

What the Members welcomed....

- There was positive feedback towards the work of the Pathways Team, not only from some young people, but from Foster Carers too.
- There was evidence of strong partnership working between different agencies. This was apparent in the work taking place between the Pathways Team and the Social Landlords and also with the Youth Offending Service.
- The Pathways Team has worked alongside Job Centre Plus to develop the Care Leaver’s protocol, which aims to support care leavers into work.
- Positive outcomes from the Independent Visitor Service were reported.

What the Members suggest for future developments....

Timing of Transfer to the Pathways Team

In October 2012, the Department of Education issued the Care leavers in England Data Pack alongside the Charter for Care leavers. This documentation states that, nationally, too many young people are leaving care at age 16, particularly from children’s homes. Although many go home, 26% move to independent living. The government expects all Local Authorities to support and prepare young people for adulthood in a measured and flexible way so that young people move to independence when they are ready.

A number of contributors expressed concern regarding the timing of the transition of the transfer of Looked After Children to the Pathways Team in preparation for leaving care. One professional who works closely with care leavers explained:

“The age of 16 is a time of massive uncertainty for all children regarding exams, etc.. For Looked After Children, we add to that by them leaving care. The timing of transition is not that flexible”.

The case was made strongly that there was a need for additional support for Looked After Children through the period around 16/17 years old when they are doing GCSEs, looking for further education, training or employment and, for many, leaving foster care to become more independent. A huge amount of change is taking place simultaneously. In fact, some of the foster carers with whom the Members met suggested whether earlier contact with the Pathways Team may help. Members were also informed that as the Pathways Team get involved with a Looked After Child, at their 16th birthday, for some children, depending on their date of birth, that is not early enough to provide support to the young person in making their post-16 applications.

Members have, therefore, concluded that it would be beneficial for there to be greater flexibility around the timing of transition to the Pathways Team, based on each young person's individual needs.

Recommendation 9 – Transfer to the Pathways Team

Recognising the educational importance of year 11, an assessment should be carried out regarding the merits of providing a gradual transition to the Pathways Team focused on both the school year and the needs of the young person rather than on the 16th birthday of the care leaver.

Post-18 Support

The care leavers in England Data Pack released by the Department of Education (in October 2012) stresses the importance of ensuring that the young person has a network of support so that they do not feel alone and experience loneliness. Comments from both young people preparing to leave care and from others who have been through the process (see 'What the Young People said....' above) suggest that more could be done in this regard. Indeed the point was made that, once a child in care is 16 years old, the system assumes that planning starts for them to leave care. Members warmly welcome the proposals to support payments based on the Staying Put principles that are now being developed for Wirral. This should enable those young people who wish to stay with their foster parents post-18 to do so. However, concerns remain among professionals:

"There is a need to ensure that back-up is available to Looked After Children if "they have had a bad day" to prevent them giving up on opportunities".

"There are real concerns about what will happen to some of the young people when they leave school and have less day-to-day support. What will stop them going off the rails?"

Members were informed that those children in care who are under 18 years of age are unable to claim benefits. Therefore, they tend to maintain contact with the Pathway Team in order to maintain financial support. However, once they reach 18, "they have to live in the adult world" and contact is often lost.

Recommendation 10 – Post-18 Support

The reduction of support for Looked After Children at 18 years old represents, to some care leavers, "a cliff-edge". Whilst the planned introduction of a 'Staying Put' policy in Wirral is warmly welcomed and although personal advisers are available post-18, the Strategic Director for Families & Wellbeing is asked to consider options for the ability of young people to access more one-to-one support and opportunities for "drop in" facilities for Care leavers.

Independent Visitor Service

The Independent Visitor Service is a statutory service providing volunteers who befriend, support, advise and guide children or young people (aged 6-21) who are in the care of the Local Authority and who have little, irregular, poor quality or no contact with parents or where an appointment is seen to

be in the child's best interests. The Service is independent of professionals involved in the care of the young people and anything discussed during the visits remains confidential subject to safeguarding practices. Referrals can be made from carers, social workers, Independent Reviewing Officers, other professionals and from the young people themselves. Referrals are made usually because the young person is isolated or they are experiencing a number of changes in their lives and an Independent Visitor is someone who can provide consistent support over a long term basis. The service in Wirral is currently provided by Wired and is supporting 20 young people. The youngest currently supported is 11; the oldest is 20. Young people are in a variety of settings such as foster placements or residential care and can be in Wirral or out of Borough.

The service is promoted through a variety of means such as the distribution of information leaflets, Wired's website and attending foster carer forums. However, particularly given the evidence presented in Section 6.4 (Post-16 Support) it is suggested that the Independent Visitor Service may be able to play a greater role in reducing some of the concerns expressed by the young people at the time of leaving care.

Recommendation 11 – Independent Visitor Service

The profile of the Independent Visitor Service should be raised in order to provide additional support for young people and to present opportunities for greater continuity in support.

Ownership of the Pathway Plan

During meetings, Members heard that there was a perception that for a significant number of Looked After Children, the Pathway Plan was "targeted at them rather than with them". The Department of Education stresses that there should be sufficient focus on the young person's Pathway Plan to ensure it clearly maps out the needs and ambitions of the young person. Based on the evidence available to the Members, it is suggested that further work is required in this area.

Recommendation 12 – Ownership of the Pathway Plan

In order to remove the sentiment held by some young people that the Pathway Plan is targeted at them rather than with them, more attention is needed to ensure that the young person 'owns' the Pathway Plan, with enough support being provided by the social worker to enable that to happen. It is suggested that development work is undertaken with the Pathway Team to enable this transformation.

6.5 Education

What the young people said....

- Some young people experienced strong support from their school but this was not universal.
- There was a very mixed response regarding the relationship with the Designated Teacher. Some young people had a supportive relationship whereas some young people did not know who their Designated Teacher was and others had a poor relationship.
- “Additional money goes to the school but you don’t see it”.
- Some young people received support from the school in the form of equipment such as laptops.
- There was evidence from the questionnaire that young people do feel encouraged to do well at school by their carers, although this was not universal.
- Attendance by some foster carers at Parents’ Evenings was limited.
- Some care leavers felt that they were not encouraged to succeed at school as they would not be able to cope with the academic stream. For example, “they picked my career for me at that age”.
- Being treated equally in school and not being stigmatised would help.
- “A Looked After Child in school is seen as problem child.”
- There was evidence of some bullying related to young people being in care.
- Referring to the instability in her life, one young person commented “How can they expect you to be stable at school when all that is going on?” followed by “Why do they want to move you when you are expecting exams?”

What the Members welcomed....

- The ethos and the extensive support provided towards Looked After Children at both the Observatory and Woodchurch High School was hugely impressive. The staff at the school clearly know the children very well, trying to understand individual needs and making reasonable adjustments. The schools act as very strong advocates for their children in care.
- The re-alignment of the Looked After Children Education Service (LACES) has led to the monitoring of data on a pupil by pupil basis. This has enabled detailed conversations with schools which, hopefully, will facilitate the effective targeting of resources and lead to improved attainment.
- The new working methodology of the LACES Team will hopefully encourage long-term planning for individual Looked After Children in schools.
- There were reports that Independent Reviewing Officers are now regularly asking how the Pupil Premium is being spent.
- There is some evidence that the additional support, including mentoring, is leading to improved results for Looked After Children at GCSE (Key Stage 4). This is demonstrated by the table below. In 2012, 4 LAC (Year 11) achieved 5 A*-C (including English and Maths) out of a cohort of 33, that is 12%. The target for 2013 is to increase this performance to 20%. However, attainment levels remain well below the average for non-Looked After Children.

The attainment of Looked After Children achieving 5+ GCSE A*-C, including English and Maths is demonstrated by PI 101:

PI 101	Wirral LAC 2010	Wirral LAC 2011	Wirral LAC 2012	National 2010	National 2011
5+ A*-C including English and Maths	8	9	12	12	13
5+ A*-C	29	26	42	26	31

Source: ‘Review of Attainment & Progress at the End of Key Stage 4’, Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21st January 2013

As a comparator, the equivalent data for all Children is demonstrated by PI 75:

PI 75	Wirral 2010	Wirral 2011	Wirral 2012	National 2010	National 2011	National 2012
5+ A*-C including English and Maths	58.7	64.1	64.8	53.5	58.9	58.3

Source: 'Review of Attainment & Progress at the End of Key Stage 4', Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21st January 2013

What the Members suggest for future developments....

Relationships between Schools and Social Care

It was clear during the course of the Review that many of the social care and educational professionals have a great desire to meet the needs of the children in care. However, evidence arose that partnership working was not always strong and that improved mutual understanding of the roles of teachers and social workers would be beneficial. The Members heard observations that there needs to be a closer working relationship between schools and social workers in the interests of the children in care. There were requests for faster response times to queries and a better way of contacting social workers. It is interesting to note that the Scrutiny Review of Literacy Levels at Key Stage 2, which reported in January 2010 found similar evidence. That report concluded:

"With respect to the care of vulnerable children, there was evidence of some frustration regarding the relationship between schools and the Children's Social Services Department of Wirral Borough Council. This frustration could be heard in the words of one head teacher, who commented that "There is a desire for people from different departments (education, social care and health) to work together but there are still barriers. Sometimes people can be reluctant to open out and work together. There are lots of little islands"."

The Literacy Scrutiny Review included the following two recommendations:

"Greater emphasis should be given to the provision of a consistent link between schools and Children's Social Care Services. A Social Worker should be allocated to either a Children's Centre or a School Cluster Group, wherever is most appropriate".

"The Council is encouraged to promote more multi-agency working, specifically by improving protocols for the sharing of information between health, social care and education professionals. This should apply particularly to 'hard to reach' families".

Therefore, in order to strengthen the relationship between schools and social workers, the Members recommend that lines of communication are strengthened, commencing with regular meetings between Designated Teachers and District Managers.

Recommendation 13 – The Relationship between Schools and Social Workers

More emphasis should be placed on developing stronger working relationships between schools and social workers, enabling better lines of communication. In particular, regular meetings between Designated Teachers and District Managers would provide a basis for progress.

The Personal Education Plan (PEP)

In order to enhance the educational outcomes of Looked After Children, a Personal Education Plan (PEP) should be prepared for each child in care. The PEP is a record of what needs to happen for Looked After Children to enable them to fulfil their potential and reflects any existing education plans, such as a statement of special educational needs. The PEP is the joint responsibility of the Local Authority and the school, although the process should be led by the child's social worker.

The Members heard a number of suggestions from professionals that the completion and value placed upon the PEP needs to be improved, with greater emphasis on ensuring that the PEP has identified where additional support is required and that the support is actually provided. It was also suggested that the process requires greater consistency. Although positive work is taking place to further develop the plans in consultation with foster carers and social care teams, more progress is needed. One Manager concluded that:

“Whilst the social worker’s major focus is on the safety of the child, there are challenges to ensure that the PEP is not seen as a low priority”.

In terms of the process, there was a proposition that the PEP process works better if there is continuity in attendance at meetings and that the process will only be successful if fully supported by social work managers, social workers and Designated Teachers. It was also emphasised that the success of the PEP in schools can rely on the relationship between the Designated Teacher and the class teachers.

Recommendation 14 – Raising the Profile of the Personal Education Plan (PEP)

A greater emphasis should be placed on raising the profile of the Personal Education Plan (PEP) and ensuring that the value of the plan is better understood by all those responsible for the welfare of a young person.

Consistency of Reviews for Looked After Children

An LAC Review is held a minimum of every six months. In Wirral, the PEP Review is a separate process, although many of the same people are involved. It is understood that in some Local Authorities, for example, Bristol City Council and Norfolk County Council the PEP Review takes place in conjunction with the LAC Review. The purpose is to ensure that these two strands of the child’s care plan are in alignment.

This was also a recommendation of the 2008 Scrutiny Review, ‘Scrutiny of the Outcomes for Children in Foster Care’:

“Consideration should be given to combining, to a greater or lesser extent, joint care meetings – LAC Reviews and PEP meetings – in order to make more effective use of professional’s time”.

However, the Officer response reported in the Fostering Service Progress Report for the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 21st January 2010, is also noted:

“Wherever possible, LAC Reviews and PEP meetings are combined. Social workers and Independent Reviewing Officers do consider whether this is possible when LAC reviews are booked. It does however remain the case that combined reviews are not always an option. For example, statutory timescales cannot be changed to enable a combined review. In addition, some LAC Reviews are called to consider specific issues other than education. It would not be appropriate to combine such a review with a PEP meeting”.

Recommendation 15 – Consistency of Reviews for Looked After Children

Consideration should be given to holding the PEP Review and the LAC Review at the same time wherever possible. The Task & Finish Group welcomes the work underway to improve the PEP in line with best practice in other authorities and recommends ways are found to enhance sharing of the data required between school and social worker.

Engagement of Foster Carers in the education of children in care

The previous Scrutiny Review, referred to earlier, which investigated Literacy Levels at Key Stage 2 again commented upon importance of education and, in particular, literacy skills for children in care. At that time, the Panel Members sought to encourage the Authority to raise the profile of literacy specifically for Looked After Children in order to enhance their life chances. It was suggested that foster parents should be given greater support specifically to help them assist their fostered children in improving their literacy skills. The Literacy Review recommended:

“Training courses for Foster Carers and staff in Residential Homes should include a module on literacy and raising standards”.

In addition, the ‘Scrutiny of the Outcomes for Children in Foster Care’ Report (2008) included a recommendation:

“There should be strong encouragement for foster carers to attend schools’ Parents evenings and PEP meetings and provide the means for doing so through additional childcare arrangements. Carers should have regular contact with the Designated Teacher”.

During the current Scrutiny Review, concerns were again raised among professionals regarding the role of foster carers in emphasising the importance of education. There were calls for some foster carers to become more aspirational towards education. Evidence emerged that attendance at school parents’ evenings by foster carers was partial. One way in which greater emphasis could be placed on education is by providing clarity regarding the responsibility for attendance at parents’ evenings, whether it be the foster carer or the social worker. It was also suggested that more could be done to give foster carers the confidence to go into schools and ask questions.

Recommendation 16 - Attendance at Parents’ Evenings

The expected arrangements for attendance at Parents’ Evenings ought to be specified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP).

Personal Education Allowance

Funding for Looked After Children is available to schools via a number of streams:

- Pupil Premium - £900 per Looked After Child per year is payable to the school (2013/14 rate).
- “First 500” – The Wirral School Forum has agreed that an addition £500 per Looked After Child is payable to the school for each Wirral child in care (although not Looked After Children from other Local Authorities).
- Personal Educational Allowance – Schools can apply for specific amounts of funding to support individual Looked After Children for activities such as additional tuition, educational equipment and educational trips. This fund is administered by the Social Care Branch.

The Members suggest that further emphasis is given, by working effectively with the schools, to ensure that this additional funding is used as effectively as possible to improve the educational outcomes for the Borough’s Looked After Children.

Recommendation 17 – Personal Education Allowance

Alongside Pupil Premium, the Personal Education Allowance (PEA) represents a valuable resource to help Looked After Children achieve the educational results of their peers. The LACES team is encouraged to both analyse the effectiveness of the PEA funding and seek to ensure the funding is accessed by all of the Looked After Children who would potentially benefit.

6.6 16+ Employability

What the young people said....

- In several cases, college has been very supportive.
- Several care leavers recognised the importance of apprenticeships as they provide experience. “Apprenticeships set you up for a proper job.”
- There were several examples of young people struggling to settle into a job.

What the Members welcomed....

- Within the Employability Team, it is a big asset to have a former Looked After Child acting as a peer mentor. “The issue is not about throwing money at it. It’s about getting the right people to work with the children”. The use of peer mentors is now being replicated by other Local Authorities.
- The percentage of Looked After Children at the age of 19 who are in education, employment or training (Performance Indicator NI148) continues to improve. The last three years has seen an increase from 36% (2010/11) to 52% (2011/12) to 61% for NI148 in Wirral for 2012/13.
- The Inclusion Service aims to create work experience for Looked After Children.
- The Brathay Project, and subsequently the use of Oaklands as the partner organisation in delivering the NEET Participation Programme. This programme received excellent feedback and was recognised as being superb for building confidence in Looked After Children.
- The work that is taking place to achieve the FromCare2Work Kitemark.

What the Members suggest for future developments....

The Employability Team is responsible for providing support to both Looked After Children who are still in education post-16 in addition to those who are NEET or on the edge of NEET. Comparative information is available in the following table regarding the activities of 19 year olds.

	Cohort of 49 young people who were 19 in Wirral as of November 2012	Activities of 19 year old care leavers in 2011 (England)
Percentage in education, employment or training	61%	65%
Percentage not in education, employment or training (NEET)	31%	30%
Percentage not in education, employment or training (NEET) because of because of disability or illness	8%	5%

Source: Care leavers in England Data Pack released by the Department of Education (Oct 2012 and 2012 Care leaver in Education, Employment and Training (Wirral) Briefing paper

It is also interesting to note that the Care leavers in England Data Pack reports that young people in education at age 19 are more likely to have had stable care periods than those in other activities. 80% of the young care leavers in higher or other types of education had a single period of care compared with 72% of those in training or employment and 69% of those who were NEET.

The Local Authority has set a target of 65% of care leavers aged 16–19 being in employment, education or training in 2012 / 2013. As at April 2013, the level was 62%, with a caseload of 105 Care leavers in the 16–19 age group. A challenge for the future is the extension of the duty to ensure that support is also in place for 20 and 21 year olds. On current figures, this will increase the caseload to 179. In order to maintain the level of service, there is a proposal for additional capacity to be provided by peers who have been through the care system in order for the team to cope with the expected additional demand.

Recommendation 18 – Increasing the Capacity of the Employability Team

As the statutory duty to provide support to 20 and 21 year old Care leavers is introduced, the proposal to increase the capacity of the Employability Team with a peer mentor and an apprentice is fully supported.

Opportunities for Work Experience

The importance of building self-confidence in Looked After Children was heard repeatedly throughout the Review. Members were informed that, for some children in care, there is a need to improve self-esteem and confidence levels, for example, to help with interview skills. This can be a significant problem at the age of transition (16–17 years old) when the young person is moving to semi-independence; a period which can be particularly difficult when there is no parental input.

One way of achieving increased confidence levels is to provide relevant experiences in order to prepare a young person for further training and eventually for work. One foster parent commented:

“Work experience is very important for Looked After Children as a confidence builder”

It was noted that there is an offer of a one week’s placement to Looked After Children to work with the Inclusion Team based at Moreton Family Centre. However, it appears that this process is not replicated across other parts of the Council. It was suggested that, as the Corporate Parent for these young people, the Council could provide greater opportunities for internships and job experience across all Departments. Furthermore, it was also suggested that procurement arrangements could be used to encourage companies to offer work experience, internships and apprenticeships to care leavers.

Recommendation 19 – Opportunities for Work Experience

Wirral Council, as a Corporate Parent, is encouraged to identify and promote opportunities for internships and work experience for Looked After Children and Care leavers within the Council. Consideration should also be given to the Council’s procurement arrangements in order to encourage similar opportunities in other companies.

Apprenticeship Scheme

The past success of the Wirral Apprentice scheme has been widely recognised. Members were informed that the previous scheme, in order to support the needs of the Borough’s Looked After Children, was able to ensure ring-fenced interviews for care leavers as part of the Council’s Corporate Parenting responsibilities. As the Apprentice scheme is now being offered on a Liverpool City Region basis, Members welcome the news that the principle of ring-fencing interview opportunities for Looked After Children has been retained. The report, Wirral Apprentice Programme, supporting a delegated decision made by the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Regeneration on 29th July 2013, includes the following statement:

“To open up apprenticeship places for care leavers a limited number of £500 premium payments will be available to businesses recruiting via the Wirral Apprentice programme. The purpose of the premium is to enable officers to incentivise employers and secure ring-fence interviews for care leavers”.

The Financial Planning Assumptions in the report show that, in the current financial year, it is assumed that four Looked After Children will benefit from this premium payment. This approach is warmly welcomed by the Members undertaking this Scrutiny Review.

Higher Education

It is recognised that the Employability programme, delivered by the Looked After Children Employability Team, arranges for the provision of academic mentoring support to those still in full-time education. As an example, Liverpool John Moores University provides mentors from among the undergraduates, for example, to improve exam techniques. University visits are also arranged to show children in care that university is within their range. Nevertheless, in 2012, three Looked After Children progressed to higher education. In September 2013, it is hoped that six former children in care will go on to higher education with a further four identified as potential university entrants in September 2014, with there being potential for the latter figure to be higher. As a comparator, the Care leavers in England Data Pack released by the Department of Education (in October 2012) reported the activities of 19 year old care leavers in 2011. Nationally, 7% were reported to be in higher education. The report also noted that young people who were in foster placements immediately before leaving care are the most likely to be in higher education aged 19.

It is recognised by the Members that a lot of work is taking place to raise aspirations among this cohort. Nevertheless, as Corporate Parents, it is reasonable to aim to raise aspirations even further. It is noted that Local Authorities have a duty to pay a higher education bursary of £2000 to any care leaver who started a course after September 2008.

Recommendation 20 – Higher Education

Greater emphasis should be placed on inspiring more Care leavers, for whom it is the appropriate route, to attend Higher Education. Consideration should be given to the opportunities that there may be to provide Care leavers with appropriate experiences early in the sixth form (or before).

Employment Opportunities For All

The Department for Education has been funding the FromCare2Work Programme run by the National Care Advisory Service which provides care leavers with employment opportunities. The Department is encouraging all Local Authorities to actively work with the programme. It is encouraging to note that Wirral Council is actively engaged in working towards achieving the From Care2Work Kitemark. Although Members in the previous recommendation have stressed the importance of aspiration towards higher education, they also heard evidence of the importance to support the aspirations of all children in care, whether that be on an academic or vocational basis.

Recommendation 21 – Employment Opportunities for All

The principle of seeking the right opportunities for individual Care leavers is supported, with an equal emphasis being placed on vocational avenues as well as academic learning.

6.7 Housing, Health and Youth Support

What the young people said....

- The Council should take more care about where they let young people move to. For example: “There was no central heating or double glazing. It was very cold”.
- Semi-supervised living is a good way to prepare for leaving care.
- There were low expectations about finding “somewhere nice to live in the future”.
- In some cases, the social worker provided little support towards care leavers finding accommodation.

What the Members welcomed....

Housing

- The floating support model enables care leavers to have some independence but with some support being available.
- The Supporting People Programme provides support to vulnerable young people. Currently there are 289 units of supported accommodation for young people, some of whom will be care leavers.
- Wirral Supported lodgings, provided by Local Solutions, is recognised as a cost-effective way of providing supported accommodation to those moving towards independent living.
- The establishment of the Homelessness Gateway has been a very positive development. Since August 2012, the Response team has been the lead agency on the Homelessness Gateway for young people aged 16 /17yrs. The Gateway ensures that young people are given the support they need to prevent homelessness and also encourages young people to stay with their families if possible and safe to do so.

