



## Policy and Performance - Regeneration and Environment Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday, 2 March 2016</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>6.00 pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall</b>

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### AGENDA

**1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PARTY WHIP**

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.

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

**2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2016.

**3. DEVOLUTION UPDATE (Pages 9 - 18)**

Presentation Slides **attached**.

**4. HOMELESSNESS AND THE IMPACT OF WELFARE BENEFIT REFORM (Pages 19 - 36)**

5. **STREET LIGHTING UPDATE**  
(Pages 37 - 40)
6. **2015/16 QUARTER 3 DIRECTORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT** (Pages 41 - 50)
7. **FINANCIAL MONITORING 2015/16**  
(Pages 51 - 60)
8. **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT**  
(Pages 61 - 84)
9. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 1)**
10. **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

The public may be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

RECOMMENDED – That in accordance with section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The public interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

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

## **POLICY AND PERFORMANCE - REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Monday, 18 January 2016

Present: Councillor M Sullivan (Chair)

Councillors KJ Williams D Realey  
J Crabtree C Spriggs  
R Gregson J Stapleton  
J Hale A Sykes  
D Mitchell S Williams  
S Niblock

Deputies: Councillors D Elderton (In place of G Ellis)  
A Leech (In place of M Daniel)

In attendance: Councillors A Brighthouse

### 32 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PARTY WHIP**

Members were asked to consider whether they had 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.

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

No such declarations were made.

### 33 **MINUTES**

**Resolved:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2015 be approved.**

34 **NOTICE OF MOTION: HAMILTON SQUARE - EFFECTIVE SCRUTINY OF CONTROVERSIAL SCHEME**

Prior to consideration of the motion, the Chair informed Members that a statement had been made by the Leader of the Council in the past few days stating that:

*“based on conversations with businesses, residents and other partners, we have decided that the changes to Hamilton Square are not the best use of this money at the moment”.*

Given the announcement by the Leader, the Chair informed that the options available to the proposer were to either withdraw the motion, or that he exercise his right to speak, and that the Committee purely note its content.

Councillor Alan Brighthouse thanked the Chair and took the opportunity to discuss issues relating to economic development and the administration of similar such projects. The motion as referred from Council (minute 92(i), 14 December 2015 refers) stated that:

“Council notes that a public consultation was recently carried out regarding the redesign of the access to Hamilton Square, Hamilton Street and the area in front of Birkenhead Town Hall.

Council is aware that many principled objections have been raised to this scheme, with concerns around the re-introduction of unnecessary traffic and noise, the removal of the expensive landscaping and paved areas introduced by the Hamilton Quarter and the overall purpose of the scheme.

Given the Council's limited financial resources, it is important that this project is tested against the 2020 Vision. Before an investment of £1.1m is committed, the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee is requested to examine, in detail, the criteria used to justify this investment.

Council, therefore, suggests that the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel is not the most appropriate forum for this fundamental study and requests that the project be the subject of full consideration by the Policy and Performance Committee.”

**Resolved:**

**That the Notice of Motion referral from Council, minute 92(i) 14 December 2015, be noted.**

## 35      **DEVOLUTION - VERBAL UPDATE**

Ms Rose Boylan, Policy and Strategy Manager provided an oral update on the subject of the devolution package and economic growth plans for the Liverpool City Region.

The Committee was informed of the key aims of the devolution deal i.e. to accelerate economic growth, growing jobs and to promote public service reform, reducing costs. The Committee also noted the proposed opportunities for greater control, powers and resources in relation to:

- Economic development and energy
- Transport infrastructure
- Housing Development & planning for growth
- Employment & Skills

As part of implementing Phase 1 and development of Phase 2 devolution deals, members were also informed of the a review of political and officer arrangements that had been taking place, namely confirmation of the following appointments:

December 2015:

- Mayor Joe Anderson elected Chair

The new Combined Authority cabinet with portfolio leads:

- Economic Development: Cllr Phil Davies
- Transport: Cllr Rob Polhill
- Housing and Planning for Growth: Cllr Barrie Grunewald
- Employment and Skills: Cllr Ian Mayer
- Health and Wellbeing: Cllr Andy Moorhead
- Public Service Reform: Mayor Joe Anderson

The Policy and Strategy Manager advised that each of the portfolio leads were to co-ordinate review of existing working arrangements in their areas of responsibility between now and an Annual Meeting of the Combined Authority scheduled for June 2016. She further explained that this would enable the Annual Meeting to establish formal 'shadow' arrangements, if it so wished, in advance of the introduction of a new Liverpool City Region Mayor in May 2017.

The Policy and Strategy Manager informed that Wirral Council would have ongoing involvement in developing the devolution project, as well as wider City Region activity e.g. the 'Growth Deal'. The Committee were told that

Members would continue to be provided further detail about implementation of the devolution agenda, and the implications for Wirral, in the coming weeks.

Members raised a number of questions concerning the matter of competing for the advancement of development projects on the Wirral, where the developers were already involved in projects on the Liverpool side of the River Mersey. It was noted that this particular issue – making Wirral attractive to investors - would be covered under the following agenda item. Councillor Hale requested that for future devolution reports, a written report or copies of the presentation slides be circulated with the agenda papers in advance of the meeting. Officers confirmed that this would be actioned.

**Resolved: That the presentation be noted.**

## 36 **CREATION OF A PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

The Strategic Investment and Partnerships Manager presented the report of the Strategic Director Regeneration and Environment that updated the Committee on the Property Development Framework supporting the development of new commercial floor space in Wirral, initially presented to the Cabinet at its meeting held in March 2015.

The report informed that the industrial and office property market in the Liverpool City Region faced challenges with end values remaining relatively low and grant funding still being required to enable developments to take place. That is, the total cost of constructing speculative and bespoke accommodation being greater than its value on completion.

The Strategic Investment and Partnerships Manager advised that the issue was further compounded by banks often refusing to lend against any kind of speculative development and limiting their lending against bespoke schemes, with a known end user, to a maximum of 60% of the projected end value. Members were told that one of the other constraining factors was that the availability of external grant funding from organisations including the UK Government and the European Union was reducing significantly.

Members were informed that the Council had been reviewing the current models that were available to it in terms of supporting private sector development and company growth, and exploration of new ways of supporting such developments.

The Strategic Investment and Partnerships Manager explained the three primary Development Models and the constraints associated, summarised below:

OPTION	DESCRIPTION	CONSTRAINTS
1. Site/ Acquisition Land Assembly	To strategically intervene in the marketplace to address constraints causing barriers to the private sector. This may include land assembly to create developable parcels of land.	Lack of available funding to support this type of option. Little or no return on the outlay.
2. GAP Funding	To address viability gaps by bridging the 'gap' between development costs and end values.	Again, the lack of available funding for this option presents a problem. However, the LCR LEP has been allocated some resources through the Growth Deal.
3. Council Head Lease	<p>Covenant strength allows a developer to secure higher levels of funding for a development, strengthening the yield of a development and addressing viability in a different way from GAP funding.</p> <p>The Council taking the head lease for a new developing significantly increases the viability of a development from the point of view of securing funding.</p>	Using the Council's covenant strength in this way brings opportunities and risks. It exposes the Council to potential costs if the sub lease ends and there are void periods. However, mitigating actions can be put into place and the risk depends on the development plus the potential return for the Council.

He further informed the Committee that all efforts to make Wirral attractive to investors had to be assessed against the financial risk to the Council, adherence to policy and effective due diligence.

Members expressed full support to any initiatives that encouraged investment in the Wirral, and promoted business growth and employment.

The Committee discussed a range of projects, past and current, funding sources including the Growing Places Fund and international funding / city region investment. A member questioned the sustainability of some of the funding models, but acknowledged along with others that some of the land

areas covered by the enterprise zone had been unused for 30 to 40 years, and noted the successes arising from 'pump priming' similar schemes elsewhere.

A question was asked that given the topic, whether members of the Planning Committee should declare an interest at this point. The attending solicitor informed that the discussion was considered general, and not specific to any particular application, and as such no declaration was required.

Members noted the value of investing in the clearance of contaminated land, thereby making it more attractive to investors.

The Head of Regeneration and Planning informed the Committee that as the economy picks up, the number of people looking to invest, or talking about investment opportunities was growing. The Strategic Investment and Partnerships Manager also pointed out that state aid shouldn't distort the market and that the Council must remain innovative in its efforts to attract investors and new businesses.

**Resolved: That the report be noted.**

#### 37 **POLICY INFORM BRIEFING PAPER - JANUARY 2016**

The Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee noted the report of the Strategic Director Regeneration and Environment and the attached January Policy Inform Briefing Paper that included an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, potential implications for the Council, and emerging policies.

The report and Policy Inform Briefing Paper outlined the key features of the Autumn Statement and the Spending Review, which was announced on 25th November 2015. The Policy Inform briefing also alluded to any potential implications for Wirral Council, and elaborated on any legislation or policy updates that had been implemented, or developed since the last policy briefing published in September.

The report further informed that the fourth (March 2016) Briefing Paper would focus upon the 2016 Chancellor of Exchequers Budget.

**Resolved: That the contents of the January 2016 Policy Briefing papers be noted.**



38 **LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY - SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS**

The Policy and Performance Committee – Regeneration and Environment received a report of the combined authority scrutiny link member Cllr Mike Sullivan, that set out progress to date on the work carried out by the Liverpool City Region Scrutiny Panel.

The Committee noted that an LCRCA Scrutiny Panel meeting had been held on 13 January 2016 and an update would be provided to Members via the finalised minutes once published.

**Resolved - That the progress to date regarding the work of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel be noted.**

39 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee noted the report of the Chair that updated members on the current position regarding the Committee's work programme as agreed for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

A Member requested that consideration be given to the inclusion of Street Lighting as a topic on the Committee's work programme, given the number of street lamps currently out of order / being reported, and delays in repairs being actioned. Another Committee Member suggested that two components be considered, firstly failure / repair / actions (repairs and maintenance), and secondly outages due to supply (Scottish Power).

The Head of Regeneration and Planning confirmed that a report on the matter of repairs and maintenance responses would be presented to the March meeting of the Committee. It was noted that given the number of items to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee that the report item on the outages due to failures in supply be deferred until after March.

Members further requested that the matter of dog fouling be reviewed, to consider mirroring the successful approach to prosecutions and penalties for littering. Officers advised that the request would be investigated and referred to the relevant service area and Committee. Members would be kept informed of the matter, should the topic fall to another Committee to review.

**Resolved: That**

- 1) the updated Regeneration and Environment Policy & Performance Committee work programme for 2015/16 as detailed in the report appendix be noted;**
- 2) additional reports into the matters of street lighting and dog fouling be prepared in the timeframe agreed, to be presented to the relevant Committee(s) as appropriate.**

# LIVERPOOL CITY REGION & DEVOLUTION UPDATE

**Rose Boylan, Policy & Strategy Manager**

Policy and Performance  
Regeneration and Environment Committee  
2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016

# DEVOLUTION DEAL – KEY AIMS

Continue to move forward rapidly to implement Phase 1 of the devolution deal that was agreed with Government

Brings some significant opportunities for helping us to deliver the Wirral Plan and our 20 pledges, and our role in the wider City Region in terms of increased powers and resources for:

- Page 10
- Economic development and energy;
  - Transport infrastructure;
  - Housing development and planning for growth; and
  - Employment and skills

At the same time work is underway to agree the detail of Phase 2, including a specific focus on Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

Ongoing activity to deliver key projects and programmes eg Growth Deal; transport; EU Programme

# ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS

Discussions are also underway with Government to scope out those areas in the Agreement which were less detailed eg:

- Vocational Education;
- Business rates reform and redistribution;
- Multi-year settlement and the “Single Pot”;
- Total Household Approach for employment programmes

# POTENTIAL SCOPE OF FURTHER DEVOLUTION

Further discussions now underway:

- Health and social care;
- Children's services;
- Licensing and Regulation;
- Housing (powers and flexibilities);
- Fiscal devolution

eg tax raising powers which may benefit from further development such as potential benefits of a hotel occupancy tax

There may be other areas where Government is looking to devolve further

Eg Criminal justice – focussing on individuals with complex needs

Possibility to pilot new approaches in LCR with the most potential being in youth justice

# NEXT STEPS

Phase 2 Devolution – negotiations with Government on the areas outlined

Report back to the March Combined Authority Meeting on progress with both Phase 1 Implementation and Phase 2 negotiations

Head of Paid Service in conjunction with Lead Officers to report to March Combined Authority on more developed portfolio responsibilities, including:

- Proposed workplans;
- Governance arrangements;
- Executive capacity

# LATEST LCR DEVELOPMENTS

In recent years the City Region has emerged from a period of decline to achieve some significant new economic, political and cultural successes

Need to build on this, to be ambitious and aim even higher to achieve our goals and potential

This highlighted very clearly with the recent launch of the **'State of the City Region'** report by the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University

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Independent and comprehensive report assesses where we are now, where we should go next, how to get there and how devolution might help



# STATE OF THE CITY REGION REPORT

Report emphasises the importance of the City Region in terms of:

