



Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Wednesday, 29 November 2017
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **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 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.

3. **MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)**
To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September, 2017.
4. **UNIVERSAL CREDIT FULL SERVICE NOVEMBER 2017 (Pages 9 - 54)**
5. **NOTICE OF MOTION: MAKING MORE TIME FOR PEDESTRIANS (Pages 55 - 56)**

At the meeting of the Council held on 16 October 2017 (minute 68 (3) refers), the attached Notice of Motion, 'Making More Time for Pedestrians', proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist and seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia was referred by the Mayor to the Business

Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (6), Councillor Gilchrist has been invited to attend the meeting in order for him to be given an opportunity to explain the Motion.

6. NOTICE OF MOTION: WIRRAL WELL-MADE NEED FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT (Pages 57 - 58)

At the meeting of the Council held on 16 October 2017 (minute 68 (4) refers), the attached Notice of Motion, 'Wirral Well-Made Need for Infrastructure Support', proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley and seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie was referred by the Mayor to the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for consideration.

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (6), Councillor Blakeley has been invited to attend the meeting in order for him to be given an opportunity to explain the Motion.

7. UPDATE ON LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DEVELOPMENTS (Pages 59 - 64)

8. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY SCRUTINY PANEL - VERBAL UPDATE

9. 2017/18 QUARTER 2 WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE (Pages 65 - 78)

10. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 2 2017/18 (Pages 79 - 88)

11. HIGHWAYS REPRESENTATION PANEL MINUTES (Pages 89 - 92)

The Committee are requested to note the minutes of the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel held on 25 September, 2017.

12. POLICY INFORM: BUSINESS (Pages 93 - 116)

13. BUSINESS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT (Pages 117 - 126)

BUSINESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 19 September 2017

Present:

Councillor M Sullivan (Chair)

Councillors	P Hackett	J Stapleton
	RL Abbey	W Ward
	E Boulton	KJ Williams
	G Ellis	S Williams
	D Mitchell	G Wood

Deputies:

Councillors S Foulkes (In place of J McManus)
P Stuart (In place of A Leech)
I Lewis (In place of T Pilgrim)
B Berry (In place of J Hale)

16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that no further apologies had been received other than for Councillors John Hale, Anita Leech, Julie McManus and Tracey Pilgrim, all of whom had deputies standing in for them.

17 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 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.

Councillor Jean Stapleton declared a personal interest in respect of an item of urgent business on Resident Parking as she lived in a controlled parking area.

Councillors Jerry Williams and Pat Hackett also declared personal interests in the matter of urgent business by virtue of them living in a Resident Parking area.

18 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 4 and 18 July, 2017.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 4 and 18 July, 2017, be approved.

19 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS - RESIDENT PARKING SCRUTINY REVIEW**

The Chair agreed to consideration of this matter as an item of urgent business in view of the need for a response prior to the next scheduled meeting of this Committee.

He stated that the Resident Parking Scrutiny Review which had been endorsed by this Committee on 4 July, 2017 and referred to the Cabinet had been deferred at the last minute by Cabinet at its meeting on 4 September, 2017. He had since been told it was pulled due to 'due diligence'.

David Armstrong, Assistant Chief Executive, informed the Committee that the item had been deferred by the Cabinet to a future meeting because the Cabinet had requested some answers to questions from the Parking Services Team to help them in reaching an informed decision on the matter. It was not unusual for items to be deferred by the Cabinet when they asked for further information.

The Chair then drew the matter to a close stating that the Committee had now had a response to the matter, whether the Committee liked the response or not.

20 **COMMERCIALISATION UPDATE**

The Committee received a presentation from Stuart Bellerby, Commercial Approach Programme Lead, who gave an update on the Council's commercial approach. The project outcomes delivered so far, included:

Phase 1

- Cabinet had agreed vision & principles
- Project launched within Transformation Programme
- Work streams created Strategy, Customers and Markets, Culture and Support to Succeed.

Phase 2

- Review of the largest income generators within Council
- Review of income recovery with recommendations for service improvement
- Support /challenge on fees and charges – working with finance could amount to a maximum additional £650,000 anticipated for 2017-18
- Intranet site established including draft commercial approach toolkit
- 2 In-house e-learning modules established to support staff development

The next steps for the project would include:

- Establishing a Commercial Board and Governance
- Finalising a Commercial Strategy
- Challenge and support for income generation within budget setting process for 2018/19 and beyond
- Further development of staff training and support
- Development of a Business to Business (B2B) approach
- Member engagement and training

Responding to Members' comments, Stuart Bellerby's and Nicola Butterworth, Assistant Director: Commissioning Support's comments included the following:

- There was a large training programme which would include senior leadership and they were attending various departmental management team meetings.
- Best practice from other Authorities was being learnt from but there was also a need for a culture change and new mind set within Wirral Council.
- Up to 50 ideas had come through by way of the intranet site for the new ideas board. 10 to 15 of these ideas the Council was already carrying out; some ideas had been looked at but could not be implemented due to current lack of capacity. They were currently looking at 4/5 of these ideas and developing business cases for them.
- Additional fees for a faster than standard service was also being looked at for some areas as happened in Registrars for the issuing of duplicate birth, marriage and death certificates.
- Having a more commercial and business-like approach would create opportunities for the Council, it was not about privatising the Council.
- They acknowledged the importance of tourism for income generation for the Council and it was understood that the subsidy was being reduced over time. Mr Bellerby did not think there was a Council linked theatre across the country without subsidy.

The Chair challenged this assertion and commented upon the need for the Floral Pavilion Theatre to stand alone and indeed to generate income.

Mr Bellerby responded that he was going on the information he had been provided with and that he and Nicola were not there to run everything as that was the service manager's role.

Another Member commented that if comparisons were going to be made there was a need for them to be like for like.

The Assistant Chief Executive commented that the Floral Pavilion Theatre was a superb facility, not just a theatre but also a conference centre and the

Council was endeavouring to give greater autonomy to the Floral to enable it to increase income.

Responding to a further comment, Nicola Butterworth acknowledged the need to engage with local community groups, including Friends Groups and that although they had started the engagement process with Council staff they would look to expand this.

Resolved – That the officers be thanked for their presentation and that it be noted.

21 **UPDATE ON LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DEVELOPMENTS**

Rose Boylan, Policy and Strategy Manager, introduced a report and gave a presentation setting out a brief overview of latest developments at the Liverpool City Region (LCR), including activity underway to implement the City Region devolution deal. A snapshot of some of the recent activity and developments was included under the headings of, Economic Growth and Skills, Business and Brexit portfolio, Transport portfolio and Health, Adults Services and Children's Services portfolio.

Rose Boylan also referred to the LCR Mayor's 100 Day Plan, which was structured around five thematic pillars: Ambitious; Fair; Green; Connected; and Together. The presentation also referred to the newly completed Mersey Gateway Bridge, scheduled to open in the Autumn and the LCR Cultural programme for 2018, which would see the return of the Tall Ships in May 2018 and the return of the Giants in October, 2018.

The Chair declared an interest as retired military and in respect of the LCR Mayor signing the Armed Forces Covenant, commented upon the treatment of veterans as a national disgrace, with many former armed forces personnel being alcoholics, drug addicts, in prison or homeless.

Members expressed support for the work of the LCR, in particular the commitment to continue to engage with the Welsh Government on cross border rail connectivity; partnership working with the NHS and the scoping of proposals for affordable transport for apprentices.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

22 **LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY - OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The Chair introduced a report which gave an overview of the work of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The report gave details of appointments to the Overview and Scrutiny

Committee for 2017/18 and of the scrutiny induction day held on 19 July and a summary of the key actions / outcomes from the meeting on 26 July.

The Chair informed the Committee that Councillor Anita Leech, had resigned from the LCR Scrutiny Committee and that she would be replaced by Councillor Gillian Wood, subject to the matter being reported to Council.

The Chair reported that the Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram had been to the first meeting of the LCR Scrutiny Committee since his election and it was his intention to attend every meeting. The Committee had agreed a work programme which included a first piece of work around spatial development for an LCR approach to brownfield sites and greenbelt, this would not diminish in any way what each Council and Planning Committee did in each of the constituent authorities. The Scrutiny Committee of 20 Members would be split into two to undertake other pieces of scrutiny work including, Welfare Reform and Universal Credit and Air Quality Control.

Mike Lester, the Scrutiny Officer, confirmed that all final scrutiny reports would be circulated to this Committee's Members.

During this item, Councillor Warren Ward declared a personal interest by virtue of his partner working for the Department for Work and Pensions.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

23 **2017/18 QUARTER 1 WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE**

David Armstrong, Assistant Chief Executive introduced a report which provided the 2017/18 Quarter 1 (April – June 2017) performance report for Wirral Plan pledges under the Business theme. The Quarter 1 report was included as Appendix 1 to the report, and provided a description of the progress in Quarter 1 that included available data in relation to a range of outcome indicators and supporting measures.

Responding to comments from Members, David Armstrong stated that some indicators were annual because they were reported from outside organisations such as the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. The improvement in the employment rate in Wirral and the number of jobs created was the result of work by the Council and the Wirral Chamber of Commerce. The figures for the reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents was reducing compared to the previous quarters of the last two years.

A Member congratulated the small number of staff in the Tourism team who had undertaken tremendous work in increasing visitor numbers to the borough.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

24 **FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 1 2017/18**

Jenny Spick, Senior Manager, Financial Planning and Policy, introduced the report of the Assistant Director: Finance which set out the Council's revenue and capital monitoring position for 2017/18 quarter 1. The report gave details of key issues within the business theme, progress on the implementation of savings and income and debt. There was a current projected overspend of £100,000 which would be balanced out by an underspend in treasury management.

Responding to a comment from a Member, David Armstrong referred to the shortfall in car parking income of £0.1 million which was due to delayed implementation of the increased tariffs and charging at country parks, the delay being due to the great level of scrutiny this matter had received.

Responding to a comment from a Member, Jenny Spick stated that the £225,000 in the capital programme for webcasting was the budgeted figure for the scheme at the moment.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

25 **POLICY INFORM: BUSINESS**

The Chair introduced a report on the September Policy Inform Briefing paper which provided an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, bills presented to Parliament and emerging policies.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

26 **BUSINESS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee considered a report from the Chair which explained the process of developing a scrutiny work programme for the new municipal year. A dedicated work programme planning session had taken place on Monday 4 September for the Chair and Party Spokespersons of the committee to consider future items for the work programme.

The Chair suggested that in connection with receipt of an annotated version of the Road Safety Manager's report, from Ian Campbell, Chair of the Wirral Pedestrian Association, pre-decision scrutiny should be undertaken on the Road Safety Strategy. Further items added to the work programme included:

- Pre-decision scrutiny on the Commercial Strategy
- Universal Credit, and;

- Further briefing sessions on Wirral Waters.

Councillor Ian Lewis, at this point, declared a personal interest as he attended meetings of the Wirral Pedestrian Association. Councillor Lewis also reported that he had attended meetings with Councillors Tony Norbury and Paul Stuart and the Manager of Job Centre Plus, Deborah Veevers, who had offered to attend a meeting with the Committee.

Resolved – That the suggestions made be incorporated into the Committee’s work programme.

27 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair allowed Councillor Eddie Boulton to address the Committee concerning the issue of utility companies digging up roads and the fines imposed when they took longer than agreed to complete their work. He had asked for the figure for fines imposed in 2016/17 and for where the money had been spent at the previous meeting of the Committee.

The Assistant Chief Executive agreed that he would look into this matter and supply an answer in writing.

Prior to the meeting concluding the Chair reminded Councillor Abbey of the need to remain seated until he had formally closed the meeting.

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Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 29 November 2017

REPORT TITLE:	UNIVERSAL CREDIT FULL SERVICE NOVEMBER 2017
REPORT OF:	MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR DELIVERY

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the move to Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS) on Wirral and is intended to update Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members on implementation locally together with support arrangements in the process of being introduced to support Wirral residents claiming Universal Credit (UC) under Full Service, effectively from 15 November 2017, as the gateway to new applications in respect of Housing Benefit closes to most residents.

The matter links to a number of Wirral's associated 20/20 Pledges, significantly and directly 'People' pledges, protecting the most vulnerable and ensuring their safety and protection through reducing poverty and preventing associated hardship.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

As this report is to support Members consideration of the matter, it is not subject to the requirement of a related key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that a further report is delivered to Scrutiny in February 2018 following the initial implementation period. The purpose of the follow up report would be to deliver a summary of impact.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 This report is intended to support Overview and Scrutiny Members to give initial consideration to the implementation and impact of the further roll out of Universal Credit to 'Full Service' (UCFS) on Wirral effectively from 15 November 2017

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 There are no alternative options. The Council is legislatively required to support and administer the changes emerging from this Reform. UC is one of several wide-ranging Welfare Reforms introduced by the 2010-2015 Coalition Government in the Welfare Reform Act 2012. UC Live Service was introduced in Wirral in July 2014, replacing six key means-tested benefits and tax credits.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION – UNIVERSAL CREDIT FULL SERVICE

- 3.1 Universal Credit is a Social Security Benefit of working age only benefit therefore not affecting those of pensionable age. The ethos of Universal Credit (UC) is that it is intended to ensure customers are better off in work than they are on benefits. The framework of Universal Credit provides support to help people prepare for work, move into work, earn more and develop income management skills. The intention is that Universal Credit simplifies the historic complexities of numerous benefits.