Health

- There were only three definite matches of recorded pregnancies among Looked After Children in Wirral between 2007 and 2012. No national data of the incidence of teenage pregnancy among Looked After Children is available to be used as a comparator.
- The Healthier Homes Programme resulted in all residential homes in Wirral becoming accredited. Other Local Authorities are now implementing similar programmes using the Wirral scheme as a model.
- The successful Health Challenge Champions Programme has been devised to support young people on the edge of care.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) have recently produced an assessment of gaps in training for foster carers. This has resulted in the production of a training pack aimed specifically at foster parents.
- There is recognition of the need for more detailed screening for vulnerable children with regard to the early identification of communication issues and the promotion of emotional literacy.

Youth Support

- The impressive work of the Response Team supports some of the most vulnerable young people in the Borough, which includes some Looked After Children.
- Preventative services, such as those provided by the Response Team, are vital for vulnerable young people.
- The successful introduction of a protocol to prevent Looked After Children obtaining a criminal record has, since 2008, led to the reduction in the numbers of Looked After Children offending.

What the Members suggest for future developments....

Screening for Vulnerable Children

It has been recognised, over the years, how quickly young children fall behind in school, for example, when they miss out on early years provision. Therefore, without adequate early years provision the child is behind when they start school and they tend to stay behind. Due to their background circumstances, there is a greater risk of Looked After Children not succeeding at school. In 2012/13, an application was made for health funding to employ a Speech & Language Therapist to work with three geographical clusters of Looked After Children aged between 4 years and 7 years in Wirral. The views of foster carers were sought and an assessment of gaps in training for foster carers was produced. Of 15 children in one cluster, three of the children had not previously been identified by the normal screening. The outcome was recognition of the need for more detailed screening for vulnerable children. As a consequence, a training pack for foster carers has been developed.

Recommendation 22 – Screening for Vulnerable Children

Consideration ought to be given to ways in which screening can be improved to ensure that all vulnerable children, including Looked After Children, are identified and receive appropriate interventions to make sure that children are more able to communicate and to promote emotional literacy.

A Guarantor for Private Landlords

It was reported during the Review that, initially, care leavers are likely to move to some form of supported accommodation. There is a limited supply of single room accommodation in Wirral. Therefore, it can be difficult for clients to move on from supported accommodation. As a result, some care leavers will approach the private sector for accommodation requirements. However, Members were informed that as most private landlords require a guarantor and the Local Authority is not able to act as a guarantor, care leavers are disadvantaged. It is suggested that the extent of this problem may be an issue worthy of further investigation on which the Corporate Parenting Group may be well placed to lead.

Recommendation 23 – Supporting Care leavers in obtaining tenancies

Models of good practice from elsewhere should be explored in order to further support care leavers in obtaining tenancies.

Prospects for Sharing Accommodation

It was suggested during the Review that, in order to enhance the opportunities for care leavers to find suitable housing, sharing accommodation with fellow care leavers may be an appropriate option. In order to facilitate this alternative, it may be feasible to extend the 'Right Side of Care' website to provide a forum for placing online advertisements.

Recommendation 24 – Sharing Accommodation

The feasibility of using the 'Right Side of Care' website to include the facility for offering opportunities for sharing accommodation should be investigated.

Monitoring the Quality of Accommodation

Some concerns were raised by care leavers regarding the quality of accommodation that they were expected to move to. This argument was supported by one professional who argued:

“The process for housing young people who are leaving care should ensure that adequate monitoring and checking is taking place to make sure that reasonable expectations are being met”.

Members are concerned that checks should be adequate to ensure that reasonable expectations are being met.

Recommendation 25 – Monitoring of the Quality of Accommodation

The process for housing young people who are leaving care should ensure that adequate monitoring and checking is taking place with young people to make sure that reasonable expectations of accommodation are being met.

***This Report was produced by the Looked After Children Scrutiny Task & Finish Group
(which reports to The Families and Wellbeing Policy & Performance Committee)***

Appendix 1: Scope Document for the Looked After Children Scrutiny Review

Date: 6th December 2012 (Draft 4)

Review Title: Outcomes for Looked After Children

Scrutiny Panel Chair: Cllr Wendy Clements	Contact details:
Panel members: Cllr Walter Smith Cllr Pat Williams	
Scrutiny Officer: Alan Veitch	Contact details: 0151 691 8564
Departmental Link Officer: Simon Garner	Contact details:
Other Key Officer contacts:	
<p>1. Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?</p> <p>The Council's Corporate Plan 2012/13 includes the following statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to work with our partners to protect children and young people from harm and improve the lives of the children and young people already in our care. • We will ensure that children in care and care leavers have appropriate support which best suits their needs, including fostering and adoption. <p>Specific targets quoted in the Corporate Plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the numbers of looked after children achieving Level 4 at Key Stage 2 to 50% in English and to 50% in Maths) and those achieving 5+ GCSE A*-C (including English and Maths) to 20% • Increase the numbers of care leavers in education, employment and training to 65% 	
<p>2. What are the main issues?</p> <p>How well are Looked After Children prepared for adult living, with particular reference to outcomes including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational attainment • Employment and training (as opposed to NEET) • Home / accommodation circumstances • Social / emotional development • Rate of entry to the Justice System (Note: Children, under the age of 18, in custody or on remand are deemed to be Looked After Children) • Problems relating to drugs and alcohol • Incidence of teenage pregnancy • Transition for children with disabilities <p>Note: Reference will be made during the review to the impact of welfare reforms on care leavers.</p>	

3. The Committee's overall aim/objective in doing this work is:

The Council has a responsibility, as corporate parents, for the Borough's Looked After Children. Data consistently shows that outcomes for Looked After Children are poorer than the national average. As an example, the percentage of Looked after Children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and Maths) in 2012 is 12%. This equates to 4 out of 33 children in the cohort. This review will investigate the steps which the Council and other partners are already taking and consider further actions that may be feasible in order to improve the outcomes for Looked After Children.

4. The possible outputs/outcomes are:

- 4.1 Understand the current issues for both Looked After Children and the service providers.
- 4.2 Identify ways in which outcomes for Looked After Children, as listed in section 2 of this document, can be improved.

5. What specific value can scrutiny add to this topic?

Scrutiny will give members the opportunity to assure themselves that the Council and partners are taking all possible steps to ensure that the outcomes for Looked After Children are improved. Scrutiny will enable the experience of those directly impacted by the reforms to help identify any recommendations for changes. These recommendations will be referred to Cabinet.

6. Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?

- 6.1 Appropriate Cabinet members and Directors, Wirral Borough Council.
- 6.2 Partners of the Council, for example, Housing partners, schools and NHS Wirral.

7. Duration of enquiry?

- The Scope document will be reported to the meeting of the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 21st January 2013.
- Evidence-gathering will take place between November 2012 and February 2013.
- A progress report will be presented to the meeting of the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 18th March 2013.

8. What category does the review fall into?

Policy Review	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
External Partnership		<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Holding Executive to Account		<input type="checkbox"/>		

9. Extra resources needed? Would the investigation benefit from the co-operation of an expert witness?

The review will be conducted by councillors with the support of existing officers. However, the panel are looking for advice from people with expertise on this topic.

10. What information do we need?	
<p>10.1 Secondary information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Government Departmental reports • Relevant national documents • Previous Cabinet / Scrutiny Committee reports • Scrutiny Reports from other Councils into similar topics, for example, Haringey, Hartlepool, Cheshire East • Care leavers Data Pack, published by Department of Education, October 2012 • Educational Achievement Performance Data for Wirral and statistical neighbours • Evaluation of the Staying Put: 18 Plus Family Placement Programme - Final report (Department of Education) 	<p>10.2 Primary/new evidence/information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with key officers • Interviews with current and former Looked After Children as well as foster providers • Examples of best practice from other Local Authorities • Information relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to leaving care grants • Access to bursaries for those staying in education and higher education • Pathway Plan
<p>10.3 Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet portfolio holder, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc).</p> <p>Potential witnesses include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julia Hassall, Acting Director of Children’s Services, Wirral Borough Council • Simon Garner, Acting Head of Children’s Social Care Branch, Wirral Borough Council (and Chair of the North West After Care Forum) • Fiona O’Shaughnessy / Dave Walker / Jeanette Geary, Children’s Inclusion Service, Wirral Borough Council • Brian Ronson, Leaving Care Service– Pathway Team Manager • Simon Fisher, Transition Team, Wirral Borough Council • Anne Patterson, Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), Wirral Borough Council re. What are children saying about the leaving care process? • Vivian Stafford, Strategic Service Manager: Post 16 Commissioning and Economic Generation, Wirral Borough Council (Also to cover the Apprenticeship scheme) 	<p>10.4 What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?</p> <p>How well are Looked After children prepared for adult living, in particular with reference to the outcomes listed in section 2 earlier?</p> <p>Do care leavers have access to information about their care leaver entitlements?</p> <p>How does the Council work with the FromCare2Work programme run by the National Care Advisory Service?</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phil Sheridan, Consultant Headteacher (Secondary) and Virtual Headteacher, Wirral Borough Council. To also include the Looked After Children's Education Service (LACES) team, Wirral Borough Council • Anne Tattersall, NHS Wirral and Head of Being Healthy Outcome Group (regarding health and teenage pregnancy issues plus funding arrangements and commissioning arrangements with CCGs) • Housing Team, Wirral Borough Council – Sheila Jacobs, Supported Housing Manager plus Catherine Green, Rehousing Services Manager • Pat Rice, Response, Wirral Borough Council (Lead for 16-17 Protocol Group) • Patricia Jones, Youth Offending Service • Sue Brown, Assistant Chief Officer, Merseyside Probation Trust (or nominee) • Members of the Children in Care Council (Contact: Fiona O'Shaughnessy) • Former Looked After Children (Contact: Brian Ronson) • Foster carers (Contact: Sue Leedham) • Private Foster Carer (if possible) • Teachers / staff from schools, for example, Observatory School, Woodchurch High School, Wirral Alternative School Programme (WASP) (Role of Designated Teacher re. LAC in schools) • Job Centre Plus re. guidance for supporting care leavers • Residential Providers Forum 	
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11. What processes can we use to feed into the review? (site visits/observations, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, written questionnaire, etc).

11.1 Meetings with officers listed in 10.3 above

11.2 Meetings / Focus groups with current and former Looked After Children and with foster carers

11.3 Desk-top research / analysis

11.4 Possible survey of members regarding their role as Corporate Parents, including training opportunities

11.5 Possible questionnaire of potential and former care leavers

12. In what ways can we involve the public and at what stages? (consider whole range of consultative mechanisms, local committees and local ward mechanisms).

Meetings / Focus groups with current and former Looked After Children and with foster carers (as described in section 11.2 above). This will include the Children in Care Council

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7 NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	<i>BYRNE AVENUE RECREATION CENTRE, BYRNE AVENUE, ROCK FERRY.</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ROCK FERRY</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>HEAD OF UNIVERSAL & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR ADRIAN JONES</i>
KEY DECISION?	<i>YES</i>

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the present position in respect of Byrne Avenue Recreation Centre, seek authority to take possession of the building from The Byrne Avenue Community Trust, declare the property surplus and progress with the disposal of the property.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 At its meeting on 14th April 2011, Cabinet resolved that:-

(1) The Byrne Avenue Recreation Centre is transferred to the Byrne Avenue Community Trust, by way of lease;

(2) The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources agree the terms and conditions of the lease;

(3) The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to complete the necessary legal documentation and

(4) In the event of appropriate terms of lease not being agreed, or the necessary funding not being obtained, the matter be reported back to Cabinet.

- 2.2 Cabinet on 4th November 2010 requested that £350,000 from the Community Fund be allocated to support the Community Asset Transfer of Byrne Avenue with the sum being made available only when the total funding package is confirmed and the group's business plan agreed.

- 2.3 Byrne Avenue Community Trust (BACT) completed the 99 year lease on the 10th February 2012. Under the terms of the lease BACT had twelve months (by 10th February 2013) to secure all funding to complete the refurbishment which BACT estimated at £700,000. To date, BACT has secured £35,000 from the Morgan Foundation, £35,000 from the Johnson Foundation and £500 from Unite Wirral 9515 Branch (total £70,500) leaving a shortfall of £279,500 on their original estimates. BACT were unsuccessful in bids to Sport England and Reaching Communities and attached in

Appendix 2 is a list of the funding applied for. BACT were also required to submit a business plan to the Council for approval in respect of the operation of the swimming baths and community building from Byrne Avenue Recreation Centre prior to 10th February 2013. The Business Plan has not been received.

2.4 The lease included a clause that terminated the lease on 12th February 2013 if the conditions of the lease were not met.

2.5 In March 2013 BACT summarised their options which are set out below:

1) Continue to fundraise for the £279,500 which would take another 12 months.

2) Call it a day and hand back to Wirral Council.

3) Undertake the refurbishment in two phases

Phase 1 - Swimming pool, changing facilities, balcony, boilers and reception estimated at £450,000

Phase 2 - Refurbishment of the sports hall, changing facilities estimated at £250,000.

BACT is requesting that Wirral Council allocate £350,000 into phase 1, matched against £70,500 BACT have already secured, plus another £30,000 BACT anticipate they can raise. The estimated timescale is that the work on phase 1 could commence in Autumn 2013. Option 2 is not a route BACT would wish to take and option 3 is their favoured option.

3.0 SUMMARY OF POSITION

3.1 BACT has been unsuccessful in securing funding to completely refurbish the building. Their proposal to carry out the work in two phases, using the Community Fund £350,000 for phase one, gives no assurances that the funds for phase two will be secured. In the absence of a Business Plan, any phased development would be difficult to support as Phase 1 will see the refurbishing the pool which is commonly the loss-making activity in a Sports Centre and would need to be supported by more profitable dry activities.

3.2 The building could therefore remain partly refurbished indefinitely. The lease was subject to the condition that BACT would secure all the funding within twelve months of signing the lease and the building would be completely refurbished prior to opening.

3.3 The deadline for securing the funding and submitting the business plan in the lease was 10th February 2013 and therefore the lease has ended.

3.4 The Council's Disposal Policy sets out the procedure for the disposal of surplus assets. The sale could proceed on the open market with the existing building or a cleared site.

3.5 A sale of the existing building would remove all liability from the Council and there would be no delay in marketing the building. The market will determine whether the building is refurbished and reused or demolished and the site redeveloped. The risk is that, on disposal, the Council would have no further control over the building which could be left vacant and unused by the purchaser and therefore may become vandalised and detrimental to the surrounding area.

- 3.6 A sale of the cleared site would require the demolition of the building. Demolition costs, including a type 3 asbestos survey, are estimated at £160,000. There is no budget identified to meet this expenditure. This option would ensure the building is not left empty for a long period but would remove the possibility of the building being reutilised.
- 3.7 Any delay in disposing of the building will result in additional empty property costs.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 4.2 As summary above.
- 4.1 When possession of the building is taken the Council will be responsible for the costs of holding the asset including any liability in respect of potential insurance claims. These could be mitigated by an early sale and / or by the demolition of the building.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Proceed with the Community Asset Transfer of the building by
- Extending time period on the offer of £350,000 from the Community Fund
 - Extending the deadline for securing the full funding or
 - Agreeing for the work to be carried out in two phases.

These options do not guarantee that the remaining funding will be secured and the building could be partly refurbished using the Community Fund which would not be an acceptable option and would require a new lease.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 As part of the process of compiling its business plan, BACT has consulted potential customers and other user groups who might use the facility if it was reopened following refurbishment.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 7.1 The building was previously run by a voluntary group, which was unable to continue to operate the premises as a swimming pool. The building was advertised for Community Asset Transfer (CAT) in accordance with the Council's CAT policy and BACT were the preferred bidder.

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

- 8.1 The works identified to refurbish the Centre are estimated by BACT at £700,000. BACT has secured £70,500 and with the Council / Community Fund contribution of £350,000 leaves a shortfall of £279,500 to fund the works.
- 8.2 The £350,000 earmarked from the Community Fund will be re-allocated to support other Community Asset Transfer activities in accordance with the conditions of the allocation from the Fund which is administered by Magenta Living (Wirral Partnership Homes).

- 8.3 The sale of the building would generate a capital receipt. If the site was cleared then this would incur demolition costs of approximately £160,000, for which no funding has been identified but could be considered for inclusion in the Capital Programme.
- 8.4 The annual costs incurred by the Council in maintaining this vacant building prior to the lease being completed were approximately £23,000 including business rates, electricity, insurance, rental of temporary fencing around the pool, security and boarding up.
- 8.5 Byrne Avenue Recreation Centre was originally leased to Byrne Avenue Recreational Trust on a 30 year lease from 1995 but ceased trading in 2009. The building has remained closed since 2009.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 BACT will need to be advised the Council require possession of the building as the lease has ended and be asked to remove the entry of the lease from the registered title.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

No because there is no relevance to equality.

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The building is currently vacant. The carbon emissions are 4.723 tonnes.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Planning permission would not be required to re-commission the building as a swimming pool and sports centre. Planning consent would, however, be required for the redevelopment of the site.
- 12.2 The site is located in a Primarily Residential Area where new housing development could be permitted subject to compliance with Policy HS4 in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan, which contains criteria to address design and amenity.
- 12.3 Paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework however states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the asset to be surplus to requirements or the asset would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quality or quantity in a suitable location or the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.
- 12.4 Unitary Development Plan Policy REC1 also safeguards existing facilities of Borough wide importance for sport.
- 12.5 Policy CS31 of the Proposed Submission Draft Core Strategy, which was approved by Council on 15 October 2012 (Item 51 refers) as a material consideration in future

planning decisions, states that land and buildings used for sport and recreation will be protected from incompatible development unless it can be demonstrated that the site is genuinely surplus and not required for any other recreational purpose, supported by evidence of continuous marketing or that the facility will be replaced with an equivalent or better facility capable of serving the same local community.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 That possession of Byrne Avenue Recreation Centre is taken from Byrne Avenue Community Trust as the lease has ended on 10th February 2013 as the Trust has been unsuccessful in securing the necessary funds for the refurbishment.

13.2 That the grant of £350,000 from the Community Fund be withdrawn and re-allocated to support other Community Asset Transfer activities.

13.3 That the asset be declared surplus and authority be given to its disposal in accordance with the Council's disposal policy.

13.4 In the event that the asset is to be sold on the open market the existing building be sold by auction.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 To make the best use of the council's property assets and to seek authority to a disposal of the building by auction.

REPORT AUTHOR: *David Dickenson*
Asset Management Surveyor
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email: daviddickenson@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

- 1) Location plan.
- 2) Byrne Avenue Community Trust, List of Funding Applied for.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

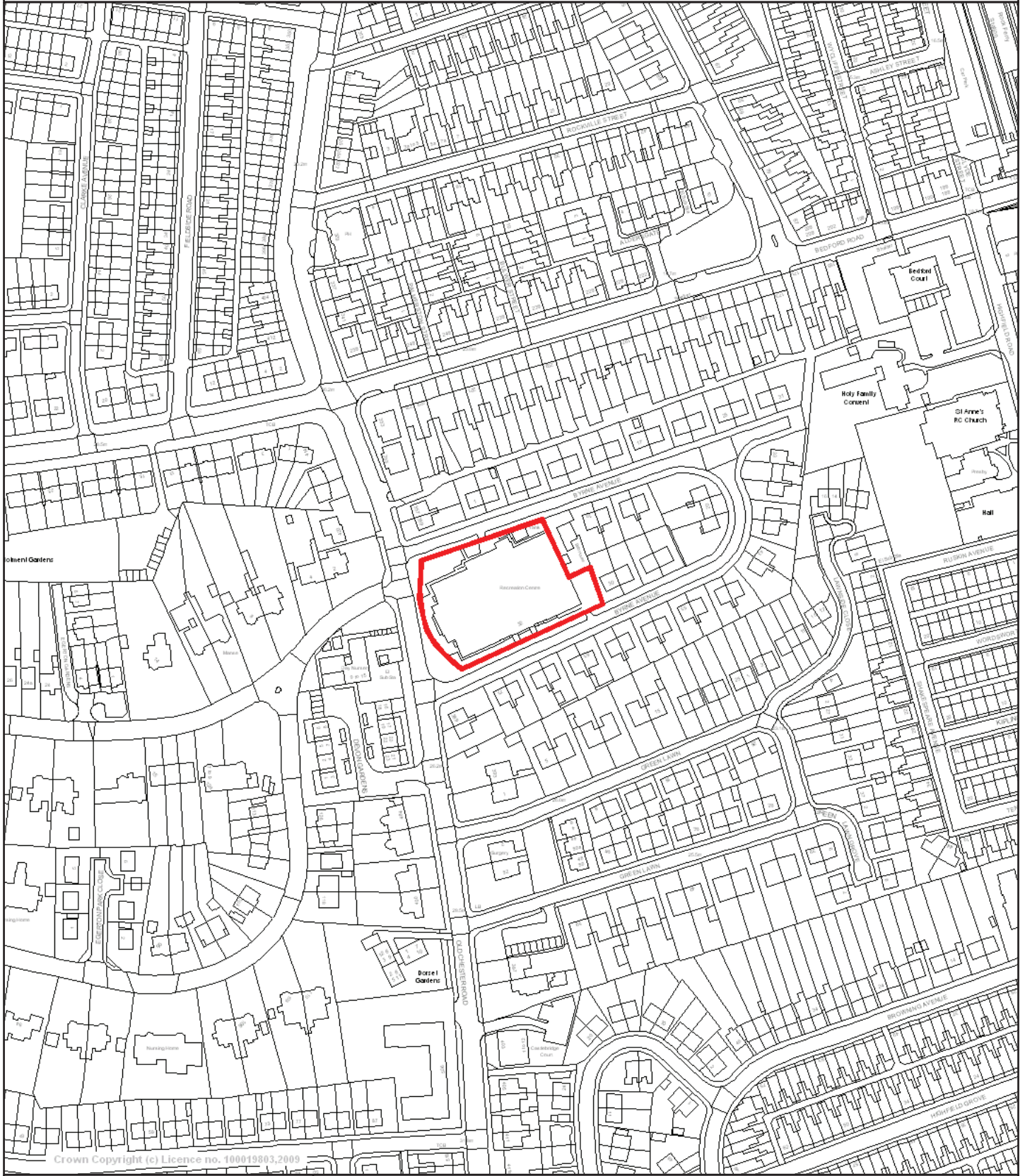
No reference material has been used in the preparation of this report.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	14th April 2011
Cabinet	2nd September 2010

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Byrne Avenue Recreation Centre, Byrne Avenue, Rock Ferry.