- Economic diversity - different LA districts offer complementary specialism and strengths eg public sector in Liverpool, maritime and shipbuilding in Wirral;
- Port remains a vital part of the UK economy, central to the logistics industry and the Atlantic Gateway Project;
- Connectivity has been greatly enhanced by recent extension of the airport handling nearly six times the number of passengers than it did 17 years ago;
- Regional rail network has led to an increase of 52% of passenger number since 1998;

Page 15 Wealth of architectural, cultural and heritage assets including the UNESCO World Heritage Centre – strength of the city region’s cultural attraction is reflected in the fact that it attracts an estimated 56 million visitors a year and Liverpool’s current status as the fifth most-visited city in the UK

# KEY MESSAGES

So, report recognises that LCR has achieved some good successes recently  
BUT – needs to do more in future

- Strengthen partnerships
- Generate more leadership – not just local authorities
- Create greater trust & honesty
- Collaboration – public & more coherent private sector
- More confidence & ambition
- Contribute more to Northern & national growth agendas
- Commit more to LCR so it passes the pub test
- Look further forward and outward
- Improve communication – win more friends home & abroad

Delivery, delivery, delivery - this is key

# CONCLUSIONS

Wirral continues ongoing involvement in developing the devolution asks as well as wider City Region activity eg Growth Deal

Detailed consideration of the linkages between the Wirral Plan & Pledges and devolution agenda eg

- to deliver our growth aspirations
- footprint for future delivery

Ongoing updates to this Committee

For further information, contact:

Rose Boylan, Policy and Strategy Manager  
[rosemaryboylan@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:rosemaryboylan@wirral.gov.uk)

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## Policy and Performance - Regeneration and Environment Committee

Wednesday, 2 March 2016

REPORT TITLE:	Homelessness and the impact of welfare benefit reform
REPORT OF:	Ian Platt, Head of Housing

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks to provide Members with an update on the issue of homelessness in Wirral, and to outline the progress made in terms of its prevention and reduction. The report is also intended to advise members of the consequential impact of welfare reforms on levels of homelessness in the borough.

The issue of homelessness has the potential to affect all Wards within the Borough.

The delivery of an effective homeless response directly contributes to a principal theme of the 'Wirral Council Plan: A 2020 Vision' of protecting the most vulnerable of Wirral's residents. It also assists with the achievement of a number of the pledges set out in the Council's vision, these being:

- *"Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents"*
- *"Children are ready for school"*
- *"Wirral residents live healthier lives"*
- *"Vulnerable children reach their full potential"*
- *"Reduce child and family poverty"*
- *"Zero tolerance to Domestic Violence"*
- *"Community Services are joined-up and accessible"*
- *"People with disabilities live independently"*
- *"Older People Live Well"*
- *"Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe"*

### RECOMMENDATION/S

That Members note the content of this report.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

1.1 The content of this report is for noting.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

2.1 No other options were considered.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

3.1 Homelessness can have significant negative consequences for the people who experience it. At a personal level, homelessness can have a profound impact on health, education and employment prospects. At a social level, homelessness can impact on social cohesion and economic participation.

3.2 Local Authorities in England have a legal duty to secure accommodation for unintentionally homeless households who fall into a 'priority need' category. This is commonly referred to as the 'main homeless duty'. In addition to the statutory responsibility of the provision of accommodation for eligible applicants, the Housing Act 1996 also places a duty on Councils to provide free advice and assistance to all people experiencing, or threatened with homelessness.

3.3 Homelessness can be defined in a number of different ways. For many it conjures up an image of someone sleeping rough, for others it may mean living in very poor quality accommodation, experiencing domestic abuse or having no security of tenure. Whilst Wirral's 2013-18 homelessness strategy does deal with homelessness in its widest sense, official homelessness statistics concentrate on households who are assessed by a local authority as being statutorily homeless; that is they meet specific criteria set out in legislation.

3.4 In determining a statutorily homeless application, the council must decide whether a person is:

**“Eligible”** – Refers to eligibility for public funds;

**“Homeless”** – That is, they have nowhere that is available and/or reasonable to occupy, anywhere in the world;

**“In priority need”** – This refers to the pre-defined groups of people who are prioritised for assistance under homeless legislation including pregnant women, those with dependent children, care leavers, young people aged 16-17, or where someone in the household is vulnerable, e.g. because of old age, mental or

physical health problems; or by being in prison, care or the armed forces;

**“Unintentionally homeless”** – Those who have not deliberately done, or failed to do, something that caused them to become homeless, such as failing to make rent or mortgage payments when they could have afforded to do so.

- 3.5 In cases where a local authority is satisfied that an applicant is eligible for assistance, is in priority need and has become homeless through no fault of their own, the authority will owe a ‘main homeless duty to that household. Such households are referred to as ‘statutory homeless acceptances’. When a main homeless duty is owed, the authority must ensure that suitable temporary accommodation is available until a settled home becomes available, or the duty ends in some other way.
- 3.6 In cases where a household is homeless, and in priority need, however is considered to have become homeless through their own fault (termed intentionally homeless), a lower level of duty is owed. This duty includes providing a reasonable period of time in temporary accommodation to enable homeless households to secure suitable alternative accommodation, whilst also providing housing advice and assistance.
- 3.7 On average over three thousand people, approach the Council’s Homelessness and Housing Options service each year for help and advice, as they believe they are at risk of homelessness and some will go on to be accepted as statutorily homeless. Where clients are not, or unlikely to be accepted as statutorily homeless, they are provided with advice, advocacy and assistance to resolve the presenting housing problem or helped to find alternative accommodation. In many cases, issues such as rent arrears, offending behaviour, mental health problems or substance misuse will make the task of keeping or finding a new home a more challenging task.
- 3.8 In addition to strengthening the duties owed to individual homeless applicants, the Homelessness Act 2002 also placed a duty on housing authorities to:
- Carry out a review of homelessness in their areas;
  - Formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on this review
  - Keep the strategy under review; and
  - Consult other local or public authorities, or voluntary organisations before adopting or modifying the strategy.
- 3.9 The Homeless Review was undertaken in 2012 and provided the basis for the Council’s Homeless Strategy 2013-2018 which was approved by Cabinet in July 2013. The strategy acknowledges that homelessness is a complex problem with multiple causes requiring both flexible solutions and the delivery of innovative services in order to reach the increasing number of people affected by the economic climate. The strategy therefore identified four key priorities to respond to these issues:

- **Preventing Homelessness** wherever possible, through early intervention and effective collaborative work.
  - **Strengthening Partnership Working** to ensure that the housing and support needs of those with more complex needs are met.
  - **Evaluating and Re-aligning homelessness and prevention services** to ensure continuing strategic relevance and value-for money within an environment of increasing demand and reducing resources.
  - **Increasing access to the private-rented sector** to ensure the best possible use of the range of housing stock in Wirral.
- 3.10 The strategy is underpinned by a detailed action plan that sets out a number of key actions. The quarterly Homeless Forum, which is facilitated and chaired by the Council, and attended by local agencies that work with homeless people, is responsible for oversight of the strategy and associated action plan.

#### **4.0 CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS**

- 4.1 Homelessness rarely has a single cause or explanation; it is often seen to be a symptom of wider underlying problems, for example those who suffer from physical or mental ill health, substance misuse or have an offending background. Compared to the general population, those who are homeless experience poorer health outcomes and the consequences of homelessness will often stretch beyond the immediate effect and go on to have a lasting impact on those individuals.
- 4.2 Homelessness is generally a product of:
- Structural factors such as poverty, housing shortages; or
  - Individual factors e.g. vulnerability through ill health, drug use, etc.
- 4.3 Although it would be fair to say that those individuals with no apparent problems are at risk of homelessness if there is a shortage of affordable housing, it is likely that that the vulnerable are at increased risk in circumstances where factors like poverty and culture impact on them at both the structural and individual level.
- 4.4 For many homeless people, or those threatened with homelessness, their situation arises from a combination of both individual and structural factors and, in order to reduce the adverse impact of these factors, the council has sought to commission and coordinate services which address both.
- 4.5 The table below demonstrates the main reason for the loss of settled accommodation, for homeless applicants that were owed the main homeless duty under homeless legislation and for whom homelessness could not be prevented.



Main reason for loss of last settled home - households owed full duty	2013/14	2014/15	Q1-Q3 2015/16
Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	26	13	4
Other friends/ relatives no longer willing or able to accommodate	23	11	5
Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner	14	8	7
Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner	6	11	12
Violent breakdown of relationship involving associated person	2	4	2
Racially motivated violence	0	2	0
Other form of violence	8	6	3
Racially motivated harassment	0	0	0
Other forms of harassment	3	4	1
Mortgage arrears	12	5	3
Rent arrears - social landlord	1	0	0
Rent arrears - private sector dwellings	2	3	2
Termination of assured short hold tenancy	14	17	5
Other reasons for loss or rented or tied accommodation	5	0	0
Required to leave National Asylum Support Service accommodation	0	0	0
Left prison/ remand	6	0	0
Left hospital	2	4	0
Left other institution or local authority care	3	5	0
Left HM Forces	2	0	0
Other reason for loss of settled home	7	5	6

Table 1: Main Reason for loss of last settled home 2013 - 2015/16 Q3

4.6 Worryingly, the numbers of people that became statutory homeless as a consequence of a violent relationship breakdown with their partners has, at the time of writing, doubled when compared with 2013/14 data. Given that there remains one more quarterly report due in this financial year, it is likely that this figure will increase further. To ensure that the housing needs of victims of domestic abuse continue to be met, Wirral has successfully bid for funding from Central Government to enhance supported housing services for women experiencing domestic abuse. This funding will enable the securing of 6-12 units of dispersed, community-based accommodation that can be accessed by women that require a safe haven.

## 5.0 EXTENT OF HOMELESSNESS

### 5.1 STATUTORY HOMELESSNESS

5.1.1 Nationally, it is generally considered that official homeless statistics do not provide a true picture of homelessness in England. The figures exclude people that are homeless but who do not approach a Council for assistance and, critically, do not include data for homeless people that do not meet the statutory criteria for homeless acceptance. This lack of coherent national data on homelessness makes measuring the true scale of homelessness a real challenge.

5.1.2 The most recent official statistics on national levels of statutory homelessness were published in December 2015 and showed that the number of households accepted as homeless and owed the main homelessness duty (i.e. permanent rehousing) was 4% higher compared with the same period (July to September 2014). The number of homeless acceptances was 14,670, representing an increase of 6% on the previous quarter. London boroughs accounted for 32% of all acceptances in England during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2015, an increase on the same quarter in 2014.

5.1.3 Locally, the overall number of homeless decisions made in 2014/15 (233) represents a 21% reduction when compared with 2012/13 levels (295). At the time of writing, the number of decisions made during 2015/16 is 138, meaning that the overall number of decisions made by the end of 2015/16 is likely to be lower again.

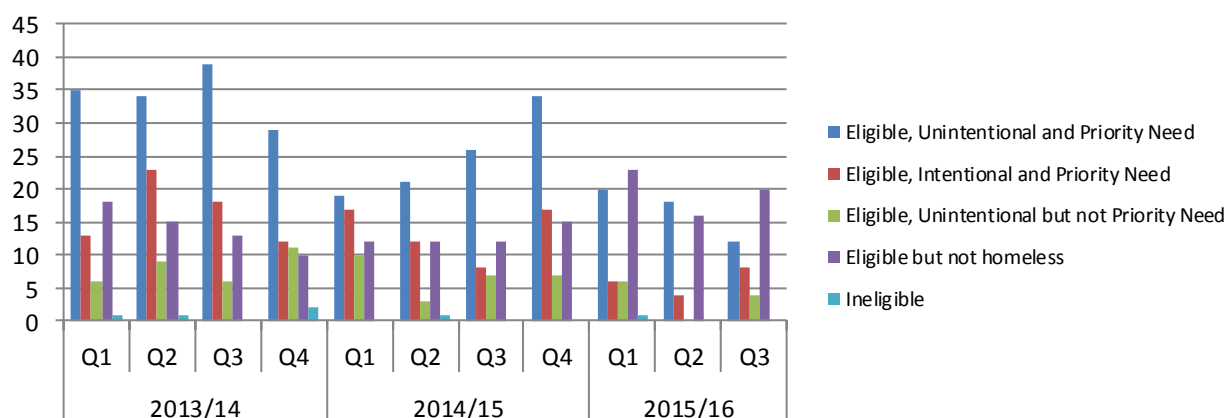


Chart 1: Graph showing statutory homeless decisions 2013-Q3 2015/16

5.1.4 The number of households that made a homeless application, and who were subsequently identified as being owed a full duty, has also decreased. In 2013/14, the number of people that were owed a full duty under homelessness legislation was 137. This figure reduced by 27% in 2014/15 to 100. At the time of writing, of the 138 decisions made during 2015/16 to date, 40 households were determined as being owed a full duty.