- 3.2 UC is a means-tested benefit which is intended to replace the following legacy benefits with a single monthly payment. The benefits and tax credits that fall within scope of the UC are:

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credits
- Working Tax Credits
- Housing Benefit for working age *

** Housing Benefit will remain in payment for some specific claimants, including those who occupy specialised accommodation such as hostels and supported accommodation.*

- 3.3 UC can be claimed with other remaining benefits e.g. Child Benefit, Personal Independence Payment as well as taking into account earned income and other income e.g. occupational pensions etc. UC will provide a top-up for living costs if the claimant's existing income is below a set level.

- 3.4 Fundamentally from the Council perspective UC provides help with housing costs (rent) as part of the UC claim instead of Housing Benefit for most claimants.
- 3.5 The next major phase of UC roll-out at Wirral is Universal Credit 'Full Service' and commences on 15 November 2017 for all Wirral postcodes except CH44 and CH45 (Wallasey), which follow in January 2018.
- 3.6 In contrast to UC Live Service, UC Full Service is completely digitalised. Customers are required to create an account and UC must be claimed online. Payments are made monthly and direct to the Household. There are however payment safeguarding arrangements available e.g. payments direct to landlord based on circumstances. At local One Stop Shops and Libraries, Customer Service Advisors are trained and available to customers to get online and make their claim. Jobcentre's are also able to provide access to the internet or signpost customers to local places where the internet can be used for free. If customers are unable to claim online, then face to face and telephone support is available until a customer can get access to the Internet. DWP also offer a visiting service including Customers in hospital.
- 3.7 Local Authorities continue to be funded by DWP under the annual 'Delivery Partnership Agreement' to play a crucial role in assisting with digital access and to provide individual budgeting support for those who require assistance in transitioning to a single, monthly payment or to manage debt and other financial challenges.
- 3.8 New UC Customers will experience a 'waiting period' for their first payment. The DWP recognise that this may cause hardship and have introduced an Advanced Payment facility which enable Customers to request up to 50% of their award in order to prevent damage to the claimants/ families health through help with immediate essentials - food, heating costs etc. Through Customer Access channels (OSS, Libraries and Call Centre), the council will actively promote this provision and do it's best to ensure people are aware and signposted accordingly. Officers will explain it is repayable through negotiable arrangements with DWP.
- 3.9 Through local partnership work, access to support is well established and has been since Universal Credit's original introduction on Wirral in July 2014. The development of this support will continue to ensure wider communication to the growing group of claimants. The Council and Partners have developed a media campaign to highlight what support is available within the Borough.
- 3.10 At the moment, the 'natural migration' of claimants is a gradual stepped process which occurs as peoples circumstances change and they enter the UC gateway. The 'managed/scheduled migration' of existing claimants to UC has yet to begin and is now expected to commence mid-2019, with likely completion in 2022

4.0 CURRENT STATUS AT WIRRAL

4.1 Currently nationally available data is limited. The DWP reports as at 30 October 2017 there are 4945 people claiming Universal Credit across Wirral.

4.2 Of this total we have 1679 working age claimants are in receipt of Universal Credit and claiming Council Tax Support. This represents approximately 8.6% of the total working age Council Tax Support claimants which suggests the remainder will move to Universal Credit over the next few years. The profile of this figure is broken down below

Claimant Groups				
Single	Single with Deps	Couple	Couple with Deps	Total
747	817	16	99	1,679

With Earnings Allowance	Without Earnings Allowance
331	1348

Since the introduction of UC there has been a steady decrease in overall caseload and in particular working age claimants. This is consistent with national and local trends:

	Overall HB/CTS Caseload	Housing Benefit Claimants	CTS				
			Total CTS	Elderly split	Working Age split	UC claims	% of WA on UC
Pre July 2014	41,906	31,846	37,611	15,949	21,662	0	0
Jul-15	40,413	30,233	35,928	15,085	20,843	571	2.74%
Oct-17	36,842	26,695	33,191	13,611	19,580	1,689	8.63%

5.0 WORK UNDERTAKEN TO DATE

Work undertaken to support the implementation and roll out of UC in Wirral includes a range of activities and has been ongoing since its introduction. This covers the engagement and activities across One Wirral Council (including elected member engagement), Partner & Third Sector Organisations and the Liverpool City Region.

5.1 Wirral Council to date has:

- Worked with other council services across Delivery Services to capture and understand the wider impacts of UC e.g. Children's and Adult Services and Environmental Services
- Amended the Council Tax Support (CTS) Policy to enable assessment of CTS in relation to UC Customers

- UC leads and champions have been established across Customer Services
- UC procedure notes produced as procedures are constantly refined in response to rapidly changing legislative and work process changes. Clear guidance material produced for all staff to signpost UC claimants for Advanced Payments and alternative support during the 6 (possible longer) week waiting period to prevent hardship at the earliest opportunity
- IT processes implemented to manage UC workflows efficiently and to report and record relevant data effectively
- Full training has been delivered across the appropriate services
- Literature in the form of letters and leaflets produced/updated where necessary and the promotion of digital channels e.g. website review and the development of an effective Communication Strategy undertaken. Councillor.net FAQ's produced (See Appendix 3)

5.2 **Within the 3rd Sector it has:**

- Worked collaboratively with Private & Registered Social Landlord sectors to ensure they are fully informed of UC developments relevant to them to support them in assisting their tenants
- Delivered presentations across Wirral to all affected Partners and third parties – see list (Appendix 4)

5.3 **Within Liverpool City Region it has:**

- A group has been established to promote collaboration and co-operation across the Liverpool City Region with a view to developing shared understanding and approaches to common issues, sharing of best practice and positive working relationships. Specifically with regard to matters concerning Benefits and Revenues and the Council's related responsibilities
- The group initiated in 2016, works collaboratively in many aspects particularly to identify and implement improvements to performance, customer service and efficiency and to better respond to changing legislation such as Universal Credit
- The ethos behind this being that by sharing thinking and possibly jointly undertaking specific projects, authorities may be enabled not only to reduce the costs of implementing change but to better support those who are experiencing the effects of it as the process of welfare reform progresses
- With specific regard to UC the group has tabled questions to the DWP, secured response and escalation together with attendance at its forum of appropriate DWP regional leads
- The group is presently working together to rationalise intelligence around the wider welfare reform impacts and any associated anti-poverty provision it may be able to inform/support relating to complex claims and DWP legislation

6.0 SUPPORT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

6.1 Council Tax Support

People in receipt of UC may still apply for and be eligible for CTS. It is important to note that this MUST be claimed separately whereas this support would previously be considered alongside a person's HB claim. Council Tax Support is a local/locally funded scheme which replaced the national Council Tax Benefit Scheme. It is means tested and reduces the amount of Council Tax payable where an award is made.

Ensuring uptake of Council Tax Support is maximised is a key part of the work ongoing to support those moving to UC as it is evident people fail to claim, or make a late claim with arrears that may have otherwise been avoided, or at least minimised accruing. This is being done in a number of ways and it is expected this work will evolve at UC roll-out gathers momentum.

Personal Budgeting Support

Customer Service Advisors have been delivering Personal Budget Support (PBS) and debt advice for Customers in receipt of UC since July 2014. As with DHP & LWA, there is an expected increase in the number of Customers accessing this service. The council's role in delivering PBS is intrinsic to the supported roll out of UC.

UC Advance Payment

The council will actively promote this provision to ensure vulnerable customers are aware and correctly signposted to apply for this. Officers will explain that this payment is repayable and it is intended to prevent damage to the claimants/families health, for immediate essentials – food, heating costs, clothing etc. It is similar to Wirral's own Local Welfare Assistance Scheme although it is apparent the benchmark is set higher and the means test is stringent.

Wirral's LWA

Since 1 April 2013 Wirral has offered this locally based support provision. Whilst this is a discretionary scheme it is offered by the vast majority of Councils, initially funded through ring-fenced DWP grant. Each council tailors the scope of their scheme to support local need in order to provide a safety net in disaster or emergency, or to enable independent living in the community. Wirral's LWA Policy requires that support is available to people who do not have alternative means of paying for what they need. They are intended to meet more immediate, one off needs rather than on going expenses. Application is on-line through Wirral's website: - 'Benefits & Money'. Customer service advisors are able to support those who may have difficulty in navigating the application, or no personal access to the internet.

DHP

Discretionary Housing payments (DHP) are payments which can be paid in addition to Housing Benefit and to the Housing Element of Universal

Credit as a 'top up' to meet rent costs. They cannot cover any ineligible services.

The amount and duration of the award is at the discretion of council and each case is considered on individual merits.

DHP is funded from an annual grant from DWP, which can be topped up locally up to a maximum amount by the council should they wish to do so.

People claiming Universal Credit can apply and once it is established they receive help towards their housing costs in their Universal Credit payment a DHP can be considered to cover any shortfall. Payments in these cases can be made either directly to the claimant or to their landlord if there are rent arrears or circumstances exist which mean it is in the claimant's interest to pay their landlord. This two way method of assisting those who claim Universal Credit, with their rent, can be confusing for some claimants. Social landlords often assist tenants to make a DHP claim and Private landlords have been made aware since July 2014 of the process for their tenants to receive this extra help.

For detail of award/expenditure for both LWA and DHP see Appendix 1

Foodbank

Given the intrinsic and recognised role of 'Foodbanks' the council could give consideration to supporting the local provision with a financial award – given the move to UC Full Service, it is highly publicised that Foodbanks nationwide are concerned that supplies will be exhausted in the lead up to the Xmas period with demand linked to immediate hardship caused by UC first time payment delays.

Benefits maximisation/take-up activity/campaigns

Operational planning is underway to more widely promote both LWA and DHP. Work is in progress to better understand who the hard to reach groups may be to ensure accessibility. Wirral's Welfare Rights Unit Team is situated within the Customer Service division, Benefit's and the advisors work closely with service managers across the council to advise and support planning, this scope is invaluable given their expertise and experience in their capacity as advocates.

7.0 NEXT STEPS

Work post UCFS implementation will continue to ensure collaborative working across all council departments, Partners and third sector organisations to monitor and provide support to customers impacted by the changes brought about by UCFS.

7.1 The council will:

- Produce and deliver Member Awareness Sessions in conjunction with DWP and CAB to enhance their understanding of the

impacts if UC on their constituents enabling them to support and signpost

- Continue to maximise and promote the support mechanisms available to all UC Customers
- Ensure easily accessed support provisions are maintained across multiple channels for vulnerable customers
- Consistently review our procedures and work processes to ensure they are inclusive and effective
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Communication Strategy to ensure we are reaching the appropriate audiences
- Build a suite of management information reports using reliable and factual statistical data to ensure a true reflection and understanding of UC captured
- Continue to provide updates and guidance communications such as Councillor.net, web pages, leaflets, fact sheet (see Appendix 3)
- Continue to work with our colleagues across the Liverpool City Region and neighbouring councils as part of a collective forum
- Work closely with software providers to develop automated functionality specifically built for UC
- Commit to carry out a full review of Wirral's Council Tax Support Scheme to consider and implement any agreed changes in 2019/2020 following the required consultation

8.0 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 8.1 Review of the existing LWA & DHP policies to accommodate the impacts and demands of the wider UC roll out. A consideration may be a change in the application and award process (criteria/number of awards within a set period) and/or increased local contribution to the funds. (See Appendix 2 for current policies)
- 8.2 Council Tax Enforcement Procedures – consider an easement by aligning recovery procedures to UC ‘waiting period’ Many Registered Housing Providers are proposing to be flexible in debt recovery if a person is awaiting a claim decision however will expect rent to be paid in line with any benefit awards.
- 8.3 Ensure Fair Debt Policy is fit for purpose and consider “Can’t Pay v’s Won’t Pay” when considering individual cases.
- 8.4 Ensure the council has a Digital Inclusion Policy to capture and support the specific digital requirements/support including the needs of Wirral UC customers.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no known immediate financial implications as the administration is supported through the DWP administration grant awarded to the Local Authority, together with in year funding.

- 9.2 Potential impact could be as a result of increasing the local schemes which currently require council contribution – LWA & DHP.
- 9.3 An indirect financial implication can be associated with collection rates of council tax – this is also noted as a risk.

10 LEGAL

- 10.1 The council must ensure full legislative compliance in accordance with the DWP UC regulations. Ensure all local schemes reflect the changes brought about by UC.