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Scale 1/2500 Date 8/5/2013
Centre = 332610 E 386426 N

Asset Management Section, Dept. of Law, HR and Asset Management, Cheshire Lines Building, Canning Street, Birkenhead, CH41 1ND
Tel: 0151 666 3882, Fax: 0151 606 2090



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BYRNE AVENUE COMMUNITY TRUST

Funding Applied For

Details

Sport England	Rejected - Reapply in Summer 2013
Reaching Communities (Lottery)	Rejected - more suited to Sport England
Future Builders	Rejected
Esmee Fairbairn	No trading history
Garfield Weston Foundation	No trading history
Hedley Trust	No trading history
The Duke of Devonshire	Rejected - apply when operational
The Johnson Foundation	£35k agreed
The Morgan Foundation	£35k agreed
The Wates Foundation	No trading history - apply when operational
Various other smaller trusts	No trading history - apply when operational
Biffa	Rejected
Earl of Derbyshire Trust	Rejected

BYRNE AVENUE COMMUNITY TRUST

Funding Applied For

Details	Potential Amount
Unite Wirral 9515 Branch	£500(approved)
John Gilpin Trust	£1,000
The Ravensdale Trust	£?
The Tillotson Bradbery Charitable Trust	£500
Wethered Bequest	£500
Thomas Robinson Charity	£500
Alan Jenkins Stoked Memorial Trust	£1,000
Ken Dodd Charitable Trust	£200
Peter Stormonth Darling Ch Trust	£10,000
	£14,200

Summary

Funding Approved

The Johnson Foundation	£35,000
The Morgan Foundation	£35,000
Unite Wirral 9515 Branch	£500
Total Approved	£70,500

Update received September 16th September 2013

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 7 NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	<i>ASSET MANAGEMENT & DISPOSALS</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>CLLR ADRIAN JONES</i>
KEY DECISION?	YES

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Asset Management and the Council's Asset Management Plan and to set out proposals to generate £20m capital receipts. Members are asked to note the work in developing its Asset Management Plan and to declare a number of sites identified in this report as surplus to requirements and to proceed with disposal.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

The financial challenges facing the Council require efficiencies in all areas. It is essential that the Council realises efficiencies from its estate, generates capital receipts, and has a clear plan for future accommodation needs across the borough, as the size of its workforce decreases.

Previous asset reviews gave a framework for the management of buildings, assets and land and there have been a number of positive outcomes from this such as Community Asset Transfer and a range of capital receipts have been generated. However, the Council still has surplus land and assets and in some areas such as office accommodation there has been a number of proposals which have not progressed as expected.

The new Asset Management structure brings all Council Facilities Management and Asset Management roles together (appendix 1). A key focus for the asset team is the identification and release of surplus land and buildings. The capital receipts resulting from sales will (1) support the Council's Capital Programme (2) facilitate new ways of working and (3) reduce operating costs.

Following the LGA peer review, Local Partnerships were commissioned to report on asset management and to align property strategy with growth and community development. Local Partnerships is a joint Treasury/LGA body and is continuing to offer support in the following area until Dec 13:

- Asset Disposals
- Office Rationalisation
- Area Reviews

The intended outcome is to “re-set” the council’s asset plans and to identify key buildings or those that will not be vacated such as Wallasey Town Hall and Birkenhead Town Hall. Alongside the office accommodation review there will be a strengthened approach to the use of council assets through area reviews. These reviews will work with other parts of the public estate such as police, health and fire and with local residents. It is proposed that the first review will take place in Moreton.

In order to maximise the use of funding and assets in the future there is the potential for:

- The introduction of agile working and improvements in the use of office space could result in running cost savings of circa £2m pa.
- A series of area review across the Borough could deliver (1) more coherent access to a range of public services for customers (2) reduction in estate costs and (3) provide capital receipts.
- A more strategic and pro-active approach to realising capital receipts could be developed. This would optimise proceeds and realise wider benefits for the borough, allowing for investment in remaining buildings, some of which have extensive repair and refurbishment needs.

An officer Capital Working Group has been set up to deliver the asset and capital programmes, with sub-groups planned for disposals, office accommodation and area reviews.

2.1 Key Issue - Asset Management Best Practice

A robust Asset Management Plan is at the heart of best practice. The plan should define actions that are consistent with the Council’s vision and strategy and capable of delivery. These challenges were recognised in a WBC Internal Audit Report (January 2013) which identified the need for:

- A clear asset management plan/strategy, including updated policies on property review, disposal and community asset transfer.
- A plan to intensify the use office space.
- That a delivery plan is be put in place and monitored.

Local Partnerships are working with officers to address these recommendations and will review comparable Council’s Asset Management Plans which have been recognised as good practice.

2.2 Key Issue – Support for Wider Objectives

From an organisational perspective land and property is an overhead on the cost of services provided and local authorities are increasingly taking savings from property running costs and investing in growth opportunities, mainly in homes and employment.

Asset Management can act as a catalyst for regeneration and community development, for example by investing directly in opportunities that include:

- Research and Development

- Offshore Wind
- Low carbon
- Advanced technology and manufacturing
- Biomedical

This approach will support proposals considered by Cabinet on 19 September 2013 proposing investigation of a Local Asset Backed Vehicle (LABV). A Local Asset Backed Vehicle combines private sector finance and skills and public sector land and property assets as a means of driving development and investment. Should a LABV be procured efficient asset management will work towards releasing those assets which can deliver value via a LABV.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

As previously indicated three main work-streams are being developed; Capital receipts & Disposal, Office Accommodation and Proposed Area Reviews.

3.1 Realising Capital Receipts & Disposal Strategy

The organisational target is to generate £20m of capital receipts by March 2015. This demand is being driven by two specific needs.

Firstly, to reduce the impact of annual borrowing costs on the revenue budget. Maximising the use of capital receipts will minimise the council's need to borrow as new borrowing leads to new costs. The projected Capital Programme 2013-16 is estimated to be £79.3m of which £22.8m is to be funded through unsupported borrowing. Over the next three years, this will result in approximately £2.8m of additional revenue costs. The use of capital receipts will reduce the need to borrow and some of the additional revenue costs identified.

Secondly, the Government is considering allowing Councils some flexibility from 2015/16 to use capital receipts from asset sales to transfer and reform services. There is the potential in the future that the Council will be able to use part or even the whole of a capital receipt from new asset sales to be used for one off revenue purpose to support organisational change. This would enable reconfiguration of service areas, reducing on-going revenue costs and further improving services.

3.1.1 Previously Disposed Sites

The chart below demonstrates that the Council has been an active vendor of surplus sites since 2005:-

Year	Number of sites sold	Value of sites sold £000m	Comments
2005/06	27	8.0	Includes former school sites, sold at £6.64m
2006/07	25	3.6	Includes 1 school site sold for £2.6m
2007/08	40	2.6	Highest single disposal was £600k
2008/09	27	1.3	Highest single disposal was £277k
2009/10	23	2.1	Highest single disposal was £306k
2010/11	18	1.6	Highest single disposal was £500k

2011/12	14	1.4	Highest single disposal was £1.0m
2012/13	38	1.1	Highest single disposal was £274k
2013/14	24	1.6 to date	Highest single disposal to date is £310k
Total	231	£22.4m	

3.1.2 Future Disposal Sites

The table below provides a snapshot of a pipeline of surplus land and assets with 74 sites currently identified for possible disposal in the period 2013 – 2016. This pipeline will be dealt with through a variety of means and includes a corporate target of £20m in capital receipts to be achieved by March 2015. Achievement of this target is highly dependent on disposal of the three large sites, with the fourth site (Bebington) being considered for wider development.

Larger Sites	Brief Description
Acre Lane (Professional Excellence Centre), Bromborough	Site area 8.472 Ha with single storey former school, now used as training centre, comprising 8795m2 GIA with open space to rear. Most likely alternative use – residential, with open space provision.
Manor Drive, Upton	Site area 4.187 Ha, open space used for grazing and producing a rent of £4200 pa. Designated within UDP for housing since 2000.
Former Rock Ferry High School	Site area 8.235Ha. Former school site bisected by a public footpath with 9895m2 GIA of buildings to north, including a listed building & playing fields. Most likely alternative use – residential, with open space provision.
Bebington Complex (part centred on former Town Hall and Town Hall annexe and environs)	Consists of a number of buildings not all owned by the Council but includes: Bebington Town Hall, Town Hall Annex, Highcroft Day Centre, Library & Civic Centre, Police Station, Health Centre. Due to the development potential on part of this site which includes partners and other agencies, it is intended to explore the use of a LABV (Cabinet 19/09/13). Until this option is explored further this site is not included within the current disposal list.
Smaller Sites	
Sites earmarked for auction in December 2013.	21 sites. Provisionally includes industrial & office ground leases, vacant/overgrown sites, former children's home, car parks, woodland.
Sites earmarked for disposal in 2014.	15 sites to date, including cleared land, amenity land, former care home, car parks, former school etc.
Buildings currently held for operational purposes which will become surplus	Description
The potential pipeline of surplus sites will be derived from reviews of the non-operational estate and of operational land and buildings.	The Council owns a significant operational estate comprising circa 250 properties. This does not include land and commercial interests throughout the borough. Operational buildings will become vacant e.g. through a number of major initiatives, including Transforming

	Business Support, Shared Services and Re-modelling across the Organisation. Some operational premises will face challenges as a result of their condition and suitability.
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In order to realise and maximise these capital receipts, officers have undertaken a procurement process, through the Capital Working Group (disposals) which has resulted in the appointment of Lambert Smith Hampton to represent the Council in respect of the larger disposals.

Local agents specialising in residential land sales have expressed the view that although the market for land fell by 50%, it is now starting to recover (perhaps to as much as 75% of the previous high) with recovery initially centred on well-established locations around Chester and West Wirral. Generally speaking, flatted developments are attracting no interest, which is in contrast with smaller sites for which there is most demand. The larger sites will attract interest from volume house-builders, although sites such as Acre Lane may attract consortia bids. Bidders will be careful to take issues, such as social housing requirements into account when evaluating sites.

The conclusion to be drawn, therefore, in respect of the larger sites is that they are likely to attract interest from volume house builders but the Council will need to anticipate and deal with/cost-in issues that developers will regard as risks, such as land contamination, unstable ground conditions etc.

The Council's requirement for capital depends on the timely disposal of three sites and seeks members' approval to proceed with this exercise.

The Professional Excellence Centre (Acre Lane)

Although the building is well used it faces considerable life cycle issues and occupies a large site which has potential for residential development. The preparation for marketing this site will take into account planning requirements, provision of public open space and the requirement for various housing and infra-structure needs in-line with Council policy. The Council has alternative buildings including Birkenhead Town Hall which would meet the changing demands on the Professional Excellence Centre and an exercise to relocate these services is underway.

Former Rock Ferry High School

Following the merger of Rock Ferry High and Park High school to form the University Academy of Birkenhead, the site has been closed since 2011. Following the school closure one of the buildings has been listed as being of historical and architectural interest, which will have implications for any site redevelopments. A proposal to locate a Universal Technical College on the site, which resulted in the council incurring significant expenditure in building security whilst the project was being developed, has in recent months fallen through but there are still running costs for the redundant site. An alternative use which enhances open space provision and protects the listed building is being considered and the Secretary of State for Education will be asked to support redevelopment, which will include some residential uses.

Land at Manor Drive

This site was designated for residential development in 2000 in the council's unitary development plan. As the restriction on development has recently been lifted this opens the possibility for development of the site and realising a substantial capital receipt. However,

officers are mindful of the interests of the pony club who have occupied the site for approximately 40 years and whose lease has recently expired. The Council's preference is to work with Upton Pony Club over the next year or so to explore the suitability of suitable alternative sites. The current position is that the lease has not been renewed and proceedings for possession have been issued and the hearing is scheduled for 21 November 2013. An offer has been made to settle matters. Three e-petitions have been received but these have had to be rejected whilst court proceedings are pending, the Council is also aware of a petition on a Government web-site.

3.1.3 Capital Working Group (Disposals)

As set out above, officers have formed a programme board to scope and manage the disposal process, which is meeting on a regular basis. The proposed terms of reference are:-

- To act as the forum for all decisions relating to surplus and underperforming land, buildings and property interests and to manage the Council's governance process in relation to these matters.
- To identify, scope and evaluate viable alternative uses, having regard to material considerations and in consultation with stakeholders and bring forward proposals to optimise the use and value of property interests.
- To procure and manage external agents as required to support programmes, deal with the larger disposals and advise the council with regard to alternative uses and options for, including disposal, joint venture etc.
- To appropriate and manage all surplus council sites for development purposes, to manage the disposal programme and to be accountable for delivery.

3.1.4 Content of a Local Authority Disposal Strategy

Local Partnerships have advised that a robust disposal strategy will form part of the Asset Management Plan. These strategies will have the following characteristics:-

1. To monitor performance of assets to ensure they meet the operational, social, economic and investment requirements of the authority.
2. To eliminate liability, including holding costs.
3. To realise underdeveloped value.
4. To unlock growth opportunities.
5. To support corporate priorities.

Identification of surplus assets will arise from both internal stimulus through asset and service reviews, changes to the local plan and other initiatives. External parties such as joint venture partners, community organisations and speculative approaches will also give rise to opportunities to dispose.

Constraints – there are a wide variety of regulatory constraints, such as requiring Secretary of State consent to dispose of school playing fields. Also often as a consequence of the way

interests were originally acquired [public subscription, grant regimes and compulsory purchase etc.] local authority property interests are frequently fettered by covenants and other obligations which must be identified and discharged prior to disposal. Such situations may be further complicated by external regulation [EU procurement rules and state aid, for example], internal regulations and a desire to by the Council to attach conditions to disposals in order to mitigate against the risk of future uses which conflict with Council policies.

Under s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 except with the Secretary of State's consent, local authorities must not dispose of land for less than the consideration that is the best that can be reasonably obtained. For facilities matters the Secretary of State has issued a number of general disposal consents which can be applied in certain situations and are subject to conditions and ceilings.

3.2 Office Rationalisation

An initial project commenced in August in which Local Partnerships and the Claremont Group worked with council officers undertaking building inspections, interviews and questionnaires to capture headcount and accommodation issues/requirements, feedback and review. The objective was to look at the eight of the main buildings, establish departmental requirements and service adjacencies and consider which buildings the Council should keep and which it should dispose of in order to fulfil its immediate and medium term accommodation requirements.

Eight buildings were included in the scope for consideration; Wallasey Town Hall, North Annex, South Annex, Hamilton Building, Cheshire Lines, Treasury Building, Finance Municipal and Conway Centre. The scope of the project included; headcount, useable space, desk capacity, space efficiency, running costs, capital costs and IT.

Whilst the initial project has identified buildings such as Conway Centre and Finance Municipal as being the least favoured buildings to retain, further work is needed to assess service requirements, agile working capabilities, cost analysis of capital and maintenance for the buildings, the emerging requirements of the proposed Constituency Offices and regeneration opportunities for released sites.

Appendix 2 gives details of the work undertaken to date. It is intended that a comprehensive report will be brought to members early in 2014 which will recommend a strategic office accommodation rationalisation plan. Ahead of this, work is being undertaken to increase and maximise staff occupancy levels at Wallasey and Birkenhead Town Halls, two significant heritage buildings where continued long term use is envisaged by the council.

3.3 Area Review Process

Wirral's operational property is located around the Borough. This property includes libraries, one-stop shops, leisure centres, day centres, children's centres, schools, parks and gardens and much more. In addition, in common with other areas, there is an array of operational property owned and used by other public sector bodies, including GP surgeries and other NHS buildings, police and fire stations, further and higher education teaching facilities, job centres, courts and accommodation used by the voluntary and third sectors. Wirral also has office accommodation located outside Birkenhead and Wallasey, the main civic centres, mainly used to house adult and children's service teams.

The public are typically less concerned about how the Council rationalises its office accommodation, and consequently from where back office services are delivered. While significant savings can be made in rationalising operational estate, and capital receipts generated in the form of releasing surplus land and assets for sale, the process by which this is done needs to be more measured, to look at the whole public estate in a given area, and to include meaningful consultation with local residents. Specific operational areas may be subject to specific statutory consultation requirements.

Rationalisation of operational property may not only lead to savings in revenue and capital receipts for the public bodies concerned. It can also deliver better and more coherent access to public services for customers, by providing access to services from a range of providers at one location, and support attempts to secure channel shift to more cost-effective means of accessing services. It can also release land for re-use to meet current needs, including housing.

As part of the programme of driving more value from assets an area review workstream has been established. This is to pilot an approach in areas where local people and the public agencies owning property can collaborate to achieve cost savings, better ways of delivering services and an improved environment. Moreton has been selected by the Chief Executive's Strategy Group as the pilot area because of the wide range of public services offered from the area and to compliment the building work which has already commenced in the area to establish a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Local Partnerships have met representatives from the other public agencies with property in and around Moreton centre, including the police, ambulance service, Magenta Living (formerly Wirral Partnership Homes), and Clinical Commissioning Group. All are keen to be involved in a process where the public property in the area could be rationalised and improved. It will be important to engage with local residents to collect their points of view and ideas, so that the project does not become a fait accompli before they are involved. Local Partnerships are engaging with a company, Glass-House, which is a national charity experienced in involving communities in collaborative design and place making. They will help facilitate an event where local people are invited to attend to contribute their ideas.

Local Partnerships are meeting with the local Moreton Members to agree how they will contribute to the review. Based on the outcome of this work, consideration would be given to the viability of this model to review, on an area by area basis the whole of the Wirral on a phased basis.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 4.1 In not delivering the asset targets outlined in the report this will increase the risk to the financial stability of the Council.
- 4.2 Limitations to the modernisation of Council Services and buildings are likely to occur if capital is not generated from the disposal of surplus assets.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Options for land and buildings are considered on a case by case basis during the review processes highlighted in this report.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 As part of the whole asset review process a range of consultations will be undertaken
- staff, when considering office rationalisation
 - community and partners, when undertaking area reviews
 - secretary of state, when disposing of education buildings and/or playing fields

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 7.1 Where voluntary, community and faith groups use Council assets under consideration they will be fully consulted with as part of the asset review process. Where appropriate and feasible, it is proposed to continue to successful Community Asset Transfer programme.

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

- 8.1 Financial implications are highlighted within the main body of the report. The value of the Council estate at March 2013 was estimated at £710.9m.
- 8.2 IT implications are significant and will be assessed and dealt with as part of the project management of specific changes, rationalisation and disposal of the assets.
- 8.3 No direct staffing implications, any changes to ways of working for staff will be discussed with HR and unions.
- 8.4 Asset implications are dealt with within the main body of the report.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None arising directly from this report. Individual disposals and development decisions will require legal advice and will need to comply with statutory constraints.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?
- (a) Yes and impact review is attached – <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/downloads/6342>

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Proposals would reduce Carbon usage and will be taken into consideration when identifying key building for retention. Other environmental issues will be dealt with as per planning requirements.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 For each of the three sites identified for disposal they fall within the Primarily Residential Area within the Council's UDP. Any developments at these sites will be also subject to the Council's Housing Development policy.
- 12.2 Community safety implications will be considered as projects are agreed and drawn up.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that:

- 13.1 Cabinet notes the work required to develop a new Council Asset Management Plan.
- 13.2 Cabinet declares the following sites surplus to operational requirements and instructs officers to dispose of them in accordance with S123 Local government Act 1972: Acre Lane, Professional Excellence Centre, the former Rock Ferry High School and land at Manor Drive.
- 13.3 Cabinet approves via the strong leader model to accept the purchase offers upon sale of identified sites.
- 13.4 Cabinet approves the outline terms of reference of the Capital Working Group (Disposals).
- 13.5 Cabinet agrees to the continued work relating to office rationalisation and agile working
- 13.6 Cabinet agrees to the pilot area review in Moreton.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 14.1 The recommendations will release Council assets which have the potential to realise Capital Receipts and to allow investment to retained assets. By producing an updated strategic Asset Management Plan following best practice this will provide the Council with a considered approach to the management of assets going forward.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Asset Management Structure

Appendix 2 Office Accommodation Review, Preliminary Findings October 2013

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny	12 July 2012
Cabinet	2 February 2012
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny	17 November 2011
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny	15 September 2011
Council Excellence Overview & Scrutiny	31 January 2011
Cabinet	25 November 2010

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UNIVERSAL & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES
ASSET MANAGEMENT
David Armstrong

HEALTH, SAFETY & RESILIENCE
Mark Camborne

- Health and Safety
 - Corporate
 - Schools
- Occupational Health
- Legislative Compliance
- Construction, Design & Management
- Corporate Resilience
 - Emergency Planning
 - Business Continuity
 - Flood & Water Management
- Open Golf 2014 Project Lead
- Armed Forces Champion

STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT
Jeannette Royle

- CYP Estate Strategy & Project Management
- CYP Capital Programme
- Private Finance Initiative (PFI)
- CYP Capital Finance
- Asset Strategy
- Community Assets
- Property Information & Data
 - School Net Capacity
 - Asset Register
 - Asset Management System
- Asset Development
- Estate Management
 - Valuations
 - Disposals
 - Leases, licenses'
 - Property investment

CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE & FACILITIES MANAGEMENT
Jeff Sherlock

- Design & Contract Services
 - Architectural
 - Quantity Surveying
 - Clerk of works
 - Project Management
- Building Surveying & Minor Works
 - Structural Engineer
 - Building Surveying
 - Building Project Officers
- Building Services & Sustainability
 - Engineering & maintenance
 - Heating
 - Mechanical & Electrical
 - Technical Compliance
 - Energy awareness
 - Energy conservation
- Facilities & Support Services
 - Help desk
 - Repairs & Maintenance
 - Public Buildings
 - Metro Catering
 - Metro Cleaning
 - Office Accommodation

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OFFICE ACCOMMODATION REVIEW PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OCTOBER 2013

1.0 Office Rationalisation

The project involved 7 weeks of building inspections, interviews (with consistent questionnaires to capture headcount and accommodation issues / requirements), feedback and review. The team was made up of Local Partnerships, Claremont and Asset Management officers with senior team leaders and their representatives who attended workshops and have fully engaged in the process and been very positive.

The objective was to look at the core office buildings, establish departmental requirements and consider how to decide which buildings the council should plan to keep and which it should dispose of in order to fulfil its immediate and medium term accommodation requirements, against a reducing headcount and alternative methods of working and providing services.

2.0 Scope and Methodology

8 buildings are included in the initial scope.

- 1) Wallasey Town Hall
- 2) Town Hall North Annexe
- 3) Town Hall South Annexe
- 4) Hamilton Building
- 5) Cheshire Lines
- 6) Treasury Building
- 7) Finance Municipal Building
- 8) Conway Centre

This list takes account of existing plans to transfer staff to Birkenhead Town Hall and the accommodation currently used in part of Old Market House being on short term arrangements.

We have looked at 7 measures; 4 are used to score the buildings suitability.

Given the significant investment already made and underway at Wallasey Town Hall we have, for the purposes of this analysis, assumed that 200 workstations will be accommodated here and that it is a core strategic location.

Cheshire Lines is leasehold with 11 years unexpired. We do not consider it likely that the lease can be surrendered or assigned and have therefore assumed it will be retained as a core strategic building and is currently being re-cabled as a condition of the lease. We have also assumed that the Archive and data storage facilities will be retained in the basement of Cheshire Lines until a separate needs review can identify a long term solution.