5.1.5 Of the homeless decisions made in the past three years, Wirral has seen a rise of 42% in 'intentionally homeless' decisions. A person is considered to be 'intentionally homeless' because of something they deliberately did or failed to do. A large number of 'intentionally homeless' cases are linked to welfare reform and affordability issues reflected in the accrual of rent arrears.

5.1.6 This is not to suggest that the problem of statutory homelessness in Wirral is declining, but rather the reduction is considered to be, in part, as a direct consequence of more effective homeless prevention work. The Homelessness and Housing Options service utilises a prevention 'tool kit', containing over 20 different measures, to assist households threatened with homelessness to remain in their current accommodation, or to assist them into suitable alternative accommodation. Prevention tools include landlord negotiation, court attendance for possession proceedings, securing discretionary housing payments, or providing financial assistance to access the private rented sector. This approach has seen Wirral's homeless

preventions increased by 34% from 391 (2012/13) to 525 preventions in 2014/15.

5.1.7 In terms of the demographic profile of people making homeless applications; in 2014/15, of those homeless applicants who were owed a full duty, over half of applicants (57.57%) were within the 25-44 age group, with just over a quarter (25.75%) being in the 16-24 age group. *(It should be noted that young people aged 16 and 17 years old are classed as 'children' and their housing needs are reviewed in partnership with CYPD)*

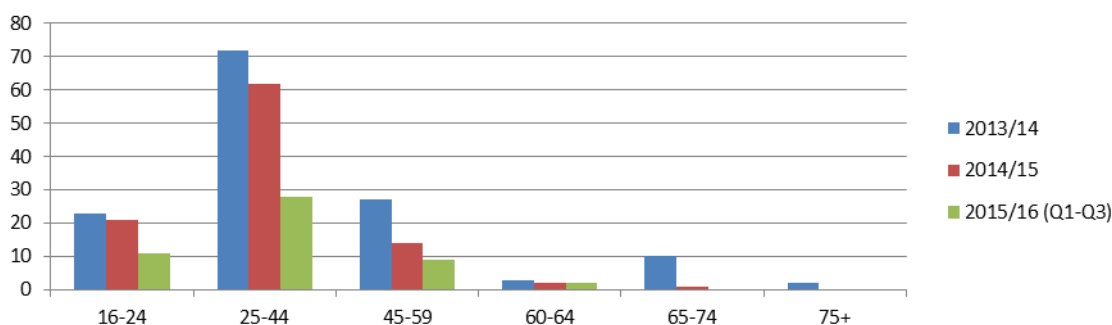


Chart 2: Chart showing ages of Applicants owed a full duty 2013-2015/16 Q3<sup>1</sup>

5.1.8 It demonstrates continuing trends when compared with previous years, with a decrease in the proportion of older people that are owed a full duty under homeless legislation and with the majority of homeless acceptances made in respect of the 25-44 age groups. This is expected given:

- The national economic circumstances, including the high unemployment rates for people leaving school.
- Housing Benefit eligibility restrictions mean that single people under 35 are looking for accommodation in a very restricted private rented market.
- The lack of appropriate accommodation available to younger single people and childless couples
- The impact of welfare reform changes which are largely targeted towards working-age households.

5.1.9 The chart below shows the household composition and gender of homeless applicants that were subsequently owed a full duty by the Council.

	Couple with Dependent Children	Lone Parent Household with dependent children		One Person Household		All other Household groups
		Male Applicant	Female Applicant	Male Applicant	Female Applicant	
2013/14	19	4	52	32	14	16
2014/15	13	3	39	19	18	8
2015/16	7	2	20	7	9	5

Table 2: Gender/Household Composition of Homeless Applicants owed a full duty 2013 - 2015/16 Q3

<sup>1</sup> As previously referenced in 4.8, homeless 16 and 17 year olds are not usually considered through the statutory homeless route, but rather their housing needs are addressed by both the Housing Division and CYPD. The standard central government reporting pro-forma however still references 16 & 17 year olds.

5.1.10 Over the past three years, the significant majority of homeless applications (95%) have been made by people that defined themselves as being 'White'. This is broadly reflective of Wirral's ethnic profile.

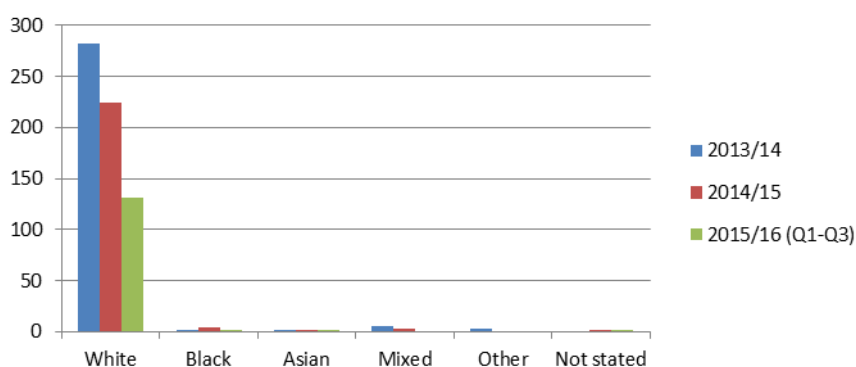


Chart 3: Graph of ethnicity of homeless applicants 2013-2015/16 Q3

## 5.2 SINGLE HOMELESSNESS

5.2.1 Single homelessness - or strictly speaking, the homelessness suffered by single adults or couples without dependent children, although in practice, overwhelmingly the former. The significance of single homelessness is that the majority of these people, are unlikely to have a 'priority need' and as such, would not meet the criteria set in homeless legislation for the 'main homeless duty'. Such households would be provided with housing advice and assistance, in line with the Council's statutory responsibilities, but no temporary accommodation.

5.2.2 Homelessness amongst single people rarely has a single cause or explanation; it is often seen to be a symptom of wider underlying problems, for example those who suffer from physical or mental ill health, substance misuse or have an offending background. The term 'Single Homeless', although used universally, does not necessarily encapsulate the individual situation and therefore it is crucial in any gathering of statistics to recognise that homelessness may be the symptom, and not the cause.

5.2.3 The majority of single homeless people would not be owed a full homelessness duty by the Council, there are, however, a range of supported housing services funded through the Council's Supported Housing Team that will accommodate single homeless people. These services take the form of homeless hostels, schemes for young people, offenders and people with substance misuse problems and a refuge for women fleeing domestic abuse. In some instances, and where appropriate, the Council is also able to temporarily place people within these services while investigating a statutory homeless application.

5.2.4 In Wirral, the funding for housing support is allocated, through a contractual framework, to a range of organisations (voluntary, charitable, private sector, Housing Associations) to provide key front-line services to multiple disadvantaged people.

- 5.2.5 Although provided to different homeless profiles, these services all share the common aim of delivering housing-related support which can be described as a lower level of practical support, not amounting to personal care, which allow vulnerable people to obtain or remain in their own home. Housing related support services offer vulnerable people the opportunity to improve the quality of their lives by providing a stable environment that enables greater independence.
- 5.2.6 Housing-related support is preventative in nature and it exists to help vulnerable people avoid crisis situations or delay/prevent entry into costly institutional services like hospitals or residential/nursing homes, and to live as independently as possible for as long as possible. A report on the cost benefits of housing-related support showed that, on average, for every £1.60 invested in a preventative service, £3.41 is saved through reduced demand on the statutory sector. There is thus a significant social return on investment when prevention and early intervention is funded.
- 5.2.7 In 2012, the Liverpool City Region (LCR) received funding from DCLG to facilitate work across the six LCR Councils to reduce levels of homelessness, and to enable a coordinated response to the issues of homelessness across the local authority areas.
- 5.2.8 To this end, the 6 LCR Councils agreed the need for the development of a single point of access to homeless services for vulnerable people and, as such, commissioned Capita to develop a web-based referral system called 'Mainstay'
- 5.2.9 Mainstay acts as a "virtual" single point of access for those needing floating or accommodation based support services. This means that those who require these services can present to an 'assessment point' at a range of services across the Borough and receive a common assessment and be referred to the most appropriate service(s) which meets their needs at that point. Whilst the system is operated on a Pan-Merseyside basis, it has been tailored to be reflective of the housing need, and service provision within each individual Authority.
- 5.2.10 It was agreed that Wirral would be the last Authority to implement Mainstay and, accordingly, during the latter part of 2014, the Supported Housing Team worked closely with the Mainstay administrators and local providers of homeless services, in order that all relevant agencies were prepared for its roll-out, which took place on the 26th January 2015.
- 5.2.11 From the period 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015, Mainstay reported that:
- 851 single homeless people were registered and assessed by Mainstay services for accommodation.
  - 764 homeless people were accommodated in a Mainstay service.
  - 26% of homeless people assessed by Mainstay services had previously been resident in a homeless service.

5.2.12 Mainstay further reports that 75% of all homeless people assessed by Mainstay were male. 42% were aged between 18-25 and 28% were aged 26-40.

### 5.3 ROUGH SLEEPERS

5.3.1 Rough sleepers are defined for the purpose of statistics as “people sleeping, or bedded down, in the open air (such as on the streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters); people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as shop loading areas, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats and stations) In Wirral, Service Users have reported sleeping in Birkenhead Park, coal-bunkers, sheds they have broken into and tents along the waterfront.

5.3.2 Each year, every Local Authority is required to undertake a ‘Rough Sleeper Count’. The purpose of the count is to get a better understanding of the scale of the issue and whether it's changing over time, so that policies and services can be better planned. The chart below shows the resultant findings since 2011.

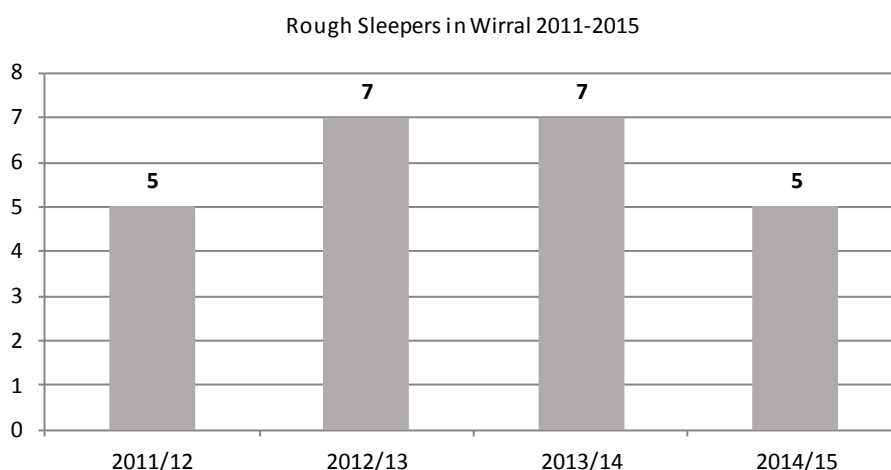


Chart 4: Graph showing findings of Rough Sleeper Count 2011-2015

5.3.3 Whilst providing useful data, it is generally accepted that the methodology (set out by Central Government) used to conduct a Rough Sleeper Count is not sufficiently robust enough to capture the true scale of the problem; a situation that the Government themselves recognises and which is in the process of being re-evaluated.

5.3.4 Other local data and stakeholders suggest that a much greater number of people sleep rough on occasion. It is felt that there are two profiles of individual within the rough sleeper cohort; straightforwardly, those who require accommodation and a degree of support to assist them to maintain this accommodation and a core group of approximately ten individuals with substance misuse issues who appear to be reluctant and/or unwilling to engage with traditional service provision. There is a significant level of alcohol and drug problems amongst rough sleepers and mental health problems are common but less prevalent.

5.3.5 Since 2008 the Wirral YMCA (located on Whetstone Lane) has acted as a hub for rough sleepers, ensuring co-ordinated access into emergency provision (Night Shelter) and accommodation and providing a dedicated worker for them ensuring consistent & comprehensive assessment of need. The chart below shows the number of individual users accessing the provision.

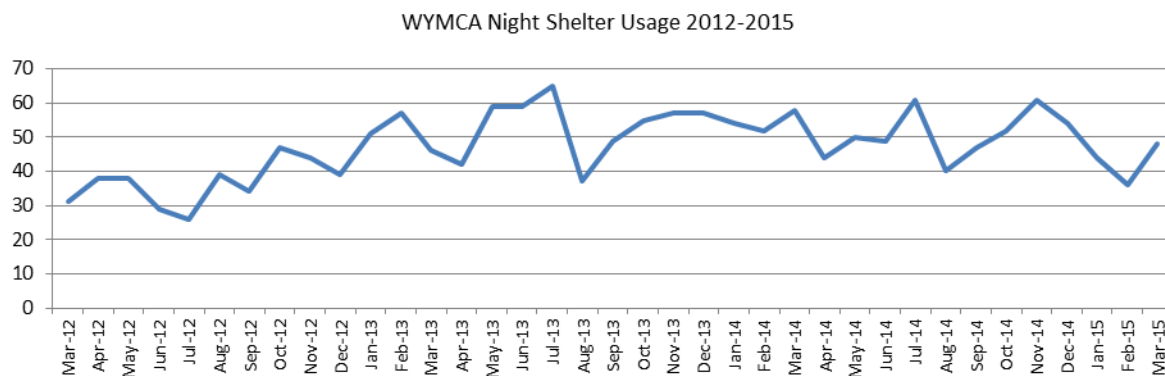


Chart 5: Graph showing Night Shelter Usage 2008-2015

5.3.6 The Night Shelter reports that:

- Most Service Users are Male.
- The main age group of those using the Night Shelter service is 25-34, closely followed by 35-44 and 18-24 year olds.
- There are more young males aged 18-24 within the profile of repeat Service Users

5.3.7 To respond to the issue of rough sleeping, the five Merseyside Councils that comprise the Liverpool City Region (LCR) submitted a successful partnership bid to Central Government to enable the development of the LCR Intensive Support Service (LCRISS), a 2 year project for people with multiple and complex needs. This service, which went operational in December 2015, is delivered by The Whitechapel Centre and will aim to ensure that rough sleepers with multiple and complex needs have their needs met in a holistic and person-centred way.

