



## Constituency Committee - Birkenhead

<b>Date:</b>	Thursday, 24 July 2014
<b>Time:</b>	6.00 pm
<b>Venue:</b>	Birkenhead Town Hall

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### AGENDA

**1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

The Committee is invited to appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair for the municipal year 2014/2015

**2. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 24)**

Subject to the addition of "Professor W.R.Lee, Williamson Art Gallery and Museum Action Group" to the list of attendees, and the addition of "At the request of the Chair, Mr W.R Lee, Williamson Art Gallery and Museum Action Group gave the Committee an update in relation to the future of the Williamson Art Gallery and Museum" to Minute 17(5)

The Committee be requested to approve the accuracy of minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2014 and also 10 April 2014.

**4. CONSTITUENCY MANAGER'S REPORT (Pages 25 - 68)**

Update on progress in relation to the ongoing work programme being undertaken in support of the Birkenhead Constituency Committee

**5. INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY (Pages 69 - 76)**

**6. CONSTITUENCY BUDGET AND SPEND (Pages 77 - 84)**

**7. YOUR WIRRAL GRANTS PROGRAMME (Pages 85 - 90)**

Recommendations as to the proposed process for the allocation of Your Wirral Grants

**8. INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION (Pages 91 - 112)**

A report on Electoral Registration was presented to the Councils Policy and Performance Co-ordinating Committee on 15 January 2014 and subsequently considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 13 March 2014. The Cabinet requested that the report referred be to the Constituency Committees as a topic for discussion.

**9. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**10. SCHEDULE OF FUTURE COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

30 October 2014

29 January 2015

9 April 2015

**11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR**

## **CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - BIRKENHEAD**

Thursday, 30 January 2014

Present:

Chair            Frank Field

Councillors	A Brighouse	AR McLachlan
	J Crabtree	M McLaughlin
	G Davies	C Meaden
	P Davies	T Norbury
	WJ Davies	D Realey
	P Doughty	D Roberts
	S Foulkes	H Smith
	S Kelly	J Stapleton
	B Kenny	

Also Present:

Mr J Brace  
Mrs L Brace  
Ms H Robinson  
D Roberts  
Mr P Griffiths  
C Purcell  
Ms G Jones  
Ms R Shaw  
Mr P Barton  
Ms R Burns  
Ms P Lawson  
Ms P Haywood  
Mrs P Cocker  
Mr J Cocker  
Ms Julie Smith  
Mr D Collinson  
Mr D Rigby

Apologies

Councillors    P Williams

14    **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

15 **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Birkenhead Constituency Committee held on 28 November, 2013, be approved.**

16 **CONSTITUENCY MANAGER'S UPDATE**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Neighbourhoods and Engagement updating on progress in relation to the actions identified at its meeting on 28 November 2013 (Minute 9 refers).

Ms Dawn Tolcher, Constituency Manager introduced the report highlighting the action to be undertaken and the progress to date.

In relation the recruitment of a post graduate to undertake further analysis and provide conclusions and recommendations on the priorities to inform the Constituency Plan. Two member's and the Constituency Manager indicated that they had met with academics from Liverpool University who would be assisting with the task of collating the public spend in Birkenhead. some data was presented at the previous committee meeting but now the work will focus on the spend on services for children under 5 to help us shape our early intervention work.

In relation to constituency profiling, Ms Tolcher indicated that a session was to be held with Members on Tuesday 3 February 2014, to update them on the Constituency Profile that public health have formulated. A Member stressed the need for the Committee to be more proactive in accessing all available funding streams.

A task and finish group was established to determine the priorities and proposals for spend in 2013/14.

The Group suggested that the priorities for the funding allocation for this financial year were improving the environment, Date Audit of current spend and need ; improving services for young people and improving communication with the community.

Lead Members for each of the four priorities introduced the priorities and highlighted the recommendations which required approval from the Committee. The following comments were made:-

### Improving the Environment

A Member indicated that this priority was looking at tackling the issue of cleanliness of entries. Funding had now been identified to improve this as part of a pilot project. It was suggested that aside from BIFFA, funding could be used to fund the employment of officers to assist in regular cleansing of the “hotspots”. It was further suggested that education and promotion could be enhanced to encourage the public to care for their environment.

A Member suggested that the community payback team could be asked for assistance.

Ms Tolcher, Constituency Manager indicated that as part of this project, the issue of prosecution would be looked into and a report would be presented at the next meeting indicating prosecution rates and how we can make people more aware of the processes.

In response to the Chair’s question as to how many people had been prosecuted to date. A Member stressed the difficulty of gaining evidence in order to prosecute.

Members of the public commented that the increase they felt was largely down to the “bulky item” removal service now being chargeable and suggested that the Council may wish to look at waiving the fee or charge it at a reduced rate.

It was further commented that landlords also had a big part to play in the project, ensuring that their tenants cleared their property upon leaving.

A Member commented that as the “clean up” develops this could then be communicated to the public to encourage further community involvement.

A member of the public suggested that this was something young people could get involved with a possible positive community project.

The Chair indicated that this issue had been raised at the previous meeting and that the Housing Associations had suggested creating places of beauty to enhance the area.

It was suggested that the introduction of alley gates could be looked into as those areas that had them had evidenced an improvement to the area.

It was further suggested that through the National Citizenship Service, young people could assist in community project.

### Improving Services for Young People

A Member indicated that this priority centred on the reduction in children becoming NEET, improving their lifestyle through healthy eating and improving support to mums during pregnancy and after birth. The task and finish group had recommended that the Committee agreed to allocate the total £50,000 from Public Health to improve services for young people focusing on these outcomes.

Ms Tolcher indicated that she had met with the Chair to discuss the issue of children becoming NEETs. It was suggested that a session be held with Members and teachers to enable the Committee to gain a better understanding of how children become NEETs.

Members of the public indicated that there was a need to identify the those young people that were NEETs and look at reasons behind the lack of attainment and employment opportunities.

In response, Ms Tolcher indicated that she had met with the Cabinet Member to discuss this with a view to reducing the number of young people that were NEETs and looking into various models of good practise. A further meeting was due to be held on 20th February 2014. Ms Tolcher had also met with alternative education providers.

A Member suggested that further discussion be held with Merseytravel to tackle the issue of transport access to employment and training opportunities.

A Member commented that there was a need to recognise the achievements of those people within the community who actively encourage peoples' lives, especially those who do this on a voluntary basis. It was suggested that the Committee could introduce an award scheme to recognise the work done within the community by volunteers and smaller community group, which may encourage others within the community.

In relation to the support offered to mums during pregnancy and after birth, the Chair indicated that a report would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

### Improving Communication with the Communities

In relation to this priority, it is recognised that local publications such as the Wirral globe did not reach the Birkenhead Wards, It was suggested that a community newspaper be introduced for Birkenhead which would improve communication within the area also could provide possible employment opportunities.

A member of the public asked if local residents who pay for local distributor but did not receive local publications could be reimbursed. In response, Ms Tolcher agreed to pursue this.

It was suggested and agreed that discussions be held with local organisations, health and church groups to explore the idea of pooled resources to enhance communications and publication of community issues.

A Member suggested that as there was funding available surrounding social inclusion; the Committee may be able to apply for this to assist in enhancing communication to the public.

A member of the public commented that Committee needed to think about reaching those residents for who English was not their language.

**RESOLVED: That**

- (1) Recommendation 2.3a: *Improving the Environment* as detailed within the report be approved as a priority for 2013/14 in Birkenhead and an allocation of £20,000 from the £50,000 be allocated to tackle inequalities. The constituency manager be requested to form a proposal on how to deliver this project to be discussed with the task and finish group and presented back to the committee as a recommendation at the next meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March;**
- (2) Recommendation 2.3b: As detailed within the report the Constituency Manager be requested to work with Ward Councillors to collate other issues within Birkenhead related to waste and Improving the Environment to contribute to the Constituency Plan for 2014/15;**
- (3) Recommendation 2.3c: As detailed within the report, £10,000 of the £50,000 allocated to the committee from Wirral Council be allocated to support a data audit to be carried out detailing the current spend of public funding in Birkenhead on services.**
- (4) Recommendation 2.3d: As detailed within the report, *Improving Services for Young People* be approved as priorities for 2013/14 in Birkenhead and the constituency manager be requested to form a proposal on how to deliver this project to be discussed with the task and finish group and presented back to the committee as a recommendation at the next meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March.**
- (5) Recommendation 2.3e: As detailed within the report Improving Communication be approved as priority for 2013/14 in Birkenhead and the constituency manager be requested to form a proposal on**

how to deliver this project to be discussed with the task and finish group and presented back to the committee as a recommendation at the next meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March.

- (6) It was approved that the Priorities Task and Finish Group progress the proposals based on the approved priorities; they do not need to wait to discuss again at the next committee meeting in March. Progress report will be presented at the next meeting.
- (7) Recommendation 3: As detailed within the report, a Task and Finish Group be formed to discuss and devise an action plan to develop community engagement in Birkenhead to support the work and priorities of the Constituency Committee in 2014/15.

17 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION ( NOT TO EXCEED 20 MINUTES)**

During the Public Question and answer session the following questions/comments were raised;

- (1) Is the Wirral Youth Zone still going ahead?

In response, It was reported that the Council had committed two million pound to the project and had identified a site near to the Fire station in Birkenhead, it hoped that a further four million could be sourced. It was envisaged that work on the project would start by the end of 2105 and operating from early 2016.

Ms Tolcher indicated that the she was currently working with a group of young people to design the logo and branding for the youth zone, and update on this would brought back to the next Committee meeting.

A Member suggested that a visit to other Youth Zones could help with the development of this project.

In response to concerns raised regarding transport issues, It was reported that officers were in discussion with Merseytravel on this to ensure there was adequate transportation links to the site.

- (2) Mrs Brace indicated that despite having a disabled bay outside of her property her vehicle had been damaged by passing traffic and she was having to park on the pavement and asked what could be done about this?

In response it was reported that the issue of parking on pavements was discussed at a recent Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee and a report would be brought back to the Committee in due course.



- (3) Could we have an update on the Neptune's Master Plan?

In response, A Member indicated that it was hoped that information on this would be received in the next few months.

- (4) Where there plans to hold weddings in Birkenhead Town Hall?

In response, Mr Joe Blott, Strategic Director of Transformation and Resources indicated that although there is a licence to hold ceremonies in the Town Hall there were no catering facilities, however the Council was looking at incorporating the whole of the Hamilton Square area to enhance the service provision.

- (5) What are the plans for the Williamson?

In response, it was reiterated that the Council do not want to close the Williamson; plans for which were contained on the budget options listed which had been previously considered by Council. There was a draft plan and this would be discussed at a meeting to be held shortly.

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# Public Document Pack

## CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - BIRKENHEAD

Thursday, 10 April 2014

Present:

Chair Rt Hon Frank Field MP

Councillors	A Brighouse	M McLaughlin
	G Davies	C Meaden
	P Davies	D Realey
	WJ Davies	D Roberts
	S Kelly	H Smith
	B Kenny	J Stapleton
	AR McLachlan	P Williams
	G Davies	C Meaden
	P Davies	D Realey
	WJ Davies	D Roberts
	S Kelly	H Smith
	B Kenny	J Stapleton
	AR McLachlan	P Williams

Also Present

Mr J Brace  
Mrs L Brace  
Mr P Barton  
Mr D Hitchell  
Ms B Call  
Ms L Loughlin  
Ms D Drake  
Mr P Toosey  
Ms D Ashton  
Ms P Griffiths  
Mr B Giles  
Mr P Manley  
Ms J Smith  
Mr J Cocker  
Mrs P Cocker  
Ms T Blood  
Ms A McNeill  
Mr P Mearns  
Ms M Grund  
Ms M More  
Mr M Rushton  
Councillor M Patrick  
Ms L Evans

18 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor J Crabtree  
Councillor P Doughty  
Councillor S Foulkes  
Councillor T Norbury

19 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Phil Davies declared a non pecuniary interest in item 3 on the agenda – Constituency Manager's Update by virtue of him being a governor of Woodlands Primary School and a Non Executive Director of Lairdside Communities Together.

Councillor Chris Meaden declared a non pecuniary interest in item 3 on the agenda – Constituency Manager's Update by virtue of her being a Non Executive Director of Lairdside Communities Together.

20 **MINUTES**

The Chair reported that the Minutes would be amended and then signed.

21 **CONSTITUENCY MANAGER'S UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Neighbourhoods and Engagement that updated it on progress on the actions taken following its last meeting on 30 January 2014.

Attached to the report were 15 Appendices which the Constituency Manager presented to the Committee on an individual basis.

**Appendix 1 – Report to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability dated 27 February 2014**

Improving the environment had been agreed as a priority for Birkenhead in 2013/14 with a budget allocation of £20,000 for this purpose. The Constituency Manager had been tasked with developing a proposal on how to tackle the high levels of waste in alley ways at the Committee meeting on 30 January 2014 (Minute No. 16 refers.).

Appendix 1 informed of proposals the Cabinet Member had agreed to improve the local environmental quality of terraced housing areas by tackling alleyway dumping in a particular way. There would be two phases. Phase 1 – The Good Neighbour Campaign (All terraced households) and Phase 2 – Pilot Studies.

Members were reminded that the Council at its Budget meeting had allocated £400,000 to address the concerns of many residents over significant fly-tipping in many parts of the Borough. The allocation would be used to reinstate the monthly cleaning of entries. A two year programme was to be developed to tackle the issue of fly-tipping which was aligned with the work carried out in taking forward the Recycling and Waste Strategy. This allocation would reinstate monthly clean ups but the programme included a strategy and interventions to change residents behaviour in relation to this problem. The project details were outlined in the report to the Cabinet Member – Environment and Sustainability.

As a result of the Council's budget allocation the Constituency Manager had not progressed the proposal on how to tackle the high levels of waste in alley ways to avoid any duplication. However, a proposal was now being developed, to work in the Birkenhead area, to deal with pieces of land, of unknown ownership, which were considered 'eye sores' which were attracting litter and/or fly tipping. The Committee was informed that a reactive service to remove fly tipping in Birkenhead would be included in the service specification to be drafted.

Members were keen to explore the contractual arrangement currently in place with its contractor for waste collection, Biffa. A Member reported that Streetscene offered a waste collection within five days but the contractual arrangements did not provide a guarantee on this time period and it was considered unacceptable for people to have to wait three months for rubbish to be removed from their streets. It had not been negotiated with the contractor that rubbish would be removed as soon as it was reported. It depended on the seriousness of the dump. The Chair informed that he considered that the Council should ensure that its contractor delivered the service that it required.

## **Appendix 2 – Prosecutions for Waste Offences**

The Committee noted that where any person was found to have not secured their waste, the Council could serve a legal Notice in accordance with Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Over the past five years there had been 192 section 46 notices served on households in Wirral. This was broken down by Constituency as follows:

- Birkenhead 157
- Wallasey 31
- Wirral South 4
- Wirral West 0

Members noted that to date there had been no fixed penalty notices issued or, prosecutions instigated. This was because although evidence could be found in the waste it was difficult to prove who was responsible.

The Chair informed the Committee that the Council could seek successful prosecutions with fixed penalties being imposed and to do this, investigations needed to be carried out, to establish who was responsible for dumping the rubbish.

The Committee noted from the report that it had now been agreed that where the Council found circumstantial evidence, arrangements would be put in hand to issue Fixed Penalty Notices and consider prosecutions if they remained unpaid.

### **Appendix 3 – Improving Services for Young People**

#### **Objective: To increase the Breastfeeding initiation rates in the Birkenhead Area**

The Committee was informed that less than half of all new mothers initiated breastfeeding in Birkenhead (47%), compared to 74% in England. It had been proposed that a project be developed to increase Breast Feeding initiation rates in Birkenhead by developing an antenatal support programme specific to the area.

The Committee received a report that informed that historically support had been provided to mothers once they had given birth. This was accomplished through hospital support, health visitors and a service that Home-Start Wirral (voluntary sector organisation) currently delivered.

The report also informed that, through feedback from professionals, it was clear that at the point this support was offered, many women had already made their decision on whether to breastfeed or not. Their decision could often be made on family and peer advice and they would not accept any support or further consideration.

A Member informed that the crucial person was the midwife and that she had heard reports that caused her concern, in respect of the Midwife Service currently available in Wirral. Consequently, the Director of Adult Social Services had been requested to look into the situation and provide a report on his findings for the Policy and Performance Committee – Families and Wellbeing. The Member did not consider that this Service was working as well as it should.

The Constituency Manager informed that there would be a consultation exercise carried out to establish the barriers and why people were not supporting it.

The Chair informed that he did not believe mothers received the six visits they should in the first two years of their baby's lives.

#### **Appendix 4 – Improving Services for Young People (Child Poverty)**

The Committee noted that poverty was not a new issue and its causes and effects had been explored numerous times before. In particular reference was made to a report, 'The Foundation Years: Preventing Poor Children Becoming Poor Adults' published by the Independent Review of Poverty and Life Chances.

It had been proposed that a project be developed to work towards addressing high Child Poverty levels in Birkenhead and to reduce risk taking behaviour based on a model currently being delivered in Wallasey and Wirral West.

The Committee received a report that informed it that the Cabinet, at its meeting on 13 June 2013, had agreed to progress the Child Poverty Project Proposal (Minute No. 15 refers). Consequently, two of the four primary schools that had applied had been selected to become a Community Hub (one in Wallasey and one in Wirral West), enhancing the vital role of schools and creating a platform for them to act as a catalyst for transforming local communities. The only Birkenhead Primary School to submit an Expression of Interest was Woodlands Primary. It had been ranked third in the assessment process and unfortunately there had only been enough funding for two schools.

The Committee noted that the activities co-ordinated through this 'School Community Hub' were aimed at mitigating and reducing the impact of poverty and deprivation through a 'whole family' approach and a community-led programme of activity. It sought to enhance rather than duplicate pupil-centred interventions, for example those in place to narrow the gap in attainment.

The Committee noted that the two Schools were in the process of drafting action plans and would carry out asset mapping.

#### **Appendix 5 – School Community Hub Initiative Expression of Interest**

The Committee was informed that child poverty was calculated on the basis of the number of children in families in receipt of either out of work benefits, or tax credits where their reported income was less than 60% median income as a proportion of the total number of children in the area. Child poverty was higher in Birkenhead than in the other three Constituencies.

The Committee noted the content of Woodlands Primary School's expression of interest to be a Community Hub.

It was now proposed that the Committee could financially support (in partnership with public health) Woodlands Community Primary School to be a Community Hub and work in partnership to develop an action plan focusing on the prevention of risk taking behaviour for families in the Birkenhead area e.g. Becoming NEET, Drugs and Alcohol, teenage pregnancy. The project would cost £50,000 in total.

A Member proposed that all the Birkenhead Schools with high levels of child poverty be invited to Express an Interest again and this was agreed.

The Constituency Manager would write to all schools and lead on a selection process and formulating of an action plan. Councillors M McLaughlin and A McLachlan would provide support in respect of the process.

### **Appendix 6 – Improving Communications – Wirral Well**

A proposal to develop the Wirral Well website (a health and wellbeing service directory operated by Voluntary and Community Action Wirral (VCAW)) to include support available for Digital Exclusion for residents of Birkenhead and to promote and increase the use of Wirral Well had been put forward.

The Committee received a report that informed that the Council had invested in Wirral Well and that VCAW recruited, trained and worked with volunteers to input data, research service provision and boost registrations to the site. Support for volunteers was offered to help them to progress into employment through volunteer co-ordinator and packages of learning. VCAW was also developing 'Wirral Well+' which was a resource for services and would enable practitioners such as social workers, GPs, fire advocates, etc, to identify provision for clients amongst other things. This would help in ensuring access by individuals who did not have web access and would allow the development and printing of a bespoke list of services suitable for that individual. Additional work was being undertaken on functionality including the insertion of searchable location fields, linked to maps.