3.0 Results and Building performance measures

3.1 Headcount: We have identified 1990 people within the directorates, predominantly in the core buildings, but including 356 Specialist Services and Infrastructure staff in satellite locations.

In scope there are therefore 1634 people requiring use of a desk (workstation).

3.2 Useable space: See table below.

This is the m² available for office space not including circulation, toilets and ancillary areas.

3.3 Workstation capacity: See table below

We have assumed a target of 1 desk (workstation) per 6 sq m useable space and 15 % circulation, breakout and ancillary space. This compares with similar fit for purpose accommodation in modern Private sector offices and is challenging yet achievable when considered against a sample of representative councils drawn from across the UK in 2010 which showed the top performing 20% occupying 1 workstation per 8.75 sq m.

3.4 Space Efficiency: See table below. Town Hall not assessed as results are distorted by high allocation of ancillary uses, council chambers etc.

3.5 Running Costs including energy: See table below.

3.6 Capital costs: Planned and reactive maintenance per sq m per annum (to make buildings fit for continued occupation). See table below.

3.7 IT Importance / Risk Sensitivity: Certain buildings such as Treasury, Hamilton and Cheshire Lines have significant IT / Data infrastructure. The Town Hall Annex South has recently had significant cabling investment. It may be uneconomic, untimely or risky to close these buildings. Shared data centres and cloud technology developments may influence decisions on these buildings. See table below.

3.8 Recommendations by Claremont:

Cheshire Lines – This building offers maximum flexibility for use firstly as a decant space for staff from some of the other buildings which require refurbishment, but also as a longer term base for some of the Departments which will need to be relocated due to the disposal of their current building. The building has approximately 11 years left on its lease, at which time this building should be re-assessed closer to the surrender date. It is proposed that once cabling works are completed, that this building is filled to capacity, as far as possible to the standard at 3.3 above.

Conway Centre – This building is likely to cost the Authority more in future maintenance costs than any of the others due to its age and condition, and due to its layout it currently does not allow the kind of departmental office arrangement which would be ideal in space planning terms. This building is recommended for disposal ahead of any of the others.

Hamilton Building – This former school is in much better condition than Conway, with a simpler floor plan and it will cost less to retain occupation. The basement requires some attention as it floods from time to time and contains a major IT hub in this area which places it at risk of damage. Hamilton is popular with occupants, spacious and light and the layout is good enough to make it feasible to re-plan for efficient departmental office use.

Treasury Building – Estimates were obtained for refurbishment of this building in the region of £1M which has driven the proposal for disposal to realise a capital receipt. However this building has potential to accommodate significant numbers of workstations and if suitably refurbished and efficiently planned will be suitable for departmental office use. Given the location of the key council IT facilities in this building it is proposed to retain this building pending future IT developments.

Wallasey Town Hall – Whilst this is not the ideal building layout for a modern Headquarters for the Authority it is listed and has character and as the Authority wishes to retain this listed landmark building it requires careful and appropriate refurbishment and conversion of various spaces to accommodate departmental offices alongside civic spaces.

Finance Municipal Building – This building is in poor condition, with extensive service renewal required, including heating and ventilation. It is proposed that this building is vacated, with staff re-located to retained core buildings and the site cleared, to offer development opportunities.

North and South Annexes, Wallasey Town Hall – These annexes are typical 1960/70's construction and have a backlog of maintenance issues, including asbestos removal. The South Annexe has had more works carried out to it in recent years than the north. In pure building terms all options, including demolition have been considered but it is proposed that both are given a medium life refurbishment for three reasons:

- i) Their continued use, to maximum occupation levels, in the context of an overall reduced workforce will allow the Wallasey Complex to be the key administrative centre of the council, alongside the current democratic, civic and community functions. A key element in the various LGA reviews of the council has been the need to consolidate staff work places as far as possible.
- ii) By repairing the annexes to give them a 10 – 15 year extended life, this brings this accommodation into line with the remaining 11 year lease on Cheshire Lines. From now to 2024 accommodation needs for the council would be met and this would also allow for the development of a coherent plan for the council's accommodation needs post 2024, including the possible development of new-build.
- iii) The option is retained to re-develop around the Town Hall in the future. For example, a plan from 2024 onwards could include a new complex from the South Annexe to the Promenade alongside the Town Hall, with the subsequent demolition of the South Annexe. The North Annexe could also be demolished or turned over to other uses e.g business start up's.

4.0 Building performance:

Measure	Town Hall	North Annexe	South Annexe	Hamilton	Cheshire Lines	Treasury	Finance Municipal	Conway
Useable area m2	core	1647	1647	2765	3989	3304	3033	2952
Workstation capacity	200	225	225	340	548	335	505	250
Space efficiency	core	1:7.3	1:7.3	1:8.1	1:7.2	1:9.8	1:6	1:11.9
Ranking	core	3=	3=	5	2	6	1	7
Running Cost p/a & m2	5408 10*	*	*	165951 60	280576 70	286386 86	Not avail	Not avail
Ranking	core	3=	3=	1	2	3	6	7
Capital costs £M	core	1.068 648	1.040 631	0.940 339	tba tba	0.970 293	0.995 328	N/A
Ranking	core	6	5	4	1	2**	3	7
IT Importance	core	5=	4	2	3 ***	1	5=	7
Total Score Low = better	core	17	15	12	8	12	15	28
Total Rank	core	6th	4th=	2nd=	1st	2nd=	4th=	7th

*Town Hall and Annexes running costs only available as aggregated sum so we have assumed running costs similar to Finance Muni.

** Treasury Building running costs include IT energy costs

***Cheshire Lines also important as home for Archive / Data storage

4.1 Options: Headcount currently in scope 1634.

At 7 workstations per 10 people this drives a need for 1143 workstations

OPTIONS Yes = retain No = dispose	Town Hall (core)	North Annexe 6 th = 17	South Annexe 4 th 15	Hamilton 2 nd = 12	Cheshire Lines (core) 1 st 8	Treasury 2 nd = 12	Finance Muni 4 th = 15	TOTAL Workstation capacity 1 : 1	TOTAL Performance score low = best
Existing Capacity	200 Y	225 Y	225 Y	340 Y	548 Y	335 Y	505 Y	2378	79
Option 1	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	2038	67
Option 2	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	1703	55
Option 3	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	1648	47
Option 4	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	1588	35
Option 5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	1538	52
Option 6	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	1533	52
Option 7	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	1423	32
Option 8	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N*	N	1313	35
Option 9	Y	N	N	N	Y	N*	Y	1253	23
Option 10	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N*	N	1198	40

*closure or relocation costs included for Treasury IT

We have looked at some options above to accommodate the current headcount and these give us an idea of the efficiency of each combination as it is considered. We have assumed that the workstation requirement will not go below 1000. To bring some objectivity to the review we have scored the buildings using the performance criteria.

Additional site visits, discussions with the Government Property Unit and market research have also been carried out to identify other modern, new build and third party buildings that might be available to accommodate the Council. At the time nothing suitable was identified, but this could be repeated periodically as part of the strategy.

Given its poor performance and comments by Claremont, Conway is considered totally unsuitable as a fit for purpose modern office and it is proposed therefore that it be vacated and disposed of. Conway also has good alternative regeneration use potential in its Town Centre location.

5.0 Conclusions:

These results show that there are a number of potential options from a capacity point of view, but that is not the only deciding factor. Wallasey Town Hall and Cheshire Lines are assumed as strategic for the time being. The selection process will be informed by:

- Wirral Council's appetite for agile working and desk sharing and IT improvements.
- The impact of a shared services arrangement, constituency offices and area reviews and any further reduced headcount together with adjacency considerations for departments.
- The costs of refurbishment/upgrading and running of each building.

Considerations:

- 1) If the council can introduce a level of workstation sharing (7 desks for 10 people as an average) then clearly, only 1143 workstations are required out of 2378 available across the 8 buildings, although this may take some time to achieve in practice.
- 2) So far from the interviews only 50 agile workers were identified from the audit, although this is likely to increase as people are transferred to the constituency offices. All staff with 3G technology have access to a degree of agility which needs to be explored further.
- 3) Since the Town Hall and Cheshire Lines (at 748 capacity) are considered core and the Conway Centre is considered unsuitable, that leaves The Town Hall Annexes, The Treasury building, The Hamilton Building and Finance Municipal to accommodate the balance.
- 4) If the need for more people closer to Wallasey Town Hall is important then one or both of the Annexes could be retained and refurbished and Hamilton or Treasury released.
- 5) The Hamilton and Treasury buildings (at 675 capacity) are important I.T hubs and the risks and costs of relocating equipment likely to be very significant and the costs potentially abortive if technology and / or data Centre policy changes so this needs to be considered holistically.

- 6) Town Hall Annexes (at 450 capacity) are not great performers but are close to Wallasey Town Hall and may score in terms of adjacency or may be a short-medium term option for decant.
- 7) The Finance Municipal Building (at 505 capacity) is also poorly ranked. It is also likely to be difficult to dispose of in the future for office use making further significant investment an issue. Along with the Conway Centre however it has alternative use value and both provide regeneration opportunities.
- 8) In the medium term it may also be possible to dispose of the Treasury Building, if an IT solution allows, leaving Wallasey Town Hall, Cheshire Lines and Hamilton as the core strategic buildings for the next 10 years.

In the longer term an efficient new build opportunity remains an option that should be revisited periodically, as the organisation changes and evolves.

6.0 The next steps

- Detailed work to develop the Claremont report including:
 1. Further interviews with departments to clarify adjacency requirements
 2. Conduct a detailed furniture audit of each department.
 3. Consider parking strategy completed by Change Team as part of location decisions.
 4. Consider agile working policy and standards, and the impact of Constituency Offices and Shared Service Centre.
 5. Review Records Management and Archive System, to see if any changes are required to support agile working.
 6. In House Quantity Surveyors to review specification and prices for all refurbishment works including any new furniture required.
- Propose and agree an office accommodation strategy for the short and medium term and agree a timeframe to put together long term strategy options. This will need Cabinet approval.
- Agree Communications plan
- Detailed plans for the buildings which are to be retained, to achieve optimum layout and agile working / desk sharing capacity and agree migration plan and timeframe with decant space identified.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING

NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	PROPOSED PUBLIC HEALTH CONTRACTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2014/15
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	FIONA JOHNSTONE (DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEAD OF POLICY & PERFORMANCE)
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR CHRIS MEADEN
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The aim of this report is to seek agreement from Cabinet to progress Public Health's proposed contracting plans for 2014/15.
- 1.2 The plans outlined will be subject to final Cabinet approval and sign off (before completions) in February 2014.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Health and Social Care Act (2012) gave Wirral Council statutory duties across three "domains" of Public Health, as described in the Public Health Outcomes Framework. These duties cover the following components:
 - Health improvement –including reducing lifestyle related ill-health and inequalities in health, and addressing the underlying determinants of health
 - Health protection – ensuring that comprehensive plans are in place across the local authority, NHS and other agencies to respond to infectious disease outbreaks and other public health emergencies
 - Health service improvement - providing NHS Commissioners, including Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), with expert advice and support to improve and evaluate the quality and efficiency of health services.
- 2.2 The Public Health grant awarded to the council is designed to deliver the responsibilities set out in the Public Health Outcomes Framework. It requires

that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy should both inform and influence the commissioning plans of the Council and so influence how the Public Health grant is attributed.

- 2.3 To enable the delivery of the duties outlined in the Public Health Outcomes framework, services have been commissioned across a range of areas. Table 1 illustrates the service areas covered by Public Health contracts during this financial year (2013/14).

Table 1 – Public Health Contractual Investments (2013/14)

Category	Current Expenditure (2013/14)
Drug and alcohol	£9,328,900
Smoking Cessation	£1,419,188
Sexual Health	£3,016,876
Children aged 5-19	£2,417,160
Health & Wellbeing	£1,541,625
Weight Management (Adults)	£964,606
Health Checks	£513,500
Mental Health	£157,500
Miscellaneous Public Health Commissioning	£636,465
TOTAL	£19,995,820

- 2.4 Services are delivered by a range of providers. Currently (as at 31/09/2013) Public Health directly manages 191 contracts (with 191 providers – Appendix 1 illustrates Public Health contracts by provider for 2013/14). These contracts are proactively managed through the commissioning process.

3.0 COMMISSIONING

- 3.1 All Public Health contracts are subject to on-going evaluation as part of a clearly defined commissioning cycle approach (in line with the Commissioning Framework developed as part of the Councils Transformation programme) which is designed to maximise return on investment and improve outcomes. This methodology ensures that Public Health services (and contracts) are consistently and routinely tested against a range of criteria.
- 3.2 The main strategic criteria against which contracts are tested include the following:
- Evidence base (e.g. academic research, engagement feedback, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment)
 - Performance of targets (e.g. financial and activity based) and outcomes against plans and benchmarking information

- Value for money
- National policy and technical guidance (e.g. Public Health Outcomes Framework)
- Strategic direction (e.g. Corporate Plan strategic aspirations [narrowing the gap in life expectancy], Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy, delivery of Public Health outcomes through council services)
- Legal & contractual frameworks (e.g. incorporate national updates to contract templates used for NHS providers).

The aim of this process is for approximately a third of all Public Health contracts to be retendered per year as part of a 3 year cycle.

3.3 The output from this approach provides the intelligence to inform the development of commissioning/contracting options for approval by Elected Members and Cabinet.

4.0 CONTRACTING PROPOSALS

4.1 Public Health's proposed contracting plans for 2014/15 are set out and summarised in Table 2.

Table 2 – Summary of Contracting Plans 2014/15

Action	Financial Value	Number of Contracts
Rollover of contracts (subject to no changes)	£4.3m	152
Rollover of contracts (being retendered in-year)	£11.7m	23
Rollover of contracts (subject to service specification updates)	£3.6m	13
Decommissioning and rationalisation of contracts	£0.4m	3
TOTAL	£20m	191

a. **Rollover of contracts (subject to no changes)**

- 4.2 152 Public Health contracts (with the value of £4.3m) will be rolled over from 2013/14 to 2014/15, without any further adjustment to the existing contracts.
- 4.3 Health check (£0.5m) and sexual health (£3m) are being rolled over because they were recommissioned during 2013/14.
- 4.4 The implementation of health check contracts with GP practices (59 in total, with a value of £0.5m) were delayed as consequence of national problems associated with finalising the clinical criteria for the programme. This issue put back the local mobilisation of the contracts by 3 months (compared to the original implementation timeline agreed in 2012/13) and therefore, it is still too early to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme

b. Rollover of contracts (being retendered in-year)

- 4.5 A significant proportion of the total £20m invested in contracts will be retendered in between October 2013 and January 2015 (e.g. Drug and Alcohol and Children [5-19] services). These services account for approximately £11.7m (24 contracts) and the retender processes will be completed during 2014/15. Papers seeking permission to retender services in both these areas (Drug & Alcohol and Children's) have already been agreed by Cabinet (on 09/10/2013). It is anticipated that the retendered contracts will be operational by January 2015. Those contracts will therefore continue during the recommissioning process so that there is no loss of service to residents.

c. Rollover of contracts (subject to updated service specifications)

- 4.6 A further £3.6m (13 contracts) of contracts are being rolled over, but subject to the service specifications (which underpin the contracts) being revised and renegotiated with providers as part of the 2014/15 contracting discussions. The updated specifications (e.g. performance metrics) are designed to ensure that the contracts reflect the commissioning intentions of public health and maximise performance in terms of outcomes and value for money.

e. Decommissioning of contracts

- 4.7 Contracts with a value of £0.4m have been decommissioned during 2013/14 (e.g. provider insolvency). Alternative provision for decommissioned activity has been identified within existing contracts (at no increased cost), where necessary. The funding released (£0.4m) by this process forms part of the Public Health Outcomes investment that will be delivered through existing council services during 2014/15.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 Children's Retender (as described in paper submitted to Cabinet on 10/10/13)

- Failure to integrate these services will result in maintenance of the status quo. The Council is required to maximise the value for money it achieves for all services. Best practice guidance suggests a need to market test for best

value every 3-4 years. There has been interest locally as to whether or not the services outlined in this paper are to be re-commissioned by a number of interested parties. This raises some concerns about failure to undertake a re-commissioning exercise and whether or not these parties would challenge this decision.

- The transfer of funding from NHS England to the Council for the commissioning of the 0 to 5 year is still to be agreed. A joint procurement process will only take place if agreement on the funding to be transferred can be reached.

5.2 Drug and Alcohol Retender (as described in paper submitted to Cabinet 10/10/13)

- There is an ageing population of opiate users living on the Wirral, failure to support these individuals to move from a maintenance regime to a recovery system will not optimise the outcomes both for the individuals and local communities. The Council is required to maximise the value for money it achieves for all services.
- Failure to support the above in a properly structured and realistic manner, taking into account the behavioural characteristics of long term dependence, could result in an increase in some of the negative impacts of problematic opiate use on the wider community e.g. users returning to acquisitive crime, unsafe injecting

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 The option to continue with current provision for Drug & Alcohol and Children's (5-19) services was considered however, this would not support innovation and the potential to deliver a more cost effective service.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultations will be undertaken as described in the retender papers submitted and agreed by Cabinet for Drug & Alcohol and Children's (5-19) services (10/10/13).

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 Organisations from the Voluntary, Community and Faith are currently involved with the delivery of elements of provision. The re-tender would present the opportunity for greater involvement.

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

- 9.1 There is currently allocated funding for the services highlighted. The tender exercise would enable a more integrated and cost effective model to be developed. T.U.P.E. may be an issue that will need to be addressed.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Required Standing Financial Instructions will be followed. T.U.P.E. may be an issue that will need to be addressed.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Impact review for Children Services (5-19) retender can be accessed at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversitycohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/public-health>

11.2 Impact review for Drug & Alcohol services can be accessed at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impactassessments/eias-2010/public-health>

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no carbon reduction implications based on the content of this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no planning or community safety implications based on the content of this report.

14.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 Cabinet are requested to note the contents of this report and agree to contract schedule of activity summarised in Table 2.

14.2 An update report will be submitted to Cabinet in February 2014 summarising progress against the contracting schedule and seeking final agreement to sign off of all contracts for 2014/15.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Public Health contracts by provider 2013/14 (including contracting actions)

REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet (papers on retendering of Drug & Alcohol and Children's [5-19] services)	10/10/2013

Public Health, Policy & Performance

Appendix 1 - Public Health Contracts by Provider 2013/14 (including contracting actions)

AREA	PROVIDER	VALUE (£)	NUMBER OF CONTRACTS	CONTRACTING ACTION
Obesity	5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	79,074	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Children 5-19	Action for Children	111,813	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Action on Addiction	45,229	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Advocacy In Wirral	213,525	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Arch Initiatives	2,320,324	1	Roll over (retender)
Children 5-19	Bridgewater Community Health	72,400	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Chamber Of Commerce	5,000	1	Roll over (retender)
Children 5-19	Claughton Medical Centre	10,000	1	Roll over (retender)
Health Checks	CSU	13,500	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Drugs & Alcohol	CWP	4,645,921	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Forum Housing	50,000	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Goals	6,000	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	HIT	30,280	1	Roll over (retender)
Obesity	Homestart	190,000	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Drugs & Alcohol	Independence Initiative	35,151	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Intuitive Recovery	64,868	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	John Moores University	66,275	1	Roll over (retender)
Miscellaneous	Liverpool City Council	15,000	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Miscellaneous	Liverpool PCT	21,972	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Drugs & Alcohol	Merseycare KWO	30,000	1	Roll over (retender)
Health Checks	GP's	500,000	58	Roll over (no changes/updated

				service specification)
Alcohol	Pharmacies - Alcohol	75,813	0	Roll over (retender)
Smoking	Pharmacists - NRT	470,000	93	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Sexual Health	Pharmacists - EHC	24,000	0	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Drugs & Alcohol	Phoenix Futures	353,343	1	Roll over (retender)
Obesity	Proscore	25,000	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Sexual Health	RASA	50,000	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Sexual Health	Sahir House	30,000	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Smoking	Solutions 4 Health	40,000	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Sexual Health	Terence Higgins Trust	106,834	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Mental Health	The Reader Organisation	157,500	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Drugs & Alcohol	The Social Partnership	477,888	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Tomorrow Womens Wirral	20,000	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Tranmere Rovers in the Community	15,000	1	Roll over (retender)
Smoking	VCAW	75,000	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Miscellaneous	Wired	20,000	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Sexual Health	Wirral Brook	249,942	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Miscellaneous	Wirral Change	62,525	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Drugs & Alcohol	Wirral CVS	57,752	1	Roll over (retender)
Miscellaneous	WIRRAL PATHFINDERS	15,000	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Children 5-19	Xenzone Ltd	101,320	1	Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	WUTH	92,000	1	Roll over (retender)

Children 5-19	WUTH	1,504,257		Roll over (retender)
Obesity	WUTH - NCMP	42,091		Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Smoking	WUTH -cquin	37,165		Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Miscellaneous	WUTH - TB	78,972		Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Smoking	Wirral Community Trust	797,023	1	Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Sexual Health	Wirral Community Trust	2,556,100		Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Children 5-19	Wirral Community Trust	194,357		Roll over (retender)
Obesity	Wirral Community Trust	628,441		Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Health & Well Being Services	Wirral Community Trust	1,541,625		Roll over (no changes/updated service specification)
Children 5-19	Wirral Community Trust	313,013		Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Wirral Community Trust	301,308		Roll over (retender)
Drugs & Alcohol	Wirral Borough Council - CYPD (alcohol)	423,223	1	Roll over (retender)
Children 5-19	Wirral Borough Council - CYPD (children's)	110,000		Roll over (retender)
Miscellaneous	Wirral Community Trust	5,000		Decommissioned
Miscellaneous	Tranmere Community Project	39,136		Decommissioned
Miscellaneous	TTP	194,560		Decommissioned
Miscellaneous	MEND	184,300		Decommissioned
TOTAL		19,995,820	191	

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

SUBJECT:	<i>CALM MERSEYSIDE VIA CHAMPS COLLABORATIVE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>PROGRAMME LEAD: MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR CHRIS MEADEN</i>
KEY DECISION?	<i>NO</i>

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree a change in commissioning arrangements for the Merseyside CALMZONE via the champs public health collaborative service within Wirral Council, as agreed by the respective Directors of Public Health.
- 1.2 This report is seeking an exception under paragraph 21.1.1 of the Contract Procedure Rules i) "Where there is only one viable contractor".