## 6.0 WELFARE REFORMS AND THEIR IMPACT ON HOMELESSNESS

6.1 It is recognised that the full impact of the welfare reform agenda is yet to be felt by Wirral households. The full transition of all eligible working age households to benefits such as Universal Credit has not yet occurred, and the further reductions proposed for 2016-18 are yet to be implemented. These include:

### 6.2 Freezing of Local Housing Allowance

6.2.1 Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is claimed by private renters who are eligible for assistance with meeting their rental payments. The system has been in

place since 2008 and differs from housing benefit paid to tenants in the social rented sector, and private renters on regulated (pre-1988) tenancies, in that a set amount is paid, according to household make-up and area, regardless of the actual rent. Nationally, close to half of LHA claimants (48%) were required to pay a shortfall to meet their rental payments, even prior to the LHA changes.

6.2.2 There are currently just over a million and a quarter LHA claimants in Great Britain, and this now constitutes the vast majority (83%) of Housing Benefit claims in the private rented sector. Separate rates are set for each property size and claimants are allocated to a LHA rate based on their household size, at a maximum of four (previously five) bedrooms. It is both an in-work and out-of work, means tested benefit, which means many workers on low incomes (31% of current claimants) rely on it to stay in their homes. The benefit is claimed by a household, rather than by each individual, so a family or couple receiving LHA counts as one claim in Government statistics

6.2.3 LHA uses a nationally set system for setting the maximum eligible rent on which benefit awards are calculated. Prior to the reforms, rates were based on the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of advertised rents in the Broad Rental Market Area that a claimant lives in. Subsequent to the reforms, LHA rates are now based on the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile of advertised rents, rather than the market median. Essentially, this means that, for the majority of LHA claimants, the LHA paid will be insufficient to cover their rental payments.

6.2.4 However, Government has advised that Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates are to be frozen for 4 years from 2016 with some provision for rents in the most expensive areas. This means that claimants' LHA entitlement is less likely to cover the full contractual rent due as real rents increase over time.

6.2.5 In the North-West, changes to LHA rates have resulted in an average loss of £7 per week to households. In Wirral, the LHA rate for a three-bedroomed house was reduced from £595 to £549.99 per month.

6.2.6 This reform has particular significance in the context of national homelessness policies, which are placing more emphasis on households securing accommodation in the private-rented sector.

### **6.3 The Benefit Cap**

6.3.1 The overall cap on welfare benefits was implemented in 4 local authorities in April 2013 and was subsequently rolled out on a staggered basis to the rest of the country. Since September 2013, it has been operated across the whole of the country.

6.3.2 The cap is set at £350 per week for single people, and £500 for all other households and applies to all out-of-work households below pensionable age, with a number of exemptions for households with disabilities

6.3.3 From April 2016, the Benefit Cap will be further reduced from £26,000pa to £23,000 in London and £20,000 elsewhere. It is anticipated that families with



three or more children will see a significant change in their household income, and this may lead to wider affordability issues and resulting homelessness.

#### **6.4 Universal Credit**

6.4.1 Universal Credit is administered by the Department of Work and Pensions and replaces a range of existing benefits, including Job Seekers Allowance (income based), Income Support, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, income related Employment and Support Allowance, with a single monthly payment.

6.4.2 In line with Government policy there will be a continued transition of all working age claimants, including families, to Universal Credit over the coming years. This will represent a significant change for claimants who will now receive all of their benefit entitlement in a single monthly payment and will be required to manage their money effectively to ensure key payments, such as rent, are paid.

#### **6.5 Spare Room Subsidy**

6.5.1 The Spare Room Subsidy, introduced in April 2013, refers to the limits placed on eligible rents for households living in social housing, based on the number of bedrooms a household is deemed to require. The determination of how many bedrooms a household required is assessed using data taken from the social survey 'bedroom standard' measure established in the 1960's.

6.5.2 In context, 73% of all households in Britain occupy housing with more bedrooms than specified by the bedroom standard. Within this, a far higher proportion of home owners occupy dwellings above the bedroom standard, than people living in the social sector.

6.5.3 Locally, the Housing Benefit Team undertook an analysis of people living in social housing in May 2015 and identified that 3188 tenants were affected by the Spare Room Subsidy with 2557 under-occupying by one bedroom and 631 by two or more bedrooms. A key homeless prevention measure for under-occupying households has been to secure short term payments of Discretionary Housing Benefit for eligible households, whilst assisting them into more suitable accommodation. It is currently unclear if affected tenants, still under-occupying, will secure further discretionary housing payment awards in the future.

#### **6.6 Withdrawal of Housing Benefit for young people aged 18-21**

6.6.1 The Government intends to withdraw Housing Benefit entitlement from some 18-21 year olds from April 2017.

6.6.2 Currently, young people are already entitled to less generous allowances from the Housing Benefit system. Single people under 35 years without dependent children in the private rented sector are only entitled to rent allowance for a room in shared accommodation, such as a bedsit or room in a house or hostel. This is known as the Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR).

6.6.3 Certain categories of young people will be exempt from this removal of Housing Benefit, including vulnerable young people; those who may not be able to return home to live with their parents; parents; and those who have been in work for 6 months prior to making a claim. At this point there is no additional information on how vulnerability will be defined.

## **6.7 Housing Benefit Cap for Social Housing Tenants**

6.7.1 The Autumn Budget announcement advised of a further key change in the social housing sector with Government proposals to cap Housing Benefit payments to the relevant Local Housing Allowance rate. This will include the Shared Accommodation Rate for single claimants under 35 years who do not have dependent children. This will apply to tenancies signed after 1 April 2016, with Housing Benefit entitlement changing from 1 April 2018 onwards. These changes may effectively reduce access to affordable housing for those aged less than 35 years and affect larger families in social housing.

## **6.8 Support for Mortgage Interest**

6.8.1 Claimants of the DWPs 'Support for Mortgage Interest' (SMI) payment are homeowners who are struggling to meet the cost of their mortgage. Generally the benefit supports low income households, older people, unemployed, or sick or disabled. To be eligible to claim SMI you must be in receipt of qualifying benefits, such as income support. Under the welfare reform agenda, new applicants will have an extended waiting time of 39 weeks to receive financial assistance when in crisis. The Council of Mortgage Lenders has described the changes as 'most significant changes for mortgage in the budget' and it may see an increase in repossession action. Furthermore this benefit will change to become a loan in 2018 that homeowners are required to repay. These changes represent a further reduction in assistance to homeowners threatened with homelessness, following the previous withdrawal of the Government's mortgage rescue scheme.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

7.1 People are now facing real difficulties in managing their income and housing as a result of the downturn in the economy and its impact on the housing market, as well as the changes taking place around the future of social housing and changes to welfare benefits. Homelessness is increasing across the country, and there are fears it will continue to increase.

7.2 Locally, we have seen a 25% increase (between 417 cases in 2013/14 and 525 cases in 2014/15) in homelessness prevention activity. This includes both assisting residents to remain in their own homes or where appropriate assisting them to access alternative accommodation.

7.3 This increase in homeless prevention activity is reflected in the reduced number (22% decrease between 2012/13 and 2014/15) of statutory homeless applications taken by Wirral Council during the same period. Of the homeless applications taken in the past three years, Wirral Council has seen a rise of

42% in 'intentionally homeless' decisions, a significant proportion of which were linked to the accrual of rent arrears. Affordability issues, due to changes in benefit entitlement and the processes by which benefits are claimed are prevalent in the rent arrear cases seen by the Housing Options Team.

7.4 The numbers of single homeless people that have accessed Supported Housing-funded local homeless services in the first three quarters of 2015/16 have significantly increased when compared with statistics from the same period in previous financial years. These homeless services are reporting notable increases in the complexity of presenting needs amongst homeless people, with unresolved mental health issues and substance misuse prevalent amongst this profile.

7.5 To ensure that the Council remains responsive to the issue of homelessness:

- The Homelessness and Housing Options Team will continue to review existing service delivery and homeless prevention tools to meet the changing needs of Wirral residents in housing need, in line with Wirral's Homeless Strategy.
- The Supported Housing and Homelessness Division will undertake a strategic review of all supported accommodation services for people experiencing social exclusion, such as homeless people and women fleeing domestic abuse, to determine whether there are any gaps in provision and whether the current configuration of supported housing services is meeting the diverse needs of homeless people. The findings of this analysis will provide the evidence base for commissioning activity over the next five years and will inform the development of the Council's Homelessness Review and Strategy, due for publication in 2018.
- The Supported Housing and Homelessness Division will continue to monitor the impacts of welfare reform on vulnerable households and will explore the potential for developing an 'early warning system' for identifying residents that are at risk of homelessness as a result of changes to the welfare system. In particular, we will examine the consequences of the Government's plan to remove eligibility to Housing Benefit for 18-21 year olds on Wirral's young person's population and identify measures that could mitigate its impact.

## **8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report, although there is evidence that by not investing in preventative homeless measures there is a greater cost to the borough in the long-term through failure to meet targets and a potential for an increase in levels of homelessness. There is heightened concern over the impact of welfare benefit reforms and on the effect of 'bedroom tax' on existing tenants.

## **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The provision of a homeless service is a statutory requirement under the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002.

## **10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

10.1 There are no resource implications associated with this report.

## **11.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

11.1 There is a continued risk that due to current economic climate and national agenda that incidences of homelessness will increase significantly. There will need to be continued investment in related services and continued co-operation with relevant agencies to address this.

## **12.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

12.1 The Wirral Homeless Forum, which is facilitated and chaired by the Council, is intended to provide quarterly partnership focussed events that allow all homeless stakeholders from public, private and voluntary sectors to meet and discuss relevant issues in the borough. Members of the Forum work in partnership to respond to emerging policy, including consultation exercises, and funding opportunities; and, to work jointly to continually improve the homelessness response across all sectors in Wirral.

## **13.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 This report is for information only, as such there are no equality implications associated with this report.

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## **APPENDICES**

None.

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

The Housing Act (1996)

Homelessness Act (2002)

Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (2006)

Wirral Council Homeless Review 2012

Wirral Council Homeless Strategy 2013-2018

Parliamentary Briefing note – WWW.PARLIAMENT.UK

MainStay Data

National P1E reports – WWW.GOV.UK

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Cabinet - Policy on Discharge of Statutory Homelessness duty into the Private Rented Sector</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> June 2013</b>
<b>Cabinet – Wirral Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> July 2013</b>

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## Policy and Performance - Regeneration and Environment Committee

Wednesday, 2 March 2016

REPORT TITLE:	Street Lighting Update
REPORT OF:	Head of Environment and Regulation

### REPORT SUMMARY

#### 1.0 REPORT SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the current situation regarding the street lighting maintenance and to report on the progress of the Invest to Save LED street lighting replacement scheme.

#### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 That the Committee note the report and the progress of the LED replacement scheme.

#### 3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 The Committee requested a report on street lighting maintenance.

#### 4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None.

#### 5.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

##### 5.1 Street Lighting Faults

5.1.1 A series of night time street lighting surveys were carried out in November and December 2015 of all highway routes in the Borough to determine the number of street lights and items of street furniture that were unlit at that time. The results of the survey showed that 2,300 street lights were unlit accounting for approximately 7% of the street lighting stock.

5.1.2 In order to reduce the number of 'outtages' a special programme of maintenance work began on Monday 8 February 2016 to supplement the routine service to the faulty street lights.

5.1.3 The Council's contractor has been asked to undertake approximately 300 repairs each week and the repair of the faulty lighting will be completed before the end of April 2016. The repairs will be completed in the order of the

night-time survey to allow the contractor to concentrate their resources in a specific area, rather than in various locations spread across the Borough.

- 5.1.4 There are a number of street lights that are unlit due to underground mains cable faults and these locations will require the attendance of Scottish Power to complete the repair.
- 5.1.5 Although these repairs have been issued to Scottish Power, it is unlikely that the repairs will be completed within the same timescale, since Scottish Power cable repairs times are governed by different targets, outside of the Council's direct control.
- 5.1.6 As each route is completed by our contractor it will again be inspected at night time to ensure that all the street lights issued to them for repair are now lit.
- 5.1.7 Any street lights that have been reported to the Council since the special repair plan began on 8 February 2016, which were not unlit at the time of the street lighting surveys are currently being issued to the contractor for repair.