The Constituency Manager reported that there was no marketing or promotion budget for Wirral Well. There was a need to publicise this resource across the Constituency through professionals, social sector and residents. This proposal was for marketing and promotion activity within each ward targeted at specific groups and in high footfall areas and the aim was that all residents were made aware of this resource. Promotional tools could include window displays in empty shops; information in community newsletters (such as the various Messenger publications, WALRUS, etc); small business card size information; pop up information stands; email notifications and other targeted promotion. The resources would be utilised by professionals who were engaging with residents e.g. health visitors, fire safety team, police officers.



As part of the community engagement plan for Birkenhead, and using the principles ABCD, Community Connectors would be recruited to inform people of Wirral Well and to consult with them on aspirations and assets for Birkenhead.

Members noted that the second part of the proposal was to fund an extension of Wirral Well. To date a number of exercises had taken place to map digital support across the borough, however this information had, in the main, been stored on spreadsheets which could quickly become out of date. It was reported that a workshop had taken place on 10 September 2013 that had discussed the potential to utilise the Wirral Well online directory to record and store digital support services across Wirral.

The Project would cost £5,000 and would ensure improved knowledge of Wirral Well and help reduce social isolation.

### **Appendix 7 - Improving Communication – A Birkenhead Publication**

There was a proposal to develop a pilot of a local publication in Birkenhead. There would be a community based approach and the aim was to inform residents on matters that would interest them. Appendix 7 outlined the need and delivery mechanism to produce a publication.

The Committee was informed that a pilot publication was proposed, funded from the Committee's budget allocation for 2013/14. The long term aim would be to have a larger publication funded through public sector partners, grants and appropriate advertising as part of a community led 'News Hub' to gather and disseminate local news in appropriate formats.

It was proposed to run a pilot to produce three quarterly editions over a twelve month period. They each would be an eight page publication put together with a community focus. The Constituency Manager would finalise a service specification to be put out to tender. The total cost to the Committee would be £27,500.

The publication would be distributed to all households in Birkenhead (39,823 properties). The community would be used for distribution purposes, with incentives that would benefit community organisation e.g. local sports club, scouts group. It was also proposed this was managed on a ward basis, with ward Councillors recommending originations in their area.

### **Appendix 8 - Improving Communication – Birkenhead Publication Survey Monkey Questions**

The Constituency Manager referred to Appendix 8 – Birkenhead Publication Survey Monkey Questions – February 2014 and the summarised responses. These informed that that often residents did not consider that they were

informed enough about local news and it was proposed that a monthly publication be produced that was non political and would include information that local residents would be interested in.

Members noted that a more detailed brief was in preparation and two steering groups were being established. One would oversee the content of the publication and the other would progress the financial stability of the publication so it could continue, if there was agreement, after the pilot ended.

The Constituency Manager reported that the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 included at Chapter 2, a 'Code of recommended practice on Local Authority Publicity'. As the Council was funding the publication it was important to comply with the guidance and a protocol would be written..

### **Community Engagement and Constituency Handbook**

The Constituency Manager informed that an action plan would be drawn up to develop community engagement in Birkenhead to support the work and priorities of the Committee during the next Municipal Year. Also, the Constituency Handbook and Community Engagement Task and Finish Groups were merging together as their memberships were similar and Community Engagement was a section of the Handbook. Members would continue to explore this piece of work and provide feedback for the Committee. The Constituency Manager intended to circulate a draft copy of the handbook to obtain Committee Members views on its content.

### **Appendix 9 – Budget Summary March 2014**

The Committee noted that Appendix 9 detailed a budget summary based on the proposals detailed in section 2.0 of the report.

### **Appendix 10 – Children and Young People's Department Early Years' Budgets (2014-15) spent in Birkenhead**

The Committee noted that Appendix 10 detailed an overview of all services paid for through Children and Young People's Department, provided by the Director of Finance. Where it could be done accurately the overall budget had been proportioned to Birkenhead, for other Wirral wide services they had been averaged. There was still further collation to do with this as part of the Councils Future Council project which was now being progressed.

### **Appendix 11 – Public Health Spend – Children Services under 5's**

The Committee noted that the services directly commissioned by Public Health were Breast Feeding Support and an antenatal support programme (Me Time, My Time). Appendix 11 included the proportion of spend of these services in Birkenhead for 2012/13 and 2013/14 and the outputs and

outcomes achieved/ monitored for the Health Visitor Service. A new specification was being written on this service to go out to tender for a new contract to start on 1 February 2015. The request had been made for the outputs to be gathered on a constituency basis.

### **Appendix 12 – Summary of Health Agencies Commissioning Children’s under 5’s Service**

The Committee noted that Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was responsible to commission Maternity Services, Acute Services and Community Nursing. Appendix 12 detailed spend on Maternity Services on a Constituency basis. Further consultation was to be carried out to discuss support offered to expectant mums who do not access these services. The CCG was unable to provide a breakdown on Acute Services but this is being pursued. They could not provide a breakdown on Community Nursing, this was also being pursued through the provider (Wirral Community Trust) to detail spend and outcomes of this service.

The Committee also noted that NHS England was a new Area Team which formed in April 2013. It was responsible for the budgets provided to GP’s, Dentists, Pharmacists, Health Visitors and the Family Nurse Partnership.

### **Appendix 13 – GP’s Practice List and Budget**

The Committee noted that Appendix 13 detailed the spend on GP’s which had been calculated from practice lists statements from January 2014 and multiplying the number of registered patients aged under 5’s by the Global Sum Price of £66.25 per person. Similar data and activity levels were being collated from the Business Support Unit in relation to dentists and pharmacists. This was not currently available in this format.

### **Appendix 14 – Overview of Health Visitors’ Service Spend**

The Committee noted that Appendix 14 detailed current spend on Health Visiting (including the Family Nurse Partnership Service) on a constituency basis and an overview of the outcomes and delivery of this service. The next steps were for providers to breakdown the collation of outputs on a constituency basis. Currently Wirral had 71.8 Health Visitors as part of The Health Visitor Implementation Plan 2011-15 – ‘A Call to Action’; Wirral should have 84.8 by March 2015. Wirral currently used a system developed by Cowley and Bidmead (2005) to determine how the various teams were constituted and resourced, in terms of staffing.

## **Appendix 15 – Birkenhead Constituency Profile of Children aged 0-4 years**

The Committee noted the content of this profile, produced by the Public Health Intelligence Team.

### **RESOLVED: That**

- (1) the Constituency Manager be requested to continue to work with Local Members and particularly the Task and Finish Groups to progress the proposals detailed in the report to work towards the priorities identified at the Committee’s meeting on 30 January 2014;**
- (2) the Constituency Manager be requested to monitor each project based on the proposal and update the the Committee on progress at its future meetings;**
- (3) the Constituency Manager be requested to continue to collate information to summarise overall in respect of all services spends, outputs, outcomes and report it to the Constituency Committee; and**
- (4) the Constituency Manager be requested to ensure that all the Birkenhead Schools with high levels of child poverty be invited to Express an Interest in becoming a Community Hub again.**

## **22 PAVEMENTS & GRASS VERGE PARKING - UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee received a report in respect of pavement and grass verge parking which had been referred to it from the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee at its meeting on 27 January, 2014 (Minute No. 34 refers) where it had agreed that it should be considered by each of the Constituency Committee.

The Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee had noted that there were a high number of enquiries made to Streetscene which indicated the extent of the problem across Wirral, particularly in areas with narrow streets and no off road parking.

Councillor George Davies referred to the nine pilots and asked for Councillor Harry Smith’s view on them. Councillor Harry Smith agreed to provide Councillor George Davies with the appropriate information.

A member of the public who lived in Bidston Road, off Bidston Hill informed that she had the use of a disabled bay but had to park on the pavement. She considered that it would be better if the road was one way. Councillor Harry Smith informed that before the road could become one way there would have

to be a consultation process with all the residents in Boundary Road and a high percentage of them would need to be in favour of the proposal. Councillor Harry Smith informed that he would instigate the consultation but was unsure of the exact percentage required to be in favour of a one way system so Officers would be asked to provide it.

A member of the public asked if Boundary Road could be widened and was informed that it would be expensive to do that and that the land in question was probably in the green belt.

A Member considered that a sensible policy on parking enforcement in relation to parking on pavements was required as it would be inappropriate for the Council to have a blanket ban on it.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the content of the report be noted.**

23 **ROCK FERRY POSITION STATEMENT**

The Committee received a position statement on the deterioration of the Rock Ferry River Wall and Esplanade and a request for financial support for urgent repairs. Members noted that the River Wall and Esplanade were an important part of the Rock Park Conservation Area and formed a vital part of the Mersey Coastal Park Strategy which sought to open up public access to the waterfront from Rock Park to Eastham Country Park. This area provided an important and accessible leisure resource for the local community and was used regularly by walkers and cyclists as well as by those who visited the area. These activities also contributed to improving the health and well being of local people. The River Wall and Esplanade were listed structures and formed an important part of Wirral's heritage along with the properties in Rock Park. The area had been built between the 1830's and 1850's.

Members noted that although there had been some small scale repairs, the storms and high tides of Winter 2013/14 had seen a marked deterioration in the River Wall once again. Whilst, ownership of the River Wall structure was being explored there was an urgent need for further immediate repair work to improve the current condition. It was estimated that a sum of between £5,000 and £10,000 would enable the immediate repair works to be done to the River Wall and this would then provide time for ownership to be established and for external funding opportunities to be explored again. Some of this funding would also be used to repair the Esplanade as the Rock Park Estate Company did not have funding available for these repairs. Any works would need to be undertaken in consultation with the Council's Conservation Officers as the structure was listed.

A full refurbishment of the River Wall and Esplanade would cost approximately £2m and at the present time (and for the foreseeable future)

external funding was extremely limited and very competitive when it is available.

**RESOLVED: That**

- (1) £10,000 be provided from the Committee's budget allocation for 2014/15 to fund the urgently needed repair works to the River Wall and Esplanade at Rock Park to maintain this asset for the benefit of local residents in terms of their recreation, health and heritage;**
- (2) Officers be requested to continue to work with the local MP and Rock Park Estate Company to establish ownership of the River Wall structure; and**
- (3) whilst it is recognised that external funding is limited and very competitive every effort be made by Ward Councillors and Officers to identify and secure external resources to enable a long term refurbishment of the Esplanade.**

**24 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS - 2014/2015**

It was reported that the Council's Committee Calendar for the Municipal Year 2014/15 had been drawn up and the Committee was scheduled to meet at 6pm in Birkenhead Town Hall on the following dates:

- 24 July 2014
- 30 October 2014
- 29 January 2015
- 9 April 2015

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Committee's meeting dates for the 2014/15 Municipal Year as set out above be noted.**

**25 URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR**

The Constituency Manager reported on the following items of urgent business that had been approved by the Chair:

- NCS students - there had been an offer at the previous committee meeting for them to support with activities. They had supported at a charity event and they had been really helpful and would be invited to support again with developments in the Birkenhead Constituency.

- NEET Summit – was being held on 11 April, hosted at Wirral Metropolitan College. As prevention of NEETS was an identified priority for the Committee, feedback would be provided at the next meeting.
- The branding exercise being carried out by young people – had been completed for the Wirral Youth Zone which was to be called ‘The Hive’.
- Copies of the logo were shared with the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the reports set out above be noted.**

26 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION ( NOT TO EXCEED 20 MINUTES)**

The Chair invited members of the public to ask questions.

Question 1 – Philip Barton

I am unclear how the proposals the Cabinet Member had agreed to improve the local environmental quality of terraced housing areas by tackling alleyway dumping in a particular way sits with the ERIC Service, bulky item collection?

A Member referred to the £400,000 that the Council had put back into the budget to ensure monthly cleaning of entries. The Group from the third sector would only look after Birkenhead.

Members informed that the ERIC Service could not be free and the £400,000 was earmarked to deal with fly tipping in alley ways. The ERIC Service was there to take away bulky goods and the Cabinet Member’s initiative did not replace that Service.

The Chair considered that the Council should tie down its contractors to take away goods that had been dumped, as dumping was a very real problem.

Question 2 – Bob Giles

Referring to the Better Food Wirral Event which was very interesting, vending machines and the excessive consumption of fizzy drinks, were there any moves to make people aware of the excessive consumption?

A Member informed that the Council was in the process of restructuring its Leisure Centres and was removing all the vending machines and replacing them with Juice Bars which would provide healthy juices and smoothie drinks.

Mr Giles made the point that fruit juices did have high sugar content.

It was noted that water was also available in all of the Council's Leisure Centres.

The Constituency Manager informed that a Constituency Plan in relation to food was being developed for Birkenhead – What's Best for Birkenhead?

Question 3 – Lynn Evans

The Council's review of contract management was welcome. What was it doing in the background to ensure improvement and that we get what we pay for?

The Chair asked what resources did the Council put into letting its contracts.

The Strategic Director – Transformation and Resources informed that there was an internal Commissioning and Procurement Board which met regularly and was concerned with early intervention, domiciliary support services and looking at integration.

A Member informed that the Director of Adult Social Services was in the process of discussing low level support services and that Luncheon Clubs needed to be reviewed.

The Constituency Manager reported that there had been a lot of change and Members would discuss this at a half day session. A Member enquired whether there was a Schedule or Plan that the Committee could look at and the Constituency Manager undertook to find out and circulate relevant information.

The Chair informed that he and a Member had visited the Cavendish Centre which ran day services. He asked who had been awarded the contract and what it provided. He also asked to what extent were these points of contact to be devolved down, he considered that it was a question for the Chief Executive to respond to and requested that it be included in the Minutes of the meeting.

A Member referred to the work carried out in relation to commissioning and working with others. He considered that the Committee should look at the amount of money spent in the Constituency and the outputs that were achieved to establish if they represented value for money.

A Member asked if the Committee knew how many pensioners had been lost in Birkenhead over the winter period. The Chair proposed that Public Health Officers be asked to compare this year's figures with those of last year.



Pauline Cocker referred to the high levels of crime reported to the police; she considered that a lot of work needed to be done in the local community, if Birkenhead was to be a safe area in which to live.

A Member informed that he was holding a meeting with residents to discuss incidents of crime.

A Member referred to the distress caused to people at the Cavendish Centre. It was noted that the staff was very dedicated and ran the Centre on a shoe string compared to other Luncheon Clubs.

Another Member informed that the comments were very valid. There had been issues around the commissioning process. The Council was looking at how it could help going forward to provide services to vulnerable people in a deprived area.

A member of the public proposed the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan. He referred to the Neighbourhood Plans that Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council had adopted and to the different approach it had compared to that of the Council. Wirral's Local Plan did not mention Neighbourhood Planning at all.

A member of the public informed that with the help of the Rt Hon Frank Field MP, Devonshire Park was one of a vanguard of 17 communities advancing neighbourhood planning under the 2011 Localism Act. She reported that Devonshire Park was a victim of its own success because as it had progressed the neighbourhood planning the Government had kept changing things. Developers were targeting houses to convert into flats and bed sits whilst Devonshire Park wanted to protect family housing as part of the mix.

Neighbourhood Planning had been a positive experience. The community had come together to look at how Devonshire Park could look in the future. However, bringing the Neighbourhood Plan through the local authority planning process had been a nightmare with ever changing hoops and hurdles to negotiate.

Devonshire Park was the test community for Wirral Borough Council. The Neighbourhood Plan had been a good learning experience for the Council. A referendum needed to take place either this year or next. There had been a lot of frustration but it was considered that it was the beginning of something tremendously positive. People had a say over what would happen in the local area. Devonshire Park was willing to support and advise other communities who wanted to go down the Neighbourhood Planning route.

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

24<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2014

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>CONSTITUENCY MANAGERS UPDATE</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>WARDS WITHIN THE BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARY.</b>  <b>BIRKENHEAD AND TRANMERE BIDSTON AND ST JAMES CLAUGHTON OXTON PRENTON ROCK FERRY</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>HEAD OF NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENGAGEMENT</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

#### 1.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 1.1 Section 2.0 of this report provides an update on progress in relation to actions from the previous Constituency Committee meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014.
- 1.2 Section 3.0 of this report details other updates relevant to the committee.

#### 2.0 PROGRESS TO DATE- Actions from Committee Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014

- 2.1 **Action:** Improving the Environment was approved as a priority for 2013/14 in Birkenhead with an allocation of £20,000. The Constituency Manager to form a proposal on how to deliver a project to deal with pieces of land of unknown ownership considered 'eye sores' and a process to respond to fly tipping.

**Update:** A specific report from Head of Service, Streetscene & Waste details the proposal in Agenda item 4 of this committee meeting.

- 2.2 **Action:** The Constituency Manager to work with Ward Councillors to collate other issues within Birkenhead related to Improving the Environment to contribute to the Constituency Plan for 2014/15

**Update:** This has been ongoing and audit is being collated, this will contribute to the Constituency Plan. The ownership of the identified spots is being clarified but the majority appear to be unadopted or privately owned.

2.3 **Action:** The two proposals that were approved at the Committee meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014 in relation to the priority 'Improving Services for Young People' to be implemented.

**Update:** Proposal 1 was a project to increase Breast Feeding initiation rates in Birkenhead by developing an antenatal support programme specific to the area. Appendix 1 details the first quarterly report in relation to this service for the period of April- June 2014.

Proposal 2 was a project to develop a 'Community Hub' at a local primary school. All primary schools in Birkenhead with over 50% of pupils living in areas of high income deprivation have been invited to submit an Expression of Interest to this project. The deadline for submissions is 28<sup>th</sup> July 2014 and 2 schools will be offered a grant of £25,000 each to achieve the outcome that 'Children are Ready for School'. They will utilise the funding to:

- Provide high quality service provision and interventions for children below statutory school age that will have a positive affect on Childrens' intellectual and social /behavioral development prior to school entry.
- Work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop at home and in the community, delivering the key message and understanding that what parents do is more important than who parents are.
- Build on the strengths and well-being of the local community; mapping what resources are available for parents and children and help families learn about and use resources and services available within the community

MP Frank Field, Councillor Moira McLaughlin and Councillor Ann McLachlan have guided this project and will be involved with the assessment process to select the 2 schools to deliver the pilot project.

2.4 **Action:** The two proposals that were approved at the Committee meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014 in relation to the priority Improving Communication to be implemented.

**Update:** Proposal 1 was a project to increase and develop the use of the Wirral Well website through improved and targeted promotion. Methods of how to do this in terms of what tools to use and a segmented approach to specific target groups has been written and is to be implemented. A report on the impact will be provided at the next committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

Proposal 2 was to develop a pilot community based publication in Birkenhead.

**Background:** On 31 March 2011 the Secretary of State issued a Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity (the 'Code'), which applies to the Council.

The Code sets out a range of provisions in relation to local authority publicity, including seven principles of local authority publicity, (1) lawful, (2) cost effective, (3) objective, (4) even-handed, (5) appropriate, (6) have regard to equality, and (7) diversity. The Code also includes statements of the actions a local authority should or should not take in order to comply with the principles. In particular, a local authority should avoid anything likely to be perceived by readers as constituting a political statement, or statements about the frequency, content and appearance of local authority newssheets or similar communications.

Paragraph 28 of the Code Publicity provides that:

*Local authorities should not publish or incur expenditure in commissioning in hard copy or on any website, newsletters, newssheets or similar communications which seek to emulate commercial newspapers in style or content. Where local authorities do commission or publish newsletters, newssheets or similar communications, **they should not issue them more frequently than quarterly**, apart from parish councils which should not issue them more frequently than monthly. Such communications should not include material other than information for the public about the business, services and amenities of the council or other local service providers.*

Section 39 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 came into force on 30 March 2014 and provides a specific power for the Secretary of State to direct a Council to comply with the Code (as applicable).