11 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS; STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 11.1 Factors that will influence a smooth transition to UC 'Full Service', alongside the continued development and delivery of the core benefit service are:

- The process of administering claims moving away from Housing Benefit, to UC and/or to Council Tax Support with UC is cumbersome and resource intensive
- Notifications received via the DWP Data Hub will incrementally increase. This in turn will increase work volumes to be processed. This is consistent with the experience of neighbouring councils across the region but cannot be quantified at this stage
- DWP potential failure in providing timely and accurate UC notifications that can lead to incorrect assessments of cases resulting in increased resource requirements to correct
- DWP do not always inform the Council when a customer moves over to UC which can result in avoidable customer contact and potential loss of benefit causing further vulnerability

To address the above effects, councils are working with their software providers and DWP Partners in order to make better use of automation to limit the impact on customers and service delivery.

The council must ensure it is sufficiently equipped and resourced to meet the requirements, impact and demand as a result of UC Full Service.

This will require close monitoring and reporting on an ongoing basis to assess needs of the service.

12 RELEVANT RISKS

- 12.1 Failure to deliver in accordance with the terms of DWP Delivery Partnership Agreement.
- 12.2 Presentation of wider poverty issues through increased demand in access to free life essentials food, energy, clothing etc. as a result of uncontrolled or unavoidable alternative spend.

- 12.3 Increased demand on services for children and families resulting from financial hardship imposed by UC, specifically the waiting period for an individual to receive UC. The potential for increased evictions and homelessness will also have a direct impact on social care needs for those families involved.
- 12.4 An increase in social care needs presents a linked increased risk to the council potentially failing to meet its statutory obligation to ensure the provision of Adult/Children's social care.
- 12.5 Presentation of homelessness as a result of UC presents a linked increased risk to the council potentially failing to meet its statutory obligation to ensure the provision of adequate housing.
- 12.6 Potential reputational damage due to failure to respond and support change imposed as a result of UCFS rollout.

13 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 13.1 No formal requirements to consult

14 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 Ensure full adherence to Equality Impact Assessments requirements including a revised EIA in respect of all local schemes. This is currently underway for UC and will remain ongoing as changes evolve.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Breakdown of DHP & LWA spend

Appendix 2 – DHP & LWA current Policies

Appendix 3 – Councillor.net FAQ & UC Leaflets

Appendix 4 – Details of Presentation audiences

REFERENCE MATERIAL

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/652897/universal-credit-statistics-to-14-sept-2017.pdf

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
NA	

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APPENDIX 1

DISCRETIONARY HARDSHIP PAYMENT

It is important to note that Councils continue to administer applications for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) for those in receipt of UC. During 2017/18, year to date, Wirral awarded 55 UC customers with a DHP. A total of £23,037 was paid out to residents as additional support towards their housing costs. It is anticipated that there will be an increased demand as the UC caseload grows. DHP is funded by DWP Grant to the Council supplemented with a local top up. See spend table to date for 2017/2018.

DHP Fund	Government Contribution	Local Contribution	Total Fund
2017/2018	£872,473.00	£295,948.62	£1,168,421.62
Total No of Awards	Total Spend	Total Committed	Fund remaining
1199	£429,411.77	£726,877.17	£441,544.45

LOCAL WELFARE ASSISTANCE

Wirral provides emergency support through its Local Welfare Assistance (LWA) Scheme which is cash limited locally funded scheme. We need as a Council to be prepared for an increase in LWA applications but at present DWP are not providing projections. Officers are presently reviewing options for criteria variation for UC Customers, supporting a simple and effective process of awareness and application that will ensure a response to any immediate hardship faced. See spend table to date for 2017/2018.

LWA Fund	Total Fund		
2017/2018	£767,807		
Total No of Awards 30/9/17	Total Spend – 30/09/17	Projected Spend - 31/3/18	Fund remaining
3,853	£101,108	£244,217	£523,590

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DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS

What are Discretionary Housing Payments?

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's) are 'free standing' payments, that is, they are not part of the Statutory Housing Benefit scheme. DHP's can only be awarded to top up either an existing Housing Benefit award or the Housing Costs element of a Universal Credit award. They cannot be used to meet the cost of charges that are not eligible for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit housing costs (e.g. heating and lighting of non-communal areas). The amount and duration of the award is entirely at the discretion of the Housing Benefit Service and each case is treated on its own merits.

The fund from which DHP's are made is limited; therefore Wirral Council takes care to ensure that payments go to those claimants in most need of additional financial help in meeting their housing costs.

How can a claim be made?

A claim for DHP will normally be made in writing and signed by the claimant and/or their representative. Claimants should go to www.wirral.gov.uk/dhp to download an application form. A leaflet called 'Discretionary Housing Payments' is also available on the website. Customers who apply for a DHP should whenever possible produce evidence of their income/ outgoings , loans and debts, details about any rent arrears and possession action taken by their landlord and particularly should include details about any disability related costs they incur both regularly or occasionally. Evidence in support of your claim can be up www.wirral.gov.uk/evidence . Claimants should also mention any exceptional circumstances that exist in support of their application.

Discretionary Housing Payments Policy

Wirral Council is committed to ensure the full DHP fund is awarded within each financial year to those claimants who need additional financial help to pay their rent. Each case will be treated strictly on its merits and all customers will be treated equally and fairly. All efforts will be made to establish what additional disability related costs a claimant has .This may mean they have less disposable income with which to contribute towards their rental costs.

A holistic approach will be taken when claimants report they have loans debts and rent arrears. If appropriate and when no other budgeting support is in place, a referral will be made to Wirral Council's Housing Options Team for them to arrange help and support for financial issues and for them to also offer specialist help with housing related issues; whether this is to assist a move to more suitable accommodation or for example liaison with an existing landlord if possession proceedings have started.

Through the operation of this policy Wirral Council will support the vision of the local 2020 plan. Some of the objectives of the plan, which relate directly to this policy are:-

To support people with disabilities to live independently

To help reduce child and family poverty
To help older people to live well
To support good quality housing

Wirral Council will take into account the following in deciding whether or not an award should be made:

- the shortfall between the Housing Benefit or Housing Costs in Universal Credit (UC) and the rental liability
- any steps taken by the claimant to reduce their rental liability, for example seeking a more suitably sized or priced property
- the financial circumstances of the claimant, their partner and any dependants or other occupants in the claimant's home and the financial ability to meet the rental shortfall in part or whole
- the medical circumstances etc of the claimant, their partner and any dependants or other occupants in the claimant's home and the costs both regularly and /or occasionally of all disability related expenditure
- the income and expenditure of the claimant their partner and any dependants or other occupants in the claimant's home
- any savings or capital that might be held by the claimant or their family
- the level of debts of the claimant or the family
- the exceptional nature of the claimant and their family's circumstances
- any possible impact on the Council of not making such an award e.g. the pressure on priority homeless accommodation and associated funding.
- any other special circumstances brought to the attention of Wirral Council.

Wirral Council will decide how much to award based on all of the circumstances. This may not meet the shortfall in its entirety and does not guarantee that a further award will be made at a later date even if the claimant's circumstances remain the same.

If a claimant has a change in their circumstances they should report this promptly as Wirral Council may need to revise an award.

Wirral Council considers that DHP's should usually be seen as a short term emergency fund and should not be considered as a way around any current or future entitlement set out within the Housing Benefit legislation or welfare reforms. However the availability of suitably sized and priced alternative accommodation will be taken into account.

In all cases Wirral Council will decide the length of time for which DHP is awarded on the basis of the evidence supplied and the facts known. The start date of the award will normally be:

- the Monday after the written claim is received unless individual circumstances indicate an earlier date is appropriate.
- DHP cannot be awarded for any period outside an existing HB/Housing Costs in UC benefit period
- the minimum period for which an award will be made is one week and the period will not usually exceed 12 months

Wirral Council will consider any reasonable request for backdating an award but such consideration will usually be limited to the current financial year.

Right to review:

DHP's are not payments of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit and are therefore not subject to the statutory appeals process.

Wirral Council will operate the following policy for dealing with appeals about a refusal to award a DHP, a decision to award a reduced amount of DHP, a decision not to backdate a DHP or a decision that there has been an overpayment of DHP. Wirral Benefits Team use experienced Benefit Processing Officers to consider appeals made. This will be a different Officer from the one who made the original DHP decision.

- a claimant (their appointee or agent) who disagrees with a DHP decision may dispute it. A request for a review must be made in writing within one calendar month of the written decision being issued. Where appropriate Wirral Council will explain the decision by telephone, at interview or in writing and will seek to resolve the matter
- where agreement cannot be reached the Benefit Processing Officer will review the evidence held and make a decision
- where the Benefit Processing Officer decides not to revise the original decision he/she will notify the claimant in writing, setting out reasons for their decision.
- where the claimant is still not satisfied they will be entitled to a further review which must be made in writing within one calendar month of the decision letter. This review will be conducted by the Senior Appeals Officer. The decision will be notified to the claimant in writing. The decision will be final and binding and may only be challenged via the judicial review process or by complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Overpayments:

Wirral Council may seek to recover any DHP found to be overpaid if a claimant has misrepresented information at the time of the application or an error was made when the DHP award was decided.

Overpayments will normally be recovered via an invoice from the person to whom the DHP was paid.

Under no circumstances will recovery be made from any ongoing benefit.

Publicity:

Wirral Council will publicise the scheme and will work with interested parties to achieve this. A copy of this policy statement will be made available for inspection and will be posted on the Wirral website. Information about the total annual amount spent will not normally be made available until the end of the financial year.

Fraud:

The Local Authority is committed to the fight against fraud in all its forms. A claimant who tries to fraudulently claim a DHP by falsely declaring their circumstances, providing a false statement or evidence in support of a claim, may have committed an offence. Where Wirral Council suspects that such a fraud may have occurred, the matter will be investigated as appropriate and this may lead to criminal proceedings being instigated.

**WIRRAL LOCAL
WELFARE ASSISTANCE
SCHEME
POLICY**

CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Purpose of the Scheme**
- 3. Financial Constraints**
- 4. Eligibility & Assessment Criteria**
- 5. Accessing the scheme**
- 6. Methods of award**
- 7. Appeals**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The discretionary Crisis Loans for Living Expenses and Community Care Grant elements of the Social Fund administered by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) were abolished with effect from April 2013. Funding has been allocated to Local Authorities for the provision of a replacement local scheme.
- 1.2 Crisis Loans were intended for people who were unable to meet their immediate short terms needs in an emergency or as a consequence of disaster, and they were awarded for immediate living expenses in order to avoid serious damage to the health and safety of the applicant or a member of their family. Community Care Grants were primarily intended to help vulnerable people live as independent a life as possible in the community and were dependant on receipt of income related benefit.
- 1.3 The DWP continues to administer the discretionary Crisis Loan Alignment and Budgeting Loans which are being replaced with new national schemes for Short Term Advances and Budgeting Advances. The DWP also continues to administer the regulated elements of the Social Fund (Funeral Payments, Cold Weather Payments, Winter Fuel Payments and Sure Start Maternity Grants).
- 1.4 The DWP intended that Local Authorities would need to consider the scheme's original purpose when developing local schemes, and that they would develop schemes that were flexible to meet the needs of local communities.
- 1.5 The funding provided for the scheme was less than the previous DWP spend on Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants, and the new local schemes therefore need to address issues of reliance on the scheme and prioritise those most in need. The DWP expected the funding to be concentrated on those facing greatest difficulty in managing their income and to enable a more flexible response to unavoidable need.
- 1.6 Following analysis and consideration of the issues identified during the first six months of delivering the local scheme, this document sets out the revised year one policy of the Council's provision. This policy will continue to be reviewed and further developed for subsequent years.

2. Purpose of the scheme

- 2.1. The scheme aims to provide emergency support to people who have insufficient resources to meet their own or their family's immediate short term needs, which if not met would pose a serious risk to their health and wellbeing, or would put at risk their ability to remain or establish themselves in the community.
- 2.2. The scheme will not be appropriate where the authority considers that the applicant has alternative means of addressing those needs.
- 2.3. Consideration will also be given to those applicants with an identified immediate need that cannot be met through any other channel, and which the applicant cannot reasonably be expected to fund themselves.
- 2.4. The scheme will only be appropriate where the support required is not available through any other provision. Where we consider it reasonable to expect the applicant to use that alternative provision, the application will be refused and the applicant will be appropriately signposted and supported to access that provision.
- 2.5. The scheme intends to avoid cash payments - the intention is to meet the presented needs through the provision of goods or services rather than with cash awards. Cash will only be considered as a last resort where there is no other way of meeting the need.
- 2.6. Support will be targeted at those most in need through consideration of the circumstances of each application, as explained in section 4.
- 2.7. In the longer term, the scheme will aim to provide long term solutions where applicable by addressing any underlying issues identified during the application process. Working with partner organisations we aim to develop a network of support which can be accessed by referral via the scheme.

3. Financial Constraints

- 3.1 Government funding of the scheme is finite and may not be adequate to support all applications for support through this scheme.
- 3.2 Close and regular financial monitoring of the scheme will take place to understand the pressures on the scheme and to inform the extent to which the scheme can support applications.
- 3.3 The eligibility criteria in section 4 define the basic criteria required in order for an application to be considered. Having met those basic criteria, decisions on support or awards which can be provided from this scheme will be dependant on the level of resources available.
- 3.4 Should the levels of applications meeting basic eligibility criteria significantly outweigh available funding then the basic eligibility criteria may need to be amended.
- 3.5 In the event of an under-spend of the LWA budget, consideration will be given to extending financial support to third party partner organisations whose work supports the principles and intentions of this scheme.