## **5.2 LED Street Lighting Replacement Scheme**

- 5.2.1 The LED street lighting scheme to replace 7,557 existing high energy consuming lanterns with new LED luminaires commenced on 24 August 2015 and is due to be completed on 31 March 2016.
- 5.2.2 By the end of January 2016, 4,117 new lanterns had been installed and the Contractors projected installation figures for February and March 2016 are 1,820 and 1,620 respectively.
- 5.2.3 On completion of the project, the Council's street lighting will use over 3.6 million kilowatt-hours less electricity each year.

## **6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The estimated cost of the special programme of repairs is estimated at £160,000, and this will be funded from available resources within the Council's approved Highway Management and Traffic Management revenue maintenance budgets for 2015/16.
- 6.2 LED lighting will also reduce maintenance expenditure as the lifecycle of an LED system is considerably longer than that for the existing sodium lighting stock. The revenue savings which result from the current LED installation scheme are already included in the Council's approved budget for 2015/16 and also within the base budget proposals for 2016/17 and comprise energy and maintenance savings of £100,000 for the current year 2015/16 and £390,000 in 2016/17, this is in addition to the £85,000 saving already taken in 2014/15.



## **7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The maintenance of highways, including street lighting, is a statutory duty for the Council under the Highways Act 1980 (as amended).

## **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

8.1 The management of the special repair plan and the project management of the LED contract is carried out by existing Council staff.

## **9.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

9.1 The special repair plan will enable the Council to carry out repairs more quickly than the allocated budget which will improve residents satisfaction regarding road maintenance.

9.2 No significant risks have been identified in changing from the current form of street lighting to LED street lighting. Lighting will continue to be provided in accordance with British Standards.

## **10.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

10.1 The Wirral resident survey carried out in 2015 identified road maintenance as one of the highest priority of the services provided by the Council, and that residents perceived that improvement is required in the response time to complete repairs.

## **11.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

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

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

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## **APPENDICES**

None

## REFERENCE MATERIAL

Street Lighting Strategy 2014 available at:

<http://s03vs->

[intrcm.core.wcent.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50021358/rep3645%20Strategy%20final.pdf](http://intrcm.core.wcent.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50021358/rep3645%20Strategy%20final.pdf)

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet – Street Lighting Strategy 2014 and Action Plan	9 October 2014



## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

2<sup>ND</sup> MARCH 2016

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>2015/16 QUARTER 3 DIRECTORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DAVID ARMSTRONG, ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:</b>	<p><b>CLLR PHIL DAVIES, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR STRATEGIC AND POLICY OVERSIGHT</b></p> <p><b>CLLR GEORGE DAVIES, JOINT DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LABOUR GROUP AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES</b></p> <p><b>CLLR PAT HACKETT, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR BUSINESS AND TOURISM</b></p> <p><b>CLLR STUART WHITTINGHAM, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR TRANSPORT, TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE</b></p> <p><b>CLLR BERNIE MOONEY, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION</b></p> <p><b>CLLR CHRIS MEADEN, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEISURE AND CULTURE</b></p>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

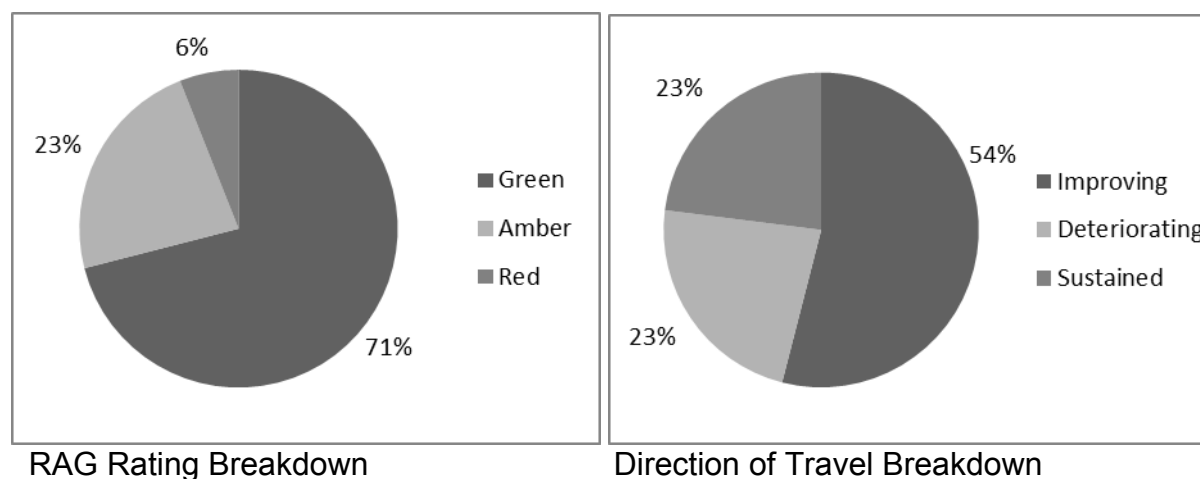
#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.0 This report sets out Quarter 3 performance against delivery of the Regeneration and Environment Directorate Plan. The Directorate Plan was reported to this committee on 23 March 2015. The performance report is attached as Appendix 1 and sets out progress against a suite of agreed key indicators and performance measures.
- 1.1 Whilst the Corporate Plan 2014/16: Refreshed for 2015/16 (and supporting Directorate Plans) have been superseded by the Wirral Plan: A 2020 Vision, they still form the basis of the in-year performance management framework. A

new Performance Management Framework will be developed for the Wirral Plan once the associated delivery plan has been finalised.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 1.2 The Regeneration and Environment Directorate Plan performance is reported through a set of agreed performance measures aligned to priorities identified in the plan. Performance is monitored against the targets set at the start of the year.
- 1.3 For each measure, a Red, Amber or Green (RAG) rating is assigned depending on the performance level against the target. A number of measures are annual, and these will only be reported when the data is available. The report (Appendix 1) also shows the direction of travel for each measure to illustrate whether performance is improving, deteriorating or sustained.
- 1.4 Of the 17 reportable indicators, 12 (71%) are rated Green, 4 (23%) are rated Amber and 1 (6%) is rated Red. For the indicators rated Amber and Red, the responsible officer has indicated the reason and any corrective actions being put in place to get performance back on track.
- 1.5 Of the 13 measures where it is possible to indicate the Direction of Travel, 7 (54%) are improving, 3 (23%) are deteriorating and 3 (23%) are showing performance being sustained. Of the 3 measures reported as deteriorating at Q3, 2 are rated as Amber and 1 is rated as Red. The reason for the Direction of Travel against these indicators is explained within Appendix 1. The charts below show the breakdown in terms of the RAG and Direction of Travel ratings:



## 3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 The performance management framework is aligned to the Council's risk management strategy and has been considered as part of the Directorate planning process.

## 4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 N/A

## **5.0 CONSULTATION**

5.1 N/A

## **6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS**

6.1 There are none relating to this report.

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

7.1 There are none arising from this report

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

8.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

13.1 Members are requested to note the contents of this report and highlight any areas requiring further clarification or action.

## **14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

14.1 To ensure Members have the opportunity to review delivery of the Regeneration and Environment Directorate Plan.

### **REPORT AUTHOR: Margaret Sandalls**

Performance Management Officer

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Directorate Plan Performance Report Quarter 3 2015/16

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2015
	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2015
	14 <sup>th</sup> July 2015
	23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2015
	3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2015
	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2014
	22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2014
	9 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
	27 <sup>th</sup> January 2014
	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2013
17 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	

**Regeneration & Environment Directorate  
Corporate and Directorate PI Performance Report  
Quarter 3 2015/16**

2015-16 Regeneration & Environment Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	(Q3)				Year End Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	Period	RAG			
RECP02	To maintain local environmental quality (LEQ) of litter, detritus, & graffiti in main gateways and shopping areas	93.5%	93.5%	95%	Apr-Dec	Green	93.5%	↔	
RECP03	Number of new affordable homes	250	150	230	Apr-Dec	Green	250	↔	
RECP04	Number of adaptations completed	2000	1500	1995	Apr-Dec	Green	2000	↑	
RECP05	Number of interventions to improve private rented sector properties	400	300	759	Apr-Dec	Green	900	↑	<i>Over-performance is due to the initial implementation of additional Selective Licensing and Healthy Homes activity and more staff contributing to this output; the year-end forecast has been revised to reflect this.</i>
RECP06	Increase the number of jobs created and safeguarded via Invest Wirral	975	475	655	Apr-Dec	Green	975	↑	<i>Performance during 2015/16 has consistently achieved or exceeded trajectory figures and cannot be readily compared to performance progress from this time last year because of the unusually high volume of Regional Growth Fund (RGF) Grant Applications awarded. Current performance remains on track to meet or exceed the 2015/16 year-end target.</i>

**Regeneration & Environment Directorate  
Corporate and Directorate PI Performance Report  
Quarter 3 2015/16**

2015-16 Regeneration & Environment Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	(Q3)				Year End Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	Period	RAG			
RECP07	Gross Value Added per head of population	£13,213	£13,213	£13,589	2014	Green	£13,589	↑ <i>This data is annual for 2014 and was released in December 2015. Wirral's new GVA per head figure has outperformed the target by 2.8%.</i>	
RECP08	Number of working age people claiming out-of-work benefits (economic in-activity)	13.6%	14.1%	13.1%	Apr-Jun	Green	13.4%	↑ <i>Latest performance data represents Q2 2015/16 showing Wirral is performing at 13.1% and is on track to meet or exceed the end of year target for 2015/16. Q3 (July-Sept 2015) performance is not available until February 2016. Data for this indicator is reported on a calendar year basis.</i>	



**Regeneration & Environment Directorate  
Corporate and Directorate PI Performance Report  
Quarter 3 2015/16**

2015-16 Regeneration & Environment Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	(Q3)				Year End Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	Period	RAG			
REDP09	Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents (KSI)	98	74	112 (P)	Apr-Dec (Police: Jan-Sept)	Red	150	↓  At this time we are limited in our analysis to provisional (P) headline numbers; basic analysis shows there have been some improvements in pedestrian KSI casualties (particularly child KSIs), however there have continued to be increases in the number motorcycle and scooter casualties as well as in car KSI casualties.  A multi-agency action/activity plan has been agreed by key partner agencies to address KSI casualties within Wirral.  Data is recorded by police on a calendar year basis therefore Q3 figures actually represent Jan - Sept 2015 KSI casualties.	
REDP12	Number of empty properties returned to use or demolished through local authority action	260	160	160	Apr-Dec	Green	260	↔	
REDP13	Number of homeless preventions	750	561	932	Apr-Dec	Green	1200	↑  <i>As quarterly targets have been continually exceeded in 2015/16, caused by the inclusion of Mainstay data set, the year-end forecast has now been revised to take this new data into account.</i>	

## Regeneration & Environment Directorate Corporate and Directorate PI Performance Report Quarter 3 2015/16

2015-16 Regeneration & Environment Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	(Q3)				Year End Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	Period	RAG			
REDP15	% of Major Planning Applications determined within 13 weeks	60%	60%	100%	Apr-Dec	Green	60%	↑	
RECP18	Develop and deliver the Wirral Selective Licencing Scheme (WSLS)	100%	83%	83%	Apr-Dec	Green	100%		
REDP19	Delivery of the Docks Bridges Replacement Major Scheme up to contract award stage	100%	90%	75%	Apr-Dec	Amber	100%		Government guidance on State-Aid rules has resulted in delayed approval being made which will affect subsequent programme dates but which will be recovered in subsequent years.
REDP20	Maintain the condition of Wirral's strategic network – Principal Roads	1%	1%	1.7%	2015	Amber	1.7%	↓	During 2014 each indicator achieved a measure of 1.4% (rounded down to 1%) For 2015 the key network indicators declined slightly by 0.3% and 0.35% respectively.
REDP21	Maintain the condition of Wirral's strategic network – Non-principal Roads	1%	1%	1.75%	2015	Amber	1.75%	↓	The 2015 survey was undertaken prior to completion of the surfacing programme. Future surveys will take place on completion of the works whenever possible.  Wirral's strategic network remains in the top quartile in the country.