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Merseyside CALM has been active since 2000 as a joint commission across Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, Halton, Knowsley and Wirral. It is currently commissioned by Liverpool council as part of a broader health promotion contract with Liverpool Community Health Trust. The total value is £95k per annum. Liverpool Community Health Trust sub-contract to the national CALM charity and host (employ) the local CALM co-ordinator.
- 2.2 The CALM national charity provides a national helpline service and campaign co-ordination. Local funding is to provide this service for Merseyside residents and for the employment of the Merseyside CALMZONE co-ordinator. It has recently also been responsible for maintaining the suicide prevention network and an annual summit.
- 2.3 This sub-contracting arrangement has not added value and the consensus view of each local authority Director of Public Health was agreed to end the commissioning of LCH and to propose to commission the service directly from the CALM charity via the champs public health collaborative service.
- 2.4 CALM is a targeted mental health promotion and suicide prevention campaign and service, originally developed by the Department of Health in line with the national suicide prevention strategy, targeting young men aged 15yrs – 35 yrs, It aims to raise awareness of depression and encourage young men to seek help for mental anguish associated with problems with relationship breakdown, unemployment, substance misuse, financial pressures and social isolation. The rationale for the service is that men in this age category are at a significantly higher risk of committing, attempting, or considering suicide. Very few of these men have consulted their GP and are unlikely to have been in touch with mental health services. For this reason a more innovative, accessible and responsive approach was needed.

- 2.5 The organisation has been highly successful in developing a recognised national CALM brand and in delivering an attractive website, helpline and text service. Its creative collaborative campaigns have involved leading national and international figures with the entertainment industry, media and the arts – often using high profile role models for young men. As a mental health charity they have recruited significant sponsors and ambassadors promoting CALM in their respective fields.
- 2.6 Since CALM launched in Merseyside suicide rates amongst this group has decreased. Recently, however, rates amongst men aged 35 to 55 has increased, in part attributed to the economic downturn. CALM is broadening its focus to cover all men and Merseyside has been developing this work.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 CALM has become a recognised and accepted brand amongst the target audience and key partners. The brand could not transfer to another provider. Commissioning a new provider would require significantly increased investment in order to duplicate what has already been established over the years. This is unrealistic and would put at risk the support provided to young men vulnerable to suicide and poor mental health.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Directors of Public Health have considered other options and made this proposal. The CALM national charity is the only provider of the CALM brand and service. The option of tendering has been considered but the risks outlined in 3.1 make that option unviable. The option of each locality commissioning independently has also been considered but would lead to duplication of effort and inefficiencies.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Merseyside CALMZONE steering group is made up of the lead commissioners from each participating local authority to direct and advise this commission. All members agree with this proposal to continuing to commission CALM:

- Sandra Davies, Liverpool
- Chris McBrien, Knowsley
- Pat Nicholl, Sefton
- Sue Forster, St Helens
- Simon Bell, Halton
- Steve Gavin, Wirral

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 6.1 The project will benefit this sector as the provider is a charity and its key stakeholders are within this sector.

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

- 7.1 The total cost of the project is approximately £100k divided between the authorities as outlined in Appendix 1.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The legal implication is in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules as this is an exception under paragraph 21.1.1

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes the service is in direct response to equalities issues of age, gender and disability and to break down prejudice and inequalities related to mental and mental health. It is based on the need to provide an accessible mental health service to men who are not accessing mainstream support and services. It also pays specific attention to provide to young black men, fathers and gay men and addresses issues of equality and discrimination throughout the service.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 No implications

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 No implications.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 That Wirral council, via the champs public health collaborative service, commissions MERSEYSIDE CALMZONE directly from the CALM charity on behalf of the participating localities.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 To change the commissioning arrangements from Liverpool council health promotion contract with LCH to the champs collaborative public health service at Wirral council.

13.2 Investing funds directly to the charity will enable it flexibility to respond to the economic environment and lever in additional funds from charitable sources. The charity wishes to make greater use of volunteers and to expand the service to respond to the changing demographics of suicide to meet the needs of men over 35 years.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Financial Breakdown

REFERENCE MATERIAL

www.calmzone.net

SUBJECT HISTORY

None

Appendix 1: Financial breakdown

Sefton PCT	£18,325
Wirral PCT	£21,972
Halton & St. Helens	£20,988
Knowsley MBC	£11,616
Liverpool PCT	£36,802

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7 NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	<i>REABLEMENT AND DOMICILIARY SUPPORT PROCUREMENT - CONTRACT AWARD</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE JONES</i>
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The subject of this report is set within the continuing transformation of adult social care services and the procurement of market capability and capacity to enable people to remain at home through the provision of high quality Domiciliary Support Services and reablement at home support services that seek to maximise independence and continued self care with appropriate levels of support.
- 1.2 The Council has taken steps to transform the market by tendering for more flexible and responsive domiciliary and reablement services, which provide value for money taking into account the increasing integration of service delivery and commissioning between the Council and its partner organisations, especially Health.
- 1.3 The tender exercise promotes and supports the principles of the ethical charter to drive quality and standards within both the domiciliary and reablement services.
- 1.4 The report confirms the outcome of the Invitation to Tender and the tender process to establish a Contract Agreement (the contract) for the provision of Domiciliary Support Services and Reablement at Home Care Services. This process has identified successful Providers to deliver the services as specified through the procurement process and this report recommends ratification of this outcome.
- 1.5 Appendix 1 (exempt from public report) confirms the details of the providers recommended for awaiting contracts and as such is exempt from the open part of the public report, due to commercial sensitivities.
- 1.6 The report confirms that the provision of Reablement at Home Care Services are part of a wider service configuration to develop and implement with Health partners a comprehensive Intermediate Care Service. This will include a dedicated number of Intermediate Nursing Care Home beds and Intermediate Care Multi-disciplinary Team(s) complementary in nature to reablement at home care services to enable maximisation of people's potential for independence and the prevention of inappropriate long term residential/nursing care home placements. It is envisaged that this comprehensive range of intermediate care services will be fully implemented and effective from April 2014.

1.7 Domiciliary Support (also known as Home Care), is the support and help with personal care and household tasks for those that are frail and/or those with long term care needs. Domiciliary Support makes it possible for individuals to remain in their own home, enabling them to maintain personal independence within their local community. Homecare reablement seeks to support people to maximise their level of independence and appropriately minimise their need for ongoing homecare support, as such this service runs hand in hand with the provision of domiciliary care support services and explains the joint tender process.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The subject of this report is set within the comprehensive and complementary commissioning framework as outlined within the overarching strategy approved by Council entitled 'Shaping Tomorrow' to ensure the principles of personalisation and the transformation of adult social care.

2.2 This framework provides the context for three complementary Commissioning Plans covering Early Intervention and Prevention, Targeted Support Services and Learning Disabilities, together with a refreshed Carers Strategy, recognising the cross cutting nature of support provided by carers.

2.3 The Council has implemented a renewed dialogue on market capability and capacity with both health commissioners, partners and adult social care providers to identify together, where pressure points exist and to decide on how innovation and best value can be achieved. The Council has instituted a range of measures to work with providers to develop a diverse and active market where innovation is encouraged and rewarded and where poor quality is actively discouraged.

2.4 The above has been supported by regular Provider Forums and these meetings have informed the development of the Wirral Market Position Statement containing intelligence, information and analysis for social care providers. It describes current and potential future demand and supply and outlines models of care the Council wishes to encourage.

2.5 Overall, the market re-shape will see a reduced reliance on bed based capacity and groups of domiciliary and reablement services.

2.6 The Council recognises that change needs to take place within the adult social care market place to meet future requirements. The Market Position Statement will support market transformations and new service configurations to enable:

- A strategic shift to better support people at home and reduce reliance on bed based capacity.
- Further development of enablement, reablement and intermediate care services.
- Enhanced Domiciliary Support capacity and capability with a same-day responsiveness to new packages of support.
- The ability to mobilise support to people in crisis, including a mobile night's service.
- Investments in Assistive Technologies, equipment and adaptations.

All of which are subject to the contents of this report and to –

- Develop early intervention and prevention services.
- Increased housing with support options, including extra care for all needs groups.
- A range of day opportunities or support to access mainstream community venues.
- Services that stimulate and promote self direction/personal budgets.
- Brokerage services to enable individual procurement of services.
- A range of respite services for both adults and older people.
- The development of a range of carer related support services.

2.7 The population of Wirral is set to increase by just over 5% by 2030, with a marked increase in the population of older people. It is predicted the over 65 population will increase by 16% over the next ten years with the sharpest increase in the over 85's. The West of Wirral has a higher population of older people compared with the East. This will have a considerable impact on Health and Social Care Services, as the number of older people presenting with health related problems increases. Older people will have increasingly complex needs, highlighted by an increase of 14% by 2020 of the number of people requiring support with domestic and personal care needs. Wirral mirrors the national picture with regards the number of people forecast to have dementia set to increase by 50% by 2030. There will be a steady increase of 19% by 2020 with a steeper increase between 2020 and 2030.

2.8 During 2011/12 approximately 14,000 people received a package of care funded by the Council. The majority of people supported with commissioned packages, receiving support at home in the form of personal care and/or equipment and adaptations in order to remain at home. Wirral currently has 70 accredited personal support providers, reflecting an approach to procurement of individual support, based upon 'spot purchase' rather than a delivered number of block contracts to secure service provision. There have been problems commissioning packages within West Wirral, with providers unable to take these packages on. Investigation and engagement with current providers of services has identified a number of logistical challenges which include: recruitment and retention, individual contracts and conditions of service (e.g. zero hour contracts), travel costs, downtime, and a lack of local carers. As a consequence, many older people are placed within a short stay residential placement, losing skills and delaying the opportunity for them to return home, with support.

2.9 The Council recognises that the application of spot purchase contracts has potentially impeded market developments. The use of spot purchasing has afforded no certainty to providers to build capability and capacity to enable timely and flexible responses to need and demand for services. Analysis of how Wirral is performing across a range of linked service supports, spanning residential and nursing care home care, hospital discharges and intermediate care and reablement services, would indicate inappropriate service user outcomes and a skewed market for care. Notably an over reliance on bed based provision, as an alternative to reablement or Domiciliary Support. The market for Domiciliary Support is further skewed by a number of Health and GP commissions allied to Rapid Access and admissions prevention services which incentivise services leading to providers prioritising responses and impacting upon generic domiciliary care support services available capacities. There is a commitment to improve joint working with Health Commissioners to achieve coherence in meeting health and social care needs, and work collaboratively to re-shape the market.

2.10 The Council has taken steps to incentivise providers by –

- Requesting a local office
- Awarding contracts based on a 60/40 weighting and assessment of quality and price, which will include how providers:
 - Pay Living Wage.
 - Consider travel finance.
 - Minimise and move away from zero hour contracts.
 - Move away from 15 minute calls where inappropriate.
 - Intend to commit to the ethical care charter.
 - Develop their workforce to ensure they have the required skills and values.
 - Invest in dementia training.
 - Implement robust recruitment selection.
 - Ensure continuity of care.
 - Ensure timely responsiveness and ability to meet demand.

2.11 The tendering process has followed the established procurement timetable incorporating the following to assure robust governance and objectivity of decision making –

Invitation to Tender Issue date	7 th August
Invitation to Tender Return date	18 th September
Notification of bidders through to Stage 2	27 th September
Stage 2 Presentations	W/C 3 rd , 7 th and 14 th October
Successful and unsuccessful bidders informed	After Cabinet Approval
Start of mandatory standstill (Alcatel) period	W/C 11 th November (TBC)
End of mandatory standstill (Alcatel) period	(TBC)
Anticipated contract award date	11 th November
Contract Start Date	14 th November

2.12 The Council is seeking to appoint accredited Organisations for the Provision of Domiciliary Support Services, including Dementia (Lot One) and Reablement Support at Home (Lot Two), the contracts will run for an initial 3 year period from 1 January 2014 subject to annual review, with an option of two 12 month extension periods. Rates quoted in the Tender documents shall remain fixed until 31 December 2017 and thereafter revised annually in accordance with Clause 13.0 of Schedule A, Terms and Conditions, Conditions of Contract.

2.13 Lot One – general domiciliary support, including people with dementia, dementia domiciliary support is a service predominantly for older people but also for any adult with a physical or learning disability or mental health needs and will cover the hours between 7.00am and 11.00pm, 365 days a year. Wirral will be divided into 4 geographical zones – Birkenhead (CH41, 42 and 43), Wallasey (CH44, 45 and 46), Wirral South (CH60, 62 and 63) and Wirral West (CH47, 48, 49 and 61). Current indication of hours across all 4 zones is approximately 16,790 hours per week. Contracts will be awarded to deliver the service across a complete zone or combinations of zones. Payment will be for actual hours delivered on a pro-rata basis. This is split across the geographical zones as follows:

Zone	Hours 18-64 years	Hours 65 plus years	Total weekly hours
Birkenhead	1070	2930	4000
Wallasey	950	3590	4540
Wirral South	720	3320	4040
Wirral West	780	3430	4210

2.14 Lot Two – Reablement at Home again is predominantly for older people, but also for any adult with a physical or learning disability or mental health needs and will cover the hours between 7.00am and 11.00pm, 365 days a year. Wirral will be divided into two zones for this Lot, blocking the four above zones as follows:

Zone	Hours
Birkenhead and Wirral South	460
Wallasey and West Wirral	700

2.15 The tender process has been designed to engage a range of Providers and to ensure a diverse and sustainable market. The tender process was carried out under OJEU regulations – Part B. The intention is to award zones as follows:

- Tier 1 Provider – Main Provider
- Tier 2 – Back-up Provider (only where Tier 1 cannot fulfil requirements).

Each of the zones have been evaluated and awarded separately. The Council has considered various mixes of zones to ensure best value as outlined in the tender documents. It should be noted that the Council cannot guarantee that all indicative will be transferred to a successful bidder as a Service User may choose to utilise their personal budget in ways other than a Council Commissioned service.

The tenders were evaluated as follows:

Lot 1 – General Domiciliary Care

- Price – 40%
- Quality – 60%

The evaluation consisted of two stages:

- Stage 1 – ITT submission, represented 90% of the overall score and 100% of the price score.
- Stage 2 – Presentation, represented 10% of the overall quality score.

Lot 2 – Reablement

- Price – 0%
- Quality – 100%

The evaluation consisted of two stages:

- Stage 1 – ITT submission, represented 90% of the overall quality score.
- Stage 2 – Presentation, represented 10% of the overall quality score.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 The Council has undertaken extensive analysis of current business activities and profiled trends, demand for and utilisation of current service configurations and demographic implications to inform the Wirral Market Position Statement and to overlay this with comparative performance indices. This has evidenced a need to reshape the current market to enable and support people to remain living at home and prevent and avoid inappropriate long term residential and nursing care home placements. This strategy is a combined approach with Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and will maximise and make best use of available resources and deliver better outcomes for people.
- 3.2 We do recognise that the awarding of contracts will involve a potential movement of people, either as they choose personal budgets to retain current providers or that they transfer to a different provider given the outcome of the tender process. We have allowed a transition period to enable the necessary adjustments to ensure the safe handover of potential support arrangements for individuals so that care arrangements are maintained with minimum disruptions. Individuals will have the option to remain with their existing provider via Direct Payments if they wish.
- 3.3 The Council has endeavoured to maintain a balance between cost and quality, we are seeking to ensure quality standards, to bring to bear learning and knowledge regarding previous service challenges, whilst at the same time best value is obtained. Significant focus and weighting has been given to those agencies demonstrating commitment to the ethical care charter.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not applicable, in that the proposal within this Report will reshape the current market position and deliver better outcomes for people whilst making better use of available resources.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Tendering of Domiciliary Support Services and Reablement at Home Services has been embedded within the established programme of regular Provider Forums that are now scheduled by Adult Social Care to assure communication, engagement and co-ordination of market developments to give meaning and purpose to the Wirral Market Position Statement.

5.2 The Forums have provided an opportunity for Council Officers to share information and intelligence regarding trends, activity and demands relating to needs and services and to explore with providers rationales for proposed actions to be progressed. This has been an interactive and transparent process that has been subject to challenge by providers but equally early warning and readiness for the changes that are now taking place. In essence this has brought the Wirral Market Position Statement alive and represents a dynamic and positive dimension to on going Provider engagements.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 There are no direct implications for voluntary, community and faith organisations.

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

7.1 The cost of the new contract at existing service levels can be contained within the current 2013-14 budget allocations of £10.517m for independent domiciliary care and £0.860m for independent reablement.

7.2 Any additional use of the contracts in 2014-15 and later years will be offset by reductions in other categories of community care packages.

7.3 A detailed impact analysis is included within Appendix 1 (exempt from public report).

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Invitation to Tender (ITT) and the process to establish a Contract Agreement is a competitive procurement conducted in accordance with EU Procurement Directives and as implemented in English Law in the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI 2006 No.5) and such other UK regulations implementing its provisions as may be made from time to time.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes and impact review is attached.

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/adult-social-services>

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the granting of contracts to those Providers that have been successful in relation to the tendering process as identified in Appendix 1 (exempt from public report).

12.2 In making the recommendations in Appendix 1, the council has given consideration to the following factors and interdependencies:

- Ability to achieve the required market shift at the pace required.
- Monitoring market stability.
- Ensuring robust responsiveness to meet the changing demand in the market place.
- Ability to achieve good outcomes and experience for individuals.
- Ability to drive quality, continuity of care and support the principles of the ethical care charter.
- Healthy market competition.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 The Council is committed to maximising and maintaining peoples potential for independent living and preventing and avoiding inappropriate long term residential and nursing care home placements to ensure better outcomes and best use of available resources. The tendering of domiciliary support service provision and reablement at home will contribute to this key objective and will be further enhanced with the implementation of a comprehensive health and social care intermediate care service effective from April 2014.

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APPENDICES (EXEMPT)

Appendix 1 – Strictly Confidential and not for Circulation

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7 NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR THE FUTURE TREATMENT OF WIRRAL'S KERBSIDE COLLECTED GARDEN WASTE
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	MARK SMITH, HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGULATION
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR BRIAN KENNY, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the options for the processing of all Wirral's kerbside collected garden waste post March 2014. Whilst the Council can legally make a charge for the collection of garden waste it has a statutory duty to dispose, or send for treatment this waste at no additional charge to householders. It is recommended that Wirral Council join an existing green waste composting contract between April and October 2014, currently let by Sefton Council, to enable Wirral Council to take part in a collaborative procurement exercise with all other Merseyside districts. This will ensure that Wirral enjoy the "economies of scale" that a large procurement project is likely to attract and limit the impact of increased processing costs that this industry has experienced over recent years.
- 1.2 Parts of this report relate to the commercial position regarding the existing contract and are therefore exempt from public disclosure in accordance with paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and are contained in **Appendix 1**.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The current garden waste reprocessing contract is due to expire 31st March 2014. Wirral is projected to produce around 13,000 tonnes of garden waste per annum. This must be composted to PAS100 standards to enable the Council to claim recycling credits (£58.99 per tonne) and add this tonnage into Wirral Council's recycling performance figures. The current national median gate fee price for windrow treatment reported by WRAP is £24 per tonne (excluding haulage) making the value of this contract significant, and subject to OJEU procurement rules.
- 2.2 Please see **Appendix 1**.
- 2.3 All Merseyside districts are currently drafting a joint tender for green waste processing (led by Sefton Council). A soft market testing exercise has been carried out and the findings of this will inform the development of the ITT (Invitation to Tender). The

outcome of the procurement exercise will be known around April 2014, with a view to commencing November 2014. It is envisaged that the large scale of this tender will secure the most competitive direct deliver gate fee price. Bidders will also be requested to price for the bulking and transportation of garden waste where the facility is too far to deliver to directly by districts. It is likely that the most competitive tenders will come from bidders that source a treatment facility close the main cluster of districts. Therefore, Wirral will be required to arrange its own bulking and transport of waste to the facility, or pay an enhanced contractual gate fee price to include bulking and haulage. However, it is possible that the bidders of this large contract will “subsidise” these costs in order to secure the additional tonnage Wirral Council can offer.

3.0 PREFERRED OPTION: JOIN AN EXISTING COLLABORATIVE CONTRACT UNTIL OCTOBER 2014 AND TAKE PART IN A LONGER TERM JOINT PROCUREMENT EXERCISE WITH OTHER MERSEYSIDE DISTRICTS

A two year collaborative green waste processing contract was let by Sefton Council in November 2011 and has been extended until 31st October 2014. The contract was awarded to White Moss Horticulture, which is a family owned business and producer of horticultural products based in Kirkby. All Merseyside districts are entitled to use this contract at any time, subject to being “invited” by the contractor and operating within limited tonnages. Wirral Council has formally been invited to join this contract from any time up until the expiry date.

The direct deliver gate fee price is highly competitive, due to the larger scale of the contract, and the location of the White Moss Horticulture facility to the Merseyside districts. In addition, White Moss Horticulture are keen to work with Wirral Council, as they are aware we are part of the joint Merseyside procurement proposal.

Officers wish to accept the White Moss Horticulture offer to join that contract upon the expiry of the current contract. This will enable Wirral to fully evaluate the outcome of the joint procurement exercise (2.2 refers) and if desired, compare the future gate fee prices to an in-house option (see section 5.4 below) in spring next year in order to determine Wirral’s future route for garden waste processing.

The Sefton Contract only allows for the “receiving and treatment” element of the process, based on a direct deliver gate fee price. It is impractical for Biffa to direct deliver to this site, due to the 1.5 hour estimated turnaround time. Therefore it will be necessary for Wirral to tender for the bulking and haulage of the garden waste for the same period (April to October 2014.) The value of this contract will require Wirral to seek five quotes. Officers have received a quote from White Moss Horticulture which has provided an indication of the approximate cost.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

4.1 Please see **Appendix 1**.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Extension of existing contract with Armstrong Group

Please see **Appendix 1**.

5.2 Procure Wirral's own interim contract

This option is only likely to generate competitive tenders from composting reprocessors who are reasonably local, as transport and bulking costs are very significant, and become unviable if a reprocessor is too far away. The current Sefton Contract with White Moss Horticulture offers a cheaper gate fee price than any others received in our green waste tendering exercise carried out in 2009. When comparing with 12/13 national gate fee prices published by WRAP, this price is also extremely competitive.

It is the view of officers that the existing Sefton contract is unlikely to be “beaten” by contracting without the enhanced tonnage from other districts. It is estimated that the amount of officer time taken to carry out this exercise will exceed 200 hours. Due to the reduction in staffing resources across a number of Council departments, it would be necessary to employ a consultancy firm to assist with this tender at an estimated cost of at least £15,000.

A benefit of this option would be to explore “direct deliver” options to nearby composting sites. However, based on previous/current known gate fee prices, and the additional cost of delivering waste to a facility outside of the borough is anticipated to be higher than the White Moss Horticulture offer.

As with the “preferred option”, this option would enable the Council to work up an in house tender option from the Parks and Countryside Service as well as keep in consideration the outcome of the joint Merseyside procurement exercise.

5.3 Full Wirral “stand alone” procurement with an April contract start date

Tender prices submitted in 2009 were all higher than the White Moss Horticulture interim offer with the exception of the successful tender at that time – refer Appendix 1. White Moss Horticulture have also indicated in writing that the interim “offer” price may well be improved on through a collaborative procurement process.