4. Eligibility & Assessment Criteria

4.1 The eligibility criteria for support under this scheme is focused upon the circumstances, presenting need and level of risk rather than focusing on eligible groups of people.

4.2 To be eligible for access to the scheme **all** of the following criteria must be met:

- Aged 16 or over
- Be a Wirral resident or, in the case of those who are homeless or leaving an institutional establishment, have established links with Wirral
- Support is required to address essential needs of yourself and/or your dependants
- It is demonstrated that there are no other resources or other ways of meeting this need which are considered reasonable

4.3 In order to be eligible for essential immediate support the applicant would also need to be able to demonstrate that there would be a serious risk to the health and wellbeing of the applicant and/or his or her dependants if those needs are not met.

4.4 Examples of essential immediate support needs are:

- Essential food
- Heat/electricity
- Essential supplies associated with infants/children

This list is not exhaustive and applications for other needs claimed as essential and immediate will be considered.

4.5 To be eligible for support to remain or become established in the community where the applicant cannot reasonably be expected to fund items themselves, the following criteria must be met:

- The applicant has essential items or costs associated with establishing or maintaining residence in the community, **and**
- It is demonstrated that there are no other resources or other reasonable ways of meeting this need
- If funding constraints apply, priority will be given to applicants who are supported or who have been referred to the scheme by an organisation which supports vulnerable people

Or

- The applicant has to replace essential items (this could be following a disaster or unforeseen event), **and**
- It is demonstrated that there are no other resources or other reasonable ways of meeting this need

4.6 Examples of items or costs that would be considered are:

- Essential domestic appliances¹
- Essential domestic furniture²
- Essential bedding

This list is not exhaustive and applications for other items or expenses claimed as being required to maintain health and wellbeing in the home or in the community will be considered.

4.7 Applications for support to meet essential travel costs may be considered under this scheme. Travel costs will only be considered for travel within the United Kingdom; overseas travel will not be considered due to the financial constraints of this scheme. Examples of travel that would be considered are:

- Travel to attend the funeral of a close relative³
- Travel to visit a close relative³ in care or another institution

This list is not exhaustive and applications for other travel costs will be considered.

4.8 The scheme will not be considered for the following:

- Those applicants who have an income or savings or a member of their household has an income or savings which could be used to meet their needs
- To buy (or repair) TV or satellite equipment
- To meet contract costs for TV packages, mobile phones, broadband etc

¹ ie a microwave or cooker, a washing machine for those with dependant children or a disability which increases laundry requirements, a fridge for those applicants who cannot shop on a daily basis or who need to store medication in a fridge.

² A bed and a form of comfortable seating e.g. sofa/arm chair are considered essential, other furniture such as dining table and chairs, and storage will also be considered but will be given a lower priority.

³ A close relative is defined as a spouse, parent, grandparent, sibling, child or grandchild or the spouse of any of these relatives.

- 4.9 If the basic eligibility criteria are met then an application will be assessed to quantify the level of priority of the need. This assessment will be based upon the severity of the likely impact if the need is not met.
- 4.10 Outcomes from assessments will be utilised if legitimate demand levels for support from the scheme outweigh the finite level of support available through the schemes budget. There may therefore be instances where the basic eligibility criteria above are met but an application may be refused because the priority of that application is lower than the scheme's budget can accommodate.
- 4.11 In the longer term an element of the assessment process will be the identification of the underlying causes of the crisis. Applicants will be offered a range of services to support them including benefit maximisation, energy efficiency, debt management and support in finding work or accessing training.

5. Accessing the Scheme

- 5.1 Applications and referrals will be available through a number of channels to maximise accessibility.
- 5.2 Applications to access the scheme will be accepted by referral from a range of partner organisations and Council services where an applicant either has an existing relationship with that organisation, or has approached them for guidance and support.
- 5.3 Applicants will need to provide evidence of their identity and residency and, where appropriate, evidence that they meet the eligibility criteria and presenting circumstances.
- 5.4 Initial screening questions will be asked to determine whether
 - an exceptional need has occurred,
 - the basic eligibility criteria are met, and
 - some support can usefully be put in place
- 5.5 Those applicants who meet the eligibility criteria will have their application reviewed with priority given to those requiring emergency support. The scheme will aim to provide a same day decision and award for such emergency cases.
- 5.6 Where appropriate an appointment will be made to review the application, the circumstances of the applicant and the potential options available.
- 5.7 This service will not be available out of hours. However the Council's Emergency Duty Team will continue to respond to the needs of vulnerable adults and children out of hours, and will be supported to do so through the scheme's funding.

6. **Methods of Award**

- 6.1 Where a need is identified that cannot reasonably be met by any other scheme, consideration will be given to the provision of goods and / or services to meet that need.
- 6.2 In order to maximise the number of people that can be supported by this scheme, where goods are required we will look to provide second hand refurbished furniture and white goods where appropriate rather than new items.
- 6.3 Where goods cannot be provided directly, consideration will be given to payment cards or vouchers to enable the purchase of such goods. These payment cards or vouchers must be used for the purpose for which they have been requested.
- 6.4 Where a voucher is issued, this may not offer a choice of providers / stores. However the Council will work to ensure that the goods offered by any provider it specifies are of acceptable quality and offer good value to the customer.
- 6.5 Cash will only be issued where there is no identifiable alternative to meeting the need of the applicant.
- 6.6 Where cash is awarded, the sum provided will be sufficient to meet the minimum needs of the applicant and his or her dependants for the period until the applicant's circumstances can reasonably be expected to have changed. This sum will be calculated according to a schedule of rates determined by the Council and will be reviewed at regular intervals.
- 6.7 Repeat applications within 2 years will generally be denied unless the reason for the application is unrelated to the previous award. Where a repeat application is awarded then consideration may be given to providing the award as a loan rather than grant depending on the applicant's ability to repay the award value. The value of the loan will be the cost of the goods and / or service provided by the Council, or the amount of the cash awarded where applicable.
- 6.8 It is unlikely that any further loans will be made whilst a previous loan has an outstanding balance payable, however we will consider the individual circumstances of the application including whether there has been an effort to repay the loan and the amount outstanding.

- 6.9 Where a loan has been made to a couple, both partners will be deemed to be liable for the repayment of the loan.
- 6.10 Where it is likely that an applicant's circumstances will quickly and significantly improve (e.g. a person whose access to bank funds has been temporarily suspended), the first award may be designated as repayable.
- 6.11 Awards may be made to a person other than the applicant where they are:
- Enduring Power of Attorney
 - Lasting Power of Attorney for Property and Affairs
 - Department for Work and Pensions Appointee
 - Housing benefit appointee provided there is no conflict of interest

7. Appeals

- 7.1 Applicants will have a right of appeal if they do not agree with a decision made as to their eligibility. They will also be able to appeal against a decision not to make an award due to budgetary constraints.
- 7.2 All appeals will need to be made at the time of receiving the decision, and will be considered by a more senior member of staff.
- 7.3 Those appeals of decisions where the need is immediate (i.e. food, essential provisions or heating) will be prioritised, and we will aim to make decisions within one working day of receipt of the application.
- 7.4 Where the need is for essential items of furniture or support with travel costs, we will aim to review the decision within 5 working days.
- 7.5 There will be no further right of appeal. However any complaints received by the Council about this process will be handled according to the Council's complaint policy, and used to inform future amendments to arrangements, training and communication requirements with our staff, partners and partner services.
- 7.6 Applicants will not be able to appeal against the amounts laid down in the schedule of rates, or about any other matter laid out in this policy. Any disputes relating to the content of this policy will be treated as a complaint and handled according to the Council's complaint procedure.

DRAFT

Universal Credit

Overview

Universal Credit (UC) is the government's major welfare reform change which has been introduced nationally since 2014. The first phase of UC has been termed Universal Credit Live Service (UCLS)

The second phase of UC is now being rolled out nationally. This is termed Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS) and goes live in Wirral on 15 November 2017, for all postcodes except CH44 and CH45, which have the later 'go live' date of 24 January 2018

Universal Credit replaces six 'legacy' benefits for working age people ; - Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance (Income based), Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related) Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit and Housing Benefit.

The ethos of the reform is to make work pay and attempts to replicate financially the way working people manage their money on a monthly basis. It introduces financial assistance for paying rent within the monthly payment, removing the need in most cases for Housing Benefits. It is also intended to establish if some claimants can work for some hours rather than claiming out of work and/ or disability benefits .It introduces the concept of a claimant commitment which is signed by the claimant and partner and monitored for compliance with individually tailored expectations of daily /weekly work search and related activities.

UC is also paid to people who work and payments can vary on a month to month basis as their actual paid income is monitored automatically via Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) data and payments adjusted accordingly.

There is a direct deduction programme for recovering amounts from UC payments on behalf of third parties. Amounts can be taken on a monthly basis for such items as; - rent arrears, council tax arrears, court fines, utility arrears and overpaid HB. Financial sanctions can be applied to UC payments when DWP decide a claimant commitment requirement has not been met.

LA's sign up to an annual Delivery Partnership Agreement (DPA) with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Wirral's DPA has enabled close working relationships to build between Wirral Benefits managers and the local DWP Partnership Manager. Joint planning and working programmes are ongoing and have improved overall understanding and local liaison.

UCFS has to be claimed digitally. LA's have been financed by DWP via the DPA to assist claimants with digital access. This is being delivered via appointments in One Stop Shops.

Funding via the DPA also covers delivery of Personal Budgeting Support .This is done by appointment in One Stop Shops and provides individual support for those who require assistance with the transition to a monthly payment and / or to help manage debt and other financial difficulties.

Funding via the DPA has been increased from November 2017 to reflect the anticipated increase in digital and personal budgeting support required by claimants.

UCFS introduces a further digital aspect, with each claimant having an on-line journal which replaces paper notifications, appointment letters and captures all interactions between DWP and claimant. These journals require constant update and those who are committed to work searching 35 hours per week will have to access their journal daily with work related activity evidence. LA's are not funded via the DPA for ongoing digital support once a UCFS claim is in payment.

Under UCFS **new** Housing Benefit (HB) claims will be restricted to those from pensioners*, claimants who live in specified supported accommodation, where the landlord provides care, support an supervision (e.g.; hostels , specialised accommodation for disabled and vulnerable customers) and anyone with 3 or more children who haven't claimed UC in the previous six months.

*Pensionable age for this purpose is defined by the DWP as the age someone can claim pension credit (not new state retirement pension) and their rolling pensioner equalisation programme sets out the age at any given time; at 15.11.17 it is 64 years of age for men and women, rolling to 65 years in 2018.

UC Full Service in Wirral - The next major phase of UC starts on 15 November 2017

UCLS has to date been restricted those who rent privately or have no housing costs. UCFS brings into scope many more categories of claimants, e.g.; self-employed, homeowners, students, long term disabled etc.

The pace at which people migrate to claiming UCFS , rather than HB, is expected to rise enormously from 15 November 2017. Many change in circumstance scenarios will prompt natural migration under UCFS to escalate, although DWP have refrained from issuing any expected volumes. As the UCFS caseload expands to include a higher ratio of disabled and vulnerable customers the impact on Wirral Council having to support these people will increase, predominately with the digital aspects of the UCFS model.

Single people between the age of 18 and 21 years may not qualify for help with their housing costs under UCFS. There are many exemptions from this rule and it is expected vulnerable young people in Wirral will be accepted and have their housing costs covered by UC. See full details at; - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-and-rented-housing-2/universal-credit-housing-costs-for-18-to-21-year-olds>

There will be a managed transfer of claimants who have received UCLS before 15 November 2017 onto the UCFS digital platform. This will be managed by specialised teams in local Jobcentres during a three month period, likely to start in spring 2018.

Q & A's to assist you with constituent enquiries

Where can people make a claim for UC?

All claims must be made on-line to www.dwp.gov.uk/universalcredit

Anyone who doesn't have digital access can make an appointment at a One Stop Shop for help and support by calling in or telephoning 0151 606 2220

Local Jobcentres also have digital access for anyone to drop in, where they will get help and advice to make a claim.

Some local social landlords also have digital access available for their tenants e.g.; Magenta Living HA at Partnership House, 45 Hamilton Street, Birkenhead, CH41 5AA

Many local community groups and centres have digital access for local residents.

Do people need an e-mail address to claim UC?

Yes. People will need an e-mail address. If they haven't got one they can get help and support to create one from a One Stop Shop or local Jobcentre as above. .

They will also have to set up a UC account. People will need an e-mail address and a UC account before they make their UC claim.

What if people are housebound or have disabilities which make digital access very difficult?

Arrangements can be made directly with DWP for a visitor to call to help someone make a claim .Even if someone is in hospital they can ask for a visitor. They should telephone .345 600 0723

Also see the referral form **here*** If an appointee assists someone to make a claim DV to supply info

How long will someone wait before they get a UC payment?