## Regeneration & Environment Directorate Corporate and Directorate PI Performance Report Quarter 3 2015/16

2015-16 Regeneration & Environment Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	(Q3)				Year End Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	Period	RAG			
REDP22	Implementation of LED Street Lighting Project	100%	75%	70%	Apr-Dec	Amber	100%	An increase in installation figures together with poor weather throughout November and December 2015 resulted in slight slippage to the intended target. The project is being brought back on track through resource management and will be delivered as planned by year-end.	
REDP23	Develop and deliver a master plan for Birkenhead Town Centre	100%	80%	80%	Apr-Dec	Green	80%		
Directorate Financial Management	Revenue	89,461,400			Apr-Dec	Green	87,651,400	An underspend of £1.81 million is currently forecast across the Directorate. This underspend is as a result of a number of factors.	
	Capital Programme	23,473,077		15,176,039	Apr-Dec	Green	23,473,077		
	Savings	2,944,000		2,469,000	Apr-Dec	Green	2,944,000	The Streetworks Permit option (£200k) requires a statutory process, which is likely to delay the full implementation until 2016-17. Other options requiring income generation will be closely monitored throughout the year.	
Direction of Travel (DoT)	↓ Deteriorating performance			↑ Improving Performance			↔ Performance Sustained		

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## Policy and Performance - Regeneration and Environment Committee

Wednesday, 2 March 2016

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>FINANCIAL MONITORING 2015/16</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Head of Financial Services</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the financial monitoring information for Regeneration and Environment in a format consistent across the Policy and Performance Committees. The report aims to give Members the detail to scrutinise budget performance for the Directorate. The financial information is for Quarter 3 (October-December 2015) and was reported to Cabinet on 22 February 2016.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

1. That the forecast year end underspend of £1.81 million in the Regeneration and Environment 2015/16 Revenue Budget position and actions taken during quarter 3 be noted.
2. That the capital expenditure position at the close of quarter 3 totalling £14.9 million against a revised Capital Programme of £23.5 million be noted
3. Members are requested to review the information presented to determine if they have any specific questions relating to the budget for the Regeneration and Environment Directorate.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure Members have the appropriate information to review the budget performance of the directorate.

### 2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 This is a monitoring report but any options to improve the monitoring and budget accuracy will be considered.

### 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### 3.1 CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET

- 3.1.1 The 2015/16 Budget was agreed by Council on 24 February 2015. ; any increase in the overall Council Budget have to be agreed by full Council. Changes to the Budget since it was set are summarised in Table 1.

**Table 1: 2015/16 Original & Revised Net Budget by Directorate £000's**

	Original Net Budget	Approved Budget Changes Prior Qtrs	Approved Budget Changes Qtr 3	Revised Net Budget
Regeneration & Environment	90,287	-795	-31	89,461
Net Cost of Services	90,287	-795	-31	89,461

- 3.1.2 The main budget movements in quarter three relate to adjustments within the support services budget. These adjustments have no effect on the net bottom line of the council as a whole.

#### 3.2 PROJECTIONS AND KEY ISSUES

- 3.2.1 The projected outturn position as at the end of December 2015, key issues emerging and Directorate updates are detailed in the following sections.

**Table 2: 2015/16 Projected Budget variations by Directorate £000's**

Directorates	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	(Under) Overspend Quarter 3	RAGBY Class	Change from prev
Regeneration & Environment	89,461	87,651	-1,810	Y	-1,080
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>89,461</b>	<b>87,651</b>	<b>-1,810</b>		<b>-1,080</b>

The report classifies the forecast under/overspends for the above areas using a colour RAGBY rating. The ratings are defined as follows:

- Extreme: Overspends **Red** (over +£301k), Underspend **Yellow** (over - £301k).
- Acceptable: **Amber** (+£141k to +£300k), **Green** (range from +£140k to -

£140k); **Blue** (-£141k to -£300k).

### 3.3 DIRECTORATE UPDATES

#### Regeneration and Environment

- 3.3.1 There has been a further underspend of £1.08 million this quarter. Within Waste & Environment there is a forecast underspend of £0.2 million. The annual inflation rate applied to the Biffa contract was less than originally budgeted for resulting in a small underspend. There is also some additional income from litter enforcement fines and which is reflected within the above underspend position.
- 3.3.2 Due to EDRF funding for the salaries within Business Support being extended until November 2015, there will be an underspend of approximately £0.1 million on employee budgets. There are also further potential underspends of £0.3 million from budgets set aside to match funding future grant delivery programmes. As yet these monies have not been committed.
- 3.3.3 In Housing there is also additional income from DFG fees and underspends from employee vacancies during the year. A further £0.26 million has been added to this underspend by removing a budget allocated as a 'revenue contribution to capital' and using in its place other available capital programme resources.

### 3.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF SAVINGS

- 3.4.1 The delivery of the agreed savings is key to the Council's financial health and is tracked at both Council and Directorate level. The Budget for 2015/16 originally included £38 million of efficiency measures and it was recognised that the delivery of the savings, particularly within Adults and Children's Services was challenging being more of a transformational / change nature. Cabinet in July agreed the reprofiling of £9.6 million of savings funded from earmarked reserves (£5.4 million) and General Fund Balances (£4.2 million) which was confirmed by Council 12 October.

**Table 3: Budget Implementation Plan 2015/16 (£000's)**

BRAG	Number of Options	Approved Budget Reduction	Amount Delivered at Dec 15	To be Delivered
B - delivered	8	1,595	1,595	0
G – on track	9	794	603	191
A - concerns	3	470	200	270
R - high risk/ not achieved	0	0	0	0
<b>Total at Dec 2015-16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2,859</b>	<b>2,398</b>	<b>461</b>

- 3.4.2 The savings tracker contains an assessment of the 2015/16 savings. Cabinet 27 July agreed that £9.6 million of savings be moved into 2016/17 with

funding from earmarked reserves and General Fund balances.

### 3.5 PERFORMANCE AGAINST CAPITAL BUDGETS QUARTER 3

#### 3.5.1 Capital Programme 2015/16 at end of Quarter 3 (31 December)

	<b>Capital Strategy</b>	<b>Revisions Since Budget Cabinet</b>	<b>Revised Capital Programme</b>	<b>Actual Spend December 2015</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
R&E– Env & Regulation	12,633	-1,089	11,544	7,256
R&E– Hsg & Comm Safety	6,412	-984	5,428	2,319
R& E – Regeneration	1,808	4,694	6,502	5,344
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>20,853</b>	<b>-2,621</b>	<b>23,474</b>	<b>14,919</b>

#### 3.5.2 Regeneration and Environment – Environment and Regulation

In respect of West Kirby Flood Alleviation the business case has been submitted to the Environment Agency. Approval to commence the scheme is still awaited and anticipated to be primarily in 2016/17.

The major areas of expenditure to date are in respect of highways and bridges with expenditure exceeding £4.7 million. The most significant schemes are Kings Parade, Spital Road, North Wallasey Approach Road, Rake Lane, micro asphaltting and Bidston Bypass Bridge.

The LED Street Lighting scheme is well under way with expenditure of £1.4 million incurred by 31 December with a further £1.8 million to be expended in this phase.

#### 3.6.3 Regeneration and Environment – Housing

£1.3 million of grant aid has been provided for the provision of essential aids and adaptations giving disabled people better freedom of movement in and around their homes.

#### 3.6.4 Regeneration and Environment – Regeneration

Over £5.2 million Regional Growth Fund and business investment grants have been allocated to date which is helping to create jobs and encourage growth and investment. Allocations include a grant of £1.2 million towards Redsun Development's overall £7 million investment to support the new Turbine Business Park which will provide an estimated 235 local jobs, with businesses operating from new units on the site. Capital and Centric Plc, have received £0.9 million with upwards of 50 jobs set to be created with the opening of a £2.5 million complex of new super-energy efficient offices and warehouses in Birkenhead.

Hamilton Square Accessibility Improvements – the original proposal has been withdrawn following public consultation and the £0.4 million Liverpool City



Region Sustainable Transport Enhancement Package grant will be returned. There are a series of projects being developed which will form part of a wider strategy for Birkenhead town Centre which will include improved linkage and developments within the Woodside area, Hind Street and the Europa Pools area. Any further proposals for Hamilton Square should they arise will fall within this strategy.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 In respect of the Revenue Budget the Regeneration and Environment Directorate is projecting a £1.81m underspend as at the 31 December 2015.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

6.1 There are no IT, staffing or asset implications arising directly out of this report.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 There are none relating to this report.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

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

#### **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 This report is essentially a monitoring report which reports on financial performance.

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#### **APPENDICES**

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Regular financial monitoring reports for Revenue and Capital have been presented to Cabinet since September 2012.	

## Annex 1 Revised Capital Programme

Regeneration and Environment - Environment & Regulation	Revised Programme £000	Spend to Date £000	Council Resources £000	Revenue/ Reserves £000	Grants £000	Total Funding £000
Road Safety	60	45	60	-	-	60
Active Travel	107	68	107	-	-	107
Transportation	104	89	104	-	-	104
Bridges	1,305	1,159	467	-	838	1,305
Street Lighting	76	53	26	-	50	76
Highway Maintenance	3,935	3,547	1,400	-	2,535	3,935
Transport for Growth	1,436	323	-	-	1,436	1,436
Start Active, Play Active, Stay active	34	12	34	-	-	34
Wirral Way - widening and safety improvements	14	6	14	-	-	14
Cemetery Extensions and Improvements	71	18	71	-	-	71
Coast Protection	23	23	23	-	-	23
Energy schemes (LED Street Lighting)	3,162	1,430	3,162	-	-	3,162
Allotments	165	20	165	-	-	165
Parks Improvements	38	35	-	13	25	38
Parks vehicles replacement	684	428	684	-	-	684
West Kirby Flood Alleviation	50	-	-	50	-	50
Dock Bridges Replacement	280	-	280	-	-	280
	<b>11,544</b>	<b>7,256</b>	<b>6,597</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>4,884</b>	<b>11,544</b>

<b>Regeneration and Environment - Housing &amp; Community Safety</b>	<b>Revised Programme £000</b>	<b>Spend to Date £000</b>	<b>Council Resources £000</b>	<b>Revenue/ Reserves £000</b>	<b>Grants £000</b>	<b>Total Funding £000</b>
Aids, Adaptations and Disabled Facility Grants	<b>2,000</b>	1,268	-	-	2,000	<b>2,000</b>
LIFT	<b>2</b>	3	2	-	-	<b>2</b>
Clearance	<b>516</b>	469	220	100	196	<b>516</b>
Home Improvement	<b>420</b>	244	270	150	-	<b>420</b>
Improvement for sale grants	<b>180</b>	-	-	180	-	<b>180</b>
Empty Property Interventions	<b>160</b>	58	150	10	-	<b>160</b>
New House Building Programme	<b>1,500</b>	277	1,500	-	-	<b>1,500</b>
Cluster of Empty Homes Fund	<b>650</b>	-	-	-	650	<b>650</b>
	<b>5,428</b>	<b>2,319</b>	<b>2,142</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>2,846</b>	<b>5,428</b>
<b>Regeneration and Environment - Regeneration</b>						
New Brighton	<b>140</b>	48	140			<b>140</b>
Other Regional Growth Fund Schemes	<b>3,208</b>	2,890	-	-	3,208	<b>3,208</b>
LEP Regional Growth Fund Schemes Targeted Assistance	<b>2,265</b>	2,265	-	-	2,265	<b>2,265</b>
Business Investment Grants	<b>780</b>	105	780	-	-	<b>780</b>
The Priory	<b>69</b>	36	-	-	69	<b>69</b>
Hamilton Square Accessibility Improvements	<b>40</b>		40	-	-	<b>40</b>
	<b>6,502</b>	<b>5,344</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,542</b>	<b>6,502</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,917</b>	<b>26,166</b>	<b>23,585</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>22,760</b>	<b>46,917</b>



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## Policy and Performance - Regeneration and Environment Committee

Wednesday, 2 March 2016

REPORT TITLE:	WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT
REPORT OF:	<i>THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE</i>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report updates Members on the current position regarding the work programme for the Regeneration and Environment Policy & Performance Committee as agreed for the 2015/16 municipal year.

The Regeneration and Environment Policy & Performance Committee is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council and be informed by service priorities and performance, risk management information, public or service user feedback and referrals from Cabinet or Council.

In determining items for the Scrutiny Work Programme, good practice recommends the following criteria could be applied:

- Public Interest – topics should resonate with the local community
- Impact – there should be clear objectives and outcomes that make the work worthwhile
- Council Performance – the focus should be on improving performance
- Keeping in Context – should ensure best use of time and resources

The work programme is made up of a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports. This provides the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The current work programme for the Committee is attached as **Appendix 1**.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are requested to approve the Regeneration and Environment Policy & Performance Committee work programme for 2015/16.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

To ensure members of the Regeneration and Environment Policy & Performance Committee have the opportunity to regularly review, update and give continuous approval to the annual work programme.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

N/A

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **3.1 PREVIOUS / CURRENT SCRUTINY REVIEWS – UPDATE**

##### **3.1.1 Tourism**

As reported in the previous work programme report, the first evidence session was held in December and Members of the Review Panel had an opportunity to talk to the Council's Heritage Officer and a representative from the History and Heritage Association. The next evidence session is to be finalised with representatives from the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Wirral Met College.

##### **3.1.2 Coastal Strategy**

The evidence session for the Coastal Strategy scrutiny review has now been held. The Review Panel focused particularly on areas detailed in the strategy that required intervention in the short-term from flood and coastal erosion risk and how these would be funded. A representative from the Environment Agency was also invited to the session to talk about Partnership Funding and Local Levy funding.