Nationally, gate fee prices for Windrow Composting have reduced slightly in this year. This is due to higher competition amongst waste reprocessors for the waste product (as some local authorities use other processes such as anaerobic digestion and in-vessel composting to recycling organic waste containing kitchen waste). In addition, restrictions on the use of peat (to be phased out completely by 2020) have meant kerbside collected garden waste has become a popular alternative for compost producers.

It is therefore likely that a new stand alone procurement will produce similar or slightly lower gate fee tender prices than Wirral secured last time (with the exception of the successful tender). The amount of tonnage Wirral has to offer has reduced, which may offset any gains from current market values. However, the amount of tonnage to be treated as part of the collaborative procurement will be critical to local reprocessors and has the potential to attract new reprocessors to the area. This guaranteed supply of good quality organic waste will maximise competition and drive down the gate fee price. This has already been demonstrated in the existing collaborative tender with Sefton as this gate fee price is lower than districts pay individually to various contractors.

The previous procurement failed to secure a cost effective “in borough” composting solution. The garden waste had to be transported outside the borough. The tonnage

yield from Wirral's garden waste scheme has reduced by around 40% this year, making the likelihood of reprocessors offering a competitive direct deliver option within the borough extremely unlikely.

5.4 Secure an in-borough composting site and carry out the treatment process "in-house"

As in option 5.3, the reduction in tonnage as a result of the garden waste scheme will make the in-house reprocessing of the compost more expensive per tonne. Overheads and capital costs for setting up a composting facility will be the same for 13,000t (the maximum we are likely to yield for a chargeable garden waste service) as it would be for 20,000t (collected via a free service).

A number of other barriers currently exist:

- There is no existing facility or site in the borough so this will have to be identified and planning permission sought. (Relevant planning permission has been granted at a privately owned site near Storeton and the landowner is keen to engage with the Council over the future use of this site).
- Capital investment will be needed to carry out site works, develop infrastructure and purchase specialised equipment.
- The Council currently does not have the expertise and qualifications to ensure the waste is treated to PAS 100 standards.

Notwithstanding this, there are wider benefits to consider by taking on this function:

- The local agricultural soil quality could be improved for local farmers by utilising the compost.
- The carbon footprint from the garden waste kerbside collection service would be minimised as the waste will be recycled and used within the borough.
- There is an opportunity to develop partnerships with local businesses (Farmers and other land owners).
- Garden waste subscribers would be able to visit a local site to understand the process and collect free compost to take home.
- This could compliment a wider parks and countryside function and provide a free source of compost to be used by the Council and during other land restoration projects.
- Income opportunities exist by receiving green waste from the private sector.

Officers believe this option is worth exploring so that a true comparison of costs can be made between a collaborative procurement and in-house solution. Until the gate fee price from the collaborative procurement is known, this option should not be ruled out. The preferred option in this report allows time to explore this option if Members wish. It will be necessary to appoint a consultancy firm to carry out this work at an estimated value of around £15,000. This could be contained within existing budget provisions in 2013/14. The work must be concluded by 31st March 2014, to enable a comparison of costs and benefits with the joint Merseyside procurement.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 Initial meetings have been held with all Merseyside Districts, the MRWA and Halton Council in order to develop the concept for a joint procurement.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 Included in the “offer” from White Moss Horticulture, is a gift of 1000 free bags of home compost that the Council can distribute to garden waste subscribers through a home compost giveaway (or through community organisations linked to gardening/growing). There are no negative implications for voluntary, community and faith groups.

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

8.1 The cost of the interim green waste contract and the bulking and haulage is likely to be in the region of £230,000 (depending on tonnage yields for that period). A growth bid for next year has already been prepared as the existing provision for green waste processing is insufficient to cover the future costs. Officers estimate that an additional budget of £65,000 pa will be required upon retendering the existing contract.

8.2 The preferred option has the least impact on existing staffing resources. Sefton Council are leading the collaborative procurement exercise and all districts are inputting into that process. For example, St Helen’s Council produced a soft market testing document that has recently been posted on the CHEST. The responses are being collated by Sefton Council’s procurement team. The interim contract has already been procured and a minimum of 200 officer hours (legal, procurement and technical) will be saved by utilising this contract. Should Members wish an in-house feasibility study to be carried out, it is estimated this would cost around £15,000, which could be contained within existing budget provisions.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 With regards to the Sefton interim option, Wirral was named as a “contracting authority” in the OJEU notice (183347-2011-EN) and the “Tender for the Provision of a Green Waste Composting Service”. There is a tonnage limitation of approximately 10000 tonnes per annum. As this interim arrangement is for a seven month period, this tonnage will not be exceeded.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

No because there is no relevance to equality.

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 In order to ensure the garden waste we send for treatment can be classified as “recycled” it must be treated to “PAS 100” standards. All options within this report call for this standard. The recommended option in this report awards an interim contract to a Merseyside based reprocessor that offers a “closed loop” recycling solution. The product produced from the treatment process is used in a range of compost products”, including peat free and reduced peat products that are sold to the retail sector. The

carbon impact of transporting Wirral's garden waste to a new treatment facility will be reduced as the proposed interim facility is more local.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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

13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Members are requested to:

- (1) Approve the Head of Environment and Regulation's recommendation to pursue the preferred procurement option outlined in section 3.
- (2) Approve Wirral Council's full involvement in the proposed collaborative procurement exercise for Merseyside districts through a variant tender or variable pricing methodology (allowing Wirral the flexibility to determine its long term options) as detailed in section 2.3.
- (3) Instruct the Head of Environment and Regulation to carry out a feasibility study of delivering composting services in-house through the Parks and Countryside Services Section as outlined in section 5.4.
- (4) Instruct the Head of Environment and Regulation to report the outcome of the collaborative procurement exercise and feasibility study once the gate fee prices of the joint procurement exercise are known.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 A comprehensive appraisal of options has been evaluated and the current "offer" from White Moss Horticulture is deemed to be extremely competitive. Current and previously tendered gate fee prices are higher than this "offer". In the opinion of officers, letting our own interim contract for the same period would lead to an increased gate fee price offer from White Moss Horticulture (as it is not part of the existing Sefton contract) and would not result in a more competitive offer from other bidders. This option proposes to utilise the same bulking station that we currently deliver garden waste to which eliminates any risk of service disruption to our garden waste subscribers and any increased cost claims from the waste collection contractor, Biffa.

14.2 In such times of austerity it is important that Wirral Council maximise opportunities for partnership working and identifying collective savings from working with other local authorities. The total amount of garden waste tonnage due to be processed through a joint contract is around 60,000t, compared to a maximum of 13,000t from Wirral acting alone. Therefore this contract is large enough to attract new operators to Merseyside which will incentivise all bidders to tender as competitively as possible, benefiting all districts involved.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Information regarding existing contract with Armstrong Group (EXEMPT).

REFERENCE MATERIAL

OJEU notice 183347-2001-EN (10/06/2011) <http://ted.europa.eu/TED>

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet: Contractual Review of Green Waste Processing Contract with Armstrong Group	23 June 2011
Cabinet: Update Report Contractual Review of the Garden Waste Processing Contract With Armstrong Group	12 January 2012

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	HIGHWAY SERVICES CONTRACT 2014 – 2018: AWARD OF CONTRACT
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	MARK SMITH, HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGULATION
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR HARRY SMITH, HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is intended to inform Cabinet regarding the outcome of the procurement for a new term Highway Services Contract to replace the current contract which ends on 31st March 2014, and to recommend awarding the contract to the preferred bidder, based on their tender being the most economically advantageous to the Council.
- 1.2 Parts of the report relate to the commercial considerations of the tenders submitted and their evaluation, together with value for money assessments which utilise price information relating to the preferred bidder's tender and that of the current provider and which are exempt from public disclosure in accordance with paragraph 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and are presented in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 The maintenance of highways is a statutory duty imposed on the Council as Highway Authority. The maintenance of the highway infrastructure also underpins the regeneration of our communities and the creation of new jobs through providing good transport links.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

Introduction

- 2.1 The current highways and engineering services contract ends on 31st March 2014, and at its meeting on 14 March 2013 [Minute 229 refers], Cabinet resolved that "...the *Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment* be requested to proceed with the development and procurement of a single strategic contract for highway services to be effective from 1st April 2014; complying with procurement legislation."
- 2.2 That report also concluded that the scope of services should remain as for the existing contract and a contract duration of four years plus up to two years extension be adopted.

Project governance

- 2.3 Project governance was established to ensure effective delivery of the new contract, with senior officer representation from Regeneration and Environment, Legal Services, HR, Communications, Corporate Procurement and Finance. Regular progress briefings have also been given to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation. The monthly Project Board meetings have been supported by a project delivery group responsible for developing and managing appropriate project controls including programmes, risk registers, resource plans, communications plan, technical reports, specification documents, procurement documentation and tender management.

Contract form

- 2.3 Officers have determined that the most appropriate form of contract to be used would be the current industry standard, the New Engineering Contract (NEC) Term Service Contract, rather than the NEC Engineering and Construction Contract employed on the current contract.
- 2.4 The timing of the decision to proceed with procurement of such a contract also coincided with the launch of new procurement and model contract documents as part of the government-sponsored Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) based on the NEC Term Service Contract form. The HMEP suite of documents have been developed to enhance the existing standard documentation published by the Department for Transport which is considered as being geared towards the construction of new motorways and trunk roads, rather than the maintenance of local road networks.
- 2.5 The HMEP documents have been developed using the most recent procurement carried out in the highways sector in local government and provide procurement pre-qualification, form of contract, specification and method of measurement documents to form the basis of new local government highway contracts.
- 2.6 In consultation with both Legal and Corporate Procurement officers as to the management of key risks to the Council within contracts, it was decided to procure the new contract for Wirral using the new HMEP documents; putting Wirral at the forefront of best practice in highway maintenance procurement. In accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, a 70% price : 30% quality split has been adopted in the evaluation of tenders.
- 2.7 It has been estimated that the total value of the contract, over a full six year contract, would be in the range of £30 to 33 Million.
- 2.8 A press release combining both the decision to proceed with procurement and to use the new form of contract was issued to, and covered by, the technical press in May 2013.

Procurement

- 2.9 The Head of Procurement published a contract notice in the OJEU on 24 May 2013, informing potential bidders that the procurement of the contract, as described above, was underway, using the Restricted Contract Procedure and inviting expressions of

interest, through completion of a comprehensive HMEP Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ).

2.10 On 1st July 2013, the closing date for expressions of interest had produced 8 completed PQQ, which were then evaluated by officers from Corporate Procurement, Finance and Highways Management. It was determined that three of the interested companies did not meet the financial criteria stipulated, and it was agreed that 5 contracting companies would be invited to tender, which was carried out on 28 August 2013:

- Amey
- BAM Nuttall
- Galliford Try
- LaFarge Tarmac
- North Midland Construction

2.11 Of the 5 companies, only 3 submitted completed tenders by the closing date of 14 October 2013:

- BAM Nuttall
- Galliford Try
- North Midland Construction

The Head of Procurement is to make contact with the 2 companies that declined to submit tenders despite expressing interest through submission of the PQQ, to determine the reasons for their decision.

Outcome of the procurement process

2.12 The tender process required bidders to complete a comprehensive price list based on the standard method of measurement used in the HMEP documents, supplemented by items specifically required by Wirral in maintaining its Coastal and Highways infrastructure. This is for both the routine ordering of works, and for the target cost works which are larger and more complex nature, such as for bridges and traffic improvement schemes. Prices submitted were evaluated by using a set of quantities based upon a broad selection of the activity carried out under the current contract. The summary outcomes of that evaluation, which comprises 70% of the total marks potentially awarded to bidders, are shown in **Appendix 1** which is exempt from public disclosure in accordance with paragraph 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, due to the commercial sensitivity of the information.

2.13 The tender process also required bidders to submit information and proposals determined by the HMEP documents, together comprising:

- A Methodology Statement regarding the bidder's proposed approach to carrying out the contract;
- Information regarding the Key People the company would use to manage the contract and the services provided; and
- The Quality Statement which brings together the bidders' response to a range of questions covering client satisfaction, quality ('right first time'), cost control, programme management and health and safety.

The responses are scored and weighted relative to importance, before collation into a single score out of a possible 30% of the total score potentially awarded to bidders. The summary outcomes of that evaluation are shown in **Appendix 1** which is exempt from public disclosure in accordance with paragraph 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, due to the commercial sensitivity of the information.

- 2.14 The outcome of the evaluation has produced a ranking of the three tenders submitted, and consequently a preferred bidder.

Achieving the Council's Objectives including securing value for money

- 2.15 Cabinet will recall that a comprehensive value for money review of the existing contract was reported to them on 27 September 2012 [Minute 88 refers], and the price aspects of the preferred bidder's tender have been subjected to the same methodology, to enable a comparison with the earlier analyses, and in particular with the existing contract. That methodology was based on some of the key case studies provided within the then Audit Commission's 2011 report on local government highway maintenance entitled '*Going the distance*'; specifically (i) a number of key maintenance activities for which a range of rates were provided and (ii) utilising the 'basket of schemes' developed to enable benchmarking between authorities by the Midlands Service Improvement Group (MSIG) which now comprises 21 member authorities.
- 2.16 The results of these exercises, and the data provided by MSIG members, Merseyside and Core Cities authorities, are commercially sensitive, and the results are considered exempt from public disclosure in accordance with paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and this information is separately contained within **Appendix 1**.
- 2.17 The Preferred Bidder's approach to managing the contract and delivering the services is provided in detail in their tender submission.
- 2.18 Performance management for the contract has already been fully developed; bringing together the governance and collaborative working arrangements in the HMEP documents with the baseline of the range of performance measures in place on the current contract. Targets for the first year are already determined, and improvement targets for future years will be developed in discussion with the preferred bidder. The Contractor is incentivised to meet performance targets through the HMEP approach of 'earning' contract extension periods up to a maximum of 2 years. Poor performance can result in extensions already earned being withdrawn.

Assurance processes

- 2.19 Assurance that the Council will meet its obligations and objectives, in deciding to proceed with the contract award have been tested through a review by the Head of Internal Audit, in September 2013, and Gateway 3 Review conducted independently by Local Partnerships between 29 and 31 October 2013.
- 2.20 The purpose of the reviews was primarily to validate the Council's approach to the procurement exercise including the evaluation of tenders, selection of preferred

provider and confirmation that the Council's needs will be met before the Investment Decision is made.

- 2.21 The reports from these two reviews are provided at **Appendix 2**, together with the Action Plan prepared in response to the recommendations made.

Standstill period

- 2.22 In accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2006, Cabinet should note that there is a statutory ten day "standstill period" to enable unsuccessful tenderers to obtain feedback on the Council's contract award decision and potentially lodge a legal challenge if unsatisfied with the legality of the decision. Only after this period can the contract be formally awarded.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 Compliance with procurement legislation and the Council's own CPRs have been ensured through involvement of both Corporate Procurement and the Legal Services at all stages in the procurement process, including membership of the Project Board, and should minimise any risk of successful challenge to the procurement decision to award the contact as recommended in Section 12 below.
- 3.2 The possibility that a small number of tenders returned might lead to a lack of competition has been considered, and the quality and price bids have proved acceptable and the preferred bidder's tender provides value for money. The financial implications arising from the award of the contract are addressed in Section 7.0 below.
- 3.3 The need to secure a new highway maintenance service provider from 1st April 2014 will be achieved through appointment of the preferred bidder and then implementing a full mobilisation programme with the appointed contractor from December 2013. Planning and preparation for handover from the current provider, who is collaborating well, is already underway and risks and works programmes being regularly monitored. This will enable continuity in delivering highway maintenance as required by the duty imposed on the Council as Highway Authority.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The full Options Appraisal report, assessing a range of different options available to the Council was reported to Cabinet at the meeting on 14 March 2013.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 No formal consultation has been carried out during the procurement process. As reported at paragraph 2.8 above, a press release was issued to the construction and highways technical press.
- 5.2 Both the current provider and Trade Union representing the employees of the current provider affected by the procurement have been given regular updates on progress in the procurement process.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 6.1 There are none arising specifically from this report.

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

- 7.1 The financial implications arising from the new contract are set out in **Appendix 1**. The services delivered through the proposed contract will be met from approved revenue and capital budgets which total approximately £8.03M in 2013/14.
- 7.2 The preferred bidder will need to work or interface with the Council's existing IT systems for managing infrastructure assets, customer enquiries and works ordering. The mobilisation planning to be commenced in December 2013 will include the Council's IT team to ensure that integration and access to systems, training, and handover of licences from the current provider can take place to ensure that full service is available from 1st April 2014.
- 7.3 The Council and the preferred bidder are to form a relationship using a new contract form and common understanding of the requirements of the contract is crucial to its success. The governance arrangements set out in the tender documents, including the mobilisation plan and risk registers, will need to be implemented as early as possible in December 2013. A programme of activity, including training, contract procedures, handover arrangements, communications, establishment of depot, and the like will require the Council's existing general and contract management resources to be carefully utilised to ensure both successful mobilisation to the new service contract as well as robust closing down of the current contract.
- 7.4 Cabinet is reminded that the salt barn depot, gritter fleet and salt are provided to the current contractor by the Council, and this arrangement is to continue under the new contract.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The maintenance of public highways is a statutory duty imposed on the Council as Highway Authority, under the Highways Act 1980.
- 8.2 The procurement process is governed by the Public Contracts Regulations 2006.
- 8.3 The transfer of former Council employees between the current provider and the incoming provider is governed by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE).

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?
- (b) No because there is no relevance to equality.

Whilst there is no direct impact on the Council's services, it is important that the Council's contractor meets the requirements of equality legislation, and supports the Council's obligations in carrying out works and services on its behalf, including through sub-contractors. All of the companies invited to tender had been satisfactorily assessed in this regard through the PQQ evaluation process described in 2.8 and 2.9 above.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report. All of the companies invited to tender had been satisfactorily assessed regarding the policies, management systems and procedures in place for environmental protection and waste management; including for sub-contractor arrangements; through the PQQ evaluation process described in 2.8 and 2.9 above.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific planning implications arising from this report. The Contractor appointed will be expected to address any planning obligations in respect of depot arrangements as part of the mobilisation for readiness for delivering the services.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- (i) Note the outcome of the procurement exercise described in the report.
- (ii) Note the outcome of the value for money and external assurance reviews, and endorse the proposed approach to resolving outstanding matters set out in the action plan prepared in response to the external review recommendations.
- (iii) Approve the award of the Highway Services Contract 2014 – 2018 to the preferred bidder, subject to statutory standstill procedures.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 The appointment of a contractor from 1st April 2014 is essential to deliver the maintenance of highways and coastal infrastructure.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 (EXEMPT) – financial and value for money analyses

Appendix 2 – Local Partnerships' *Gateway 3 Review* report and Internal Audit report.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

The NEC family of contracts:

<http://www.neccontract.com/about/index.asp>

The HMEP standard form of contract and procurement documents:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/hmep/efficiency/standard-form-of-contract.php>

Audit Commission report 'Going the distance' May 2011

<http://archive.audit-commission.gov.uk/auditcommission/sitecollectiondocuments/Downloads/20110526goingthedistancePRESS.pdf>

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet <i>Highway Services Beyond 2014 – Options Appraisal</i>	14th March 2013

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	MAINTENANCE, SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEMS AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT: OPTIONS APPRAISAL
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	MARK SMITH, HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT & REGULATION
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR HARRY SMITH , HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION
KEY DECISION	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The current traffic signal maintenance contract will expire on 31 March 2014 and the Council needs to put in place a contractual arrangement to ensure essential maintenance of the traffic signal installations across the Borough can be carried out. The Head of Environment and Regulation has undertaken an options appraisal on a range of contract options , for consideration by Cabinet.
- 1.2 The options appraisal has been undertaken using methodology from Local Partnerships, a body jointly owned by HM Treasury and the Local Government Association, and the options appraisal report is attached in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 The outcome of the options appraisal indicates that a traditional contract operating over a four year term, with the possibility of a two year extension, is the preferred outcome to achieve Council objectives and be in place by 1 April 2014. The Restricted Accelerated Contract Procedure is recommended to procure the new contract.
- 1.4 Cabinet are requested to approve this proposed approach and procurement route.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The current traffic signals maintenance contract, previously awarded through a competitive tender process, was introduced on 1 April 2009 for a five year

term. The contract also contained options to extend for twelve months for a total period of three years. The contract will formally expire on 31 March 2014 but contract extensions could be considered. The current contract enables the necessary maintenance works on the traffic signal network to be completed and has provision for the installation of new sites as part of capital investment schemes.

- 2.2 Any consideration of a contract extension would need to demonstrate adequate contract performance against the contract to date, and benchmarking of price / cost information as compared with other recent contracts in the region.
- 2.3 The contract is managed and governed using a number of key performance indicators. The contractor has performed satisfactorily and there have been no contract disputes during the term of the contract.
- 2.4 Price benchmarking of the traffic signal maintenance costs has been attempted but there has been limited information obtained. The exercise has not been able to establish that the current contract or an extension of it would provide value for money based on the current position in the market.

2.5 Options Appraisal

- 2.5.1 An options appraisal has been undertaken to consider contract options for traffic signal maintenance. The options appraisal used the methodology developed by Local Partnerships, a body jointly owned by the HM Treasury and the Local Government Association, and considers a number of factors: setting of objectives; identifying options; the importance and significance of each objective and assigning a weighting; and using criteria to assess options against each objective.
- 2.5.2 The options appraisal included a range of Officers from different backgrounds and was facilitated by a Business Analyst from the Council's Change Team.
- 2.5.3 A new traffic signal maintenance contract will have a likely annual value of approximately £350,000, which will cover revenue maintenance and capital investment. The actual expenditure on the contract could vary each year.

2.6 Options Appraisal Project Objectives

- 2.6.1 The objectives for the traffic signal maintenance options appraisal were identified as :-
 - Meet the statutory obligations for traffic signals maintenance;
 - Reduce the on-going cost to undertake traffic signal maintenance and reduce the revenue burden on the Council;
 - Deliverability of the project to the Council's savings timetable (2015/16 onwards);
 - Flexibility to adapt to emerging issues and opportunities including changes in statutory framework or policy context;
 - Ability to embrace innovation and advances in traffic signal technology;

- Council retains robust accountability and performance management arrangements;
- Well maintained infrastructure of traffic signal assets and the best use of capital investment; and
- Service operational on 1 April 2014.

2.7 Contract Options

2.7.1 The options appraisal identified and evaluated the following contract options :-

- Contract extension for 1 year;
- Contract extension for 3 years;
- Traditional contract operating over four year term with the potential for contract extension for two years;
- Innovative contract operating over a longer term (10 years) and securing investment in the traffic signal assets;
- New scope for the contract;
- Joint / collaborative contract; and
- In-house delivery.

2.7.2 Each of the above options was evaluated using the Local Partnerships' methodology. The process for the options appraisal, objectives and weightings and the evaluation results are shown in **Appendix 1**.