Most people will have to wait 7 days after they have made their claim for their UC monthly assessment period to start .At the end of the monthly assessment period the payment will be issued after one week. This usually means a total wait of 6/7 weeks for the first payment from the claim date.

People who change from a legacy benefit (Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance (IB), Employment Support Allowance (IR), Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit) to UC will not have to wait 7 days at the start of their UC Claim, but they also have the monthly assessment period and following week to wait before the first payment is issued.

Can advance UC payments be requested?

Yes .DWP is keen that people apply early for an advance payment and they will be able to advance up to 50% of their overall estimated entitlement. The only criteria is that proof of identity is submitted before an advance can be agreed. If the situation is very urgent an advance can be made into a nominated bank account on the same day, or otherwise it takes 3 days.

To apply people should either speak to their work coach at the Jobcentre when they have a work focused interview, telephone 0345 600 0723 or make a request via their digital journal.

Advances do have to be paid back. This is done by deducting it from ongoing UC usually over 6 or 12 months.

What can someone do if they are still struggling financially?

People who remain without funds can apply for Local Welfare Assistance from Wirral Council .They can do this by going to www.wirral.gov.uk/lwa

Awards are usually issued on the same day and the scheme is flexible enough to allow up to 2 awards when someone is waiting for their first UC payment .It will be expected that a UC advance should be claimed before requesting a LWA award.

Where can people go if they need help to budget with their monthly UC payment or are struggling with debts?

Wirral Council will provide Personal Budgeting Support by appointment in one Stop Shops for anyone on UC who needs help to manage monthly budgets or debts. People can either self refer and make an appointment by calling 0151 606 2220 or call into a One Stop Shop. Third parties can refer **here*** and work coaches in Jobcentres can refer if the person talks to them about their financial difficulties.

Can people ask for an alternative payment cycle rather than the monthly payment?

Yes .A request can be made for fortnightly or weekly payments if there are special circumstances. This would usually be for a set period of time e.g.; to allow time for Personal Budgeting Support to be arranged and / or to manage debts.

UC payments can also be split in some cases between claimant and partner e.g.; where there are issues of domestic abuse or gambling, alcohol or drug addiction etc.

To vary a payment a claimant can enter a request via their on-line journal, speak to their work coach or telephone 0345 600 0723

How will I know if a young person, that is someone who is 18 to 21 years old will qualify for help with their housing costs under UCFS

The DWP will look at the individual circumstances of each young person to see if they meet an exception criteria .there are many reasons why a young person will be able to get help with housing costs .See details here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-and-rented-housing--2/universal-credit-housing-costs-for-18-to-21-year-olds>

If people have a rental shortfall between their housing cost award in UC and their rent, can they apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment?

Yes, LA's continue to hold responsibility for the award of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to both UC and HB claimants.

DHP can be considered for someone who gets UC, once their housing costs award has been made by DWP and the LA can see the award and calculate the shortfall.

Applications should be made at www.wirral.goc.uk/dhp

Can tenants ask for their landlord to be paid the housing element if they are worried about making rent payments?

Yes, tenants can ask for an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA) if they have specific concerns about managing to pay their rent e.g.; existing rent arrears or addiction issues.

They can ask for an APA by telephoning 0345 600 0723, speaking to their work coach or via their digital journal.

Can landlords ask DWP to pay them directly if they are concerned a tenant won't use the UC payment to pay the rent or there are rent arrears?

Yes, a landlord can also request an APA. They can apply by going to; - <https://directpayment.universal-credit.service.gov.uk/>

They will have to supply evidence of rent arrears or the reasons why they think the rent won't be paid.

Can Social Landlords assist their claimants in proving their rent costs?

Yes. Social landlords are asked by DWP to sign up to a landlord portal which allows two way exchange of information and should speed up claim processing.

Two local social landlords (Magenta Living HA and Prima Leasowe Community Homes) have also been part of a trusted partners pilot allowing the social landlord to pre authorise APA's and submit details for direct payments. After an evaluation period this method may be expanded to all social landlords.

How can I help my constituents with problems linked to their UC claim?

Locally DWP have provided contact details at local Jobcentres. See list **here*** You can also send an e-mail enquiry using this referral form **here*** DWP will respond directly to your constituent and they can tell you if the matter is resolved.

Will DWP speak to me about a constituents claim and how does explicit consent data share work?

DWP will not speak to any third party (including the LA or councillors) without the claimant's **explicit** consent. This means your constituent would have to tell DWP he/she agrees for them to speak to you. The constituent has to either give verbal consent if he/she is with you when you contact DWP or add an entry in their on-line journal, naming you as an agreed third party. Any explicit consent given is only for one contact.

It may be easier if you make a referral **here*** and ask DWP to contact your constituent directly. They can then report back to you if the query is resolved.

Can people on Universal Credit qualify for free school meals?

Yes, UC is a qualifying criteria for free school meals and this also means schools will benefit from additional pupil premium funding. To make a free school meals application go to www.wirral.gov.uk/free-school-meals

NB; Unfortunately the automatic free school meals eligibility checker on the Wirral Council website will return a non-qualifying message as the UC data is not yet supplied from DWP into the national Department for Education checker system. This has been raised with DWP

Where can people go for help with UC appeals or sanctions?

Wirral Council's Welfare Rights Unit gives free, impartial advice on all benefit problems, go to www.wirral.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/welfarerights .

Where can people go with housing problems, such as being threatened with eviction?

Wirral Council's Housing Options Team can help with all sorts of housing issues. These could include assisting to negotiate about rent arrears or possession proceedings with current landlords, help to find cheaper suitable accommodation or to confirm tenancy rights. Go to www.wirral.gov.uk/housing/information-and-advice

Here * (this will link directly to the appropriate document when loaded into Councillor.net)

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Landlord Newsletter

Special Universal Credit Edition

Wirral Council gave Private Landlords a commitment to keep them informed regarding information and changes about Universal Credit.

The next phase of Universal Credit implementation starts on 15 November 2017 in all Wirral postcodes, except CH44 & CH45, these particular postcodes follow on from 24 January 2018.

This next phase is Universal Credit Full Service and this will accelerate the rate of movement for tenants who move from existing legacy benefits* to Universal Credit, causing their Housing Benefit to end. This next phase will not move everyone over to Universal Credit, it's a continuation of the natural migration started in July 2014 in Wirral.

Here are some frequently asked questions that may help landlords with this transition:

What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a combined benefit which replaces six of the main legacy benefits*, these are :

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

Universal Credit includes a housing element which replaces Housing Benefit. It uses the same method to calculate entitlement for private tenants, based on the claimant's household composition and Wirral's Local Housing Allowance rates.

It is a monthly paid benefit and is also paid to working claimants.

How can I help my tenant make a claim for Universal Credit?

Universal Credit has to be claimed online at www.gov.uk/universalcredit

If tenants don't have access to the internet or lack confidence using a computer, advise them to get help from friends or family. They can also make an appointment at a One Stop Shop to get help to set up an e-mail address, a Universal Credit account and make a claim for Universal Credit, plus opening a basic bank account if they don't have one. They can also drop into their local Jobcentre where staff will assist them in making a claim. You will need to make sure your tenant has valid proof of their rental liability to submit, in support of their claim.

How will my tenant be paid?

In most cases Universal Credit will be a single, monthly payment which is paid directly into the claimant's bank account. Direct payments to landlords can be requested when there are arrears or a doubt of non-payment due to specific circumstances.

How can my tenant get financial help when they are waiting for their first Universal Credit payment?

Tenants can ask the Department for Work and Pensions(DWP) for an advance of Universal Credit. Once they have made their claim and verified their identity they can ask for a Universal Credit advance. They should call 0345 600 0723 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm). DWP can make urgent advance payments on the day they are requested or after 3 days if it is less urgent. This advanced payment will be up to 50% of their likely monthly entitlement.

How can Landlords apply for direct payments for a tenant's rent?

Landlords should apply online directly to DWP by going to www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-landlord-request-for-a-managed-payment-or-rent-arrears-deduction

How do I let the DWP know that my tenant is in arrears?

You should access the link above and upload evidence to send to the DWP

How would any overpaid Housing element be recovered from a Landlord?

Any overpayment of Universal Credit will always be recovered from the Tenant.

If there are any other questions or concerns, who can the Landlord contact?

DWP will only speak to you about your tenants Universal Credit claim if they have given their explicit consent and entered this in their electronic journal so the DWP call handler can see the tenant has agreed to their information being discussed with a named third party. Ask your tenant to make a journal entry before you call DWP. They will have to do this each time you need to call DWP.

What should I do if my tenant can't manage their rent payments?

A tenant can ask DWP to have their housing cost payment switched to the landlord for a period of time while they get the support they need to manage their monthly budget. Help and support for this is available from Wirral Council and your tenant can make an appointment for Personal Budgeting Support at any One Stop Shop.

How can I make sure that rent is paid?

Tenants will be expected, where possible, to arrange their own rent payments as they would if they were in full-time work. You will need to think about how this will fit with your own payment calendars. If you have previously received direct Housing Benefit payments from Wirral Council you will need to speak to your tenants to agree arrangements for collecting rent from them.

If my tenant has a shortfall between the rent I charge and the Universal Credit housing element what can they do?

Your tenant can make an application to Wirral Council for a Discretionary Housing Payment. They should go to www.wirral.gov.uk/dhp Discretionary Housing Payments are designed to assist tenants, usually in the short term and give them time to manage their monthly budget , increase their income by moving into work or find more affordable accommodation.

Will my younger tenants, those 21 years or under be entitled to help with their rent costs?

Many tenants who are single and 21 years or under may be entitled to help to pay their rent with housing costs in their Universal Credit. These will be the tenants who can't live at home due to a wide range of reasons.

You can see more details at www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-costs-for-18-to-21-year-olds

However, there are rules in Universal Credit that mean some young single tenants who do not have any earnings will not qualify for help to pay their rent until they are 22 years old .

To receive updates about Universal Credit follow Wirral Council on twitter and facebook.

Universal Credit

Help and support from Wirral Council
for those claiming Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a benefit for working age people which replaces six existing in and out of work benefits into one single monthly payment. This leaflet will tell you more about the support and information from Wirral Council available to anyone who has made a claim or is about to make one.

Help with your Council Tax bill

You may be able to get help towards paying your Council Tax bill when you claim Universal Credit. This help is from Wirral Council and must be done as soon as possible as claims cannot be backdated.

To make a claim for Council Tax Support, visit www.wirral.gov.uk/benefitsapplication

You will need to upload your Universal Credit award decision from your on-line UC journal. You will be told if you need to supply any further evidence to support your claim. You must provide details of any changes to your household, wages or Universal Credit payments as soon as they happen.

If you have recently moved into a new home and have not yet received a Council Tax bill, register to manage your account online at www.wirral.gov.uk/council-tax/manage-your-account-online You can make your Council Tax Support claim at the same time.

Help with making an online Council Tax Support and Universal Credit claim

There are advisors in One Stop Shops to help you create an e-mail address, set up a Universal Credit account and make a Council Tax Support and Universal Credit claim claim. You will need to make an appointment to do this.

You can also get help at any Wirral based Job Centre. Your work coach will be able to tell you more about this.

Help with managing your money

If you feel worried about staying on top of your bills, speak to your work coach who can refer you for help to Wirral Council specialist advisors. This support will include practical help to make sure you are not paying too much for things like gas, electricity and mobile phones.

You can also arrange a Personal Budgeting Support appointment at any One Stop Shop.

If you are worried about paying your rent and have never had to manage this before you can talk to your work coach about options to have your rent paid directly to your landlord.

Once you start to feel in control of your money you will be able to look for work knowing that you can budget when you are paid each month.

Help with Universal Credit Advance Payments

Once you have made your Universal Credit claim and provided evidence of your identity you can request an Advance Payment to help you manage your money until your first monthly payment is made. Ask your work coach or telephone 0345 600 0723 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm).

Advance Payments are paid back from ongoing Universal Credit.

If your Advance Payment does not last until your monthly payment is due and you cannot get help from family and friends, you can apply for Local Welfare Assistance. This can help with basic items such as food, heating and lighting. Apply online at www.wirral.gov.uk/lwa

Help with housing costs

If you need additional help to pay your rent you can ask Wirral Council to consider a Discretionary Housing Payment. This is a separate payment to help you meet your rent costs. It could help as you look for work and can then pay your rent from wages.

You can apply online at www.wirral.gov.uk/dhp You will need to supply details about your income and expenditure. These details can be uploaded as you make your application.

Help with serious housing issues

Sometimes your housing problems can impact on your ability to look for work. Wirral Council's Housing Options Team can provide help and support to negotiate with your current landlord, or help to find somewhere new to live that you can afford or give you information about your tenancy rights.