The Secretary of State in a letter to local authorities (dated 25 March 2014) confirmed that, where on the basis of any material or information currently available to him, he considers that there is some evidence of non-compliance with the Code, and that non-compliance has not ceased, he will be minded to give a direction to the local authority concerned to bring an end to the non-compliance or remove the risk of any future non-compliance.

**Update:** Accordingly, there is a risk that the proposal for a quarterly newsletter to be circulated within the Birkenhead constituency could be subject to challenge given paragraph 28 of the Code and the Secretary of State's stated position. It is therefore considered prudent that this risk be considered and explored by Cabinet before a final decision is taken by this Committee to proceed with this proposal.

- 2.5 **Action:** The task and finish group to finalise the draft of the Committee Handbook, including a section on Community Engagement.

**Update:** The Task and Finish group to devise a Handbook and a Community Engagement Strategy had a further meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014. Appendix 2 is the final draft of the Handbook for approval from the Constituency Committee. It includes an Engagement Strategy that will be developed as the actions are practically implemented. The Constituency Committee will receive an update on this strategy at each meeting for discussion and guidance. Discussions have continued at the Birkenhead Public Service Board on how partners can share resources and co-ordinate activity more effectively around community engagement.

The handbook also includes a revised process for Public Question Time (pages 8-9) in order to improve the quality of the responses given to questions and to enable community members who cannot attend the meeting to ask questions of the Constituency Committee.

- 2.6 **Action:** £10,000 be provided from the Committee's budget allocation for 2014/15 to fund the urgently needed repair works to the River Wall and Esplanade at Rock Park to maintain this asset for the benefit of local residents in terms of their recreation, health and heritage.

**Update:** A grant of up to £10,000 will be given to Rock Park Trust Company to carry out the repairs to the Esplanade. A specification for the works is being formulated with Wirral Council's Conservation Officer. Once completed, Rock Park Trust Company will tender for the necessary works.

### **3.0 Other Updates**

- 3.1 Following a tender process Wirral Council has appointed 'Nurture Development' to lead a 12 month programme to introduce and implement the principles of Asset Based Community Development in the borough through the training and supporting of the council's workforce, partners, local councillors, voluntary sector organisations and residents. Nurture Development are currently finalising an action plan to implement this work, an update on this will be provided at the next Constituency Committee meeting.
- 3.2 A targeted piece of work relevant to the priority of 'Improving the Environment' has been carried out with traders based in the top end of Grange Road, Charing Cross and Grange Road West area. This has involved meetings with traders and relevant officers/professionals. An action plan has been written summarising the main issues and how they can be overcome to meet the aspirations of:
- Creating a safe, clean and pleasant trading environment to attract visitors.
  - Enabling Birkenhead to be more competitive and progressive in promoting/communicating/advertising the benefits to living, working and trading in Birkenhead
  - Increasing visits to Birkenhead.
  - Building greater community pride in the area.

Appendix 3 is a copy of the Action Plan and updates on progress made to date.

- 3.3 Appendix 4 details an update on Community projects in progress.
- 3.4 Appendix 5 is a briefing paper of a new initiative called 'Seven Beats Project'. An area of Birkenhead has been identified by the Community Safety Partnership and the Police as accounting for a large proportion of crime on Wirral. It is proposed to dedicate a team of officers to this area who will work in partnership with other agencies and the local community to actively reduce crime and ASB. A steering group met for the first time on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2014, the Birkenhead Constituency Manager is a member of this steering group and will update the committee on progress made with this project.

### **4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

- 4.1 There are no resource implications detailed within this report further to those approved at the Constituency Committee meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The risk of producing a local publication to be considered by Cabinet to ensure it complies with the principles of the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity (the 'Code').

## **6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Not required as this is a research task.

## **7.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 This report has no direct carbon reduction implications.

## **8.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 This report has no planning and community safety implications.

## **9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 The Committee are asked to note and approve the content of the report.

## **10.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 To continue to progress the targeted schemes of work identified within the constituency to develop the new approach to neighbourhood working.

**REPORT AUTHOR: Dawn Tolcher, Constituency Manager (Birkenhead)**

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## **APPENDICES**

APPENDIX 1 - Antenatal Breast feeding Project Quarterly Report (April-June 1014)

APPENDIX 2 - Draft copy of Birkenhead Constituency Handbook

APPENDIX 3 - Grange Road Action Plan

APPENDIX 4 - Community Projects Update

APPENDIX 5- Briefing Paper, Seven Betas Project.





Appendix 1- Birkenhead Constituency Antenatal Project  
Quarterly Report - April - June 2014

Section A Outputs

1 User Numbers

Initial contacts with women seen this quarter:

St Catherines Hospital at Scan	0
Arrowe Park at Scan	93
Home Visit following referral by staff or volunteer	14
Telephone contact only following referral	40
Roadshow/Events	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>147</b>

Completed antenatal checklist	85
Intend to breastfeed	70
Going to be a first time mum	61

**2** Areas**Which areas of Birkenhead do the above mums live in?**

Bidston & St James	10
Birkenhead	55
Claughton	3
Oxton	9
Prenton	39
Rock Ferry	23
Tranmere	8
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>147</b>

**2** Age Range**Of the mums seen this quarter how many were:**

Under 18	2
18-21	15
21-25	25
25-34	50
35-44	17
45+	1
Not stated	37
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>147</b>

**3** Breakdown of Support**Of the mums seen this quarter:**

How many home visits were made	14
How many telephone calls were made	163
How many texts were sent	106
How many women have a support network available to them	59
How many women were signposted for additional support	8
How many mums initiated breastfeeding	29
How many mums breastfed until 6 weeks +	4

**4 Promotional Work**

Number of antenatal group support sessions delivered in Birkenhead locations	11
Total number of pregnant Birkenhead women attended these support sessions	27
Number of presentations/meetings attended in the Birkenhead District to promote benefits of breast feeding	2
Number of community/public events attended in Birkenhead District	3

**Section B Outcomes**

**5 Specific Outcomes of the Service**

**Please identify the main impact/improvements:**

Outcome 1 - Improve the health and well-being of children in Birkenhead	20%
Outcome 2 - Providing a targeted intervention for expectant mums in Birkenhead	48%
Outcome 3 - Improving support and care available to mums in Birkenhead during pregnancy.	60%
Outcome 4 - Improving support networks available to pregnant mums	48%

**Please identify any specific problems which have not been successfully addressed by the project:**

Getting things set up so we can have a presence at St Caths has taken longer than expected. This is in place now but if there are only a few mum's booked in to have their scan they change their appointment to Arrowe Park. We hope to start seeing mum's at St Caths from July.

## 6 [Case Study 1](#)

### **Background:**

Mum in her 20's from the Birkenhead area contact Home-Start through the Get Wirral Breastfeeding website for an antenatal referral.

### **Input:**

Mum was called by the First Response Worker to arrange a home visit or to invite mum to the group, mum opted for the antenatal group at the Home-Start Hub. Mum asked if she could bring a friend along as she was really nervous, and was told that this was fine. Mum and her friend attended the group the following week. From the group discussion it was apparent that mum would benefit from our text buddy service and asked if she would like to use the service, mum said she would. Feedback from the volunteer who was mum's text buddy:- "The FRW telephoned me and informed me about the background of the mum to be. FRW was of the view that this mum would need a lot of support. I texted the mum to be and was pleased that we had an immediate text exchange and formed a positive contact support relationship via text. The FRW also informed me when mum had given birth and that baby and mum were doing well. I texted mum to check how she and the baby were doing and also introduced her to the "Time for Me" group on at the Home-Start Hub. Mum was eager to attend and she attended the group with her new baby and toddler

### **Outcome:**

Mum is now 6 weeks postnatal and is still exclusively breast feeding and attending the "Time for Me" group support when it's needed. Mum said she was really grateful for the support and it helped knowing that there was someone there to support her when she needed it.

## 6 [Case Study 2](#)

### **Background:**

Mum aged 26 from the Birkenhead area contacted Home-Start through the Get Wirral Breastfeeding website for an antenatal referral. The mum has four other children, mum has also suffered a bereavement of one of her children. Mum tried to breast feed her older children but had stopped. Mum said she doesn't know why she stopped and has a lot of guilt about it.

### **Input:**

Mum was called by the FRW to offer a home visit or to invite mum to attend the group, mum opted for the antenatal group at the Home-Start Hub. Mum asked if she could bring a friend with her as she was really nervous, and was told that this was fine. Mum and her friend attended the group the following week. From the discussion it became apparent that mum would benefit from our text buddy service, and mum said she would. A volunteer was put in touch with mum and they had regular text contact and formed a positive contact support relationship via text. When the baby was born the volunteer contacted mum to check how she and the baby were doing and also to introduce her to the "Time for Me" group at the Home-Start Hub. Mum was eager to attend and she attended the group with her new baby and toddler.

### **Outcome:**

Mum is now 6 weeks postnatal and is still exclusively breast feeding and attending the "Time for Me" group support when it's needed. Mum said she was really grateful for the support and it helped knowing that there was someone there to support her when she needed it.

**7 Additional Information**

**a) Family Feedback**

Thank you so much for all your help and support!!!! Couldn't have done it without you :)

A vital service that provides excellent support at the toughest time in an expectant mum's life, your group at the Hub has been a god send

Very good, and very important and vital for all expectant mum's. It's a credit to have in Birkenhead

**b) Other Feedback**

From a Midwife - she never had support as a new mum herself with breast feeding so is delighted to see this type of service offered to new mum's.

**Completed by:** Jo Greer

**Date Completed:** 04/07/14

**BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE  
HANDBOOK 2014/15**

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### **What is this handbook for?**

This Handbook provides practical guidance to everyone involved with Birkenhead Constituency Committee; including residents, ward councillors, service delivery partners and Council officers.

Birkenhead Constituency Committee was formed in July 2013. This Handbook sets out procedures and processes to deliver the function of the Constituency Committee. The guidance in this Handbook should be read alongside the Council's constitution (accessed by link below)

<http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD867&ID=867&R PID=1000884748&sch=doc&cat=12881&path=12881>

While the Handbook supports the rules and procedures set out in the Council's Constitution (available on the Council's website [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)), the Council's Constitution will always take precedence over the Handbook. This Handbook will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

### **Wirral's Vision**

#### **Wirral Council's Vision is:**

*"Wirral will be a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected, where employers want to invest and local businesses thrive, and where good health and an excellent quality of life is within the reach of everyone who lives here".*

#### **The vision and aspiration for Neighbourhood working in Wirral is:**

*"Strong neighbourhood working can provide the basis for the Council, public services and the wider community to work together to resolve residents issues, work in partnership and involving residents and groups to have a greater say on how their local services are delivered."*

The Constituency Committees will help improve the link between the strategic priorities and local priorities. It is the Constituency Committee that will deliver an area vision, which local elected members, local residents, service delivery partners, Council officers and voluntary, community and faith groups will implement.

### **Aspirations for Birkenhead**

Birkenhead Constituency includes the wards of Birkenhead and Tranmere, Bidston and St James, Claughton, Oxtan, Prenton and Rock Ferry

Aspirations of the Committee have been agreed by Ward Councillors through consultation with residents in public places and feedback from those who have attended Committee meetings. The Aspirations for 2014/15 are:

- Maintain regular contact with constituents
- Reduce inequalities currently evident for Birkenhead Constituents
- Utilise Assets within Birkenhead in terms of people and places
- Increase use of Outdoor Spaces and Improve Environment
- Maximise Economic Growth



- Create a strong sense of identity
- Improve Perception of Birkenhead
- Enhance Community Engagement and Cohesion
- Reduction in Social Isolation

The Constituency Committee is developing a Constituency Plan to identify priorities for the area. Currently resources have been allocated to 4 priorities:

1. Improving data and intelligence regarding current spend and outcomes.
2. Improving the Environment
3. Improving Communication
4. Improving Services for Young People

DRAFT

## **SECTION 2: ROLE OF THE CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE**

For 2014/15 Birkenhead Constituency Committee is chaired by the local MP and consists of 18 elected members (three ward councillors for each of its six wards). One of the Ward Councillors will act as Vice Chair.

The role of Birkenhead Constituency Committee includes the following:

- Agree desired outcomes, develop and monitor a Constituency Plan for Birkenhead;
- Commission activities relevant to the Constituency Plan within the allocated budget within any given year;
- Review, problem solve and recommend/influence the most effective operation of responsive front line services;
- Resolve community issues which impact on residents;
- Maximise the engagement of local residents and other stakeholders

### **Conduct of meetings**

There will be 4 meetings per annum. The Committee meeting dates for 2014/15 and further details are in Appendix 1.

The Constituency Committee agenda is published no less than 5 working days before the date of the meeting. These are published online at [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk).

Each committee has an assigned Constituency Manager and Strategic Director, both of these officers will attend the meetings. Attendance of others such as Council Officers, Councillors from other Constituencies, partner organisation will be asked when required in relation to the agenda.

Members of the Committee will be required to make a declaration of any interest that is known to them at the start of every meeting, indicating whether it is a personal, or a prejudicial interest and how the interest arises. It may also be necessary for members to make an interest known if an interest arises during the course of the meeting, and where necessary leave the room whilst decisions are made.

Appendix 2 details a role description for

- Chair and Vice Chair
- Ward Councillors
- Birkenhead Constituency Manager
- Birkenhead Engagement Officer
- Strategic Director
- Committee Services Officer
- Legal Services Officer
- Council Officers and Service Delivery Partners

Appendix 3 details full list of members and support officers contact details for the Committee

### **Task & Finish Groups**

A Task & Finish Group can be set up by the Committee to undertake a specific piece of work or analysis. The membership of The Task and Finish Groups will be formed from self nominations from the constituency committee. The Constituency Manager will undertake an advisory role with these groups and additional advisors may be appointed by the Group (including from partner agencies). Progress will be reported to the Constituency Committee.

### **Public Service Board**

Wirral Public Service Board (PSB) is 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.

Birkenhead Constituency Committee will be supported by a Birkenhead Public Service Board consisting of a range of services, agencies and partners to co-ordinate the strategic delivery of the Constituency Plan. Progress of the Public Service Board in relation to specific actions and developments will be reported to the Constituency Committee.

### **Social Sector**

The Constituency Committee is supported by the Social Sector who will work together as a range of service providers and agencies to inform and support the strategic delivery of the Constituency Plan and report progress/findings to the Constituency Committee.

## **SECTION 3: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Community Engagement**

Birkenhead Constituency Committee will support opportunities for the community to have their say. This will form part of standard practice and cover aspects from the delivery of services to policy and decision making. The Constituency Committee recognises that the most effective form of engagement is 'involvement'.

In 2014/15 it is important for the Committee to gather information on what the community has and wants in terms of assets and needs. Birkenhead Constituency Committee will use **Community Research** on specific pieces of work or analysis in relation to the priorities in the Constituency Plan

#### Overview:

Community Researchers are residents who are members of a community who are given training to conduct research in their own community.

Community Researchers can be used when researching a particular topic, sensitive issues specific to a certain social group and is a way of engaging with traditional hard to reach groups.

There are a number of benefits to engaging through Community Researchers:

- Working with a community also enables the research to be a two way process in which information can be given to the communities who participate.
- In-depth community engagement can provide important insights into attitudes, beliefs and behaviour in particular communities which quantitative data cannot explain.
- Working with Community Researchers develops relationships with hard to reach groups.
- A template is provided for the Community Researchers to write up their findings in the same format. This ensures that the data can be analysed and used effectively.

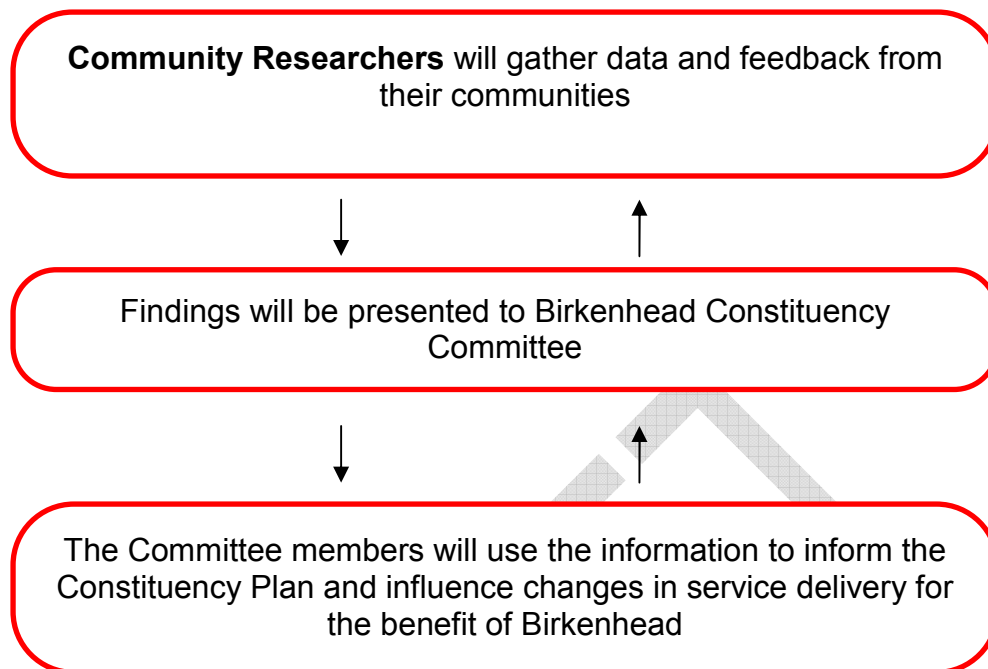
#### How it would work:

The aim for Birkenhead Constituency Committee to develop a team of Community Researchers would allow research to be gathered from groups and residents, some that may not have been engaged with before.

After initially recruiting residents who want to volunteer as Community Researchers and giving them the required training the scheme would work by Community Researchers gathering data and feedback from their communities to present the findings to Birkenhead Constituency Committee.

The Committee members will work with the researchers and use their strategic drive through the new neighbourhood approach to bring about the

change that Communities and Councillors want for the benefit of Birkenhead. It will assist to build community capacity, improve the local knowledge-base and facilitate the achievement of good practice and improved service delivery.



The committee will direct the engagement in terms of what are the topics of research in relation to the priorities identified in the Constituency Plan.

The information gathered will inform the committee to develop priorities and localise service delivery for Birkenhead.

### **Public Question Time**

Each Constituency Committee meeting will include a Public Question Time. Whilst a small proportion of time will be allowed for 'on the night' questions, in order to enable a comprehensive response at the meeting and to allow members of the public to participate who are unable to attend the meeting, questions will be required to be submitted in writing in advance of the meeting.

This will be facilitated using online and downloadable forms on the Council's web site, with hard copies available in public buildings based in the Constituency or can be posted on request. Residents requiring additional support or alternative formats of the forms in terms of with literacy or languages can have submissions made on their behalf or be supported to complete forms by Council One Stop Shops. Questions will be required to be submitted by no later than 4.00pm the afternoon before the Committee meeting. The Chair of the meeting will determine which questions will be dealt with at the Committee and the order in which they will be taken.

No less than 20 minutes will be set aside for the Public Question Time. Questions that are not able to be covered will be responded to in writing within 14 working days by the Constituency Manager. If questions are asked from a member of the public in attendance will be allowed 'on the night' it will be the Chairs decision based on the agenda and timings if they are dealt with there or responded to in writing after the meeting, this will be done within 14 working days by the Constituency Manager

### **Process for Submitting a Question**

Questions must be in writing and relate to a single issue. This can be done by:

- Completing the form online  
<https://wirral.firmstep.com/default.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=eHrcFJB1cP1&HideToolbar=1>
- Downloading the Question Form from this webpage and sending your completed form to:  
Dawn Tolcher, Birkenhead Constituency Manager, Wallasey Town Hall, Brighton Street
- Requesting hard copy or electronic copy of the form by contacting Dawn Tolcher on 0151 691 8295 or [dawntolcher@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:dawntolcher@wirral.gov.uk)

The form should be completed and submitted to the Constituency Manager no later than 4.00pm on the day of the meeting. **Please be aware that the earlier you submit your question in advance of a Constituency Committee meeting, the more likely you are to receive an answer at the meeting itself.**

The aim will be to answer your question at the meeting, if not you will receive a written response within 14 working days.