2.7.3 The result of the options appraisal produced two high scoring options :-

- Traditional contract for four year term with possible two year contract extension; and
- Innovative contract operating over a longer term with the facility to achieve investment in the asset stock to reduce the age of it.

2.7.4 A traditional contract operating over a four year period should provide a contractor with a reasonable amount of time certainty but also not tie the Council into an overly long timeframe. The Council has expertise in managing this type of contract and would not require any additional resources to administer the contract. This approach would also retain "strong client" management of the contract.

2.7.5 An innovative contract would establish a longer term relationship between the contractor and the Council. It would also secure investment into the traffic signal assets and reduce the age of the asset. This in turn would assist in reducing revenue costs for the on-going maintenance with newer, more efficient equipment being used to control and manage the traffic signal network. This type of contract would likely require a long lead-in time to develop and implement. The skills to develop this contract are not contained within the Council and an external consultant would need to be procured to research and develop the contract approach, specification, etc. This would also increase the client costs for procuring the contract. With a long lead-in time this option is also unlikely to deliver financial savings to the Council's timetable of 2015/16.

- 2.7.6 Four of the options would require longer lead-in time than is available and would not be in place by 1 April 2014 (innovative contract; new scope; joint / collaborative; and in-house delivery). These options would require, as a minimum, the one year contract extension to be put in place from 1 April 2014, which would then enable development work on these options. The one year contract extension is one of the lower scoring options and when considered that each of the four options (innovative, new scope; joint / collaborative; or in house delivery) are not the highest scoring option then this is not an ideal approach to take.
- 2.7.7 The option with the highest overall score and capable of being in place to the required timetable of 1 April 2014 is the traditional four year contract with two year extension option when the Restricted Accelerated Contract Procedure is used.

2.8 Procurement Route

- 2.8.1 The Restricted Accelerated Contract Procedure has been recommended as the procurement route as there are limited suppliers in the market place with expertise and experience of undertaking traffic signal maintenance works. The approach allows the Authority to restrict the number of candidates who will be invited to tender, which reduces cost and improves manageability.
- 2.8.2 The tender process timetable will ensure the contract will be operational on 1 April 2014. The key dates areas follows:-

○ issue Office Journal of European Union notice	10/12/2013
○ issue tender documents	15/01/2014
○ contract award	17/02/2014
○ contract start	1/04/2014

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 Failure to have a traffic signal maintenance contract in place by 1 April 2014 would result in the Council not being in a position to meet its statutory obligation to maintain the traffic signal network as part of its duty as highway authority. This would mean that there is no available mechanism to address instances of road traffic damage or emergency situations, thereby exposing road users to the risk of injury.
- 3.2 Failure to have a maintenance contract in place on 1 April 2014 could result in the Council having to switch off traffic signal installations, presenting road safety issues to road users including motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.
- 3.3 There are a limited number of suppliers of traffic signal maintenance and Cabinet are advised that this potentially creates a near-monopoly market.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The options appraisal considered seven options in total. Some of the options would not be capable of being in place by 1 April 2014 and would require, as a minimum, a contract extension for twelve months, although this twelve month contract extension option was one of the lowest scoring options. The traditional four year contract option recommended to Cabinet is the one that scored highest through the options appraisal and can be put in place by 1 April 2014.
- 4.2 As part of the wider Highway Services Contract Options Appraisal, reported to Cabinet in March 2013 (Minute 229 refers), consideration was given to including traffic signals maintenance in the larger contract. Given the limited number of suitable contractors for traffic signals, and the consequential need for a highways main contractor to sub-contract the traffic signals element of the service, it is likely that this would have simply resulted in the additional cost of a management fee and longer lines of communication on traffic signals matters.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Traffic signal maintenance works invariably only involve like for like replacement of equipment and maintenance works would not change the overall performance and level of service that road users would experience. As such no public consultation is planned for routine maintenance programmes. The new contract will include the installation of new equipment as part of capital investment programmes and with such schemes consultation will be undertaken with Elected Members, the public and relevant interest groups.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 6.1 The Council is required to undertake maintenance of traffic signal installations and the maintenance contract will have no implications on voluntary, community and faith groups.

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

- 7.1 Expenditure through the contract is likely to be £350,000 per annum which will be funded through the Traffic Signals Maintenance Budget for revenue maintenance and the Local Transport Plan allocation for capital investment into new installations. A new traffic signal maintenance contract will ensure that necessary maintenance work on the existing traffic signal assets is undertaken.
- 7.2 There is no guarantee that the existing budget will be sufficient to cover the new tender price.
- 7.3 The procurement of the contract will be undertaken by existing staff in the Traffic and Transportation Division and supported by staff in Contract Procurement and Legal Services.

7.4 Staff employed by the existing traffic signal contractor are unlikely to want to transfer into any new / alternative contract arrangements as part of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE).

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There is a requirement under the Highways Act to maintain highways including the network of traffic signal installations and equipment in the Borough. There is also a requirement to ensure that the traffic signal systems are electrically safe. The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic. Staff employed by the existing contractor are unlikely to transfer into any new contract arrangement as part of the TUPE Regulations.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The effective operation of the traffic signal network will ensure that road users, including motorists, pedestrians and cyclists are able to negotiate along the road network and travel around the Borough.

9.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the traffic signal maintenance contract, please follow link to <http://wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments-eias-2010/technical-services-0>

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Traffic signal systems that operate efficiently will reduce traffic congestion and the amount of energy consumed in operating the network. Each of these will contribute to reducing carbon emissions.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Traffic signals help to regulate traffic flow and can contribute to reducing road traffic accidents, thereby improving road safety.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION

12.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- (1) Approve the process to implement a new four year traffic signals maintenance contract of an approximate value of £350,000 per annum with the option of a two year extension, subject to satisfactory contract performance and value for money being demonstrated;
- (2) Approve the contract to be procured through a competitive tender using the Restricted Accelerated Contract Procedure.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 The existing contract will formally expire on 31 March 2014 and there is a need to ensure that the Council has a contract mechanism in place that can operate from 1 April 2014. Option two (traditional four year contract) for the

options appraisal exercise demonstrated the best overall value for the Council in achieving its objectives and is capable of being in place by 1 April 2014.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Options Appraisal for Traffic Signals Maintenance

REFERENCE MATERIAL: SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
NONE	

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**Wirral Council
Environment and Regulation Service**

Traffic Signal Maintenance Contract Options Appraisal

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The current five year traffic signal maintenance contract is due to expire on 31 March 2014. The contract does have the option to be extended subject to satisfactory contract performance by the contractor and value for money being demonstrated.
- 1.2 The Local Partnerships methodology for options appraisal has been used to evaluate a range of options for the maintenance of traffic signal operations in Wirral. Local Partnerships is a body jointly owned by the HM Treasury and the Local Government Association.

2.0 Options Appraisal

- 2.1 An options appraisal is used to assist authorities in decision making on key policy, programmes or projects. The process involves the assessment and evaluation of different ways to achieve project objectives, consider whether the use of resources could be improved and the best option for achieving required outcomes.

3.0 Options Appraisal Team

- 3.1 An options appraisal team was established for the traffic signal maintenance contract options and consisted of :-
- Head of Service Environment and Regulation
 - Service Manager Traffic and Transportation
 - Service Manager Highway Management
 - Traffic Network Manager
 - Principal Engineer Traffic Signals
 - Business Analyst Change Team

4.0 Options Appraisal Process

- 4.1 The process for options appraisal consists of :-
- Setting the objectives for the project to be assessed and evaluated;
 - Assessing those objectives and establishing weights to reflect the importance and significance to the Council;
 - Setting out options that have the potential to achieve the stated objectives; and
 - Using criteria to assess the ability of each option to achieve the required objectives.

5.0 Objectives

- 5.1 The team set out the following objectives for traffic signal maintenance :
- Meet the statutory obligations for traffic signals maintenance;

- Reduce the on-going cost to undertake traffic signal maintenance and reduce the revenue burden on the Council;
- Deliverability of the project to the Council's savings timetable (2015/16 onwards);
- Flexibility to adapt to emerging issues and opportunities and changes in statutory framework or policy context;
- Ability to embrace innovation and advances in traffic signal technology;
- Council retains robust accountability and performance management arrangements;
- Well maintained infrastructure of traffic signal assets and the best use of capital investment; and
- Service operational on 1 April 2014.

6.0 Objective Description

6.1 Table 1 below provides a description of each option appraisal objective.

Table 1 : Objective Description

Objective	Description
Meet the statutory obligations for traffic signals maintenance	This includes the need to provide a safe network; the need to ensure electrical safety; the need to manage congestion as part of the Traffic Management Act; and a requirement to maintain the traffic signals network.
Reduce the on-going cost to undertake traffic signal maintenance and reduce the revenue burden on the Council	This sets out the requirement to reduce the revenue cost of traffic signal operations and help to reduce the revenue burden on the Council.
Deliverability of the project to the savings timetable (2015/16 onwards)	This objective considers the opportunity to contribute to the savings timetable in 2015/16 and beyond.
Flexibility to adapt to emerging issues and opportunities and changes in statutory framework or policy context	This objective considers the opportunity to adapt to emerging issues such as shared services.
Ability to embrace innovation and advances in traffic signal technology	This considers the ability to adapt to changes in technology for traffic signal operations including energy and communication costs.
Council retains robust accountability and performance management arrangements	This objective sets out the requirements for the Council to maintain strong control over performance and have robust accountability.
Well maintained infrastructure of traffic signal assets and the best use of capital investment	An ageing traffic signal asset can increase maintenance costs and requires reactive maintenance responses. Investment in the network will contribute to reducing the age of the network.
Service operational on 1 April 2014	It is imperative for a variety of safety related issues that a traffic signals contract is in place on 1 April 2014.

7.0 Weighting of Objectives

7.1 Three levels of weighting were used to consider the importance of the objective to the Council. The options appraisal used weightings of high (3), medium (2) and low (1).

8.0 Contract Options

8.1 The team considered the following options for traffic signal maintenance :

- Contract extension for 1 year;
- Contract extension for 3 years;
- Traditional contract operating over four year term with the potential for contract extension for two years;
- Innovative contract operating over a longer term (10 years) and securing investment in the traffic signal assets;
- New scope of contract;
- Joint / collaborative contract; and
- In-house delivery.

9.0 Contract Option Description

9.1 Table 2 below describes each contract option.

Table 2 : Option Description

Contract Option	Description
Contract extension for 1 year	An extension of the existing contract for one year.
Contract extension for 3 years	An extension of the existing contract for a three year term.
Traditional contract operating over four year term with the potential for contract extension for two years	This would see the implementation of a four year contract based on a similar specification and contract approach to the existing contract.
Innovative contract operating over a longer term (10 years) and utilising significant investment in the traffic signal assets	This would involve a longer term relationship with a contractor and having a facility to obtain investment in the network to reduce the age of the asset.
New scope of contract	This would consist of a specification fundamentally different than the existing arrangement.
Joint / collaborative contract	This would involve the development of a shared service or a joint contract with one lead authority.
In-house delivery	This would involve the development of a workforce directly employed by the Council to undertake maintenance.

10.0 Objectives and Weightings

10.1 The team agreed the weights for each objective. Table 3 below indicates the option appraisal objective with the weighting for each objective.

Table 3 : Objectives and Weightings

Objective	Weight
Meet the statutory obligations for traffic signals maintenance	H (3)
Reduce the on-going to undertake traffic signal maintenance and reduce the revenue burden on the Council	H (3)
Deliverability of the project to the savings timetable (2015/16 onwards)	M (2)
Flexibility to adapt to emerging issues and opportunities and changes in statutory framework or policy context	M (2)
Ability to embrace innovation and advances in traffic signal technology	L (1)
Council retains robust accountability and performance management arrangements	M (2)
Well maintained infrastructure of traffic signal assets and the best use of capital investment	H (3)
Service operational on 1 April 2014	H (3)

11.0 Criteria

11.1 Criteria were used to assess each option and consider the ability to achieve the stated objective. Scores were used to determine whether the option would achieve the option or not and a scale of scores was used in the assessment process. Table 4 lists the criteria score and the relevance to meeting the objective.

Table 4 : Criteria Score

Criteria Value	Description
0	Not meet objective
1	Not likely to meet
2	Partially meet objective
3	Meet objective
4	Exceeds objective

12.0 Options Appraisal Evaluation

12.1 Table 5 below shows the assessment of each option against the required objectives for a traffic signal maintenance contract.

Table 5 : Option Appraisal Evaluation

	Option						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Objective	Contract extension for 1 year	Contract extension for 3 years	Traditional contract operating over four year & extension for two years	Innovative contract (longer term & investment in traffic signal assets	New Scope of contract	Joint / collaborative contract	In-house delivery
Meet the statutory obligations for traffic signals maintenance	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x1) 3
Reduce the on-going to undertake traffic signal maintenance and reduce the revenue burden on the Council	(3x2) 6	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x0) 0
Deliverability of the project to the savings timetable (2015/16 onwards)	(2x0) 0	(2x2) 4	(2x3) 6	(2x2) 4	(2x2) 4	(2x2) 4	(2x0) 0
Flexibility to adapt to emerging issues and opportunities and changes in statutory framework or policy context	(2x1) 2	(2x1) 2	(2x2) 4	(2x3) 6	(2x3) 6	(2x2) 4	(2x3) 6
Ability to embrace innovation and advances in traffic signal technology	(1x1) 1	(1x2) 2	(1x2) 2	(1x3) 3	(1x3) 3	(1x2) 2	(1x1) 1
Council retains robust accountability and performance management arrangements	(2x3) 6	(2x3) 6	(2x3) 6	(2x2) 4	(2x2) 4	(2x2) 4	(2x2) 4
Well maintained infrastructure of traffic signal assets and the best use of capital investment	(3x2) 6	(3x2) 6	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x1) 3
Service operational on 1 April 2014	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x3) 9	(3x2) 6	(3x1) 3	(3x2) 6
Total	39	47	54	53	50	44	23

Note : the table shows the **weight score** multiplied by the **criteria score**.

- 12.2 The table above indicates that two options are quite closely scored :-
- Option 2 - traditional contract for four year term with extension for two years; and
 - Option 3 - innovative contract operating for a long term.

13.0 Discussion of Option Appraisal Evaluation

- 13.1 Four of the options would require longer lead-in time and would not be in place by 1 April 2014 (innovative; new scope; joint / collaborative; in-house delivery). These options would require, as a minimum, the one year contract extension to be put in place from 1 April 2014, which would then enable development work on these options. The one year contract extension is one of the lower scoring options and when considered that each of the four options (innovative, new scope; joint / collaborative; or in house delivery) is not the highest scoring option then this is not an ideal approach to take.
- 13.2 The option with the highest overall score and capable of being in place to the required timetable of 1 April 2014 is the traditional four year contract with two year extension option.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7TH NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	<i>EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION PROVISION FOR 16 & 17 YEAR OLDS</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>KEVIN ADDERLEY STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – REGENERATION & ENVIRONMENT</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>CLLR. GEORGE DAVIES PORTFOLIO HOLDER – HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY</i>
KEY DECISION	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval to commission, on a pilot basis, an emergency accommodation service for homeless 16 and 17 year olds, where there is an assessed need and this is the most appropriate accommodation.
- 1.2 The Children's and Young Peoples Department (CYPD), when presented with a 16/17 year old that is homeless and unable to safely remain with family and friends, have a statutory duty to secure appropriate accommodation for the young person. Currently, when emergency accommodation is required, a bed-space will be procured on an individual spot-purchase basis.
- 1.3 The proposed emergency accommodation service will be funded through a combination of Supporting People Programme Grant (SP) and Housing Benefit (HB). The 100% subsidy by Central Government attracted by HB, will represent a saving against the current spot-purchase method of obtaining this type of accommodation for young people.
- 1.4 This report includes an appendix containing specific financial information relating to this proposal. Due to the commercial sensitivity of this information, and the potential for the disclosure of this information to disadvantage the Council in any future tendering exercise, it is considered that the appendix should be considered exempt by virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 It is recognised that it is in the best interests of most young people aged 16-17 to live in the family home or with responsible adults within their wider family network. Unfortunately, there will be occasions where it is untenable for the young person to do this and resultantly they become at risk of becoming homeless.

- 2.2 The Homeless Review conducted in 2012 identified that homelessness amongst young people appears to be rising. It is believed that this increase can be attributable to pressures on the family and relationships from factors such as reduced household income arising from the economic downturn. It was also noted that the issues and needs that young people are presenting with have grown more complex. This is particularly prevalent in relation to offending behaviour, substance misuse and mental health, and that to address these issues, requires more input and/or different responses than the Council and its partners are currently providing.
- 2.3 The review acknowledged that there has been success in preventing homelessness amongst 16 and 17 year olds but considered that appropriate emergency accommodation for this cohort represented a gap in Wirral's current configuration of service provision.
- 2.4 In Wirral, where a young person aged 16-17 presents as being homeless or threatened with homelessness (e.g. staying temporarily in accommodation or with friends and family) they are referred to CYPD (Response) who will act as a single point of contact and will take responsibility for completing an initial interview. If it is clear that early intervention approaches are not able to resolve the issue then a social work assessment is completed.
- 2.5 Currently, when a 16/17 year old is assessed as at risk of homelessness, accommodation may be provided in the form of a placement in care or supported accommodation. Supported accommodation is currently purchased as required i.e. A spot-purchase arrangement.
- 2.6 There is a significant cost to the CYPD budget associated in placing 16 and 17 year olds on this basis. The average weekly cost is £685 per person and it is not unusual for young people to remain in this type of accommodation for upward of 8 weeks depending on their level of need. At the time of writing this report there were 16 young people aged 16 / 17 years old who were homeless requiring spot purchased accommodation.
- 2.7 Discussions have taken place between Officers from the Regeneration and Environment and CYP Departments to explore alternative methods of commissioning emergency accommodation services for 16 and 17 year olds which deliver greater value-for-money than current arrangements, by using a combination of different funding streams.
- 2.8 The proposed service is intended to provide up to 6 young people aged 16/17 with safe and secure emergency accommodation and access to advice and help for a short period, this will assist Council Officers with the resolution of the crisis which led to the young person seeking assistance and / or the reconciliation of the young person with family or carers. Although certain functions such as family mediation are the responsibility of CYPD, the service will complement these tasks by focussing on providing tenancy sustainment skills or 'Life skills', emotional support and support in accessing education, employment and training. It is expected that these opportunities will be maximised for young people by the Service Provider working in partnership with CYPD and other specialist agencies.
- 2.9 The service will provide eligible applicants with a room to themselves, the opportunity to have a bath/shower, a hot meal in the evening and breakfast the following morning and access to laundry facilities.

- 2.10 The service will offer flexibility in response to the needs of the Clients which includes recognition that the support needs of Clients will not conform to a standard working day and may require support outside of these core hours. Therefore, the service will provide 24-hour staffing in recognition of the nature of the client group, enabling access for young people at any time of the day or night.
- 2.11 The number of units (bed-spaces) has been agreed with representatives from CYPD based on the preference for services which attempt to replicate a homely environment for the young person. In determining the number of units, previous utilisation levels have also been considered which indicate the need for a minimum of 6 units which would equate to an annual cost of £213,720 under the current spot purchase arrangement, but under the proposed service there would be an estimated saving of approximately £94,500 per annum.
- 2.12 The service will be delivered on a pilot basis for a period of 2 years. During this time, a working group comprising Officers from CYPD and Regeneration and Environment, as well as representatives from the organisation commissioned to deliver the service will meet on a regular basis to provide oversight of this project.
- 2.12 The service will be subject to scrutiny under the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework (QAF). This framework has been a key tool for Supporting People and housing related support services and sets out the standards expected in the delivery of Supporting People services.
- 2.13 The proposed Provider selected to deliver this pilot service is Your Housing Group (YHG) formerly Arena Housing. Members will be aware that this will be subject to the approval of the YHG Executive Group and Board.
- 2.14 YHG has been selected on the basis that:
- 2.14.1 They have a proven track record of delivering similar services in other areas;
 - 2.14.2 As they are both a Housing Association as well as a provider of supported housing services, they have the necessary infrastructure to refurbish the property to an appropriate standard and within a shortened timeframe at no direct cost to the Council.
 - 2.14.3 They have successfully held a contract with the Council for the delivery of related services for the last 9 years;
 - 2.14.4 They are currently delivering supported housing provision in the Borough and can therefore achieve financial efficiencies by sharing service-delivery functions across their various services;
 - 2.14.5 Through their work on Wirral, they already have existing links with relevant services and, critically, are able to facilitate access to general-needs housing for those young people assessed as ready to live independently.
- 2.15 It is intended that the service will be located on Manor Road, Wallasey. The proposed property is currently owned by the Councils Department of Adult Social Services and under the auspices of the Asset Management Division. The property had originally been earmarked for disposal through auction but this has been placed in abeyance since its alternative use will secure improved services and greater value for money for the

Council. Both Departments have given their assent for the property to be used for the provision of this service.

- 2.16 The Council will lease the property to YHG for the duration of the pilot. Upon the cessation of this service, the property will revert back to the Council.
- 2.17 The property is currently configured with five bedrooms, however it is intended that a downstairs room will be converted into a sixth bedroom, thus enabling six young people to be resident at any given time.
- 2.18 The property will require refurbishment to bring it up to standard and this will be carried out by the Estates Division of YHG who estimate that the refurbishment would take 4-6 weeks for completion. YHG have provided a breakdown of proposed refurbishments which includes a new kitchen and bathrooms/shower units. All costs associated with the refurbishment will be met by YHG who have identified that the overall approximate cost of refurbishment will be £23,000. All proposed changes will be submitted to the Asset Management Division for approval, prior to any commencement of work.
- 2.19 As the recouping of refurbishment costs is permissible under the HB legislation, YHG will, over the period of this pilot, recoup the costs incurred from their completion of this improvement work. The Council will however benefit from this remedial work, as the intrinsic value of the property will increase.
- 2.20 In the event that approval is given for the development of this service, then it is envisaged that it would commence operation in January 2014, which would further assist the Council in achieving efficiencies within this financial year.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 A delay in developing alternative emergency accommodation provision would result in further costs to the Council, arising from the continued use of spot-purchase arrangements.
- 3.2 Any unforeseen problems associated with the refurbishment of the property may result in delays.
- 3.3 Entitlement to Housing Benefit is an area that is subject to change and continues to be examined nationally as part of the Welfare Reform agenda. Future changes to entitlement for this group of young people may impact on the ability to reduce costs. However it is likely that this type of provision will continue to be required. Any benefit changes would be taken into account as part of the review of the pilot.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 There were no other options considered.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation between the Regeneration & Environment and Children and Young People's Department has been ongoing through the development of this proposal.
- 5.2 If this pilot project is approved, then YHG will undertake consultation with the residents of Manor Road in order to explain the nature of the service and provide a point-of-contact in the event of any concerns.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 In the event that it is determined to continue this provision beyond the initial period of the pilot, then a competitive procurement exercise will be carried out which will be open to all organisations in the voluntary, community and faith sectors.