You can make a referral online at www.wirral.gov.uk/housing/information-and-advice

Help with Welfare Rights

If you require help to make an appeal about a benefit or award that has been refused or sanctioned Wirral Council's Welfare Rights Team offer free, impartial advice on all benefit problems. Find out more online at www.wirral.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/welfare-rights

Help with school meal costs

If you receive Universal Credit you can claim Free School Meals. This is a confidential service and also helps your child's school access additional pupil premium funding. You can apply online at wirral.gov.uk/free-school-meals



FURTHER ADVICE

For more information about Universal Credit, guides, leaflets, videos, plus eligibility information and how to claim, visit the DWP website: www.gov.uk/universal-credit

APPENDIX 4

Over the last 3 months the Council has worked in conjunction with both DWP and CAB to deliver educational presentations and awareness sessions with the following Partner Groups and Organisations:

Mencap
Wired
CAB / Ask Us Wirral
Involve North West
Phoenix Futures
Leasowe Nursery School and family centre
YMCA
Wirral Foodbank
Wallasey St Vincent de Paul Society
Early childhood service
Homestart Wirral
Age UK
Family Pack project
Ferries family group
Your Housing group
Family Nurse Partnership
Magenta Living
Wirral Debt Advice
Life Long Learning
Christians against poverty
Reachout
Wirral change
CLP- Labour Party
P3 charity
Leasowe Development Trust
All RSL's with properties in Wirral
Private Landlord Forums

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NOTICE OF MOTION: MAKING MORE TIME FOR PEDESTRIANS *(as referred by the Civic Mayor to the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee)*

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist
Seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia

Council notes that National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recently began a consultation on creating an environment in which people are more active...
<https://www.nice.org.uk/news/article/local-councils-should-make-it-easier-for-people-with-disabilities-to-be-active-says-nice>

In raising this issue, it argued that active travel will help to prevent a range of chronic health conditions, leading to savings for the NHS and society at large.

Its general aim - to make it as easy as possible for people to walk, cycle or use other forms of active travel rather than making short journeys by car - would fit well with the aims of this Council and strategies being adopted by the Liverpool City Region.

Council recognises that whilst NICE is not expected to report upon the results of its latest study until the end of March 2018, the report contained ideas that can be considered in the meantime.

As NICE suggested that Councils should ensure that crossings with signals give enough time to cross the road, this Council requests officers to report on how extending the time allocated to crossing the road can be achieved so that the needs of pedestrians, wheelchair users and the elderly can be better addressed.

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NOTICE OF MOTION: WIRRAL WELL-MADE NEED FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT *(as referred to the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee)*

Proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley

Seconded by Councillor Leslie Rennie

Council notes that in Moreton more than 500 new houses will be built in the next two/three years including:

- 297 on the former Burton's site
- 122 on the former Fernbank Farm site and
- a number (yet to be determined) on the former Foxfield School.

However at the recent 'Moreton Conversation' it was clear that, while plans to push forward with the initiative were welcomed, no thought had been given to provide adequate infrastructure to support the proposals including additional education, health and public transport provision.

Council therefore requests the Leader of the Council to put in place, alongside these proposals, plans to ensure that fully adequate infrastructure is designed which will include working with Merseytravel to bring forward the plans for the provision of the long overdue and much needed Town Meadow Railway Station.

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BUSINESS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

29TH NOVEMBER 2017

REPORT TITLE	UPDATE ON LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DEVELOPMENTS
REPORT OF	ROSE BOYLAN, POLICY & STRATEGY MANAGER

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out a brief overview of latest developments at the Liverpool City Region (LCR), including activity underway to implement the City Region devolution deal.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Committee is requested to note and comment on latest developments.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

Committee have requested regular updates and consideration of City Region developments.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 N/a

3.0 LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

- A wide range of ongoing activity continues to be delivered. Wirral continues to be pro-actively involved in developing and implementing a wide range of important City Region initiatives, including significant Economic Growth; Skills; and Transport initiatives.
- As discussed at our previous Committee meeting in September, Wirral is making a significant contribution in Cultural and Visitor Economy developments, and a detailed Cultural programme of events for 2018 is planned.
- Further detail on all of the most recent developments can be found here <http://liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/>

3.1 LCR METRO MAYOR POLICY ANNOUNCEMENTS

On 14th November, the Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram, presented a detailed overview of progress in his first 6 months in office, and announced some key announcements for going forward. The Mayor's announcement was underscored by ten major new policy pledges, and he consistently reinforced the key message that the LCR Devolution ambition is based on working collaboratively with the 6 Local Authorities to deliver transformational change.

Key policy commitments include:

(i) River Mersey Tidal Commission

Setting out the vision for a step change in ambition and economic performance, the Mayor announced the appointment of Mr Brent Cheshire, until recently UK Chair of Dong Energy, to lead plans to harness the power of the River Mersey. His initial task over the next 12 months will be to establish the core business case for the multi-billion world class renewable energy project.

Tidal energy would enhance an existing portfolio of energy infrastructure investments including offshore wind, biomass and energy from waste. New investors including DONG Energy, Lego Group, RWE, Iberdrola, Viridor Laing and Stobart Energy have invested over £4bn in the last five years. These company's investments have proved successful with the LCR earning a reputation for proactively supporting this sector.

(ii) Connectivity: LCR Digital Vision

Describing the need to grasp the opportunities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the Metro Mayor highlighted the LCR's unique set of assets, including the UK's

most powerful super-computer at Daresbury; cutting-edge research facilities ie Unilever; and a cluster of digital businesses growing faster than Inner London.

To fulfil and accelerate this, the Mayor launched a 6-month study to make the LCR the UK's most digitally connected region in the UK, by connecting directly to the GTT Trans-Atlantic cable that lands in the UK at Southport. Faster speed, greater capacity and green energy will enable the City Region to grow digital and technology sectors, and attract significant investment for global companies wanting the best connections and a carbon neutral energy solution.

(iii) Single Investment approach

A key aim is to create a unified and properly resourced agency to capitalise on Liverpool's positive global brand, marketing the City Region internationally and providing one front door for all those seeking to invest and do business in the LCR.

(iv) Ambitious Skills goals

Campaign for the underspend from the National Apprenticeship Levy to be spent locally to roll-out degree-level apprenticeships and create a single UCAS-style city region-wide portal for apprentices.

(v) Housing

- A major initiative to tackle the City Region housing shortage by building 25,000 new homes before 2022 in the right places and with a variety of types and tenures to ensure everyone has access to a decent and affordable home;
- **Homelessness**
Aim to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping by implementing a 'Housing First' approach to make sure new homes are made available to those in greatest need;
- **Brownfield Land**
Adopt a brownfield first approach to new housing development by publishing the first ever City Region Brown Field Register, and lobbying the Chancellor to give the area a Stamp-Duty holiday with funds being recycled into remediating brownfield, making them available for new homes.

(vi) Transport

- Building on the £460 million investment in new rolling stock for Merseyrail by further considering how devolution powers and bus regulation can be best used to create a fully integrated public transport system for the LCR;
- **Smart ticket**
Make access to public transport more streamlined and customer-friendly by rebranding and remodelling the current Walrus card to make the City Region a UK exemplar for smart ticketing and new payment technologies;
- **Review of Fast Tag**
Making cross-river transport and movement easier and more affordable by reviewing how he can create a more affordable Fast Tag for Mersey Tunnel users; also announcement to commission design for a new state of the art Mersey Ferry.

3.2 Further devolution

There are currently ongoing discussions to develop the City Region's future devolution ambitions. These include initial consideration of Children's Services; further alignment of Health and Social Care; and proposals to begin discussions about how the LCR could potentially integrate Fire and Rescue, Waste Disposal and powers of the Police and Crime Commissioner into a future Combined Authority Structure.

Further updates on all of the above will be brought back to this Committee as the detail emerges in coming months.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Devolution arrangements propose the devolution of resources to the City Region.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

N/a

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

At this time, no additional cost is expected to be incurred by LCR local authorities as a result of the new arrangements to deliver the devolution deal.

7.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Wirral, along with City Region partners, continues to brief members and officers; circulate information and raise awareness of LCR developments through a wide range of approaches and communications.

8.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct equality implications associated with this report as it deals with the issue of devolution at a strategic level. Equality analysis will be carried out as part of the detailed implementation as appropriate.

REPORT AUTHOR: Rose Boylan, Policy and Strategy Manager
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SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	12 July 2013
Cabinet	8 August 2013
Cabinet and Council	19 September 2013
Cabinet and Council	10 March 2014
Council	19 November 2015
P&P Regeneration & Environment Committee	18 January 2016
P&P Regeneration & Environment Committee	2 March 2016
Council	13 September 2016
Cabinet	14 November 2016
Council	8 December 2016
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6 December 2016
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	24 January 2017
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	29 March 2017
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4 July 2017
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	19 September 2017

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**Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 29 November 2017**

REPORT TITLE:	2017/18 QUARTER 2 WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE
REPORT OF:	STRATEGIC COMMISSIONER FOR GROWTH

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the 2017/18 Quarter 2 (July – September 2017) performance report for the Wirral Plan pledges under the remit of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report, which is included as Appendix 1, provides a description of the progress in Quarter 2 as well as providing available data in relation to a range of outcome indicators and supporting measures.

Quarter Two Wirral Plan Performance Summary

- The employment rate in Wirral has improved by 0.5% this quarter, making this the highest ever rate recorded in Wirral since this has been a national measure (Jan 2004). This increase is in line with the North West and more than two times faster than the national average of only 0.2%, therefore narrowing the employment rate gap between Wirral and the rest of the UK.
- For the number of jobs created and safeguarded cumulative performance continues at a steady pace with additional figures this quarter relating to 140 jobs created (including 80 outstanding from prior reporting and now verified) and 60 jobs safeguarded.
- In Quarter two a £3.5m contribution towards a Liverpool City Region Households into Work pilot was secured through the Devolution Deal. This programme will test a new way for Department of Work and Pensions and Local Authorities to tackle generational unemployment.
- Plans for a major tourism project reported in quarter one were revealed in September - award winning national children's museum, Eureka! announced they are seeking funds to develop a new Eureka! Merseyside at Seacombe.
- The 2017 Wirral element of Mersey River Festival including Armed Forces Day visitor numbers have been confirmed at 40,000 achieving an economic impact of over £350,000.

- The number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents in Quarter 2 has seen a continuing improvement when compared to the same period over the last two years (40, 2017/18, 55 - 2016/17, 71 - 2015/16). The Partnership have undertaken several events during this time with more planned aimed at generating further improvement in the number of casualties during the next quarter.
- Wirral Council's corporate emissions of carbon dioxide due to energy use showed a 7.69% reduction from the previous year. This is a total reduction of 38.2% over 7 operational years and exceeded the target by 3655 tonnes.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report and highlight any areas requiring further clarification or action.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee have the opportunity to scrutinise the performance of the Council and partners in relation to delivering the Wirral Plan.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 This report has been developed in line with the approved performance management framework for the Wirral Plan. As such, no other options were considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Wirral Plan is an outcome-focussed, partnership plan which has 18 supporting strategies that set out how each of the 20 pledges will be delivered. For each pledge, a partnership group has been established to drive forward delivery of the action plans set out in each of the supporting strategies.
- 3.2 A Wirral Plan Performance Management Framework has been developed to ensure robust monitoring arrangements are in place. The Wirral Partnership has a robust approach to performance management to ensure all activity is regularly monitored and reviewed.
- 3.3 Data for the identified indicators is released at different times during the year. As a result of this, not all Pledges will have results each quarterly reporting period. Some indicators can be reported quarterly and some only on an annual basis. Annual figures are reported in the quarter they become available against the 2017/18 year end column.
- 3.4 For each of the indicators, a trend is shown (better, same or worse). In most cases, this is determined by comparing the latest data with the previous reporting period i.e. 2016/17 year end. In some cases, i.e. where data accumulates during the year or is subject to seasonal fluctuations, the trend is shown against the same time the previous year. This is indicated in the key at the end of the report.
- 3.5 For some indicators, targets have been set. Where this is the case, a RAGB (red, amber, green, blue) rating is provided against the target and tolerance levels set at the start of the reporting period, with blue indicating performance targets being exceeded.
- 3.6 All Wirral Plan performance reports are published on the performance page of the Council's website. This includes the high level Wirral Plan overview report and the detailed pledge reports which include updates on progress on all activities set out in the supporting strategy action plans. The link to this web page is set out below:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/council-performance>

3.7 Each of the Wirral Plan Pledges has a Lead Commissioner responsible for overseeing effective delivery. The Lead Commissioners for the Pledges in the report at Appendix 1 are as follows:

- Greater job opportunities in Wirral – Alan Evans
- Workforce skills match business needs – Alan Evans
- Increase Inward Investment – Alan Evans
- Thriving small businesses – Alan Evans
- Vibrant Tourism Economy – Alan Evans
- Transport and technology infrastructure fit for the future – Mark Smith
- Assets and buildings are fit for purpose for Wirral's businesses – Alan Evans

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 There are none arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The performance management framework is aligned to the Council's risk management strategy and both are regularly reviewed as part of corporate management processes.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The priorities in the Wirral Plan pledges were informed by a range of consultations carried out in 2015 and 2016 including the Wirral resident survey.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Wirral Plan equality impact assessment can be found at:
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2014-15/chief>

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Wirral Plan – 2017/18 Quarter 2 Pledge Report

REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	13 September 2016
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	29 November 2016
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	29 March 2017
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4 July 2017
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	19 September 2017

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Appendix 1

Wirral Plan Business Theme 2017-18 Quarter 2 Reports

Page 73



Growth Plan

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Delivery of the Growth Plan continues to progress well with pledge indicators and measures improving and meeting targets. Highlights for the quarter include an increase in Wirral's employment rate, in line with the North West trend, but taking rates for Wirral to their highest ever recorded.