##### **3.1.3 Budget Scrutiny**

Workshops have now been held which enabled Members of each of the three Policy & Performance Committees to consider relevant items which form part of the 2016/17 budget proposals. Two workshops were scheduled for the Regeneration and Environment Policy & Performance Committee and these covered the six budget proposals that are subject to public consultation. The outcomes from all of the workshops have now been included in a single report which will be presented to Coordinating Committee on 16th February.

#### **3.2 SPOTLIGHT SESSION**

The Spotlight Session focusing on Birkenhead Town and its immediate environs of strategic importance has now been scheduled for 29th February. The session will be informal and also open to all non-executive Members.



### **3.3 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY SCRUTINY PANEL – UPDATE**

3.3.1 A Scrutiny Review on “Housing” was agreed as the next piece of work to be carried out by the Scrutiny Panel. The scoping meeting was originally scheduled for 27th January but this has now been put back to 10th February due to the availability of presenters.

3.3.2 The Affordable Transport scrutiny review report has now been finalised and has been referred to the Combined Authority for consideration. The report has been included as **Appendix 3**.

### **3.4 PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **3.4.1 Car Parking Scrutiny Review**

An update on the implementation of the recommendations made from the Car Parking scrutiny review is attached as **Appendix 2** to this report.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

N/A

### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

N/A

### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

N/A

### **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

This report is for information to Members and there are no direct equality implications.

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### **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Regeneration and Environment Policy & Performance Committee Work Programme

Appendix 2 – Car Parking Scrutiny Review – Recommendations Update

Appendix 3 – LCRCRA Affordable Transport Scrutiny Review Report

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>

# 2015-16 Regeneration & Environment Policy & Performance Committee Work Programme

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	April 2016	Outcome
<b>Committee Dates</b>					14th		15th		3rd	2nd	18th		2nd		
<b>Scheduled Reviews</b>															
Coastal Strategy	Cllr Bernie Mooney	Requested by Members													In Progress
Tourism	Cllr Chris Meaden	Requested by Members													In progress
Homelessness and the impact of welfare reforms	Cllr George Davies	Requested by Members													
Budget Options	Cllr Moira Mclaughlin	Part of the Council's budget process													Report to Coordinating Committee on 16th February 2016
Scrutiny of the Wirral Plan and Delivery Arrangements	Cllr Moira Mclaughlin	Agreed by Coordinating Committee													Workshops held in November 2015. Report to Coordinating Committee on 10th December 2015.
<b>Potential Reviews</b>															
<b>Reports Requested</b>															
Tourism	Emma Degg	Requested by Members													T&F Review agreed
Homelessness / Impact of removal of Housing Benefit for under 21s	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
Merseytravel	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													Completed
Enterprise Zone Investment and Property Development Fund	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													Completed
Devolution	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													Completed
Street Lighting	Mark Smith	Requested by Members													
<b>Notice of Motion</b>															
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority		Referred from Council													
Wirral's Economic Success		Referred from Council													
Supporting Wirral's Part in our Nuclear Industries		Referred from Council													
Hamilton Square		Referred from Council													
<b>Spotlight Session</b>															
Birkenhead Town Centre															Session arranged for 29th February
<b>Standing Items</b>															
Performance Dashboard															

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	April 2016	Outcome
Financial Monitoring															
Policy Inform															
Devolution update															
Recommendations from Highways & Traffic Representation Panels															

## APPENDIX 2

### Car Parking Scrutiny Review – Recommendations Progress Update

Recommendation	Update	Recommendation Implemented
<p><u>Recommendation 1</u></p> <p>Cabinet approves the following ‘Objectives’ and ‘Principles’ which should provide a guiding framework for any future Car Parking strategy.</p> <p>Proposed Objectives (not listed in any priority)</p> <p>Objective</p> <p>P01 To support the long-term economic viability of the Boroughs shopping and commercial centres.</p> <p>P02 To ensure that the price for car parking is fair and not detrimental to the economic well-being of shopping and commercial centres and there is clear consideration of the cost to users of private car parks provided in the same area.</p> <p>P03 That car park users are provided with convenient alternative methods of payment other than just cash, and that parking tariffs paid for in cash are in readily available coinage.</p> <p>P04 To ensure that parking facilities are accessible and located in such places to meet the needs of users of shops and commercial premises.</p> <p>P05 To provide sufficient numbers of disabled parking spaces in good proximity to shops and services.</p> <p>P06 To ensure adequate numbers of parking spaces are available in areas of demand, particularly for visitors to the Boroughs tourist destinations.</p> <p>P07 To maintain a good quality of life for local residents and</p>	<p>A report was presented by the Car Parking Scrutiny Review Panel to Cabinet on 6th November 2014 [Minute 91 refers]. This report was endorsed by Cabinet and now forms the basis of the Council’s Car Parking Strategy.</p>	<p>Implemented November 2014.</p>

visitors by tackling inappropriate parking and congestion.

P08 Ensure that new development supports the Councils policies and does not make worse any parking issues in areas of high demand.

P09 To ensure that there is adequate taxi, cycle, motorcycle, freight and coach parking provision in areas of demand.

P10 To ensure that car parks are adequately lit, appropriately signed, and that users feel safe and secure, particularly in the evening and in remote locations.

P11 To provide well maintained car parking facilities.

***Proposed Principles.***

In order that the proposed objectives are obtainable, the Council will:

1. Ensure that parking is included as an important part of any regeneration plans for the Borough.
2. Continue to regularly review car parking charges to ensure that they are appropriate and fair.
3. Cater for short stay use to support daytime and evening commercial activity.
4. Ensure adequate provision of off-street and on-street parking in areas of demand.
5. Work with partner organisations with regards to parking which allows for mutually beneficial outcomes.
6. Look for opportunities to create more parking facilities where there is demand, including mixed use of car parks, such as parking during the day and community use of an evening and weekend.
7. Provide adequate taxi, cycling and motorcycle parking

<p>(inc Taxi ranks) near to commercial centres and visitor sites (Including the provision of cycle hire centres where appropriate)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Dispose of car parks, or reduce the size of car parks in areas of low demand, in order to make alternative car parks more sustainable and provide appropriate land development opportunities</li> <li>9. Maintain the car parks in terms of cleanliness winter gritting and grounds maintenance.</li> <li>10. Pursue developer contributions under Section 106 agreements to further the Council's policies as well as to improve parking facilities where parking need is expected to increase as a result of proposed development.</li> <li>11. Review the potential to provide lorry parking and rest facilities in the Borough</li> <li>12. To adopt the practice set out in the 2004 Traffic Management Act Part 6 which addresses inappropriate parking.</li> <li>13. Keep under review signage to and from car parks for users to ensure that they are adequate and appropriate.</li> <li>14. Consider the use of 'Park &amp; Ride' schemes in areas of high demand.</li> <li>15. Review the potential to provide coach drop off, parking and rest facilities in the Borough.</li> </ol>		
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<p><u>Recommendation 2</u></p> <p>Cabinet should introduce a banding structure for car park pricing tariffs to support the long term viability of Wirral's shopping and commercial centres and to ensure that the price of car parking is fair and not detrimental to the economic wellbeing of shopping and commercial centres. The banding structure should be governed by the objectives outlined and give consideration to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demand at different areas and/or sites</li> <li>- The economic viability of district &amp; local centres</li> <li>- Existing action plans for the regeneration of district &amp; local centres</li> <li>- Private Contractor prices in the immediate area</li> </ul>	<p>The budget implications were presented at the Cabinet budget meeting on 10th February 2015 [Minute 136 refers]. Cabinet gave consideration to the recommendations set out in the Car Parking Scrutiny Review report and the following resolution was agreed:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Simplified charges at all Council car parks for a 12 month period April 2015 to March 2016 which includes the removal of the 5p tariff denomination</li> <li>b. A new significantly reduced Pilot Tariff for the following shopper car parks for a 12 month period April 2015 to March 2016 with a review of the impact of these revised charges to be undertaken towards the end of the year and reported to Cabinet.</li> <li>c. We also request officers to progress the testing of new technology such as "Phone to Pay" as highlighted in the Car Parking Scrutiny Review report and carry out further consultation with traders' associations to look at the feasibility of a "Parking Cashback" scheme that allows shoppers to park and have the cost of their parking ticket refunded by participating outlets.</li> </ol>	<p>Implemented April 2015</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 3</u></p> <p>Cabinet should ensure that the new banding structure pricing is set out in convenient denominations (removal of the odd 5p) and that where appropriate; technology should be used to make it easier for users to pay.</p>	<p>As recommendation 2 above</p>	<p>As recommendation 2 above</p>



<p><u>Recommendation 4</u></p> <p>Cabinet is requested to approve the testing of the tariff banding structure model and any associated technological implementation in a controlled pilot or series of controlled pilots. The outcomes from such pilot schemes should influence any model, pricing or implementation of technology and the views of traders and users considered.</p>	<p>As recommendation 2 above</p> <p>‘Parking Cashback Scheme’ - Following discussions with the Heswall and District Business Association the details of a ‘parking cashback scheme’ were agreed and implemented from the start of September 2015. Heswall has been used as a pilot area as their business association has been very proactive at looking at ways to promote business in the Heswall area. Similar schemes could be rolled out to other areas such as Birkenhead, Liscard and West Kirby if found to be successful.</p> <p>‘Cashless Parking’ or ‘Phone to Pay’ - A trial of a ‘cashless parking’ solution could take place at reasonably short notice, however, there would have to be a mini tender exercise to select a provider. A trial period would have to be of a suitable length of time to obtain any meaningful data. Therefore, in order to be transparent and follow corporate procedure rules a full tender exercise is considered to be the best way forward. The Parking Enforcement Services contract has recently been extended for 1 year, this will allow further efficiency savings to be made by tendering for a new Contract at the same time as tendering for other services such as a ‘cashless parking’ solution. The introduction of a ‘cashless parking’ solution will be delayed until a new parking enforcement contractor has been appointed in November 2016 following the full tender process.</p>	<p>As recommendation 2 above</p> <p>Implemented September 2015</p> <p>Implementation likely to be late 2016 early 2017.</p>
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<p><u>Recommendation 5</u></p> <p>Cabinet should implement Car Park charges in areas of high demand for parking and ensure adequate car parking is provided in such areas. Cabinet should ensure that the development of new Car Parks or the introduction of charging at existing sites does not make any parking issues in areas of high demand worse for residents. Adequate provision of on-street parking in areas of high demand should also be considered. Cabinet should give consideration to the Corporate Plan and related strategies before developing new Car Parks or implementing charges.</p>	<p>No new car parks or parking charges have been implemented since the Car Parking Scrutiny Review Report was endorsed by Cabinet.</p> <p>A proposal to introduce parking charges at Fort Perch Rock Car Park in New Brighton was subsequently dropped following a large on-line petition and a number of other objections.</p>	<p>On-going in line with the recommendation</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 6</u></p> <p>Cabinet should request officers to report on the opportunities for multiple use car parks &amp; contract parking in the Borough. The report should be presented to the Regeneration and Environment Committee no later than July 2015.</p>	<p>No sites have been identified yet</p>	<p>On-going in line with the recommendation</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 7</u></p> <p>Cabinet should request that officers assess and report back on the continued viability of Car Park sites which experience low demand. Where continued viability is not found, Cabinet should seek approval for the sale or leasing of such land. Cabinet should ensure that officers give consideration to the potential requirement for Car Parking in the future based on known regeneration plans before seeking to dispose of the site(s). Officers should only present this report once viability can be fully assessed following implementation of the proposed new strategy and associated recommendations found here. In the panels view at least a full year's data should be considered.</p>	<p>No sites have been identified yet</p>	<p>On-going in line with the recommendation</p>

## **LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **AFFORDABLE TRANSPORT – SHORT HOP BUS FARES REVIEW**

#### **1 Chair's Introduction**

This is the second piece of detailed scrutiny undertaken by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel and I would like to thank Panel members for the time they put into this work and those individuals who presented evidence to us. The issue of affordable and reliable transport is vital to our communities, as reflected by the comments made to elected members by their constituents. We were particularly keen to understand why the cost of 'short hop' bus fares within the LCR appeared higher than other comparable areas and what, if anything, can be done about it.

Whilst it initially appeared that, within the deregulated bus market we may be unable to influence significant change in terms of bus fare regimes, our investigations revealed that there were nonetheless suggestions that could be made that may help bus users and which may encourage greater bus patronage across the city region. These suggestions are reflected in the recommendations at Section 7 of this Report.

I commend this report to you,

**Cllr Kevan Wainwright**  
**Chair – LCR Scrutiny Panel**

#### **2 Background to the Review**

When the Panel was first formed it identified a number of topical areas around which it wished to carry out in-depth reviews. The Panel has already looked at 'European Funding' and has now examined 'Affordable Transport'. The topics were originally selected as they covered the broad range of responsibilities of the Combined Authority. It also allowed the Panel to test a methodology of working, given that each of the constituent authorities 'do' scrutiny in a different way.

#### **3 Developing the Scoping Document**

Having identified 'Affordable Transport' as a review topic the Panel held an initial scoping meeting to:

- Further refine the review area.
- Identify a timescale for its completion.
- Identify those who the Panel would want to receive evidence from.