## **Process at the Meeting**

- The Chair of the Constituency Committee will decide which matters are dealt with and the order in which they are taken.
- Questions which are defamatory, unsuitable, frivolous or derogatory will not be accepted. Questions should not refer to individual officers or Members of the Council by name.
- At the meeting, one supplementary question maybe asked to the originals query.
- A maximum period of 5 minutes is allowed for a statement or speech by the person who wishes to make representations or present a petition to the Area Committee. After the statement, the speaker may be asked questions. This is up to the Chair of the meeting and this period will not exceed 5 minutes. To ensure best use is made of the Public Forum, it is not intended that representations should prompt lengthy debate.
- You can normally only ask one question, make one representation or submit one petition to each meeting of the Area Committee. However, at the discretion of the Chair an additional question or representation may be allowed if time permits. You cannot ask the same question, make the same representation, or submit the same petition again within a 3 month period.

## **Public Consultation Event**

This will be a 'marketplace' type engagement events for the public. It will aim to offer residents the opportunity to receive updates and ask questions in relation to public sector services. The Constituency Manager and Engagement Officer will coordinate the events and Public Sector Partners will attend, Ward Councillors will attend when required to share and update.

Specific consultation events will take place with partners to deliver a targeted piece of consultation. These will be in public places aiming to meet as many residents as possible.

## **Community Engagement Framework**

Wider methods of public engagement are set out in Birkenhead Constituency's Community Engagement Framework (Appendix 4).

## **SECTION 4: BUDGETS AND SPEND**

For 2014/15 the Committee has been given an allocation of £50,000 to commission services in relation to the priorities identified in the Constituency Plan.

Local Authority Processes must be adhered to ensuring spend is accountable with a transparent and fair process.

The Committee will discuss proposals within the public meetings for spend of the budget allocation. Where appropriate the committee can assign responsibility to progress actions to the Priorities Task and Finish group when agreed to do so. This group consists of the Chair of Birkenhead Constituency Committee and four Ward Councillors.

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**Appendix 1**  
**Birkenhead Constituency Committee Meetings 2014/15**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
24 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	<b>6.00-8.00pm</b>	Birkenhead Town Hall
30 <sup>th</sup> October 2014	<b>6.00-8.00pm</b>	Birkenhead Town Hall
29 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	<b>6.00-8.00pm</b>	Birkenhead Town Hall
9th April 2015	<b>6.00-8.00pm</b>	Birkenhead Town Hall

**Access**

If representatives or members of the public have any particular requirements or access needs to enable them to participate in the meeting, including requirement for information in formats such as large print or on tape, please contact the Committee Services Officer beforehand so arrangements can be made in good time.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Chair and Vice-Chair**

Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected by vote by elected members.

#### Role responsibilities:

- Ensure that the Constituency Committee operates in accordance with the Council's Constitution;
- Provide leadership for the Committee through the chairing of each Committee meeting (Vice-Chair in the Chair's absence), in accordance with the contents of this Handbook;
- Ensure the production and effective implementation of the annual Constituency Plan;
- Plan the agenda for each Constituency Committee meeting with the Constituency Manager;
- Ensure that decisions taken at Constituency Committee meetings are implemented;
- Ensure adequate representation on Task & Finish Groups and that each group achieve its aims;
- Ensure that there are adequate opportunities for community engagement, particularly under-represented groups;
- Ensure that public meetings are delivered to the highest standard, demonstrating transparency in decision-making and cultivating the trust of the general public in local politics;
- Act as a spokesperson for Birkenhead Constituency Committee where appropriate, including in relevant press releases and statements;
- Attend and be a member of other Committees or working groups when appropriate in the role as Chair;
- Foster and maintain a disciplined approach by the members involved, having a regard to high standards of behaviour and ethics.
- Champion the work of the Constituency Committee.

### **Elected Members**

Members of the Council representing those wards included within Birkenhead Constituency Committee boundary will endeavour to attend each Constituency Committee meeting.

#### Role responsibilities:

- Act as honest brokers or intermediaries between citizen, community, the Council and external partners;

- Take action to improve the quality of life of people in their communities;
- Act as champions and representatives of each and every resident;
- Investigate and resolve residents' problems effectively or explain to them why they cannot be solved;
- Be well informed, know their area and be clear about local priorities.

Elected members in a corporate role will:

- Be effective ambassadors for the Council in their communities;
- Reflect the community's feedback and views in the Council's decision making processes to make policies and services more responsive;
- Make objective and informed decisions that balance local needs and priorities with those of the wider borough;
- Represent the Council's interests in local partnership working;
- Act in the best interest of the community as a whole.

## **Constituency Manager**

The Constituency Manager is responsible for the co-ordination of Birkenhead Constituency Service Hub and engagement activities, building neighbourhood profiles and ensuring residents' issues are resolved.

### Role responsibilities:

- Co-ordinate the Constituency Committee meetings.
- Lead the development and implementation of the annual Constituency Plan and report on progress to the Constituency Committee, and including budgeting information;
- Lead consultations/service reviews/community needs assessments across the constituency involving residents, partners, customers, etc. to inform the Constituency Committee;
- Working with the Public Health Intelligence Team, ensure that an up-to-date and comprehensive Constituency Profile is available to the Committee to enable decision-making to be evidence-based around priorities;
- Identify and bid for constituency funding opportunities at national, regional and local levels;
- Identify and manage a process for identifying and managing neighbourhood profiling/community assets information;
- Manage any issues that may arise from resolving neighbourhood residents' issues (e.g. brokering, mediation, facilitation, etc);
- Devise and implement Birkenhead Constituency's Community Engagement Framework;

- Design, manage and implement a diverse range of communications platforms across the Constituency, promoting its work and achievements;

## **Engagement Officer**

The Engagement Officer is responsible for the liaison and engagement with local groups and partnerships in the implementation of the Constituency Plan.

- Support the administration of the Constituency Committee, including booking venues and completing health and safety checks on venues prior to use;
- Be a proactive link to elected members, community groups, representatives and organisations;
- Deliver Birkenhead Constituency's Community Engagement Framework;
- Ascertain neighbourhood resource requirements (funding, community spaces, service needs, volunteering, etc.);
- Gather neighbourhood information and knowledge in order to build the Constituency Profile, including managing a process for identifying and recording up-to-date neighbourhood profiling/community assets information;
- Support the implementation of the Constituency Plan;
- Undertake consultation and engagement activities;
- Support neighbourhood volunteers;
- Resolve neighbourhood issues;

## **Council officers and service delivery partners**

Birkenhead Constituency Committee may ask representatives of external service delivery organisations to attend their committee meetings, recognising the important contribution which they make to shaping and delivering local area priorities.

Representatives of area partners will be of senior management level or equivalent and therefore be able to speak for their organisation and be prepared to commit resources on behalf of their organisations.

### Role responsibilities:

- Provide representation at the appropriate level of authority and experience;
- Attend the Committee when requested to do so, where practicable;
- Have high level knowledge of the service area and its strategic operating context;
- Commit to improving the quality of life and satisfaction of residents in the area;

- Take an active role in owning and solving problems identified by the Constituency Committee;
- Commit to promoting the interests of the area in decision making processes within their own organisation;
- Commit to engaging, involving and feedback with local residents in the design, delivery and improvement of services;
- Identify and assist the Constituency Committees, where relevant, in generating and match funding projects of strategic significance;
- Commit to construct, challenge and proactively improve services;
- Work with key contacts and stakeholders to create and build appropriate networks and partnerships to promote the Constituency Committee, priorities and performance measures;
- Monitor the quantity and quality of performance management, reviews and projects.
- Establish methods for promoting and sharing intelligence, information and good practice.
- Objectivity in accessing issues and opportunities and how to approach these in the best interests of the area;
- Acceptance of the Constituency Committee procedures and process

### **Committee Services Officer**

#### Role responsibilities:

- Efficiently and effectively run the administration of the Constituency committee;
- Manage publication of the agenda for the Constituency Committee;
- Advise the Committee members on constitutional matters and provide advice and guidance on constitutional compliance;
- Invite all elected Members/Representatives and guests to pre meetings, Constituency Committees and extra ordinary meetings;
- Take accurate minutes of the meeting;
- Place all actions on the electronic action tracker for officers to report on progress;
- Chase actions agreed upon by the Committee and when necessary ensure that relevant service delivery partners/officers feed back into the Constituency Committee;
- Upload all minutes of meetings onto the Council's website;
- Manage the public question time;
- Provide advice and guidance on constitutional compliance;
- Issue materials provided by the Constituency Manager to representatives on the Committee.

### **Legal Services Officer**

Role responsibilities:

- Advise the Committee members on legal matters.

**Strategic Director**

Birkenhead Constituency Committee is aligned to a Strategic Director (Families and Wellbeing). The Strategic Director will reinforce the strategic importance of the area dimension to the Council's policy and planning framework, and in particular will reinforce the importance the Council places on enhancing community governance, aligning resources and activity and improving public service delivery at a local level. The Strategic Director will also ensure an improved localities dimension to the Council's strategic planning. The role is to help clear 'blockages' and ensure issues of the Constituency Committee are taken to the highest levels.

Role responsibilities:

- Provide high level representation from the Council's officer core to support the process and outcomes of the Committee's actions;
- Provide clarity and direction for the staff supporting the Constituency Committee and implementing the Constituency Plan once agreed;
- Ensure that strong links are made between the Constituency Committee and the overarching commitments of Wirral Council's Corporate Plan and framework providing for partnership activity, including Wirral Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Public Service Board (PSB).

### Appendix 3 CONTACT DETAILS for COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<b>Constituency Committee Chair</b>	
<b>Chair</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
Frank Field MP	fieldf@parliament.uk
<b>Ward Councillors</b>	
<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
Jim Crabtree Bidston and St James	Phone: 0151 652 4738 Mob: 07402 958650 email: jimcrabtree@wirral.gov.uk
Ann McLachlan Bidston and St James	Phone: 0151 522 0299 email: annmclachlan@wirral.gov.uk
Harry Smith Bidston and St James	Phone: 0151 608 5886 Fax: 0151 609 1730 email: harrysmith@wirral.gov.uk
Phil Davies Birkenhead and Tranmere	Phone: 0151 625 3320 Mobile: 07720 073154 Email: phildavies@wirral.gov.uk
Brian Kenny Birkenhead and Tranmere	Phone: 0151 638 5488 Mobile: 07850 091 517 email: briankenny@wirral.gov.uk
Jean Stapleton Birkenhead and Tranmere	Phone: 0151 201 5057 Fax: 0151 652 3375 Mobile: 07929 780326 Email: jeanstapleton@wirral.gov.uk
George Davies Claughton	Phone: 0151 653 4265 Fax: 0151 653 3478 Mobile: 07713 644330 email: georgedavies@wirral.gov.uk
Steve Foulkes Claughton	Mobile: 07712 133696 Email: stevefoulkes@wirral.gov.uk
Denise Roberts Claughton	Phone: 0151 652 3309 Fax: 0151 653 7608 Email: deniseroberts@wirral.gov.uk
Alan Brighthouse Oxton	Phone: 0151 652 6041 email: alanbrighthouse@wirral.gov.uk
Stuart Kelly Oxton	Phone: 0151 653 3648 Fax: 0151 653 3648

	Email: <a href="mailto:stuartkelly@wirral.gov.uk">stuartkelly@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Pat Williams Oxton	Phone: 0151 653 7166 Fax: 0151 653 7586 Email: <a href="mailto:patriciawilliams@wirral.gov.uk">patriciawilliams@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Paul Doughty Prenton	Phone: 0151 651 2059 Email: <a href="mailto:pauldoughty@wirral.gov.uk">pauldoughty@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Tony Norbury Prenton	Phone: 0151 643 8796 Mobile: 07952 297652 Email: <a href="mailto:tonynorbury@wirral.gov.uk">tonynorbury@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Denise Realey Prenton	Phone: 0151 652 3059 email: <a href="mailto:deniserealey@wirral.gov.uk">deniserealey@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Bill Davies Rock Ferry	Phone: 0151 652 1199 Mobile: 07867 772437 Email: <a href="mailto:billdavies@wirral.gov.uk">billdavies@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Moira McLaughlin Rock Ferry	Phone: 0151 644 8234 Fax: 0151 652 3248 Mobile: 07880 348024 email: <a href="mailto:moiramclaughlin@wirral.gov.uk">moiramclaughlin@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Chris Meaden Rock Ferry	Phone: 0151 645 1729 Fax: 0151 643 1655 Mobile: 07738 824130 email: <a href="mailto:chrismeaden@wirral.gov.uk">chrismeaden@wirral.gov.uk</a>
<b>Council Officers</b>	
Joe Blott Strategic Director	Phone: 0151 691 8001 Email: <a href="mailto:joemblott@wirral.gov.uk">joemblott@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Dawn Tolcher Constituency Committee Manager	Phone: 0151 691 8295 Email: <a href="mailto:dawntolcher@wirral.gov.uk">dawntolcher@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Andy Brannan Neighbourhood Engagement Officer	Phone: 0151 691 8391 Email: <a href="mailto:andrewbrannan@wirral.gov.uk">andrewbrannan@wirral.gov.uk</a>
Lyndzay Roberts Committee Services	Phone: 0151 691 8262 Email: <a href="mailto:lyndzayroberts@wirral.gov.uk">lyndzayroberts@wirral.gov.uk</a>



## BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2014/15

Who	Goal	Method
<b>Residents</b>	To ensure strong neighbourhood working provides the basis for the Council, public services and the wider community working in partnership to resolve residents issues by involving residents to have a greater say on how their local services are delivered	By distributing council information to the residents who are registered on the council's email distribution list.
		Develop a project which invites and supports residents to become Community Researchers in their area. Community Researchers will play a vital role in ensuring residents views are consideration when decisions on service delivery are made.
		Working closely with the Community Connectors based within social sector groups to share important information to the wider community. Community Connectors play a vital role within the community and will ensure information is distributed to residents who may not engage with traditional services such as the council.
		Develop a targeted approach to communicating with residents and recognising that it is important to engage with people from different demographic groups in different ways.
<b>Social Sector Groups</b>	To improve communication between the council and social sector groups to share priorities and increase partnership working to maximise resources.	Continually add groups to the Birkenhead directory were possible and expand knowledge of Social Sector groups active in the Birkenhead area to ensure all relevant groups/organisations are included when carrying out engagement on a particular project or issue.

		Develop a Birkenhead Constituency Committee Social Sector email distribution list to send relevant news and information
		By encouraging Social Sector Groups to work closer together. Developing Social Sector Forums across a number of themes will help share information between groups and organisations.
		Continually promoting funding opportunities available to the Social Sector.
<b>Business Sector</b>	To ensure traders groups and the business sector are supported to play an active role in feeding concerns and suggestions for the improvement of services.	Supporting traders groups and businesses to come together to help discuss and highlight issues affecting the area.
		Engage with the Wirral Chamber of Commerce to identify opportunities for partnership working between the Business Sector, Social Sector and the council and its partners.
<b>Professionals</b>	Encouraging partnership working to identify potential duplication in services by sharing information, ideas and develop exciting projects between various organisations.	Through attending relevant partnership meetings to highlight services and projects were partnership working between Social Sector Groups, the council and its partners would be beneficial to all involved and lead to better service delivery.
		By devising a method for information exchange between professional from the council and its partners to ensure greater partnership working and reduction in duplication.

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### APPENDIX 3- Birkenhead Town Centre Trading @ Grange Road East and West

**Vision:** Birkenhead Town Centre to be seen as a safe, clean and vibrant place to visit for shopping, dining and entertainment

**Aspirations:**

- Creating a safe, clean and pleasant trading environment to attract visitors.
- Enabling Birkenhead to be more competitive and progressive in promoting/communicating/advertising the benefits to living, working and trading in Birkenhead
- Increasing visits to Birkenhead.
- Building greater community pride in the area.

Highlighted Issue	Impact	Potential Actions for change	Progress
Teenage anti- social Behaviour Page 59	Intimidating to visitors/potential visitors. Litter, vandalism, graffiti, violence, etc.	Constituency Manager (CM) to speak to ASB teams and Neighbourhood Police Inspector to discuss strategies and preventative actions to be focused in the area.	The area currently covered by the Stronger Communities Initiative is to be expanded and will include the Town Centre. This will provide dedicated staffing and planning to the area. A mobile police station is to be located in Birkenhead Town Centre.  Feedback from traders state this has had a positive impact on the reduction of ASB in the area.
Street Drinkers	Loitering, public safety, litter, etc	CM to speak to public health to get an overview of plan for the current delivery at YMCA and how they can support with managing behaviour when it is closed  CM to get an update on policies introduced to tackle problems related to Alcohol. E.g.	It was approved at the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee on 18 June that the whole of the Birkenhead Constituency becomes a Designated Public Place Orders (alcohol free zone).  The enforcement team are working closely

		alcohol free zone	with traders to investigate of complaints of anti-social and nuisance behaviour. An overview of the processes will be shared with all traders in the area.
Filthy high streets- problems include litter, cigarettes, chewing gum etc.	Un-appealing high street that does not attract visitors and damages reputation	<p>CM to discuss with Waste and Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can we Improve service provided by Biffa contractors.</li> <li>• Replace rubbish bins with improved eco-friendly design</li> <li>• Trader sponsorship/maintenance of bins, recycling units</li> <li>• Retailer accountability for shop fronts</li> <li>• Deploy cigarette but bins</li> <li>• Clarify rules for Public Houses related to street drinking and smoking.</li> </ul>	<p>New and improved style bins are being purchased for the area by Wirral Council. McDonalds are working with Wirral Council to locate bins that they will purchase/sponsor. Biffa will provide a bulk bin that is not visible (behind McDonalds). The permanent presence will use this to put rubbish collected out of sight., it will be emptied daily by Biffa at no additional charge.</p> <p>Some of the untidy and un appealing areas are to be cleansed.</p> <p>The Community Safety Patrolling Officer's are to be trained in issuing fixed penalty notices for littering e.g. cigarette stumps, rubbish</p>
Gateway's into Birkenhead littered and un-kept (e.g. Borough Road)	Birkenhead seen as a less attractive place to visit	Group to seek possibility of Community clean up events	<p>Clean up events have started, these are to be expanded.</p> <p>YMCA have secured funding to improve Borough Road area.</p>
Empty shops (often looking unsightly)	Birkenhead less attractive to visit, less choice	NM to explore options to make empty shops look more attractive e.g. art work	<p>Some are to be used for promoting Wirral Well website, this will include art work and drop in events.</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce to hold events in</p>

			empty shops offering advice for traders.
Littered and dirty 'Ally ways)	Birkenhead seen as a less attractive place to visit Safety concerns, fire risk,		The frequency of clean ups increased from the 1 <sup>st</sup> April to 4 weekly again and a scheme is being developed to educate people of the enforcements.
High and uncompetitive car parking charges in Council car parks	Less people want to visit Birkenhead	CM to get an update on the Car Park review being carried out.	An update top be provided at the next group meeting.
Safety Reputation and Negative media attention	Less people want to visit Birkenhead	Community Newsletter being developed through Constituency Committee to be utilised.  Group to develop events to raise community pride and working together.	The Safe in Town Card is being develop and will be promoted to encourage more people to visit Birkenhead.
Untidy Landscaping Areas – Vegetation/Litter	Collection of more litter	Constituency Committee to explore a scheme that will tackle the problems created by unmanaged land.	Brief is being developed.