Key activity highlights for Quarter 2 include:

- Ministerial announcement of a £3.5m contribution towards a Liverpool City Region Households into Work pilot secured through the Devolution Deal. This programme will test a new way for DWP and Local Authorities to tackle generational unemployment. City Region Employment Advocates will provide tailored support to eligible households whilst co-ordinating assistance from wider public services; households will also have access to a budget of up to £1000 to fund additional interventions.
- Cabinet and Council approval for Wirral's Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) that sets out the priorities and opportunities for economic growth within the borough. This permits the SRF to be adopted as a material planning consideration in relation to development proposals which come forward and ensures it will be used to inform the content of the emerging Core Strategy Local Plan.
- Plans for a major tourism project reported in quarter one were revealed in September - award winning national children's museum, Eureka! announced they are seeking funds to develop a new Eureka!Merseyside at Seacombe.
- Continuing to market the strengths of our sector focused inward investment offer, hosting international delegations and speaking at national conferences, eg. a presentation by Wirral Council's Strategic Commissioner for Growth on LCR Maritime Opportunities at the Department for International Trade/UK Maritime International Exchange Event in London.
- The new Business Support Service delivered by Wirral Chamber facilitated three Sector Networks for Construction, Visitor Economy and Manufacturing, offering information on training and funding and facilitating business to business networking opportunities in support of growth.

During Quarter 3 we will review the interim report of the real time evaluation of the Health Related Worklessness Programme and use the findings to inform delivery; we will work with partners to bring forward final stage Strategic Investment Fund bids for 3 Wirral Waters development projects; we anticipate details of Government/Combined Authority commissioning arrangements for the remaining allocation of ESF monies for the City Region up to 2020; and Wirral Chamber will launch the fourth Sector Network - the Financial & Professional Forum.

Greater job opportunities in Wirral

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Increase the number of jobs created and safeguarded (via Wirral Chamber Data Reporting)	Quarterly Higher is better	970 2014-15		2,081	Green Actual: 194 Target: 195	Green Actual: 394 Target: 390		Better	Annual trajectories have been re-profiled and quarter one adjustments have been applied in line with annual trends and amended reporting/verification collection requirements under the new Business Support Services contract. Cumulative performance continues at a steady pace with additional figures this quarter relating to 140 jobs created (including 80 outstanding from prior reporting and now verified) and 60 jobs safeguarded.
Increase the employment rate in Wirral	Quarterly Higher is better	66.7 2014-15	England: 74.6 (Jul 16 - Jun 17) North West: 72.4 (Jul 16 - Jun 17)	69.7	70.8	71.3		Better	Performance, as reported via National Survey Data, has improved by 0.5% this quarter, making this the highest ever rate recorded in Wirral since this has been a national measure (Jan 2004). This increase is in line with the North West and more than 2x faster than the national average of only 0.2%, therefore narrowing the employment rate gap between Wirral and the rest of the UK.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Percentage of working age people claiming out-of-work benefits (economic in-activity)	Quarterly Lower is better	13.40% 2014-15	England: 8.10% (Nov 2016) North West: 10.10% (Nov 2016)	12.20%	12.00%			n/a	Unfortunately due to the full roll out of Universal Credit, the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) will no longer be releasing this data set. DWP plan to reconfigure their StatXplore Tool with a revised dataset for unemployment benefits; when established, a new measure may be possible to develop for the 2018/19 financial year to support the Greater Job Opportunities pledge for the remaining years of the Wirral Plan.

Workforce skills match business needs

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Reduce the Employer Skills Gap in Wirral	Annual Lower is better	15.0% 2015						n/a	This target is bi-annual and results of the 2017 survey will be reported at year-end.

Increase inward investment

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Total investment secured into Wirral developments	Annual Higher is better	£38,044,660 2014-15		£107,536,957				n/a	This is an annual indicator which will report at year-end.
Gross Value Added per head of population	Annual Higher is better	£12,482 2013	England: £26,159 (2015) North West: £21,867 (2015)	£14,523				n/a	This data will be reported later in 2017-18.

Thriving small businesses

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Deliver a net additional 250 new businesses over the life of this Plan	Annual Higher is better	7,400 2014-15		8,425				n/a	This is an annual indicator which will report at year-end.

Vibrant tourism economy

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Progress has been made in Quarter 2 to achieve the Vibrant Tourism Economy pledge, as a key element of the Wirral Growth Plan, through the delivery of the actions related to the Wirral Visitor Economy Strategy.

Key highlights this quarter include:

- The 2017 Wirral element of Mersey River Festival including Armed Forces Day visitor numbers have been confirmed at 40,000 achieving an economic impact of over £350,000
- The interactive map and web ticket manager are available on www.visitwirral.com to support the borough's tourism businesses and visitors
- The Wirral hotel/accommodation research study brief is out for tender to inform a new accommodation strategy
- Wirral expressions of interest are in, for the National Cultural Regeneration Fund, to develop new attractions
- The Wirral Heritage Strategy is to be revised to support related assets and stakeholders

A challenge to us during Q2 has been the pace of tourism delivery transition to the Wirral Chamber of Commerce, and in particular website and social media training to update relevant sites; however this will be remedied in Q3 to meet target dates.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Increase visitor numbers each year based on the 2014 baseline (m)	Annual Higher is better	7.59 2014		8.20			8.50	Better	Performance for 2016 was published during Quarter 1 2017-18; and has confirmed total visitor numbers have increased in Wirral by an average of 5.75% p.a. since 2014. This data comes from Global Tourism Solutions via the Local Enterprise Partnership. It is based on the STEAM model which quantifies the local economic impact of tourism, from both staying and day visitors using a range of visitor economy measures.
Increase value of tourism economy by at least 5% each year (£m).	Annual Higher is better	£355.00 2014		£385.80			Green Actual: £402.40 Target: £391.90	Better	Performance for 2016 was published during Quarter 1 2017-18; and has confirmed an average increase of 6.4% p.a. since 2014. This data comes from Global Tourism Solutions via the Local Enterprise Partnership. It is based on the STEAM model which quantifies the local economic impact of tourism, from both staying and day visitors using a range of visitor economy measures.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Increase overnight stays & hotel occupancy by 5% by 2020 based on the 2016 baseline	Annual Higher is better	77.75 2016						n/a	This is an annual indicator which will report at year-end.
Increase the numbers of Wirral Visitor Economy Network members	Annual Higher is better	85 2016						n/a	This is an annual indicator which will report at year-end.

Transport and technology infrastructure fit for the future

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

We are continuing to work well and make real progress against the actions to deliver this pledge and are starting to realise the benefits from working in partnership; this quarter the Steering Group have welcomed several new members to further enhance this.

We are proud to have been nominated for 2 Transport Awards during this quarter for our hard work to support road safety in the Borough through the 'Mind Your Business Project' and it is pleasing to know that this is being recognised at a national and regional level. The 'Mind your Business' Project has taken traditional road safety engagement methods and utilised them to engage with road users who have not been traditionally targeted, specifically people driving on work's business. Figures obtained from Merseyside Police illustrate that 1/5th of collisions within Wirral involve people who were driving whilst at work and it is fantastic that we have been recognised for our innovate approach to this challenge.

Other highlights this quarter include: -

- We have continued to develop our Wirral Road Safety Plan to support the City Region Plan, and this quarter we are pleased to report that we can see an improvement in road safety performance data when compared with the same period over the last two years.
- Given that we recognise that the provision of efficient, well maintained and accessible transport infrastructure is critical in facilitating economic growth and attracting investors it is great news that we have been successful in securing funding from the Combined Authority to undertake Feasibility Studies to support investment in our infrastructure.
- We have worked with City Region colleagues to develop and gain endorsement by the Combined Authority of a Local Journeys Strategy which will be key to supporting residents to undertake shorter journeys by all mode.
- Consultation on the LCR Public Rights of Way Strategy has now finished and we will be working with partners to review this to develop final document for early next year.
- Marketing to promote travel by bus under the "Better by Bus" campaign has taken place, including the issue of free tickets for residents to trial bus use.

During the next few months we will be focusing on:-

- Completing the delivery of the Docks Bridges Replacement Programme to support our Growth Plan Strategy as well as residents, visitors and businesses.
- Finalising the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Public Rights of Way Strategy.
- Continuing work on the Outline Business Case for the future delivery of specialist transport to support the independence of the young people and residents in need of our support.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Increase the volume percentage of people cycling	Annual Higher is better	0% (index for 2013/14)		19%				n/a	This is an annual indicator which will report at year-end.
Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents	Quarterly Lower is better	140 2014- 15	English Metropolitan Authorities: 107 (2013-15) North West: 90 (2013-15)	122	Green Actual: 25 Target: 23	Blue Actual: 40 Target: 47		Better	Provisional Police Statistics recorded between January and June 2017 are reported in this quarter. Quarter 2 2017-18 has seen a continuing improvement when compared to the same period over the last two years (55 - 2016/17, 71 - 2015/16). The Partnership have undertaken several events during this time with more planned aimed at generating further improvement in the number of casualties during the next quarter. These include engagement activities with car drivers and vulnerable road users. A combination of approaches delivered in partnership is required to improving safety for our residents, for example infrastructure improvements such as those for pedestrians and cyclists which are being delivered through our Sustainable Transport Enhancement Programme (STEP), and engagement programmes such as Mind Your Business project working with local businesses.
Maintain the condition of Wirral's strategic network – Principal Roads	Annual Lower is better	1.40% 2014- 15	English Metropolitan Authorities: 4.00% (2015-16) North West: 4.00% (2015-16)	1.40%				n/a	This is an annual indicator which will report at year-end.
Maintain the condition of Wirral's strategic network – Non-principal Roads	Annual Lower is better	2.20% 2014- 15	English Metropolitan Authorities: 5.00% (2015-16) North West: 5.00% (2015-16)	1.30%				n/a	This is an annual indicator which will report at year-end.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
% levels of satisfaction overall with transport and highway services.	Annual Higher is better	56.7% 2015-16	National Highways and Transport Survey: 55.0% (2016)	57.0%				n/a	The National Highways and Transport Network Public Satisfaction Survey (NHT PSS) will report again in Quarter 3.
Increase levels of public satisfaction with public transport	Annual Higher is better	64% 2015-16	National Highways and Transport Survey: 60% (2016)	65%				n/a	The National Highways and Transport Network Public Satisfaction Survey (NHT PSS) will report again in Quarter 3.
Increase levels of public satisfaction with walking/cycling facilities	Annual Higher is better	56% 2015-16	National Highways and Transport Survey: 56% (2016)	56%				n/a	The National Highways and Transport Network Public Satisfaction Survey (NHT PSS) will report again in Quarter 3.
Travel Training – Number of successfully travel trained young people (Integrated Transport)	Annual Higher is better	26 2014-15		15				n/a	This is an annual indicator which will report approximately three months after 2016-17 academic year-end.

Assets and buildings are fit for purpose for Wirral's businesses

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Activity in this area of the Wirral Plan continues to be of significant importance to the economic stability of the Council and the wider Wirral area. The range of activities impacts the majority of 2020 pledges.

It is pleasing to note that in 2016-17, Wirral Council's corporate emissions of carbon dioxide due to energy use showed a 7.69% reduction from the previous year. This is a total reduction of 38.2% over 7 operational years and exceeded the target by 3655 tonnes.

Asset related projects are being driven at pace through strong project management with the majority on track to deliver within agreed timescales. In quarter 2 occupancy data across Wirral has been gathered which will support asset rationalisation. The Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) has set out the strategic context to drive regeneration across Wirral which will have a direct impact on the Asset Strategy for Wirral and we are on track to submit the One Public Estate bid to the Liverpool city Region in quarter 3. Systems to support strategic asset decisions have been improved and are proving to be of significant benefit to the business; the Asset Management System is now compliant with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Code of Practice.

There are however challenges to overcome:

- Generating Capital receipts
- Mapping of future service needs of the Wirral Partnership
- Asset rationalisation and disposal
- Acquisition of key assets in areas for regeneration
- Reduction of revenue expenditure in operational assets
- Land assembly to enable wider development projects

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
£m Income generation from investment properties and underperforming space	Annual Higher is better	£1.6 2015-16		£1.6				n/a	Annual Indicator which reports at year end.
£m Capital Receipts generated by the disposal of Wirral Council's surplus assets	Annual Higher is better	£1.28 2015-16		£2.87				n/a	Annual Indicator which reports at year end.
Commercial asset space available for release (m2)	Annual Higher is better	5,711 2015-16		78,483				n/a	Annual Indicator which reports at year end.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Reduction in Wirral Council's corporate emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) due to energy use (tonnes)	Annual Lower is better	31,999 2013-14		30,446			Blue Actual: 28,106 Target: 31,761	Better	Corporate performance over the 2016-17 financial year has exceeded the 2016-17 emissions target by 11.51%. To date, we have reduced emissions of CO2 by 17,375 tonnes from a 2008/09 baseline of 45,481 tonnes, a reduction of 38.2% over 7 operational years. The year-on-year reduction is 7.69%.
Number of multi-use of assets through shared / alternative use	Annual Higher is better	4 as at April 2016		6				n/a	Annual Indicator which reports at year end.