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

7.1 The revenue implications are as set out in the Appendix, and indicate a cost reduction of £94,748 pa if the facility is fully occupied.

7.2 The implications in regard to council assets are described earlier in this report. The Council would over the life of the scheme forego a capital receipt. However this is more than offset by the reduction in revenue costs. Over the life of the pilot these are estimated to exceed the indicative property value. The payback of a 12 – 15 month period is very favourable.

7.3 There are no additional IT and Staffing implications

7.4 The service will be funded from the following sources:

7.5 Supporting People Programme Grant

7.5.1 The Supporting People Programme, administered through the Regeneration and Environment Department, is intended to maximise an individual's capacity to develop and/or maintain independence through the provision of housing-related support services.

7.5.2 The Supporting People Team will administer the contract for the delivery of this service, on behalf of the Council.

7.5.3 The value of the contract will be met within the Supporting People budget allocation, details of the contract value can be found in Appendix 1

7.6 Housing Benefit

7.6.1 Currently, with the exception of care leavers there are no special rules preventing a 16-19 year old who is liable for rent from claiming Housing Benefit.

7.6.2 Officers from the Departments of Finance and Regeneration and Environment have held regular meetings regarding the housing costs associated with the delivery of this service, to ensure compliance with HB legislation.

7.6.3 There will be no cost implication to the Council arising from the use of HB, as HB costs are fully reclaimed by the Council from the Department of Works and Pensions, an estimated cost of Housing Benefits can be found in Appendix 1.

7.6.4 In respect of Council Tax, 100% exemption would apply if the property is occupied entirely by young persons under the age of 18 and in this case there would be no Council Tax charge applicable.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Legal and Member Services have determined that Supporting People services are provided as Part B as they maintain clients' health and well being by assisting them to remain independent within the community. Therefore there is no legal requirement to undertake a formal competitive tender for the commissioning of this service under the European Procurement Rules.
- 8.2 The Council's current Contract Procedure Rules (paragraphs 21.1.1(v)) enable a contract to be negotiated without inviting tenders if the Cabinet believes it is in the interests of the Council to do so and it represents value for money. Under the new contract procedural rules E120 applies but the requirements are the same.
- 8.3 It is however intended that, assuming efficacy of the service and member approval, the service will be put to competitive tender at the conclusion of the pilot.
- 8.4 The Council will lease the property at Manor Road, Wallasey through a formal lease agreement, approved by Legal and Member Services.
- 8.5 For the duration of the lease, the lessee (YHG) will be responsible for the issuing of appropriate occupancy agreements to the young people accommodated within the service. The Provider will issue all residents with a 'License', which is the standard form of occupancy agreement used in supported housing services.
- 8.6 The delivery of this pilot service will be subject to the terms and conditions of the standard Supporting People contract.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Children who are at risk of becoming homeless may be assessed as needing to be looked after. Children in Care may be vulnerable young people who require additional support when leaving care. The Care Planning regulations are designed to ensure care leavers are given the same level of care and support that their peers would expect from a reasonable parent and that they are provided with the opportunities and chances needed to help them move successfully to adulthood.
- 9.2 The Provider will be required to demonstrate compliance with the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework which requires that they:
 - 9.2.1 Embed fair access, fair exit, diversity and inclusion policies within the culture of the service and that they can evidence demonstrable promotion and implementation of these policies.
 - 9.2.2 Review their assessment and allocations processes on a regular basis to ensure fair access to the service.
 - 9.2.3 Demonstrate a commitment to ensuring fair exit from the service.

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/regeneration-housing-planning>

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There is no carbon reduction implications associated with this proposal.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Planning permission was granted for a change of use of the property from a dwelling house to use as a communal residence for the elderly in 1984. In granting planning permission, a planning condition was imposed restricting the use as accommodation for the elderly. As such, planning permission would be required for the use proposed. The Unitary Development Plan includes the premises within a designated Primarily Residential Area - a care use is acceptable in principle in such locations, subject to Policy HS8: Residential Care Homes.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 That Cabinet approve the commissioning of emergency accommodation for homeless 16 and 17 years olds on a two year pilot basis as set out earlier in this report in accordance with paragraph 21.1.1(v) of the Contract Procedure Rules the requirements of which are met (E120 new contract procedural rules).

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 The proposed service will represent a significant cost-saving against current methods of procuring emergency accommodation bed-spaces for 16 and 17 year olds.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Financial Details

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

7 NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT:	<i>PROGRESSING NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING INCLUDING STRATEGIC SERVICE REVIEWS OF STREETSCENE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	GRAHAM BURGESS
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR GEORGE DAVIES NEIGHBOURHOODS, HOUSING & ENGAGEMENT</i>
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Significant progress has been made to implement neighbourhood working (agreed at Cabinet May 23rd, 2013, minute 250 refers). This report sets out the first steps to realign services into the neighbourhood working model following Strategic Service Reviews of Streetscene and Community Safety.
- 1.2 These interlinked services have a far reaching impact upon the quality of life of local residents. There are a number of aspects of local environmental quality (LEQ) that contribute to overall quality of life within communities. Increasingly, health practitioners and researchers are proving the benefits of good quality local environment to the health and wellbeing of individuals. The Department of Health identifies a number of research findings that link poor LEQ with three key health risks: Physical Inactivity, Social Impacts (people not getting out and about and socialising within their community) and Air pollution. So for example, high levels of graffiti and litter can result in 50% less activity by people and in turn an increased risk of obesity.
- 1.3 Equally, if left unchecked, minor anti-social behaviour, such as littering, graffiti and damage, can spiral into increased crime and disorder; the 'broken windows' effect. An indifference to minor forms of social and physical disorder can lead to an erosion of social control and therefore neighbourhood decline. Public perceptions are as important as actual disorder and crime rates in generating neighbourhood decline. There is also a correlation between public perceptions of anti-social behaviour (and crime) with public confidence in councils and police to tackle the issues. Research suggests that community engagement (the heart of neighbourhood working) has a positive influence on both public confidence and perceptions.

- 1.4 These Strategic Service Reviews form the foundation upon which progression to full neighbourhood working can be built and the first step in the redesign of services across the public sector to provide localised responses to the needs of local people.
- 1.5 These service areas are significant issues for local residents. To illustrate this point; data shows that Elected Members and MPs report an average of 199 issues per month to Streetscene relating to highways and waste alone (based on data from April 2012 to March 2013). Councillors will be empowered as community leaders to make the best use of these resources at Constituency level, inspiring their communities to come together with public services to find the right solutions to address local needs and improve residents' lives.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1 The Council is proactively responding to the changing needs of our communities through remodelling to ensure that it is able to deliver the most sustainable, effective, targeted services possible. The move to a neighbourhood delivery model is fundamental to this thinking and the redesign of services and delivery models.
- 2.2 The role of Local Government is changing at the most rapid pace in living memory; as more and more funding is removed. The Council is being forced to radically re-evaluate the way it does business; what services it continues to provide, what is outsourced to the private and voluntary sector and what services are no longer available.
- 2.3 This approach will see a closer working relationship between the Council, public services and residents, with the wider community facilitating a more flexible response to residents' issues through co-ordinated services and resident involvement in shaping decisions and services. Local councillors have a significant leadership role to play in this process. Neighbourhood working provides a more cost effective approach to the future delivery of services by joining up front line delivery and tackling issues at source.
- 2.4 The structures for neighbourhood working have been implemented, with changes to the Council's Constitution followed by the appointment of four Constituency Managers. The 2013/14 timetable for the Constituency Committees has been set, governance arrangements are in place and Community Representatives have been recruited. Merseyside Police and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service have restructured their services to align with the Constituency footprints.
- 2.5 As outlined at Cabinet (May 23rd, 2013, minute 250 refers) a Constituency Service 'Hub' will be developed for each area. This Hub will act as the focal point for reorganising Council and partner services within the constituency area boundaries to address Constituency Plan issues and priorities. The ongoing development of the Constituency Service Hubs are based on a 'team around the issue' model, i.e. seeking to replicate the 'team around the child' model which has proven successful in Children's Social Care. Short to medium term locations for Constituency Hubs have recently been identified and steps are being taken to relocate the Constituency teams.

- 2.6 As a guiding principle, services which *can* be delivered on a constituency basis *will* be reorganised and co-ordinated through the Hubs to more effectively and efficiently address local issues. As a general rule, 'specialist' services will remain centrally managed (such as social work within Children's Social Care and Adult Social Services), but place based services at a minimum will be aligned with the Constituencies. Constituency Managers have and will continue to work with Strategic Directors to support service reorganisations and the co-location of staff on a constituency basis and to ensure that services are operating effectively.
- 2.7 The first steps in terms of the realignment of services are set out in this report. As noted above, the realignment of services is the first phase of this process with the cross-agency re-design of services to follow.

2.8 Locally driven environmental services (Strategic Review of Streetscene)

- 2.8.1 The Strategic Review of Streetscene services has been carried out to identify which resources (directly related to the delivery of place based services) could at this time be relocated to Constituency Service Hubs within the four individual constituency boundaries. The review details the numbers and designations of roles that would enable said services to be delivered at a more local level. This more localised focus will give Constituency Committees the autonomy to tackle local issues and aim towards preventing/eradicating ongoing issues rather than just tackling associated symptoms once they occur. By decentralising power from our own Town Hall, and placing it in the hands of local people with local knowledge and understanding, communities will be strengthened by the power to develop bespoke local solutions to local problems. Local neighbourhoods given their own budget to spend, utilising skills, knowledge and experience of people on the ground, will make better use of their resources because they can redesign them to fit local problems.
- 2.8.2 Streetscene's internal place based services are currently largely located in the Cheshire Lines Building, Birkenhead. This excludes the operational elements of grounds maintenance and Parks. For obvious reasons this review does not include any frontline operatives currently employed directly by outsourced services (e.g. highways maintenance – Colas, refuse/recycling/street cleansing – Biffa).
- 2.8.3 The initial population of the aforementioned Constituency Service Hubs will see frontline operatives relocated to the four new sites (exact locations to be confirmed). Examples of such operatives include those tasked with managing Wirral's external Highways and Waste and Street Cleansing contracts and those responsible for Environmental Enforcement. This list is not exhaustive and figures included in Table One are currently approximate. It was important to collate approximate staffing levels for the Constituency Service Hubs as early as possible to facilitate enquiries into possible locations. In real terms this means the devolution of decisions (to constituency level) on where to issue fixed penalties for littering, where to focus on fly-tipping as a specific issue, how to improve local highway infrastructure to suit the needs of the local users and which locations should be subject to highway improvements.

Table One: Current/Proposed Staffing Picture for Streetscene’s Place Based Services

Total Staff	56
Total Desks Needed	41
Total Staff Per Constituency Hub	14
Total Desks Needed Per Constituency Hub	10.25

*the above figures do not include those services that will alter their current performance reporting mechanisms to align “nominally” with the neighbourhood working model (see section 3.1.3)

2.9 Locally driven responses to crime and disorder (Strategic Review of Community Safety)

2.9.1 Community Safety is about protecting people’s rights to live in confidence and without fear for their own or other people’s safety. It encompasses a large range of quality of life issues and therefore there are a wide range of services in the public and other sectors that contribute to improving these quality of life issues.

2.9.2 The vision is to make Wirral an even safer place to live, to work and to enjoy leisure time. This is through the tackling of crime and disorder, including anti-social behaviour; tackling alcohol and substance misuse; reducing reoffending by adults and young people and tackling any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local environment. An important aspect of this is community reassurance and perceptions of these issues.

2.9.3 The parameters of this Strategic Review have focused primarily upon the Council’s Joint Community Safety Team and Anti-Social Behaviour Team respectively. This report sets out the detail of this Review and recommendations for a future model of working that will provide efficiencies in service delivery whilst offering more locally driven and responsive services, taking into account forthcoming changes in legislation.

2.9.4 The approach to tackling the broad range of community safety issues is fragmented across the Council, with strategic responsibility falling across different directorates. There are a number of steps currently being implemented to help address these (and other related) issues. These include:

- Establishment in September 2013 of a new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which sees the co-location and co-ordination of professionals involved in the safeguarding of children and young people.
- Specialist services re-aligned with relevant directorates (e.g. Family Safety Unit).
- Development of Constituency-based Service Hubs for the delivery of services responsive to the needs and priorities of local communities.

3.0 KEY ISSUES, CONSIDERATIONS & PROPOSALS

3.1 Locally driven environmental services (Strategic Review of Streetscene)

3.1.1 Governance

3.1.2 Although line management responsibility of operatives moving to work within a constituency footprint will remain as is, the Constituency Committee will have the power to influence decisions on priorities of work. For example, although highways improvements will be carried out in line with core statutory responsibility, a suite of localised decisions will influence how an element of the associated budget is spent. In short Members will have (via the Constituency Committee) direct influence on how an element of the highways improvement budget is allocated. Those schemes, seen previously as impossible to implement, will now be tangible possibilities.

3.1.3 Proposals

3.1.4 It is proposed that a suite of evidence based priorities are highlighted and agreed upon via each of the four Constituency Committees. These priorities will be delivered via a number of approaches including focussed task and finish groups, Local Public Service Boards or devolved teams.

3.1.5 Strategic Responsibility

3.1.6 Strategic responsibility for all the aforementioned Streetscene services sits within the directorate for Regeneration and Environment.

3.1.7 Proposals

3.18 It is proposed that the Head of Service for Streetscene and Waste works closely with the four Constituency Managers to develop an agreed strategy for the devolution of associated budgets to a neighbourhood level.

3.1.9 Structures for delivery

3.1.10 Extended consultation with the Directorate of Regeneration and Environment is essential to ensure the smooth transition of roles from the current structure to the new Constituency Service Hubs.

3.1.11 Proposals

3.1.12 Table One (above) sets out the number of place based equivalent full time employees who can now be relocated within the Constituency Service Hubs. Table One also identifies the necessary number of desks needed to accommodate each individual (taking into consideration hot-desking related to agile working).

3.1.13 It is currently proposed that a number of place based services will not be able to fully deploy into the Constituency Service Hubs at this stage. It is proposed that these 'nominally deployed' services alter their performance reporting to reflect the constituency footprint. Such services include; Parks Managers, Environmental

Health Officers and Licensing Enforcement Officers. This approach will enable detailed reporting to be presented at future Constituency Committees highlighting performance in their areas. Said nominal services will still be asked to provide representation at Constituency Committees when desired. Although these roles may not be physically deployed within the constituency footprint, Members will still have influence over the workstreams of said roles via the Constituency Committees.

- 3.1.14 It is proposed that a further review takes place (based upon the findings in this report) to investigate further the issue of worker agility. Only 43% of roles proposed for deployment are currently agile. It is envisaged that this further review will identify and draw upon best practice from other local authorities e.g. Cheshire West & Chester's established cost benefit analysis re. 'hot desking' (winner of the Municipal Journal's Achievement Awards 2012 - 'Most Transformed Property Portfolio').
- 3.1.15 It is also proposed that this further review takes into consideration those roles identified as nominal and investigates further the practicality of deploying such roles fully into the Constituency Service Hubs.

3.2 Locally driven responses to crime and disorder (Strategic Review of Community Safety)

3.3 Governance

- 3.3.1 Since 2013 the Wirral Public Service Board (PSB) has been in operation, chaired by the Council's Chief Executive. The Board exists for partners to proactively work together to identify and deliver efficiencies and opportunities for joint working. Through an agreed work programme, the Board (amongst other things), develops collective responses to national and local policy drivers impacting on all partners and strategically manages Wirral's approach to neighbourhood working.
- 3.3.2 Arrangements are underway to establish a local (operational) Public Service Board (in each Constituency area), with cross-Constituency issues escalated to the overarching PSB if not able to be resolved at local level.
- 3.3.3 **Proposals**
- 3.3.4 Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 required the establishment of a committee to scrutinise crime and disorder matters (the Crime and Disorder Partnership); there is however no requirement in this or subsequent legislation that this operates as a standalone meeting. Following the establishment of Wirral Public Service Board and given the pressures on services in terms of capacity, there is an opportunity to transfer the functions of the now Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to the Public Service Board to create efficiencies.
- 3.3.5 It is proposed that Wirral Public Service Board incorporates the responsibilities of the Community Safety Partnership into its terms of reference and fulfils its statutory functions and the Partnership ceases to hold a separate meeting. The attendees of the Public Service Board will be reviewed and extended where appropriate. It is further proposed that the responsibilities of the CSP Executive Group are

incorporated into the terms of reference of the local Public Service Boards who will drive operational achievement of the Strategic Assessment and the Group ceases to hold a separate meeting. Tackling crime and disorder is a key element of the function of the Boards in any event.

3.4 Strategic Responsibility

3.4.1 The strategic lead for community safety is held by the Community Safety Co-ordinator (Manager of the Joint Community Safety Team). Strategic responsibility for tackling anti-social behaviour, on behalf of both the Council and Community Safety Partnership (CSP), was held by the Manager of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team prior to this post being deleted. Strategic responsibility is fragmented and there is a need to bring this together to maximise resources and ensure that clear policy is developed.

3.4.2 Proposals

3.4.3 It is proposed that the strategic lead for anti-social behaviour (Constituency Manager) takes responsibility for strategic development of Wirral's response to anti-social behaviour, including overseeing the review and production of Wirral's Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.

3.5 Structures for delivery

3.5.1 Given the nature of the roles of both the Joint Community Safety Team and Anti-Social Behaviour Team, there is inevitably overlap between the two teams particularly in relation to hate related incidents and the deployments of Wirral Community Patrol to tackle anti-social behaviour. In addition there are functions within the Joint Community Safety Team that overlap with the functions of other departments. This is an opportunity to review the function of these services and where appropriate bring services together to improve the effectiveness of delivery, intelligence gathering and create efficiencies.

3.5.3 Proposals

3.5.4 It is proposed that a series of structural changes take place across services (Phase 1), followed by an evaluation and further strategic review (Phase 2), to be led by the strategic lead for anti-social behaviour.

3.5.5 It is proposed that the Anti-Social Behaviour Team is reconfigured to deliver work at Constituency level; remaining as a specialist service line managed within the Families & Wellbeing Directorate but responding to priorities and additional direction from the Constituency Managers.

3.5.6 In order to assist with the early identification of issues enabling swifter intervention, it is proposed that Enforcement Officers 'hot desk' within their respective Constituency Service Hub (when in operation) for a minimum of one day a week.

3.5.7 It is proposed that the Dog Fouling Team within the Joint Community Safety Team is transferred to the Enforcement Team within the Waste & Environment Section (Regeneration & Environment Department. This will consolidate the environmental

enforcement functions related to litter, fly tipping, fly posting, graffiti and dog fouling under one line management structure; allowing for greater synergies, creating opportunities for greater flexibility and ensuring the alignment of policy.

3.5.8 It is further proposed that the role and function of Wirral Community Patrol is reviewed, including shift patterns and working practices. Consideration will also be given to how this can serve the Constituency areas and priorities. This review will be led by the strategic lead for anti-social behaviour in conjunction with the Senior Communications Officer. This will take place as part of Phase 2.

3.5.9 Once realignments have taken place, it is proposed that there is a full evaluation and further detailed strategic review involving partners within 12 months, to seek further efficiencies and ensure the effective delivery of services (Phase 2).

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

4.1 All relevant risks in relation to the efficiency and effectiveness of the proposed staffing changes have been considered, and the proposed structures are able to deliver the Council's objectives (and contribute to partners' objectives), and meet the demanding financial challenge, with minimum risk.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 This review has been informed by research into best practice.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 Agreement by full Council (11 February 2013) in relation to Wirral's new 'Neighbourhood Working' operating model has been followed by consultation on proposals for the operating model as part of a survey of Elected Members and seminar held on the 4 April 2013, as well as further discussion by the Democracy Working Party on the 8 April 2013.

6.2 Consultation has been ongoing with key partners primarily through the Wirral Public Service Board as to their involvement in both the Constituency Public Service Boards and the Constituency Service Hubs. Key partners have additionally been consulted in relevant aspects of the proposals.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 The overarching proposed model for neighbourhood working will strengthen the Council's partnership relationship with the voluntary and community sector.

7.2 Improvements in service delivery will benefit communities directly.

7.3 The proposed development of Neighbourhood Justice Panels will see greater engagement by members of the public in tackling crime and disorder and the delivery of justice for victims.

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

- 8.1 Efficiencies will be built into devolving budgets to Constituency Committees, delivering savings across services. The Council will also take steps to incorporate Community Budget approaches in respect of service reorganisations, which could potentially mean efficiencies for wider public sector budgets.
- 8.2 There are implications of a financial and IT nature in relation to further reviews of worker agility (see section 3.1.14).
- 8.2.5 Relocation costs of staff will be limited as the required infrastructures are in place within both Solar Campus and Cheshire Lines.
- 8.2.6 Phase 2: It is anticipated that further efficiency savings will be generated following a review of the restructured anti-social behaviour service.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The arrangements will enable the Council to deliver on the Localism Act 2011 and Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.
- 9.2 This report factors in a variety of legislation including, but not exclusively, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Police and Justice Act 2006, Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, and references the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill 2013-14. There are a number of statutory duties in relation to crime and disorder that must be complied with.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

Yes and impact review is attached.

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/corporate-services>.

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The proposal will encourage sharing of community assets, therefore supporting carbon reduction.
- 11.2 The development of Constituency Service Hubs will support carbon reduction by minimising travelling time from centralised locations to the wider Wirral area.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 These proposals seek to improve community safety across the borough. Local communities will have greater opportunities to directly influence community safety and comment on planning proposals.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that:

- 13.1 Cabinet agrees the proposals set out in this report.
- 13.2 Cabinet agrees further review of other place based services across Council departments and devolvement into the Constituency footprints where appropriate.
- 13.3 Cabinet agrees to ensure that neighbourhood working is central to the Council's overall approach to public service transformation and its current review of assets to support asset based community development and increase neighbourhood resilience.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 14.1 To progress the Council's agreed approach to neighbourhood working (agreed at Cabinet May 23rd, 2013, minute 250 refers) and the establishment of Constituency Committees as set out in Article 10 of the Council's Constitution.
- 14.2 Council on the 1 March 2011 agreed that a full review would be undertaken of the Council's and partner organisations' approach to tackling anti-social behaviour, including the implementation of the Council's commitment to community justice in this vital area.
- 14.3 Wirral Council has been selected as one of nine Councils to participate in the Public Service Transformation Network which includes a specific workstream to increase neighbourhood resilience.

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SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Executive Board – Consultation Responses: Strengthening Powers to Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour	18 September 2007
Cabinet – Neighbourhood Working	24 January 2013
Council – Neighbourhood Working	11 February 2013
Council – Budget Resolution	18 February 2013
Council – Revisions to the Constitution	30 April 2013
Cabinet – Neighbourhood Working	23 May 2013

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