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## **BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE**

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### **Birkenhead Constituency Team Neighbourhood Engagement Update**

A number of community projects are being developed through the Birkenhead Constituency Team. Here are a number of the schemes and how they will benefit the area.

<h3><b>Safe in Town Card</b></h3>
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The Safe In Town Card aims to make Birkenhead a safer place.

The purpose of the scheme is to give vulnerable people the peace of mind and confidence to enter Birkenhead Town Centre and receive help and assistance if they need it.

The scheme consists of two main elements. Firstly any vulnerable person can carry a card with their details and the details of a person to contact if they need assistance. Secondly businesses and organisations within Birkenhead Town Centre will be encouraged to sign up and become 'safe places'. In doing so they agree to display a sign in their window to show they are a 'safe place' and assist any vulnerable person who comes in for help.

#### The benefits of the Safe In Town card:

Based on evidence where these schemes are already operating there are a number of benefits of the project:

- It gives vulnerable people the confidence and peace of mind that they can visit the town centre and have a safe place to go if assistance is needed.
- Parents of vulnerable people know they or a nominated person will be contacted if their child(ren) are in need of assistance.
- Potentially bring more people and business into the town centre.
- Brings the Police, local businesses/organisations and social sector groups together to make the town centre a safer place for vulnerable people to visit and interact.

#### How the project would work?:

It is important to note that the Safe In Town Card is not designed to protect people related to issues where the police should be involved and should not be

used as a replacement for calling 999. The purpose of the card is to give people the peace of mind to go into the town centre and receive assistance if they feel vulnerable.

## **Rock Ferry Community Garden**

Rock Ferry One Stop Shop and Library will be expanding to offer services to the green fingered.

Working in partnership with Lairdside Communities Together, the Birkenhead Constituency Team has been developing an exciting project to install a community garden behind Rock Ferry One Stop and Library.

Building of the garden is due to commence towards the end of July and once built, the garden will be a community resource to be used by local residents, schools, community and voluntary groups and anyone who wants to volunteer on the project.

The garden will be able to cater for any resident or community group who wants to learn how to grow fresh produce, have cooking lessons on how to prepare a healthy meal or just spend a few hours volunteering to maintain the garden, everyone is welcome to get involved.

## **Consultation around Walker Park**

The Birkenhead Constituency Team has supported residents in Prenton to start the process to carry out a consultation around Walker Park.

Walker Park is a fantastic asset for Prenton and the consultation will ask residents and groups in the area how they use the park, how often do they visit it and any suggestions for how the park could be improved.

Over the summer months a more in depth engagement will take place in the area to help provide a picture of the park and the resident's use of it.

## **Promotion of the Wirral Well website**

Helping to inform residents about the benefits of the Wirral Well website.

Wirral Well is an online one stop shop information hub for wellbeing, health and social care services where people can find anything from getting outdoors and active, art classes, growing your own food, complimentary therapies to statutory health and social care services such as information on care homes, assistive technology and managing long term health conditions.

Developed by Community Action Wirral the site aims to provide a resource for Wirral residents to help them access services in their area, a particular interest they may have and also allow Social Sector organisations a platform for promoting the services they provide.

To help promote the website the Birkenhead and Wallasey Constituency Teams have been designing an engagement strategy to identify various organisations, residents and statutory colleagues the information could be shared with.

## **Digital Inclusion Mapping**

As part of the Wirral Well website, Community Action Wirral are carrying out a mapping exercise of what services have ICT facilities are available in Birkenhead.

So far 29 facilities in Birkenhead have been identified as having ICT facilities available to residents with 17 on them registered on the Wirral Well website. The aim of the mapping exercise is to obtain a greater understanding of what facilities are available and also inform residents of where they can go to access these services.

Work is ongoing by Community Action Wirral to ensure that all the facilities that offer ICT services are fully publicised on the Wirral Well website.

## **Electoral Registration**

The Birkenhead and Wallasey Constituency Teams are working on an engagement strategy to increase the number of residents registered on the Electoral Register.

The way people register to vote is changing. Under the current system one person can register all occupants in the same household. Under the new system, called Individual Electoral Register, everyone will be individually responsible for their own register.

Analysis of the Wirral population shows that three groups may be under represented. Home movers, young people and private and social housing tenants and those living in multiple occupancy homes are the three groups identified.

To try and increase the number of people registered within these groups strategy will include activities designed to engage with residents in a number of ways.

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## **APPENDIX 5**

### **Briefing Paper** **Seven Beats Project**

#### **Introduction**

An area of Birkenhead has been identified by the Community Safety Partnership /Police as accounting for a large proportion of crime on Wirral BCU. It is proposed to dedicate a team of officers to this area who will work in partnership with other agencies and the local community to actively reduce crime and ASB. Like the Stronger Communities Initiative on which part of the area is based it is not intended to purely be a Policing operation. Its ethos will be to change lifestyles, engender a sense of community, target deprivation and increase health and prosperity.

#### **The Area**

The area consists of A342 to A348 beats inclusive (7 beats), which covers a large portion of Birkenhead and Tranmere Ward, one of the most deprived in the country. (See attached map).

This area runs from Hamilton Square in the North to Singleton Avenue in the South. In the East the area encompasses Lairdside and the Old Chester Road and to the West borders with Birkenhead Park and Oxtown Village. It contains the main shopping, commercial and entertainment areas of Birkenhead together with St Catherine's Hospital and much of the residential area of Tranmere. At its heart is the A552 Borough Road, the main arterial route to the Birkenhead Tunnel. The area also contains the site of the proposed new Youth Hub.

Currently this area accounts for (as a percentage of Wirral incidents) ;

15% Calls for Service (30% of all CFS within A3)  
15% ASB  
16% All Crime  
33% Shoplifting  
13% Domestic Violence  
18% Violence

#### **Structure**

The area and concept are based on that of the old Stronger Communities Initiative. This was a designated area of Birkenhead that was identified utilising the Vulnerable locations index which is based upon a wide range of Socio Economic indicators. The new area encompasses much of this old area and expands it South into Tranmere thus covering one of the Wirral's all crime hotspots. It is envisaged that the project will utilise and expand upon the existing SCI meeting structure. Currently this consists of a bi- monthly Strategic meeting and 2 weekly tactical meetings (geographically based at Hamilton Square and Birkenhead Fire Station). The new area would add a third tactical meeting based on the Tranmere area. – Possibly at St Catherine's Hospital.

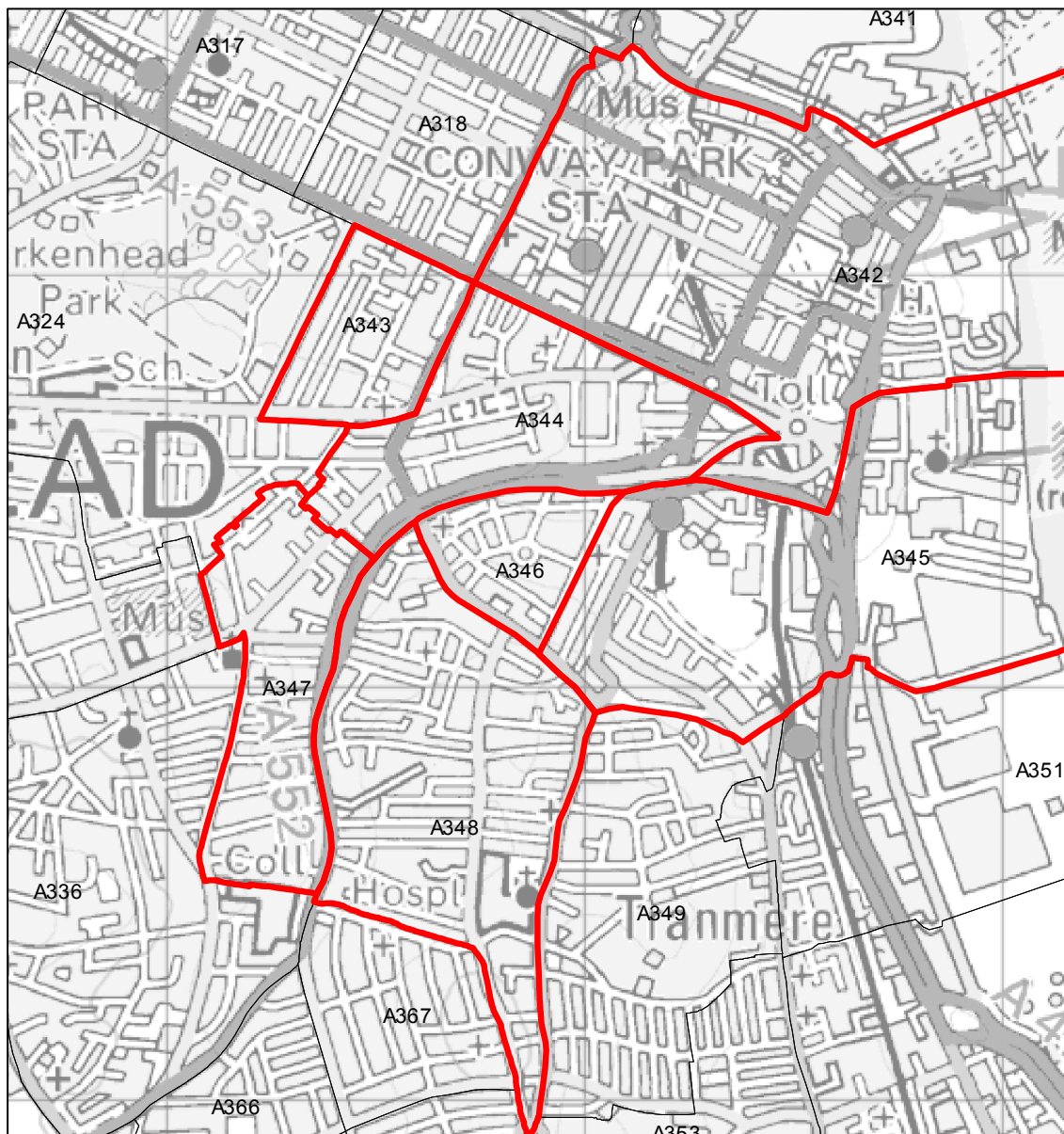
#### **Dedicated Staffing**

1 x dedicated Sergeant  
8 x Constables (including 6 Student officers)  
5 x PCSO's.  
2 x Constables (Shopsafe)  
1 x PCSO (Shopsafe)

## Partners

Many of the proposed partners are already engaged from the SCI.  
Identified partners (not exhaustive) ;

- Councillors/ WBC Constituency manager
- Community Groups
- Registered Social landlords
- Job Centre plus
- WBC departments including street scene/ ASB team
- Youth Engagement
- MFRS
- Wirral Met College
- Lairdside Community Trust
- Chamber Of Commerce
- ASDA/ McDonalds / Other Businesses/ Pyramids shopping centre
- St Catherine's Hospital
- YMCA / Hostels/ ARCH



## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

24<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2014

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>MARK SMITH, ENVIRONMENT AND REGULATION</b>

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report updates Members of the Committee on the environmental initiatives undertaken in the Birkenhead area by the Council's Waste and Environmental Services section. The Committee is requested to consider a range of suggestions for enhanced pro-environmental activity in the area.

1.2 It is widely recognised that good environmental quality can have a positive impact on people's health and well-being. The recommendations made within this report therefore support the Council's strategic priorities "Protecting vulnerable people and communities" and "Narrowing the gap in inequalities".

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

##### 2.1 Tackling alleyway dumping

###### 2.1.1 Borough wide approach

The Council has returned to four weekly cleansing of alleyways for a period of two years (Minute 76, Council 25 February 2014 refers). A £400K contribution from the Waste Development Fund is being used over a two year campaign period to drive pro-environmental behaviours and maximise recycling of household waste in terraced housing areas across the borough.

It is essential that this service change is supplemented with enhanced education and enforcement activity in order to discourage residents from using the alleyways as an easy alternative to using legitimate waste disposal routes. At Cabinet on 10 April (Minute 189 refers) agreement was given to launch a "Good Neighbour" Campaign, designed to identify and engage pro-environmental residents to help promote and eventually "normalise" good waste management practices.

The campaign is well underway, with hundreds of "Good Neighbour packs already being used by residents.

Residents can request a “Good Neighbour Pack” from the Council. The pack provides more detailed advice around managing waste, instructions and advice around the reporting of fly tipping offences as well as the following:

- A “Love Wirral - Keep our Street Tidy” Window Sticker.
- An A4 “Good Neighbour” weather proof notice to be placed on their back yard wall or gate supporting a pledge to manage their waste responsibly and asking others to do the same.
- 8 x Good Neighbour postcards. Residents can send these postcards anonymously to neighbours that share their alleyway, to encourage people to act responsibly.

All residents that request the pack will be asked to provide feedback to the Council on the level of effectiveness of the Good Neighbour approach. Packs are also being marketed directly to all residents that live in terraced areas that have reported alleyway dumping, or paid for a bulky waste collection in the last 12 months and through “neighbourhood watch” groups.

The project is supported by a temporary Council funded “Waste Investigation Unit”. This crew have been deployed throughout the two year period until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2016 and funded through the waste development fund. They work closely with the environmental enforcement team to gather evidence for the prosecution of fly tipping offences in order to deter private landlords and contractors from illegal waste disposal. Every time evidence is found in an alleyway, all households sharing the alleyway are left with a postcard to let them know the dumping in their alleyway is being investigated. Further notifications to the same households are planned should any household in the vicinity be subsequently issued a fixed penalty notice. To date 14 fixed penalty notices have been issued in the Birkenhead Constituency area, with a further 39 in the final stages of processing before they are issued in the next 7 days.

### 2.1.2 Targeted Approach

It is also important to recognise that the waste collection systems operating in terraced housing areas may themselves be barriers to effective household waste management. The quantity and quality of recycling recovered from terraced housing areas is much lower than in other areas. Part of the pilot project will carry out extensive consultation to determine if a more effective waste collection system could be implemented.

The Harrowby Road area in Birkenhead has been selected for inclusion in a pilot study due to the high number of waste related referrals and tonnage of dumped waste per household. Recycling performance is also much lower than other areas of the borough.

The initial aims of this project are:

- To reduce alley way dumping through the normalising of compliant behaviour;
- To review the waste collection system in each pilot area and identify more effective alternatives;
- To explore the local appetite for and effectiveness of community based incentives on pro-waste management behaviours;



- To engage with stakeholders, including private/social landlords and letting/estate agents in order to put in place systems and procedures that promote good household waste management;
- To use an asset based community development (ABCD) approach to identify resources in the communities to support the required change;
- To gain a greater understanding of the barriers to good household waste management and pro-environmental behaviour specific to the communities residing in the pilot areas and to develop a range of cost effective solutions to overcome these barriers that may be replicated on a larger scale.

Initial door knocking work was carried out in May 2014 as part of the “7 Beats Project” with the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in a number of locations across the constituency. As part of this exercise residents were offered free replacement wheeled bins as lack of bins emerged as a major barrier for residents complying to the Council’s waste collection system.

Several other locations within the constituency were offered free skips and wheeled bins as part of the joint campaign. The campaign was very successful and enabled PCSO’s to make contact with residents that may otherwise have not engaged with them.

## **2.2 Dog Fouling**

Officers request that the Constituency Committee highlight any dog fouling “hot spots” to the waste and environmental Services team for inclusion in the upcoming anti-dog fouling campaign. Up to five locations per constituency will be identified at any one time over a six month period. The locations will support a high profile poster campaign and benefit from enhanced patrols, based on intelligence gathered from residents, businesses and/or site users living, working or visiting the areas targeted. If caught failing to clean up after their dog, perpetrators will be issued a fixed penalty notice. The campaign, due to commence in July will now begin in the autumn, due to delays with the launch of the National Keep Britain Tidy campaign

## **2.3 Littering**

Currently between 60 and 80 fixed penalty notices are issued for littering offences each year in the Wirral (excluding those issue for depositing waste in alleyways). A number of Local Authorities are commissioning this activity out to private enforcement agencies. Early indications are that this is leading to a significant increase in the number of people being fined for dropping litter. Combined with a comprehensive awareness campaign, this approach is likely to reduce litter over time in targeted areas. Costs are reduced (often to zero) through appropriate income share arrangements with the contractor.

Officers from Waste and Environmental Services are in early discussions with participating Local Authorities with a view to developing a proposal for Wirral Council Cabinet to consider.

## **2.4 Local Businesses**

The 'Love Wirral Grant' encourages individuals, groups, schools & businesses to improve and maintain their local area which in turn encourages people to take pride and responsibility in keeping their part of Wirral clean. Each applicant could apply for up to £500. 104 successful applications were received and following public voting 80 projects were awarded 'Love Wirral Grant' funding. This grant is being continued into 2014/15.

Every business operating in a secondary retail location has been contacted to help prevent littering. Businesses were offered window stickers and "till adverts" that showed their support and requested their customers to use litter bins or take their rubbish home with them.

## **3.0 ENHANCED SERVICE PROVISION**

**Appendix 1** outlines the costs of a number of initiatives that could be provided in addition to the borough wide campaign initiatives and usual service provision.

It is important to consider the following should the Committee wish to allocate funding to any of the initiatives on the list.

### **3.1 Tackling Smoking Related Litter**

Smoking related litter is the most common type of littering and also the type of littering that is most easily detectable during enforcement campaigns, due to the habitual nature of this offence. The provision of portable ashtrays provides a non-confrontational way of "educating" smokers as to the consequences of discarding their butts.

### **3.2 Provision of free wheeled bins to residents**

The introduction of a charge for replacement and new wheeled bins for residents means that some residents have opted not to purchase one. This can lead to increased alleyway dumping and have a "knock-on" effect where other wheeled bins are subsequently stolen. Throughout 2014/15, as a result of alleyway dumping investigations, if residents state that they dumped their waste because they did not have a bin, then they are offered replacement bins free of charge (second hand where available). The proposal in **Appendix 1** will involve wider promotion of the free bin offer to Birkenhead Constituents through this local funding. Officers consider this initiative to be sustainable as the bins, if looked after, can last for around 10 years. Anyone receiving free bins will be required to commit to using them correctly.

### **3.3 Grot Spots – Mapping and intelligence**

Whilst every effort is made to cleanse the public highway to a high standard, a number of grot spots exist in the Constituency area that bring down environmental quality. These areas are usually not covered within the realms of the Waste and Environmental Streetscene Services Contract with Biffa PLC. Furthermore, litter and waste often escapes onto surrounding streets from such locations. Such areas of land

can attract anti-social behaviour and other low level environmental crime. **Appendix 1** outlines the opportunity for the Committee to request additional enforcement resources to carry out land registry searches, track down absent land owners and service notice on the land owner (or the land where this is not possible). Whilst this is an on-going issue, and would not be resolved by one-off funding, building up initial intelligence and mapping unmanaged land ownership would be a huge step forward in aiding swifter enforcement action in the future, as well as helping to determine the best course of action for individual pieces of land where ownership can not be determined. This additional resource would also service notices and clear the land through “works in default”, where ownership has been successfully identified.

### **3.4 Bulky Waste collections**

A price has been provided for one-off collections of bulky household items, where residents in a designated area are able to put out unwanted items free of charge at a specified time or collection. This initiative is a very popular method of reducing fly tipping, and sometimes funded through housing associations in various parts of the country. It is important to highlight this type of service does not provide a sustainable solution and does not encourage pro-environmental behaviours in the longer term. However, this service could be offered on a street by street basis as part of an incentive scheme, or to residents who participate in other community led activities.

### **4.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 4.1 Should any enhanced initiative be purchased by the Committee, a risk register will be developed as an important element of the project’s management toolkit.

### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Budget provision has already been approved for all initiatives outlined in Section 2 of this report. The costs for any enhanced services the Committee may wish to consider are outlined in **Appendix 1** and represent the real cost of the service to the Council. No Council administration charges have been added and any supporting communications necessary to carry out the activities will be absorbed by the existing waste provisions communications budget.

### **6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

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

(a) Yes – Please see the EIA from 13 April 2014 Cabinet (Tackling Alleyway Dumping)

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010-0>

Please note that an EIA for enhanced services will be produced on request of those services

## 8.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The initiatives outlined in this report seek to improve the local environmental quality of resident living in the Birkenhead Constituency area. A number of initiatives will help residents to segregate their recyclable waste for re-processing.

## 9.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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

## 10.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

10.1 The Constituency Committee is requested to:

- (i) Note the progress of the borough wide environmental campaigns to tackle waste related issues as outlined in **Section 2** of this report;
- (ii) Note the enhanced initiatives and associated costs available to the Constituency Committee as outlined in **Appendix 1**.
- (iii) Request officers for costings for any alternatives to the suggested enhanced initiative outlined.

## 11.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

11.1 Protecting the local environmental is a key priority determined by the Birkenhead Constituency Committee. The enhanced services available to the committee have been designed to bring added value to a suite of new borough wide initiatives aimed at engendering pro-environmental behaviours amongst local residents.

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Enhanced Environmental Services Options

## REFERENCE MATERIAL

1. When it comes to litter which side of the fence are you? (2013) keep Britain Tidy

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Budget Council	25/02/14
Cabinet - Tacking Alleyway Dumping	13/04/14

## APPENDIX 1

### Birkenhead Constituency Options for enhanced preventative actions to protect the local environment

Lead Officer	Organisation	Team	Tel.	Email
Tara Dumas	WMBC	Waste and Environmental Services	01516062453	taradumas@wirral.gov.uk
Description of "Offer" to residents				
Description	Quantity	Approx max Value £	Amount of constituency funding requested	
Bin Amnesty – to offer free replacement bins to residents who have no bin, or who's bin is damaged beyond repair – includes pro-active promotion of "time limited" offer	Est. 500 bins (grey/green)	£14,000	£14,000 suggested cap  £28/bin (with free delivery)	
Bin Amnesty – to offer free additional recycling bins to those who qualify for additional capacity (subject to evidence the resident is recycling)	Est 100 bins	£2800	£0 Existing council reserve fund	
Graffiti / fly posting removal blitz in immediate area	Up to three localised areas in one 12 month period	Can do FOC under terms of graffiti contract	£0	
Anti-graffiti coating - can be applied to residents and/or businesses properties with permission where repeated graffiti attacks occur – onus on resident /business to wash down subsequent graffiti attacks with water.	Depends upon referral rate – would suggest a cap on total spend	TBD by constituency panel	£10/square metre	

Hand out portable ashtrays to smokers within a household to deter the presence of cigarette butts by parked cars that are difficult to clean (branding could state "Birkenhead Constituency: Working together towards a cleaner environment" or something?) Place in all outlets selling tobacco within constituency area	4000	£2320	£2320 Or approx £0.58ea
Promote and provide "Good Neighbour packs" to residents stating they are concerned with the levels of alleyway dumping.	Up to 4000 available	n/a as being delivered as Borough wide project.	£0
Non-highway Grot Spot management	1 x FTE	£15,000	£15,000 for 6 months (up to 2 month lead time required to appoint)
Bulky waste amnesty days (including sorting for recycling) – kerbside collection for bulky household items in defined residential areas.	1 (for approximately 500-700 households – Mondays only)	£1540 (based on £220 per hour for 7 hours)	£1540 per localised area

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

24<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2014

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>CONSTITUENCY BUDGET AND SPEND</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>WARDS WITHIN THE BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARY.</b>  <b>BIRKENHEAD AND TRANMERE BIDSTON AND ST JAMES CLAUGHTON OXTON PRENTON ROCK FERRY</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>HEAD OF NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENGAGEMENT</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

#### 1.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

1.1 This report details an update on the budget allocation to Birkenhead Constituency Committee for 2013/14 and an overview of the budget available for 2014/15.

#### 2.0 Budget Allocation 2013/14

2.1 Appendix 1 details the budget allocation for 2013/14. It details funding that has been committed to an identified project in 2013/14 or where it has been allocated to a specific project and carried into 2014/15 to be delivered.

#### 3.0 Budget available for 2014/15

3.1 As well as the budget allocation carried over from 2013/14 Birkenhead Constituency Committee has the following funding available for 2014/15.

- £50,000 devolved budget
- £77,750 Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme Fund

This is summarised in Appendix 2 and expanded in further detail below, with recommendations of how to progress the spend with each budget allocation.

3.2 Wirral Council has devolved a further £50,000 to the Birkenhead Constituency Committee for 2014/15 to use to tackle priorities and reduce inequality. At the Birkenhead Constituency Committee meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014 it was agreed that £10,000 of this allocation would be allocated to fund the urgently needed repair works to the River Wall and Esplanade at Rock Park.

**Recommendation:** The Priorities Task and Finish Group work with the Constituency Manager to draft proposals for the remaining £40,000 allocation for 2014/15. The proposals for spend will be presented for discussion and approval at the Committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

- 3.3 The Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme for 2014/5 agreed by Cabinet on 13 March 2014 (minute 178 refers) provides an allocation of £77,750 to each Constituency Committee to be distributed in relation to two objectives:

Improving Road Safety (£38,875)

The Council has a statutory duty to provide road safety. Schemes to improve road safety need to be considered by suitably qualified officers and be deemed to make a positive contribution to road safety and not be detrimental to it.

Promoting Active Travel and Health (£38,875).

Walking and cycling are important modes of travel, both in their own right and in the integration of all other modes such as public transport and private car. Active forms of transport such as walking and cycling can have significant positive impacts on an individual's health and wellbeing; they have the potential to make an important contribution to quality of life, providing a generally accessible, clean, healthy and enjoyable way to travel short distances and to enjoy urban and rural public spaces. Also, by enabling access to employment, education and other life opportunities, improvements for active modes of transport can make significant improvements to people's economic, physical and social wellbeing.

Schemes identified by the Committee can address one or both of these objectives and should also align with the objectives set out in the agreed Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Merseyside. This alignment with the LTP is key to ensuring that the local authority is well placed to attract similar funding streams in the future.

The funding is to be used for capital expenditure schemes (as opposed to revenue expenditure), i.e. expenditure on the acquisition or creation of a tangible fixed asset or expenditure which adds to and not merely maintains the value of an existing tangible fixed asset. Appendix 3 outlines typical schemes that would be eligible for funding

- 3.4 The proposed process to manage this devolved budget is to form a Working Group. The Committee Working Group identifies potential schemes. The Group will be additionally supported by an officer from the Council's Traffic & Transportation Division who, together with other colleagues, will advise on the costs and feasibility of schemes, identify any public consultation requirements and assess links with central Local Safety Schemes (including dropped kerbs) and Safer Routes to Schools programmes.

A recommended scheme of works will be made by the Working Group and presented to the Constituency Committee on 30 October 2014 for discussion and approval regarding the allocation of this spend.

From November 2014 onwards the scheme of works will commence including statutory public consultation where necessary. The Constituency Team will work closely with colleagues in the Council's Traffic & Transportation Division to support the public consultation process as appropriate.



#### **4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

4.1 This resource implications are in relation to the budget allocation for Birkenhead Constituency Committee in 2014/15.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report has no legal implications.

#### **6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Not required as this is a research task.

#### **7.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 This report has no direct carbon reduction implications.

#### **8.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 This report has no planning and community safety implications.

#### **9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 The Priorities Task and Finish Group work with the Constituency Manager to draft proposals for the remaining £40,000 allocation for 2014/15. The proposals for spend will be presented for discussion and approval at the Committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

9.2 A Working Group is established to manage a process of identifying and prioritising schemes of work to be carried out utilising the devolved budget for the Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme. The suggested schemes of work will be presented for discussion and approval at the Committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

#### **10.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

10.1 To utilise the budget allocation (2014/15) for Birkenhead Constituency Committee to meet identified priorities.

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#### **APPENDICES**

APPENDIX 1- 2013/14 Budget Summary

APPENDIX 2- 2014/15 Budget Summary

APPENDIX 3- Examples of scheme eligible for funding (Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme Fund)



**Appendix 1- Budget Summary 2013/14**

<b><u>Allocation</u></b>	<b><u>Committed in 2013/14</u></b>	<b><u>Allocated to proposal/ carried over into 2014/15</u></b>
<p><b>Wirral Council 2013/14</b>  <b>£50,000</b>            To 'kick-start' work on the new model with a focus on tackling inequalities</p>		<p>Development of Local Publication  <b>£20,000</b></p> <p>Improving Data Collection support  <b>£10,000</b></p> <p>Service Development to Improve the Environment  <b>£20,000</b></p>
<p><b>Public Health Funding 2013/2014</b>  <b>£25,000</b>            To address specific priorities, the specific one for this project is Children in poverty.</p>		<p>Development of Community Hub in local primary school  <b>£25,000</b></p>
<p><b>Voluntary Sector Support Fund 2013/2014</b>  <b>£25,000</b>            To address the following priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased healthy life expectancy</li> <li>• Reduced differences in the life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities</li> </ul>	<p>Breast Feeding Project to increase initiation rates through an antenatal support programme  <b>£15,000</b></p> <p>Development and Promotion Wirral Well website and Digital Inclusion support  <b>£5,000</b></p>	<p>Development of Local Publication  <b>£5,000</b></p>

## Appendix 2- Budget Summary 2014/15

<u>Allocation</u>	<u>Next Steps</u>
<b>Wirral Council 2013/14</b> <b>£50,000</b> To 'kick-start' work on the new model with a focus on tackling inequalities	£50,000 carried over to 2014/15. Identified projects and priorities with a budget allocated to be developed and implemented.
<b>Wirral Council 2014/15</b> <b>£50,000</b>	£10,000 has been allocated to improving the River Wall and Esplanade at Rock Park.  The Priorities Task and Finish group will meet to discuss the remaining £40,000 and draft proposals will be discussed at the Constituency Committee meeting on 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2014.
<b>Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme</b>  Improving Road Safety ( <b>£38,875</b> ) Promoting Active Travel and Health ( <b>£38,875</b> )	A working group to be established to devise a process to allocate this funding to appropriate schemes of high priority. Recommendations will be discussed at the Constituency Committee meeting on 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2014.
<b>Your Wirral</b>  <b>£75,000</b>	Grant process to be implemented from 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2014.

**Examples of schemes eligible for funding  
(Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme Fund 2014/15)**

**Appendix 3**

<b>Scheme / Costs</b>	<b>Estimated Costs*</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) - generally to prohibit parking (including verge or pavement parking)	Approx £1,000 to £4,000 depending on extend of scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May assist with regulation of areas of concern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will need formal advertisement</li> <li>▪ Can have significant effect on businesses or residents</li> <li>▪ If too onerous, drivers may not willingly comply leading to enforcement burden</li> </ul>
Pedestrian refuge islands	Approx £13,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provides a staging area enabling pedestrians to cross roads in two 'bites'</li> <li>▪ Can contribute to speed management acting as a form of calming device.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Require a minimum road width (depending on traffic route e.g. buses)</li> <li>▪ Can restrict parking nearby and may need an additional TRO</li> </ul>
Dropped crossings	Approx £1,600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May assist people with mobility issues; prams and the elderly.</li> </ul>	
Traffic Calming (Physical Measures)	Dependent on scheme area covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Variety of types can be used including road humps; cushions; chicanes; build outs</li> <li>▪ Self enforcing measure working 24/7</li> <li>▪ Effectively guarantees speed reduction and unlikely to need further (police) enforcement action in scheme area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will need formal advertisement</li> </ul>
20mph Speed Limit Orders	Dependent on scheme area covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ideally need to be considered as part of an area approach to speed reduction</li> <li>▪ Can reduce traffic speeds</li> <li>▪ Not as costly as physical measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will need formal advertisement</li> <li>▪ Generally not self enforcing and may need police presence to enforce</li> <li>▪ Generally not as effective at reducing speeds as physical measures</li> </ul>
Traffic Signs and Road Markings	£200 - £3,000 but varies on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Comparatively inexpensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some measures may need TROs</li> <li>▪ Must comply with DfT regulations and</li> </ul>

	scheme extent and type of signs/markings required		need to be consistent with national policy/application
Cycle Lane Marking		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparatively inexpensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require a minimum road width (depending on traffic route e.g. buses) and may need an additional TRO</li> </ul>
Vehicle Activated Signs	£7,000 – £9,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visually prominent</li> <li>Impactive on those drivers triggering the unit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need good location for solar power</li> <li>Need to comply with DfT regulations for type and settings</li> <li>Over provision dilutes impact of message</li> </ul>
Cycle Parking Provision	£250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparatively inexpensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be difficult to site in some circumstances</li> </ul>
Bitumen cycle path	£110 per metre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assists/encourages off road cycle use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be difficult to obtain a contiguous route</li> </ul>
Puffin/Toucan Crossings	£67,000 - £80,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assists pedestrians to cross</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will need formal advertisement</li> <li>Can restrict parking due to controlled area</li> </ul>
Pedestrian dropped kerbs	£1,600 per pair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assists mobility for people with mobility issues, the elderly and people with prams etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some locations may not be practicable and may need additional work</li> </ul>

\*It should be noted that the costs identified above are indicative estimates and are for guidance purposes only. There are a range of factors including unknown Statutory Undertakers costs that may not be apparent from an initial inspection. A full cost appraisal will determine the actual cost for a particular request. The list is not exclusive, and other measures can be considered.

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

24<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2014

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>YOUR WIRRAL FUND</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>HEAD OF NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENGAGEMENT</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b> <i>(Defined in paragraph 13.3 of Article 13 'Decision Making' in the Council's Constitution.)</i>	NO

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform Birkenhead Constituency Committee members of changes to the administration of the Your Wirral fund and ask for nominations for a 'Working Group' to lead the assessment process of this fund for Birkenhead.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The 'Your Wirral' fund is a small grants programme that has been in operation since 2007. It is a strand of the Community Fund that came as a result of the Value Added Tax (VAT) return generated by the housing stock transfer from Wirral Council to Wirral Partnership homes, now Magenta Living. From November 2007 to October 2012 a total of £1,835,585.85 has been spent supporting 783 groups for projects and activities across Wirral. The funding rests with Magenta Living and has been dormant for the last financial year. A Joint Working Group acts an accountable body for the fund and is composed of representation from Wirral Council, Magenta Living, Councillors and Board members of Magenta Living
- 2.2 The Your Wirral fund offers grants to voluntary and community sector (not for profit) groups across Wirral through an application process. In previous years applications were evaluated by representatives from Magenta Living and Wirral Council then signed off for payment or withdrawn by the Joint Working Group. Payments were made to successful groups by Magenta Living.
- 2.3 To be eligible for funding, applications must fit within one or more of the seven themes detailed below, which were agreed by the Joint Working Group in line with the charitable objectives of the Community Fund Deed:
1. Creating an attractive and safe environment
  2. Contributing to community economic regeneration
  3. Preventing crime or reducing the fear of crime
  4. Providing employment and training for local people
  5. Benefiting local people who face discrimination
  6. Improving community facilities
  7. Engaging communities to improve quality of life

### 3.0 YOUR WIRRAL FUND 2014/15

3.1 A total of £250,000 is available for 2014/15 (from the allocation in 2013/14 that has been dormant) and is to be allocated on a constituency basis; this is different to previous years when it has been Wirral wide. The amount allocated is determined by the number of Magenta Living housing units within each Constituency (outlined below). An allocation of £50,000 is available for projects or activities that are classed as Wirral wide; delivered in two or more constituencies or across Wirral.

Area	Number of units	Allocation
Birkenhead	4683	£75,000
Wallasey	3214	£50,000
Wirral West	2430	£40,000
Wirral South	1888	£35,000
Wirral Wide	12215 (Total)	£50,000

3.2 The Joint Working Group has agreed for the Your Wirral fund to be administered through the Constituency Committees. To ensure that the conditions of the Community Fund deed are not compromised the following conditions must be adhered to:

- All applications for funding must fit within the 7 themes but constituencies may prioritise a particular theme
- The same application form is to be used across all constituencies
- The same assessment process of applications is to be used across all four constituencies
- Assessment will take place via a panel with representation from Magenta Living
- Constituencies may determine the make up of the panel
- Constituency staff will advertise the fund, arrange payments and monitor projects
- All materials must display the Your Wirral, Magenta Living and Wirral Council logo's
- The funding allocation for each constituency is proportionate to the amount of housing units in the constituency.
- Individual grants must not exceed £2,500
- The activity must take place within the boundaries of Wirral.

### 4.0 YOUR WIRRAL FUND ADMINISTRATION

4.1 The fund will be launched across the borough the week commencing 28 July 2014 (after this cycle of Constituency Committee meetings has taken place) following the conditions of the Community Deed stated in section 3.0.

4.2 An online application form will be developed and a hard copy will be available, support will be provided for residents that do not have internet facilities or have difficulty completing the application form. The application form and terms and conditions are currently being revised and an assessment template devised based on guidance from Internal Audit; the final versions of which will be signed off by Magenta Living.

4.3 The Your Wirral fund will remain open all year until the allocation is spent. A timetable will be developed that states the deadline dates to submit an application



and the length of time to assess/ process their applications to enable them to bid in sufficient time for their activity or project.

4.4 Wirral Council will pay successful groups and will claim back the money quarterly from Magenta Living. An evaluation report will be presented to the Joint Working Group and the Constituency Committee at the end of the funding round. Currently there is no confirmation that the fund will be available in the forthcoming financial year(s).

4.5 The proposed process for the Your Wirral Fund in Birkenhead is:

- Birkenhead Constituency Committee chooses all seven themes detailed in section 2.0 above.
- A Constituency Committee Working Group, to which all members of the Constituency Committee will be invited, together with a representative from Magenta Living, will meet to review and discuss all eligible applications and draft recommended allocations for consideration by the next available Constituency Committee.
- An evaluation process will be followed to assess the impact of the grants, monitoring spend and ensuring the projects/activities have met the desired outcomes as outlined in the application forms. This will be reviewed by the working group and a report presented to the Constituency Committee.

4.6 The proposed process for the Wirral wide funding is:

- Borough-wide applications will again have a 'cut off' point that is in line with the Constituency Committee cycle of meetings.
- A Task and Finish Group consisting of the Chair or Deputy Chair of each Constituency Committee (unless there is a conflict of interest in which case another elected member from that Committee will be nominated) and a representative from Magenta Living, supported by a Constituency Manager, will consider all borough-wide applications.
- The Group's recommendations will be signed off by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing & Engagement.

## **5.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

As the fund has previously been accessed by voluntary sector groups that deliver Wirral Wide there may be insufficient projects/activities to be generated in specific Constituencies. Prioritising individual themes and not using all seven could also reduce the number of applications. This could be mitigated against by promoting Your Wirral using existing networks and social media in collaboration with Magenta Living and Community Action Wirral. Increasing engagement with local residents groups to help them develop their ideas into viable projects also has the potential to reduce this risk.

## **6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

No other options are currently being considered but the fund administration will be reviewed throughout the year to identify any areas that need revising or additional support needed.

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

The changes to the administration of Your Wirral have been undertaken following discussions with Magenta Living and Wirral Council via the Joint Working Group and they are in accordance with the devolution of Your Wirral administration to the Constituency Committees.

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

The devolution of Your Wirral to the Constituencies should have no negative implications for voluntary, community and faith groups. There is the potential for more geographically based groups to be aware of the fund and undertake area specific projects. The use of an online form with the accompanying support has the potential to increase the digital inclusion of small neighbourhood based groups.