The Panel identified the issue of 'short hop' bus fares for further investigation. This was selected as evidence provided by Merseytravel had identified that the cost of "short hop" fares in the Liverpool City Region were some of the most expensive in the country. Members wanted to understand why this was the case and what could be done about it.

Following those discussions a Scoping Document was produced to guide the next stages of the review, which is attached at Appendix A of this report.

#### **4 What we did and who we spoke to**

As noted in the Scoping Document the review consisted of three evidence sessions as follows:

- a) The first evidence session focused on reviewing trends in the bus market, rates of fare increase, the current position on 'short hop' journeys within the LCR area and provided comparisons to similar urban areas across the Country. A range of questions that emerged from this evidence session was discussed and agreed with Members before other witnesses were interviewed.
- b) In the second session two smaller operators, Avon Buses and Halton Transport were interviewed by the Panel and shared their views. This was supplemented by a representative from Transport Focus, the Government appointed passenger champion, who conduct annual passenger surveys across the region.
- c) At the Final Session the two major operators, Arriva and Stagecoach, were interviewed and this session was closed by representatives from Merseytravel who briefed Members on the way forward, including how the proposed Bus Alliance may operate.

#### **5 What did we hear and from whom?**

##### **a) Evidence Session One**

Paul Johnson, Research and Intelligence Adviser, and Ian Raymond, Evidence and Intelligence Officer, from Merseytravel's Policy Research/Intelligence team presented in detail the market in the City Region noting that nearly 80% of public transport journeys are made by bus but numbers have fallen by nearly a quarter since the mid 1990's. In examining bus fares specifically, it was noted that these have increased at a faster rate than inflation or rail since at least 2000. In addition, fares are charged at a flat rate for trips up to 6 miles, but there are some local variations. Evidence available confirmed that many other urban areas have 'short hop' bus fares with cost increasing over distance. The evidence presented in charts showed that 'value for money' increased

significantly with distance travelled. The draft interview questions that were discussed by Members in this session provided an outline to probe operators into their decision making over fares including how the short distance policy evolved in the city region, barriers to future adoption of short distance fares, reasons for the rapid fares increases and future fare innovations.

## **b) Evidence Session Two**

The second session consisted of witnesses from two smaller operators - George Lewis, Managing Director Avon Busses and Colin Stafford Managing Director, Halton Transport. Both noted particularly the cost element of running bus services and the need to make a return in order to invest further in the bus fleet. Furthermore, it was stated that they have recorded few complaints on the fares they charge. When asked about flat fares they believed it was a historic decision instigated to prevent 'overriding' but could not provide any specific evidence of this. Both operators indicated that they ran some commercial routes that larger operators would not provide, due to commercial viability. They also noted they were conscious of the impact of the fares charged, with one operator stating that they had reduced their weekly fare as part of their fare revision earlier in the year (although other fares were increased).

David Beer, Passenger Executive Manager from the watchdog 'Transport Focus' also attended the second session. He stated that although Transport Focus was appointed by Government it had no statutory powers to force operators to reduce prices or introduce new fare structures. He did however indicate that the surveys that his organisation undertakes and the pressure that local passengers can make a difference citing a fare decrease in the Bristol area as an example. He noted that it's generally punctuality/reliability that are the main concerns of passengers, and stated that information is a key requirement in ensuring passengers were aware of all fare options available to them.

## **c) Evidence Session Three**

The third session consisted of witnesses from the major operators - Gary Nolan, Regional Director North and Elisabeth Tasker, Managing Director Merseyside and South Lancashire from Stagecoach followed by Arriva's Howard Farrell, Managing Director Merseyside and Derek Bowes, Commercial Manager NW and Wales. The session closed with final witnesses from Merseytravel - Liz Chandler, Director of Corporate Development, Matt Goggins, Head of Bus and Carol Mitchell Data & Analysis Team Leader. As noted in the earlier session the larger operators could not provide tangible evidence of the 'overriding' issue that had been quoted to justify the flat fare policy but both operators stated that they were conducting trials of shorter distance fares, although at present the outcomes of these are inconclusive. However both agreed the current flat fare system could be perceived as unfair for shorter distances and needed to be looked at. In addition, Stagecoach as part of their

evidence noted they had a half fare for job seekers, which was particularly beneficial when people needed help the most.

It was stated that if short 'hop' fares were introduced, fares on longer journeys may have to be increased as a result. Both operators noted that they may look at a 'carnet' type ticket that would be cheaper for people who worked in jobs which requires them to travel, for example, on just 2-3 days per week. They also agreed that investment in the bus fleet would be a factor in helping increase patronage in the future citing more comfortable seats, wi-fi, charging points etc. They mentioned that improved reliability/punctuality would help them to reduce costs which could help stabilise ticket prices or possibly reduce them. However, this would require highway authorities to work with them on bus priority measures. Finally, regional inconsistencies in fares were noted to be down to historical reasons, but it was acknowledged that these are slowly being addressed.

Merseytravel provided a presentation on issues concerning affordability, setting fares, competition issues, the role of Merseytravel and the development of a City Region Bus Strategy. Questions were asked about a possible franchising system, and it was explained that this would depend on the future Bus Bill. The proposed 'Bus Alliance' with the City Region bus operators works within current legislation and Merseytravel will be working closely with operators to deliver partnership aims specifically to increase bus patronage.

Smaller operators are recognised as an important component of the bus industry, and regular meetings between Merseytravel and all operators are now undertaken to facilitate good communication and understanding. It was also recognised that speeding up the flow of buses could reduce costs and would be welcome. 'Carnet' Tickets were recognised as helping making fares affordable but it was reiterated that apart from supported fares the organisation could not insist that the operators change their fare structure or levels.

## **6 What conclusions did we reach?**

From the evidence sessions the following conclusions were reached

### **a) Cost of fares**

1. In comparison with other urban areas, short distance fares are expensive with affordability improving with distance.
2. In the City Region, bus fares have increased at a faster rate than rail fares since 2000 however, the average bus fare is still cheaper than the average rail fare.
3. Taxis can be competitive over short distances particularly when two or more people share the cab.
4. Operators claimed that overriding in the mid 2000's was an issue in implementing the 'flat fare' system. However, they could not provide 'hard evidence' that the Liverpool City region was any different to

anywhere else. The current trials will indicate if there are any current issues in this respect.

5. The Panel welcomed that some operators recognised that flat fares are poor value and could be reducing patronage. Short distance trials were to be encouraged but it was noted that there is no wish to improve complexity or penalise unfairly those who are currently travelling around 6 miles at a relatively cheap rate (although longer distance fares may increase).
6. No real explanation was given as to why 'short hop' fares were available in other urban areas apart from the development of local networks.

#### **b) Information about fares**

1. Information on fare options was deemed to be key. It was evident that from a customer perspective that more information on fares is required and that this should be incorporated into the Bus Strategy that Merseytravel is developing. Further, individuals should be able to find out the best available fare for their journey. However, it is noted that this could be complicated in a multi-operator environment despite being undertaken by operators such as Warrington Borough Transport and Trent Barton.
2. There was a lack of awareness of the Stagecoach Job Seekers ticket which should be better publicised.

#### **c) Improved Bus Flow across the LCR**

1. Improved traffic management arrangements that reduce and make journey times for buses more reliable including new technology, traffic management, bus lanes etc can reduce costs to operators. This could result in reduced or more stable fares due to them being able to reduce costs by utilising less buses on the route. A number of the operators commented on the impact the removal of bus lanes had on the free movement of buses, which added to journey times and therefore added to their costs, which is then reflected in fares. The evidence from Transport Focus also shows that reliability and punctuality are more important to users than price.

#### **d) Future opportunities,**

1. Bus Patronage has declined for a number of years however more recently it has exhibited slight growth which operators noted had been higher on certain routes.
2. Fares are exclusively a matter for bus companies who operate in a commercial environment, with the exception of supported service bus fares. The regulatory conditions mean that neither the Combined Authority (through Merseytravel) nor Transport Focus have the powers to insist that operators change their fares. They can however influence particularly using evidence from passenger

- surveys and comments to get the best possible outcome for users and encourage non-users.
3. A Carnet of tickets was raised as an approach for reducing fares for part time workers, and the use of smartcards was also mentioned in this context.
  4. The Panel welcomed trials on short distance fares that some operators are undertaking and suggest that a key location away from Liverpool City Centre is considered eg Kirkby, St Helens, Southport, Runcorn etc as a future trial as part of the Bus Strategy/Bus Alliance.
  5. Smaller operators voiced concerns particularly regarding their revenue streams that the impact of moving to a 'short hop' system could have – the elasticity on a route and levels of competition being crucial. They further indicated that there had been very few complaints when moving to a flat fare a few years ago.
  6. The Bus Alliance was mentioned by all operator witnesses. Small operators stated that they required to be involved fully in discussions and engaged. The Panel see the Alliance as having a key role in ensuring that information is available to passengers and influencing more affordable fares to be a key aspiration.

## **7 What recommendations are we making?**

### **a) Cost of fares**

1. Review supported fares to analyse the costs/benefits of introducing short distance fares on supported services.
2. Continue to develop a range of tickets that includes an 'all operator' carnet ticket and other innovations.
3. To raise, through the Alliance, a trial at a key centre which incorporates short distance fares as part of the agreement.

### **b) Information about fares**

1. Ensure that the emerging bus strategy includes information on fares as a key element
2. Develop the Merseytravel website/apps to incorporate fare information on point to point fares in conjunction with work undertaken by the Bus Alliance.
3. The Bus Alliance customer experience workstream develops a strategy with all operators on main routes to publicise fares between key centres by operator. This to include the consideration of publishing fares at shelters and in timetables.
4. Task the Bus Alliance customer experience workstream to develop point-to-point fares as part of the journey planner as a long term development.



**c) Improved Bus Flow across the LCR**

1. Work with Local authority partners to encourage improved traffic management arrangements to improve punctuality/reliability. The Better Bus Area evaluation should help inform this.

**d) Future opportunities, including legislative background and Buses Bill**

1. Continue to work with Transport Focus to influence their work in relation to ticketing and user/non user perceptions re 'value for money' and distance.
2. Smaller operators should be encouraged to join the Bus Alliance.
3. Progress on short distance trials to be shared amongst Alliance members, provided it does not breach commercial confidentiality or competition legalities with a view to expand the trials, if successful, across the network.
4. The progress of the Bus Bill is kept under review and relevant consultations responded to. If enacted the relevant powers be used regarding affordable fares.

# SCRUTINY SCOPING DOCUMENT

## Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel

### Scrutiny Review of Affordable Transport

#### Aims and Objectives

#### Aim and Objectives

The review will look at three questions, as follows:

- 1) Why are short journey distance cash fares so expensive?
- 2) Why do operators have different fare levels in place across different areas/routes of the City Region?
- 3) What can be done about it?

#### Context/Background

Members of the Liverpool City Region Scrutiny Panel had identified “Affordable Transport” as a topic for detailed scrutiny as part of their work plan. At their Development Day held on 17 August 2015 they identified the issue of short hop fares as an area of more detailed review. This was in the light of information provided on that day that indicated that short hop cash fares were more expensive in the LCR than anywhere else.

## SCRUTINY SCOPING DOCUMENT

<b>Methodology</b>	
<b>Timescale</b>	The target completion date for this piece of work is for the final report, together with any recommendations to the LCR Combined Authority, to be signed off by the Panel at its meeting on 28 October 2015.
<b>Evidence session 1</b>	Evidence session 1 will focus on the information held on this issue by representatives of Merseytravel and will look at the current position on short hop journeys within the LCR areas, together with comparisons across the Country. This will enable members to formulate questions to bus operators and to determine any other sources of evidence they may wish to identify.
<b>Evidence session 2</b>	Evidence session 2 will concentrate on receiving evidence from the principal bus operators within the LCR and will provide members with the operators' rationale for their pricing structures. Evidence will also be provided by "Transport Focus" – an independent transport user watchdog.

## SCRUTINY SCOPING DOCUMENT

<b>Evidence 3 session and Wrap up meeting</b>	<p>Session 3 will continue to receive evidence from the transport operators, but will also start to focus on drawing conclusions from the evidence received and forming recommendations to the CA. Officers will draft a final report which members will be consulted upon before formal submission to the Panel on 28 October 2015.</p>
<b>Potential outcomes</b>	
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Members will gain a greater understanding as to the rationale behind the different price structures across the Country and the region.</li> <li>– Members will develop recommendations to the CA in order to influence providers in delivering a more equitable and understandable price structure.</li> </ul>
<b>Measuring success</b>	<p>The ultimate measure of success will be that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The rationale behind the fares charged will be more widely understood.</li> <li>– The inequality in short hop cash fares is reduced.</li> <li>– Those fares will be considered to offer value for money to the user.</li> <li>– Bus passenger journeys will increase across the City Region.</li> </ul>

# SCRUTINY SCOPING DOCUMENT

<b>Officer/Member involvement</b>	
<b>Members</b>	All members of the Scrutiny Panel will have the opportunity to be involved in review.

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