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

The administration of the fund will be undertaken by the Constituency Teams. To reduce the amount of administration of Your Wirral an online application form is being developed by Wirral Council.

## **10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The process has been reviewed by audit and designed to ensure there are no legal implications.

## **11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no equality implications because Your Wirral has been running for over 7 years and equality and diversity was considered in the beginning stages of the fund. Devolving the fund to the constituencies will not impact on equality and diversity.

## **10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **12.0 RECOMMENDATION**

12.1 The Committee agrees the proposed process set out at 4.5 for the administration of Your Wirral Funding allocated to Birkenhead.

12.2 Nominations for the working group are received and agreed.

### **13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION**

Administering Your Wirral on a Constituency basis provides the opportunity to target resources to address the specific needs of a neighbourhood.

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### Policy and Performance Coordinating Committee

15 January 2014

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Individual Electoral Registration Scrutiny Review Report</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Director of Public Health/Head of Policy &amp; Performance</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>Cllr Ann McLachlan (Governance and Improvement)</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report (included as Appendix 1) provides a detailed account of a Scrutiny Review which considered Wirral's preparations for the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration (IER) in 2014. The introduction of IER is a government initiative to transfer the existing property-based electoral register to a new register which will rely on individuals registering themselves.
- 1.2 Members of the Coordinating Committee are requested to consider the contents of this report and note the recommendations arising from this review.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 At its last regular meeting on 3 September 2013, the Coordinating Committee agreed a work programme which included a review of the Council's preparations for IER. Four Members of the Committee volunteered to undertake this work including Cllr Jean Stapleton, Cllr Moira McLaughlin, Cllr Denise Roberts and Cllr Steve Williams.
- 2.2 At the first meeting of the Review Panel, it was agreed Cllr Jean Stapleton would be the Chair of the Panel. The review was conducted over a series of meetings in October/November with appropriate officers providing information as requested by the panel and taking part in a detailed question and answer session.

#### 3.0 SUMMARY

- 3.1 The formal process for transferring to IER will commence in summer 2014. The Council's preparation's to date have included:
  - The procurement and implementation of a new Electoral Management System which is compatible with IER requirements

- Working in a partnership with other Cheshire and Merseyside authorities to project plan the transfer to IER and meet a set of milestones as set by Cabinet Office.
- The completion of a test run of the data transfer process in August 2013 in which the Council's success rate exceeded the national average.

3.2 The introduction of IER does present some risk to some the Council in terms of all voters on the register being successfully transferred to the new register. However, the review provided an opportunity for Members to gain a good understanding of the work being undertaken to mitigate that risk.

3.3 The Panel's assessment was that overall Wirral is in a strong position and is likely to have a relatively smooth transfer to IER in 2014. However, Panel Members were concerned that in some wards, notably those with higher levels of known deprivation, there will be higher proportions of voters not automatically transferred. Additional work will have to be undertaken to ensure these voters are successfully transferred.

3.4 The Panel was also concerned that these same locations tend to have higher numbers of people not on the electoral register. As such, Members were keen for the IER process to be used as a vehicle to promote electoral registration more generally to encourage those not registered to register.

#### **4.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

4.1 There are none directly relating to this report.

#### **5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 N/A

#### **6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 N/A

#### **7.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS**

7.1 N/A

#### **8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

8.1 N/A

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

9.1 The implementation of IER will require additional resources to manage the process of transferring from the existing to the new electoral register. The Cabinet Office is committed to meeting these additional costs and allocations of funding are being awarded to local authorities based upon population size and the results of the test data-matching exercise. A financial assessment is included in the full report in Appendix 1 section 5.4.

#### **10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 N/A

## **11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

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

~~(a) Yes. The impact review has been sent to the Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator and is located at~~

~~(b) No because there is no relevance to equality.~~

(c) No because of another reason which is

The report is for information to Members and there are no direct equalities implications at this stage.

## **12.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 N/A

## **13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 N/A

## **14.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

14.1 Members of the Committee are requested to note the contents and consider the recommendations arising from this report.

14.2 Members of the Committee are requested to consider whether they wish to refer the report to Cabinet.

## **15.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

15.1 To ensure Members have an understanding of the implications of IER for Wirral.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Wirral Council’s Preparations for Individual Electoral Registration Scrutiny Review

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**Wirral Council's preparations for  
Individual Electoral Registration**

**Scrutiny Review**

*A report produced by*  
**The Policy & Performance Coordinating Committee**

***FINAL REPORT***  
***December 2013***

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL**

***Wirral Council's Preparations for  
Individual Electoral Registration  
Scrutiny Review***

**FINAL REPORT**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Individual Electoral Registration is due to be introduced in 2014 and will transform the way Local Authorities' are required to compile their Electoral Registers. A national timetable is being coordinated by the Cabinet Office which requires Councils to meet a range of key preparation milestones. This scrutiny review has been conducted to ensure Wirral's preparations are robust and that any potential issues or problems are understood and are being addressed.

The success of the transfer from the existing property-based register to the IER register is dependent on a combination of national and local data-matching exercises. Initial testing of the data-matching process suggests Wirral's results will be above the national average putting us in a strong position to establish the new register in summer 2014. However, the full potential of local data-matching is yet to be fully realised and will be dependent on the availability of local data sources.

**Recommendation 1: Where access to Council held data is required for the purpose of data-matching to support the transfer to IER, this is made available (in line with legal requirements) to the Elections Team in a timely manner.**

The Review Panel acknowledged the crucial role all Council Members will have in terms of communicating the changes and encouraging constituents to take action if they are not automatically transferred to the new IER register. The Panel also recognised the value that Members' local knowledge will have in supporting implementation. Therefore, keeping Members informed during preparation and implementation will be essential.

**Recommendation 2: The Head of Legal and Member Services to coordinate periodic briefings with all Members as a means of maintaining two-way communication to support the implementation of IER.**

**Recommendation 3: Chairs of constituency committees are requested to include IER as a topic for discussion as part of their forward planning in the New Year.**

The Cabinet Office is committed to supporting the costs of implementing IER. The Review Panel considered the financial implications for Wirral in the light of the funding allocation provided. Whilst the budget forecast will need to be worked up in more detail as further information becomes available in 2014, the initial forecast indicates there will be sufficient resource available including a reasonable contingency.

The Review Panel sees the transfer to IER as a major opportunity to highlight the importance of electoral registration and use the additional resources available to maintain existing levels of registration and concentrate on those areas where levels of registration are lower.

**Recommendation 4: The Head of Legal and Member Services should ensure that funds are used in accordance with Cabinet office requirements/conditions and where possible used to support additional targeted engagement and canvassing activities, using the IER process as a vehicle to maximise electoral registration, and for contingency purposes.**

Overall, the Panel found this review to be very informative. In particular, the results and analysis of the Confirmation Dry Run data-match exercise with Census 2011 data were considered to be very useful and provided a level of detail that Members have never seen before. The Panel agreed that this information should be available to all Members and through the Council's website.

**Recommendation 5: The Head of Legal and Member Service to make Ward data on IER and non-registered eligible voters available to all Elected Members and via the Council's website.**

This review is a good example of horizon-scanning scrutiny in that IER is a national initiative being launched in 2014. The review has provided an opportunity to consider the potential issues in relation to implementing IER locally. In this sense the review has been an assessment of the Council's readiness at a particular point in time. It was recognised by the Panel that a further update is reported to the Policy and Performance Committee closer to the transition going live in June 2014.

**Recommendation 6: The Head of Legal and Members Services should prepare a report to the Policy and Performance Committee providing an update on preparations for IER closer to the launch in June 2014.**

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

At the meeting of the Policy and Performance Coordinating Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2013, Members approved a work programme which included a review of the Council's preparations for Individual Electoral Registration (IER). A Scrutiny Review Panel of four Members of the Committee was established and a series of meetings were held in Autumn 2013. The purpose of the review was for the Panel to gain an understanding of the implications of IER for Wirral. This would enable the Panel to test the Council's readiness for this new approach to compiling the electoral register and seek assurance that preparations are in hand. This reports sets out the background, methodology, findings and recommendations arising from this work.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

In 2014 the Government is changing the way people register to vote. Under the current system one person can register all occupants in the same household. Under the new system, called Individual Electoral Registration (IER), everyone will be individually responsible for their own registration. This approach sees the UK following practice in other countries and will pave the way for on-line registration (currently scheduled from June 2014).

Most people on the register before June 2014 should be automatically transferred to IER and should not need to do anything else. However, some people will need to provide additional information in order to stay on the register and will be sent letters inviting them to register under the new system. The process to register will involve residents providing their name, national insurance number and date of birth. This information will be checked to verify they are eligible to vote. In the case of those whose details cannot be verified, they will not be removed from the register until after the next General Election.

The shift to the new electoral register is being centrally managed by the Cabinet Office. A national timetable has been published with local authorities being individually responsible for meeting a series of milestones in order to prepare for the new system. The logistics of shifting from the current property-based register to the new IER register involves a major data-matching exercise. This will involve councils sending their existing registers to Cabinet Office for these to be data-matched with personal data held by the Department of Work and Pensions. This is scheduled for July 2014, with the IER register to be compiled from then and published on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014.

A Confirmation Dry Run (CDR) run of the data-match process was completed during summer 2013. This also acted as a test for local authorities to demonstrate the compatibility of their IT software with that being used nationally. The result of this exercise was better than expected with a match rate of 78% across the country leading to confirmation by the Electoral Commission that preparations are sufficiently ready for IER to go ahead as planned in 2014.

In terms of the cost implications, Cabinet Office has stated its commitment to meeting the full cost, with £108M being allocated nationally. Allocations are being made to local authorities for the years 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.

## **4. ORIGINAL SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Scope**

This review is a good example of horizon scanning scrutiny. At the time the review was conducted, planning for IER had commenced, but preparations were still in their early stages. This was acknowledged by the Panel and informed the scope of the review. The agreed scoping document is included at Appendix 1 and focussed around four key objectives as follows:

1. For the Panel to be satisfied there are robust arrangements in place for the implementation of IER.
2. To have a good understanding of the potential issues and problems in implementing this new system.
3. That Wirral is not financially disadvantaged by implementing IER.
4. That all opportunities are taken to use IER as a vehicle to maximise registration.

### **4.2 Methodology**

A combination of information sources were provided to the Panel. This included a number of documents to provide the national context and overall picture i.e. an IER Policy Briefing from the Local Government Information Unit and a summary report of the national results of the Confirmation Dry Run produced by the Cabinet Office. However, the main emphasis of the Panel was to develop an understanding of the local implications both at a borough-wide level and on a ward by ward basis. This was achieved by the Panel requesting a series of reports to cover the following:

- A detailed analysis of the results of the data-match Confirmation Dry Run (CDR) as well as those communities (geographical and thematic) where registration is lower
- The proposed strategy for maximising engagement and registration (with particular reference to those communities)
- A forecast of the financial impact of IER and whether this can be achieved from within existing resources assisted by the additional allocations from Cabinet Office for 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16.

(These reports are available on request).

The reports were followed up by a detailed question and answer session with key officers from the Council. This included the Head of Legal and Member Services and the Principal Electoral Services Officer. The review was carried out over three Panel meetings. A short review was adopted as a means of carrying out an assessment of the Council's preparations for IER at a point in time. It was acknowledged that a further update on progress should be considered by the relevant Policy and Performance Committee later on in the preparation process.

## 5. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Early Preparations

The Chief Executive as the Borough's Electoral Registration Officer has responsibility for implementing IER. In terms of delivery, the Head of Legal and Member Services oversees the Elections Team and the IER Project Team. It is recognised IER requires a corporate approach and the project team has had input from the Improvement Team, IT Services, Marketing & Communications and Corporate Policy. The Council's early preparations for IER has focussed on three key areas:

- 1. The procurement and installation of a new Electoral Management System** – The Council's existing system was over ten years old and in need of replacement. A new, IER compatible system was procured through a joint tender with the Cheshire and Merseyside Authorities. This was implemented with considerable support from IT Services to a tight deadline in July/August 2013 in advance of the CDR data-matching exercise.
- 2. The successful completion of the CDR and local data-matching** – Wirral's CDR was completed on 19 August. Wirral's test result 83%, exceeded the national average of 78%. A further data-matching exercise with locally held Council Tax data resulted in the success rate being increased to 89%. This indicates that Wirral should have a strong foundation for transferring the current register to the IER register in July 2014.
- 3. Developing a partnership approach with the Cheshire and Merseyside authorities** – This ensures a consistency of planning and preparation as well as providing an opportunity to share ideas and good practice. The Cabinet Office expects Council's to develop a range of project, risk and engagement plans and the partnership ensures Wirral's preparations are consistent with those of other authorities in the sub-region.

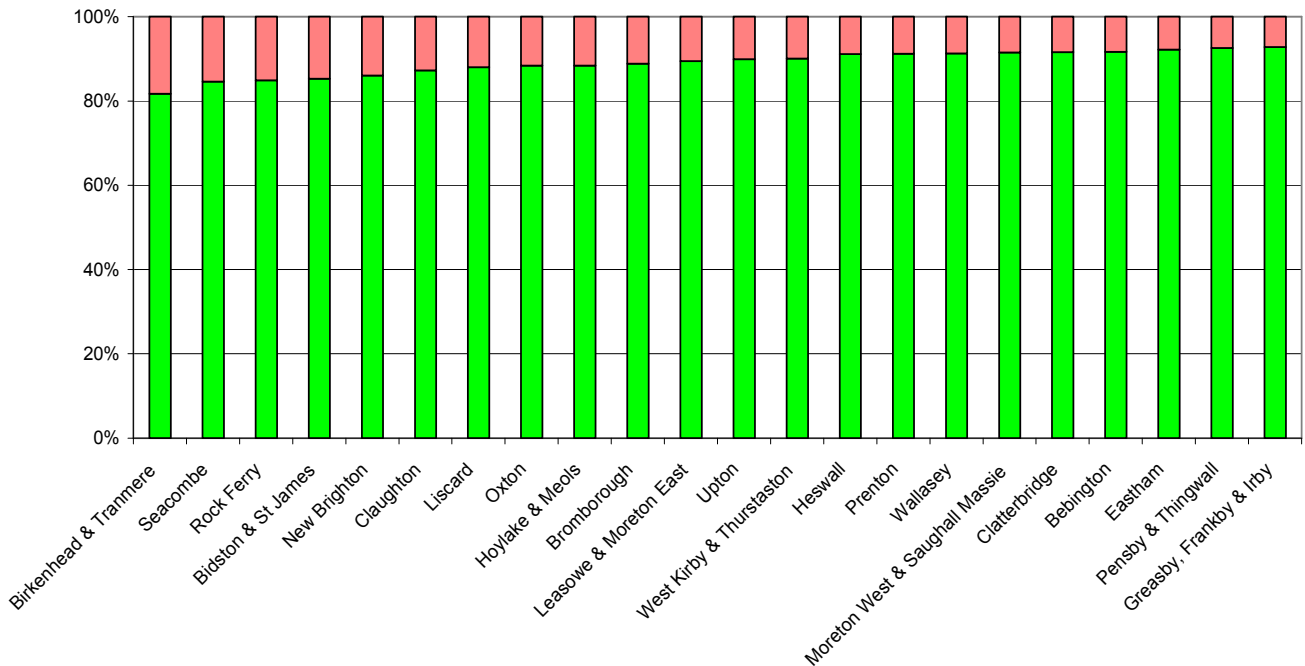
### 5.2 Analysis of Data-Matching Results and Census 2011

Overall, the results of the CDR and local data-matching indicate that out of the 239,814 people on the Electoral Roll, 213,792 would be confirmed under IER, a rate of 89%. Further local data-matching will be undertaken to reduce the number of red non-matches further.

Given the amount of information held by the Council in different departments, a hierarchy of data sources has been identified including housing benefit and schools data that will assist this work. Given issues around the Data Protection Act, it was highlighted that some departments may be less inclined to readily share data. However, the Council's Electoral Registration Officer does have the power to access all Council held data and Members of the Panel were keen to ensure there are no obstructions to the Elections Team accessing data in order to maximize the level of matching to the new IER register.

**Recommendation 1: Where access to Council held data is required for the purpose of data-matching to support the transfer to IER, this is made available (in line with legal requirements) to the Elections Team in a timely manner.**

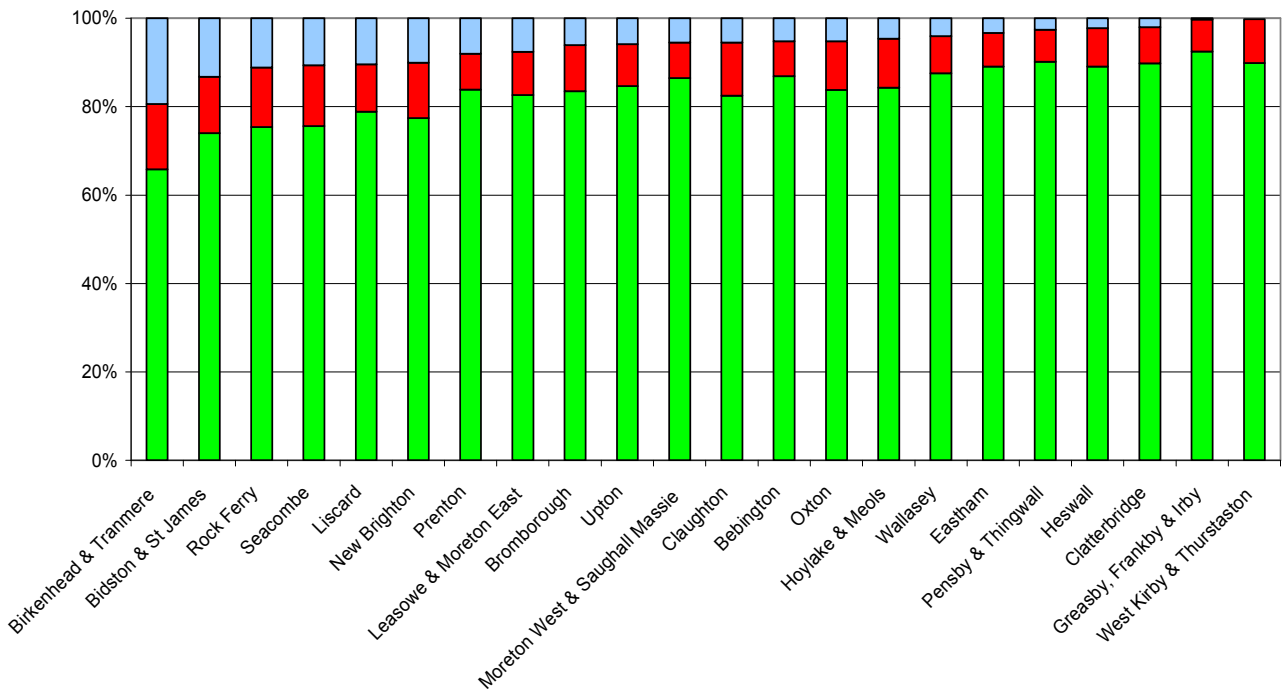
A detailed analysis of the results of the CDR and local data-match was provided to the Panel (see chart below). This provides a ward breakdown showing the number of positive (green) matches and non-matches (red).



This shows a fairly consistent picture of voters being successfully transferred across all wards, although it is interesting to note that the success rate is lower in those wards which have higher levels of known deprivation.

Further analysis was undertaken to explore levels of voter registration more generally using Census 2011 data to estimate the number of people over the age of 17 in each ward that do not appear on the register.

The chart below combines the results of the data-match exercise with the estimated percentages of non-registered voters. As in the previous chart, green indicates positive matches with red showing the negatives. Blue indicates the estimated proportion of the electorate who are not on the electoral register. The order of wards has the highest proportion of non-registered voters (Birkenhead and Tranmere) to the left.



This analysis shows a strong correlation between areas with higher levels of known deprivation and negative matches from the CDR exercise as well as levels of non-registration



more generally. The Panel noted that whilst the overall picture for Wirral at a borough-wide level is positive, the analysis shows there are some wards which are a cause for concern, including Birkenhead & Tranmere, Bidston & St James, Rock Ferry, Seacombe, Liscard and New Brighton.

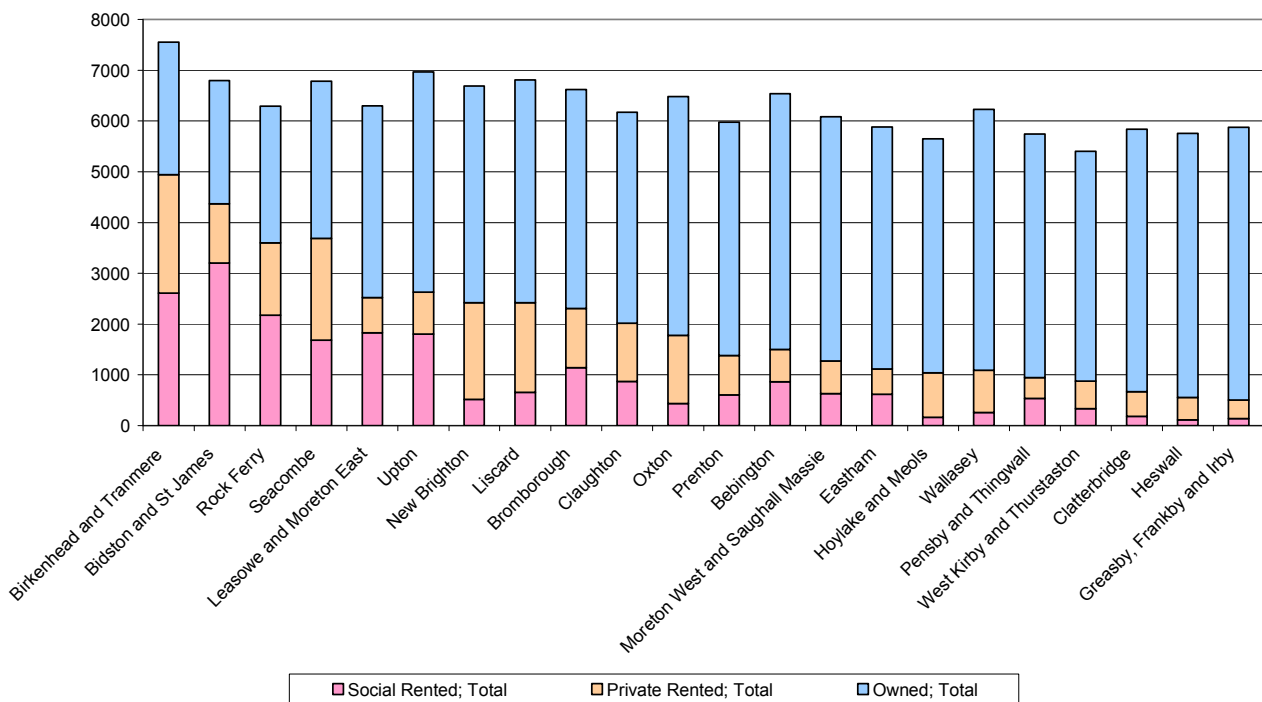
Members were interested in Wirral’s track record in getting new people on the register and what the challenges are to this. The current estimate of voters registered in Wirral is 92% which is above the national average of 90%. The challenge in getting this figure higher is resources, as there comes a tipping point in the cost-effectiveness of this given there will always be a residual number of people that do not want to or refuse to register.

One of the best incentives for encouraging registration is to make people aware of the negative impact it has on their credit rating. Members of the Panel highlighted concerns that currently many voters are reliant on other people registering them and with the introduction of IER the responsibility will fall on individuals to register themselves.

Additional analysis provided, highlighted those factors which are likely to impact on lower levels of voter registration amongst certain sections of community. These include:

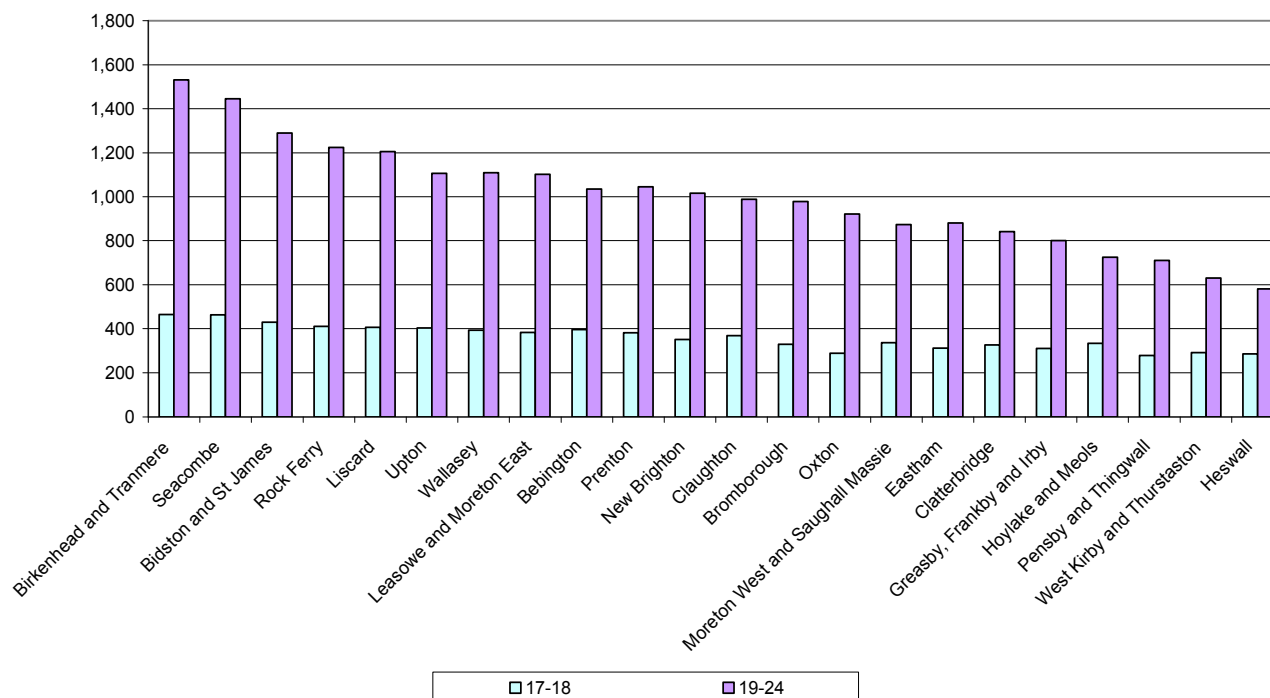
- People in rented accommodation (private and social)
- Young people
- Home movers

Apart from home movers which are randomly dispersed, geographical analysis of the proportions of people living in rented accommodation (see below) shows a strong correlation with those areas that have lower data-match results and higher numbers of non-registered voters.



In terms of the geographical dispersal of young people aged 17 – 24 (see chart below), this tends to follow the same pattern of distribution as rented accommodation again showing the correlation with areas that have lower data-match results and higher numbers of non-registered voters.

## Numbers of Young People by Ward



National analysis by the Cabinet Office explores BME communities as being at risk of under-registration. However, findings did not suggest that BME groups were statistically less likely to be registered than their white peers who otherwise share the same characteristics.

Using the Census 2011, local analysis was undertaken regarding the distribution of non-UK born residents. This indicates that apart from Birkenhead and Tranmere, the distribution of non-UK born residents is fairly evenly dispersed. Members were concerned that there is insufficient data held on BME and non-UK born communities such as the emerging Polish community. It was suggested the Council’s engagement with minority communities would need to be coordinated through second-tier representative organisations such as Wirral Change and Wirral Multicultural Organisation.

### 5.3 Draft communications and engagement strategy

The communications campaign supporting the role out of IER will be managed centrally through Cabinet Office / Electoral Commission and is scheduled to launch nationally in June 2014. It is essential the local campaign aligns with the timetable and messaging nationally to ensure consistency. As part of planning milestones, local authorities have been required to submit early draft communication and engagement strategies to Cabinet Office. A copy of the draft strategy was provided to the Panel. The strategy was drafted prior to the results of the CDR data-match analysis and will need to be further developed in due course.

Officers highlighted that local communications and engagement activity would operate on two levels. There is a need for a general awareness-raising campaign targeting all voters with generic messaging about the shift to IER and promoting electoral registration. This work will dovetail with national and sub-regional campaigns when they go live in 2014. Alongside this, a more targeted approach will be needed involving communications with key partner organisations in line with the under-represented groups set out above in section 5.2. Specifically schools, landlords / tenant groups and membership organisations that support

hard to reach communities. Members highlighted the opportunity to work with landlords through the network of Registered Social Landlords and the Council's Private Landlord's Association.

A further level of more detailed targeting will need to be coordinated through a new approach to delivering the annual canvas which reflects the ward by ward analysis non-matches and non-registered voters. The annual canvas is the means for compiling the electoral register, although work updating the register continues throughout the year. Currently there are 103 Polling Districts in Wirral and 80-90 canvassers. Usually a Polling District is allocated to one canvasser with some picking up a couple of districts. The CDR result provides a rationale for allocating resources in a much more targeted way. This will not be developed until 2014, as we are currently in the middle of the canvass for the local and European Elections next May.

The Panel was also advised that the type of work canvassers do will need to change, with more information being requested at the doorstep and the need for a strategy to respond to emerging issues depending on how people react. This approach will provide canvassers with the opportunity to highlight the legal requirements of registration and the wider benefits i.e. the positive effect on an individual's credit rating. Next year, the canvass period commences in July and continues through till 1<sup>st</sup> December when the IER register will be published. The process of IER effectively changes the whole approach to canvassing, but this process is yet to be finalised.

Members acknowledged that the draft communications and engagement strategy contains a range of different communication channels as some forms of communication i.e. the local free press are restricted in their coverage. Members were keen that all opportunities to engage with partners and share communication costs with other local authorities through cross-border initiatives should be explored.

It should be remembered that the process of shifting to IER will involve large amounts of direct mail going to individuals and households from July 2014. Confirmation letters will be sent to those people who have been matched and transferred to the IER register. Household Enquiry Forms (HEF) and Invitations to Register (ITR) will be sent to properties and people that have not been successfully matched. All of this will provide opportunities to include additional leaflets and messages.

Members were concerned about the clarity and accessibility of IER literature and application forms so they are not a barrier to some sections of the community. However, documentation is still in the process of being developed nationally and has not yet been shared or published.

Given the number of staff with frontline roles dealing with residents enquiries i.e. one stop shop and call centre staff, there will be opportunities to inform residents about IER on the back of contact for other matters. As part of its preparations, the Council has allocated a lead trainer to deliver a programme of briefings and trainings to ensure that frontline staff have a good understanding of IER in order to answer enquiries and promote registration.

Panel Members also acknowledged the role that all Council Members will have in terms of communicating the changes and encouraging constituents to take action if they have not been automatically matched and transferred to the new IER register. It was also recognised that Members have local knowledge and would have ideas about how best to engage and communicate with certain communities. Panel Members were keen to highlight the need for on-going briefing of all Elected Members and for good ideas for engaging with constituents to be shared.

**Recommendation 2: The Head of Legal and Member Services to coordinate periodic briefings with all Members as a means of maintaining two-way communication to support the implementation of IER.**

**Recommendation 3: Chairs of constituency committees are requested to include IER as a topic for discussion as part of their forward planning in the New Year.**

#### **5.4 Initial costs estimates for implementing IER in 2014**

The Panel was advised that in line with Cabinet Office's commitment to supporting the costs of implementing IER, allocations are being awarded to Council's in 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15. These have been based on a formula including population size and the results of the CDR exercise. Wirral's allocation for 2012/13 has been £12,086. In terms of the allocation for 2013/14, the Council had just been informed that this would be £100,403. This figure was calculated using the results of the CDR exercise to determine the volume of correspondence and activity to address the non-matches to the IER register.

An initial forecast of the costs for 2014/15 has been developed based on the CDR and local data-matching results and a series of assumptions about the likely response rates to mail shots and canvassing activity. This figure was calculated at £240,518. The cost for delivering the annual canvas in 2012 was £187,534. Therefore, the allocation of £100,403 is considered to be sufficient with a satisfactory surplus of £47,000 to cover the cost of communications and engagement activity as well as any other potential resilience and/or contingency costs.

It was explained to the Panel that this forecast was an initial assessment, although it did err on the side of caution had been based on detailed work and assumptions. The assessment will be reviewed over the coming months as more details emerge from the Cabinet Office to ensure there is sufficient resource in place. The Panel was also advised that in advance of the announcement of the 2014/15 allocation and to mitigate the risk of insufficient resources to cover the costs of IER, the Head of Legal and Member Services had included some contingency in the Elections Team budget for 2014/15.

A further allocation from Cabinet Office is anticipated in 2014/15. However, this is not known at this time but will be expected to taper given the bulk of the work will be undertaken in the coming financial year.

**Recommendation 4: The Head of Legal and Member Services should ensure that funds are used in accordance with Cabinet office requirements/conditions and where possible used to support additional targeted engagement and canvassing activities, using the IER process as a vehicle to maximise electoral registration, and for contingency purposes.**

## 6. CONCLUSION

Overall, the Panel were assured the Council's preparations for IER are in hand. The Panel were also assured that officers have a good understanding of the IER project, including what needs to be done and what the likely problems and issues are likely to be going forward.

The results of the CDR and local data-matching indicate that our position is above average in terms of our readiness to transfer to the IER register, which is very encouraging. Whilst the picture at the Borough-wide level is very positive, Panel Members were concerned that at a local level there are some wards which are a cause for concern in terms of people being transferred to the new register and levels of registration more generally. This highlights the need for engagement and canvassing activities to be effectively targeted and resourced.

In terms of the data analysis, the Panel was impressed with the quality of the information and analysis provided. Members also highlighted this was the first time they had seen this level of analysis of the electorate and that this would be of interest to all Elected Members and residents and should be made publicly available.

**Recommendation 5: The Head of Legal and Member Service to make Ward data on IER and non-registered eligible voters available to all Elected Members and via the Council's website.**

The Panel highlighted the need for a corporate approach to IER with front-line staff being effectively briefed so the message about this change is widely communicated to members of the public. All Members of the Council should also receive regular written and verbal briefings to ensure they are able to provide the latest information to their constituents.

The Panel acknowledged this review had been undertaken early on in the process, and that it would be useful for officers to bring an updated position to the Policy and Performance Committee further down the line and at an appropriate point i.e. June/July 2014.

**Recommendation 6: The Head of Legal and Members Services should prepare a report to the Policy and Performance Committee providing an update on preparations for IER closer to the launch in June 2014.**

Finally, the Panel were keen to consider that once the IER register is published in December 2014, there would be a need consider how the on-going register is effectively maintained. This will be particularly important beyond the 2015 general election after which old records will be deleted and the register is mostly likely to experience a reduction.

## 7. MEMBERS OF THE REVIEW PANEL

### Chair's Statement:

The review provided a good opportunity for Members of the Coordinating Committee to understand the changes coming in next year. The Panel were impressed with the level of preparation already undertaken by Council Officers and are confident Wirral's transfer to the new register should go well in 2014. This is an issue that all Members need to be aware of so that they can answer questions from constituents as the transfer to IER draws nearer.

It is clear over 90% of people will be automatically transferred to the new register. Whilst the overall picture for Wirral is positive, the Panel is concerned that in areas with higher levels of deprivation and people living in rented accommodation, the transfer to IER will require significantly more work. This review also shows that these areas also have more people that do not registered to vote. This emphasises the need for the Council to take a targeted approach with the additional resources available.

Whilst the accuracy of Wirral's electoral register has traditionally been above the national average, the IER process provides us with a unique opportunity to encourage those not on the register, particularly young people, to get themselves registered so they can vote at future elections.

### Panel Membership

Councillor Jean Stapleton (Chair)



Councillor Moira McLaughlin



Councillor Denise Roberts



Councillor Steve Williams



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***This Report was produced by the IER Scrutiny Review Panel***  
*(which reports to the Policy & Performance Coordinating Committee)*

## Appendix 1:

## Scope Document

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> October 2013

### Review Title: Individual Electoral Registration

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<p><b>2. What are the main issues?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wirral's progress in terms of IER preparation has been good in terms of implementing a new electoral management system, the results of the test data match with DWP and local data matching.</li><li>• Members of the Panel were concerned about the introduction of IER having a negative impact on voter registration.</li><li>• There are concerns about low registration among certain communities both geographically and in terms of specific sections of the community, particularly young people and people living in rented accommodation.</li><li>• At a time of austerity, there was concern about the cost of implementing IER and whether this can be met from existing resources assisted by modest allocations from the Cabinet Office.</li><li>• The government's increasingly strict stance on ICT security presents a risk to the implementation of on line registration.</li></ul>
<p><b>3. The Committee's overall aim/objective in doing this work is:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For the Panel to be satisfied there are robust arrangements in place for the implementation of IER.</li><li>• To have a good understanding of the potential issues and problems in implementing this new system.</li><li>• That Wirral is not financially disadvantaged by implementing IER.</li><li>• That all opportunities are taken to use IER as a vehicle to maximise registration.</li></ul>

<p><b>4. The possible outputs/outcomes are:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wirral benefits from a smooth transition to IER.</li> <li>2. That voter registration levels are not adversely affected by the shift to IER</li> </ol>	
<p><b>5. What specific value can scrutiny add to this topic?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scrutiny can provide assurance to the Council that preparations for the shift to IER and the implementation of this new approach are being effectively managed.</li> <li>2. Scrutiny can support effective communications to Members regarding the implementation of IER and the issues Members need to be aware of.</li> <li>3. Scrutiny can provide support in helping to promote electoral registration.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>6. Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elected Member</li> <li>• The General Public</li> <li>• Specific groups that might be able to support the Council's engagement strategy</li> </ul>	
<p><b>7. Duration of enquiry?</b></p> <p>This is considered to be a short review to assess the Council's readiness for implementation. It has been suggested that a further review of implementation is scheduled at a suitable milestone in the implementation plan.</p>	
<p><b>8. What category does the review fall into?</b></p> <p>Horizon scanning – this review is intended to inform and add value to the local implementation of a nationally delivered government policy.</p>	
<p><b>9. Extra resources needed? Would the investigation benefit from the co-operation of an expert witness?</b></p> <p>None identified at this stage.</p>	
<p><b>10. What information do we need?</b></p>	
<p><b>10.1 Secondary information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project plans &amp; briefing papers distributed by Cabinet Office</li> <li>• Results of national pilot</li> <li>• Local census data to understand local population profiles.</li> </ul>	<p><b>10.2 Primary/new evidence/information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of dry run data match results against local population profiles</li> <li>• The Council's Strategy for targeted engagement to address under-registration amongst specific communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>10.3 Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet portfolio holder, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc). council officers to include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Head of Legal &amp; Member Services</li> </ul>	<p><b>10.4 What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officers to provide a more detailed analysis of those communities (geographical and</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officers from Electoral Services and the Policy Unit.</li> </ul>	<p>thematic) were registration is lower.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officers to set out the proposed strategy for maximising engagement and registration (with particular reference to those communities).</li> <li>Officers to provide a budget forecast of the financial impact of IER and whether this can be achieved from within existing resources assisted by the additional allocations from Cabinet Office for 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16.</li> </ul>
<p><b>11. What processes can we use to feed into the review? (site visits/observations, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, written questionnaire, etc).</b></p> <p>None identified at this stage.</p>	
<p><b>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).</b></p> <p>None identified at this stage.</p>	

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