Report Key

Trend - Performance is shown as Better, Same or Worse compared with the last reporting period except for: Increase the number of jobs created and safeguarded, Reduce the number of People Killed or Seriously Injured in road traffic accidents, Increase visitor numbers, Increase value of tourism economy and Reduction in Wirral Council's corporate emissions of carbon dioxide which are compared with same period the previous year.

Target - Where targets apply, these are shown as either Blue, Green, Amber, Red based on the agreed tolerance range for individual measures.

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**Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 29 November 2017**

REPORT TITLE:	FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 2 2017/18
REPORT OF:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: FINANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the financial monitoring information for Business in a format consistent across the Overview & Scrutiny Committees. The report provides Members with detail to scrutinise budget performance for this area of activity. The financial information is at close of quarter 2 2017/18.

Information has been drawn from the relevant sections of the most recent Cabinet revenue and capital monitoring reports and combined with additional relevant service information to produce a bespoke report for this Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The report includes the following:

- Performance against the revenue budget (including savings, income and debt)
- Performance against the capital budget

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1 The quarter 2 revenue forecast overspend of £0.05 million be noted.
- 2 The performance of the capital projects and amendments to the capital programme within this area be noted.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

1.1 To provide members with details of the financial performance of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's area.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 Not applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 PERFORMANCE AGAINST REVENUE BUDGETS QUARTER 2 (JULY 2017- SEPTEMBER 2017)

3.1.0 CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET

3.1.1 The 2017/18 Budget was agreed by Council on 6 March 2017. Any increase to the overall Council Budget (but not use of the existing budget contingency) requires agreement by full Council. Changes to the Budget since it was set are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: 2017/18 Original & Revised Net Budget by Wirral Plan Themes

	Original Net Budget	Budget Change Quarter 1 Use of Contingency	Budget Change Quarter 1 Use of Balances	Approved Budget Changes Qtr 2	Revised Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Business	37,438	1,500	-	-	38,938
Net Cost of Services	37,438	1,500	-	-	38,938

3.2.0 PROJECTIONS AND KEY ISSUES

3.2.1 The projected outturn position as at the end of September 2017 and Wirral Plan: 2020 Vision Themes updates are detailed in the following sections.

Table 2: 2017/18 Projected Budget variations by Wirral Plan Themes

Directorates	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	(Under) Overspend Quarter 2	RAGBY Class	Change from prev
Business	38,938	38,889	-49	G	-187
TOTAL	38,938	38,889	-49		-187

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

- Overspends Red (over +£301k), Underspend Yellow (over -£301k).
- Amber (+£141k to +£300k), Green (range from +£140k to -£140k); Blue (-£141k to -£300k).

3.2.2 Business

- Projected net overspend within Assets of £0.5 million. This involves costs relating to Old Market House and vacant sites such as the Municipal Building and Dock Road Depot. These costs have been partially offset through the use of £0.5 million from the Revenue Budget Contingency and a re-profiling of the Property Maintenance Programme.
- Increasing demand pressures are also impacting upon Legal Services. Increased external legal fees from cases within Children's Services are projected to result in a net £0.9 million additional cost above budget.
- Business Services receive income for services provided. These comprise the IT Service Level Agreement with schools, printing services on behalf of schools and for internal functions and support for external organisations such as Edsential and Wirral Evolutions. With the opportunity of schools and others to source services elsewhere there is a potential shortfall in income of £0.6 million with negotiations ongoing.
- At this stage there is a predicted underspend within Treasury Management as a consequence of the on-going use of internal funds to minimise the requirement for external borrowing which defers the need to borrow and delivers one-off savings. These are forecast to be up to £2 million.
- The Treasury Management Mid-Year report also recommends a change in the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy in respect of supported capital. If agreed by Council and external audit this could realise reduced costs of up to £4.1 million in 2017/18. The impact of this is not yet assumed within the above monitoring figures but will be built in once approval is received from Council.

3.3.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF SAVINGS

3.3.1 A summary of the position of 2017/18 Business savings at 30 September 2017 is below.

Table 3: Savings Implementation 2017/18 (£000's)

BRAG	Number of Options	Approved Budget Reduction	Amount Delivered at Q2	To be Delivered
B - delivered	12	15,140	15,140	0
G – on track	6	1,750	1,400	350
A - concerns	1	400	200	200
R - high risk/ not achieved	4	1,700	0	1,700
Total at Quarter 1 2017-18	23	18,990	16,740	2,250

3.3.2 The savings tracker contains an assessment of the 2017/18 savings by the ratings below.

- **Blue:** Represents savings which have already been realised.
- **Green:** Savings on track to deliver
- **Amber:** Some concerns regarding delivery and will require closer scrutiny and monitoring.
- **Red:** High risk of not being achieved.

3.4.0 INCOME AND DEBT

3.4.1 The table below shows the outstanding debt by Wirral Plan Theme category and then by invoice raised date. At the end of September 2017 total Council arrears stood at £24.6 million with £5.7 million of this relating to Business. In overall terms 37,723 invoices have been issued in the year by the council with a value of £43 million raised. £44 million of payments including amounts for prior years have been collected.

Table 4: Accounts Receivable Outstanding Arrears Analysis

Theme	Less than 30 days	More than 30 days	2016/2017	2015/16	Pre 2015/16	Total at 30.09.17
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Business	3,119,132	538,486	499,293	531,812	980,224	5,668,947

3.4.2 In accordance with proper accounting practice, income is credited to the relevant financial year's accounts of the service area at the point invoices are raised. A provision for bad debt is maintained and is assessed each year. Should non-payment occur after proceeding through all necessary recovery procedures, any properly authorised write off will be charged against the bad debt provision.

3.5.0 PERFORMANCE AGAINST CAPITAL BUDGETS QUARTER 2 (July-September 2017)

3.5.1 Capital Programme 2017/18 at end of Quarter 2 (30 September)

	Revised Programme	Spend to Date Sept 2017	Funded by: Council Resources	Funded by: Grants	Business Rates	Reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Business	36,829	6,298	21,650	13,024	550	1,605
Total expenditure	36,829	6,298	21,650	13,024	550	1,605

3.5.2 New Capital Bids recommended to cabinet

- **Cyber Security (£1.562m)**

Technology needs to be refreshed to ensure it remains supported and secure. A number of projects are required to ensure that the Council is fully supported which will avoid having to pay very expensive "extended support" fees and include the upgrade to Windows 10; replacement of web publishing server; replacement of Unix servers and upgrading Windows servers. This is essential to maintain the integrity and security of the Council I.T. network. Estimated cost is £1 million in 2017/18 and £0.6 million in 2018/19 with the proposed funding being from Capital Receipts.

- **Street Lighting (£0.500m)**
This is a revision to an existing scheme with the allocation increased from £0.5 million to £1.0 million. This follows completion of survey works and is required due to public safety concerns and improved performance regarding street lighting. Additional cost is £0.5 million in 2017/18 with the proposed funding from borrowing for which a full year's cost would be £24,000.
- **Eureka Project (£0.308m)**
This is financial assistance to Eureka, The National Children's Museum to develop the Eureka! Merseyside proposal. This will support the required funding applications to bring forward this development. Eureka! Merseyside will create a world-class destination for families at Seacombe Ferry on the current Spaceport site replicating the award winning model in Halifax. The cost of the project is £11 million with funding agreed subject to final applications from a number of sources. The Council contribution is £0.06 million in 2017/18 and £0.25 million in 2018/19 with the proposed funding being from borrowing for which a full year's cost would be £13,000.
- **Data Centre (£1.500m)**
Funding from Insurance Fund previously agreed and the scheme is now being formally included in the Programme. Alternative methods of funding this scheme are currently being evaluated to maximise value for money.

3.5.3 Since quarter 1 there has been a re-profiling of the Business capital program. The program has reduced from £38.2 million to £36.8 million. The main movements are:

- **Wirral Waters Investment Fund (£3.450m)**
On course to approve over £4 million by March 2018 but based on the timing of the applications, approvals and spend profiles the use is estimated at £0.55 million in 2017/18 so re-profiled into 2018/19.
- **Car Parking (£0.325m)**
Tender has resulted in reduced costs for the car parking machines. Reduced requirement.
- **Cleveland Street. Depot (£0.370m)**
Awaiting outcome of Leisure Business Case to determine requirements so re-profiled into 2018/19.
- **Highway maintenance (£0.270m)**
Scheduled programme of works may run into 2018/19. Re-profiled into 2018/19.
- **Building refurbishment to increase occupancy (£0.223m)**
A number of projects are still on hold to avoid unnecessary spend until decisions are made on the usage of key assets. Re-profiled into 2018/19.

3.5.4 Spend of £2.6 million has been incurred in respect of the current dock bridges replacement scheme. This major scheme is largely funded through a Government grant and the extensive works are expected to be completed by

early 2018.

- 3.5.5 Other significant spend includes works to refurbish and update Council buildings to increase occupancy and make fit for purpose (£0.6 million) and highways related works (£1.2 million).
- 3.5.6 The Liverpool City Region has allocated £3.1 million of grant support for Sustainable Transport Enhancement Package (STEP) programme for which a schedule of work has now been drawn up for action by Bam Nuttall for implementation.
- 3.5.7 Within the Programme is an allocation of £10 million for investment in properties. This is closely linked to the progressing Wirral Growth Company and is intended to fund acquisitions which will, in turn, provide a revenue income stream to the Council. It is anticipated that this funding will be utilised by the year end.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The financial implications of this report are discussed throughout the report. This is essentially a financial monitoring performance update report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The entire report concerns the duty of the Council to avoid a budget shortfall. The Chief Finance Officer has a personal duty under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 Section 114A to make a report to the executive if it appears to them that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources available to it to meet that expenditure.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

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

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The possible failure to deliver the Revenue Budget is being mitigated by:
- Senior Leadership Team / Management Teams reviewing the financial position.
 - Tracking system of savings options to monitor progress.
 - Use of temporary additional support to assist with revenues collection.
 - Use of earmarked reserves and General Fund Balance savings risk contingency.

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

Appendix Capital Programme and Funding 2017/18

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Council Meeting	Date
Budget Council	6 March 2017
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 1	17 July 2017
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 1	17 July 2017
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 2	6 November 2017
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 2	6 November 2017

Capital Programme and Funding 2017/18**APPENDIX 1**

Business Theme	Revised Programme £000	Spend to Date £000	Council Resources £000	Reserves £000	Business Rates £000	Grants £000	Total Funding £000
Building refurb to increase occupancy	950	562	950	-	-	-	950
Fund to assist land assembly and resale	468	46	468	-	-	-	468
Cleveland Street transport depot	120	-	120	-	-	-	120
Demolish Bebington Town Hall	365	3	365	-	-	-	365
Demolish former Rock Ferry High School	70	61	70	-	-	-	70
Demolish Stanley School	30	28	30	-	-	-	30
Demolish former Foxfield School	11	-	11	-	-	-	11
Treasury Building	413	184	413	-	-	-	413
Cyber Security	1,000	-	1,000	-	-	-	1,000
Data Centre	1,500	555	-	1,500	-	-	1,500
Children's Services collaboration	102	-	102	-	-	-	102
Eureka	60	-	60	-	-	-	60
Industrial Estates	150	70	150	-	-	-	150
Millennium Centre re-modelling	525	148	525	-	-	-	525
Active travel	22	21	22	-	-	-	22
Bridges	938	59	788	-	-	150	938
Highway maintenance	2,790	1,190	-	-	-	2,790	2,790
Transport for growth/integrated transport	2,667	285	1,443	-	-	1,224	2,667
Coast protection	150	5	150	-	-	-	150
STEP	3,450	0	365	-	-	3,085	3,450
Dock bridges replacement	6,445	2,550	1,000	-	-	5,445	6,445
Replace highways grass cutting machinery	288	281	288	-	-	-	288

Business Theme (continued)

	Revised Programme £000	Spend to Date £000	Council Resources £000	Reserves £000	Business Rates £000	Grants £000	Total Funding £000
Business investment grants	888	147	888	-	-	-	888
Growth fund	600	-	600	-	-	-	600
Webcasting	225	-	225	-	-	-	225
Thermal mapping	42	-	42	-	-	-	42
Pothole action fund	270	49	-	-	-	270	270
Street lighting	1,165	54	1,000	105	-	60	1,165
Car parking	575	-	575	-	-	-	575
Investment in properties	10,000	-	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Wirral Waters Investment Fund	550	-	-	-	550	-	550
	36,829	6,298	21,650	1,605	550	13,024	36,829

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HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATION PANEL

Monday, 25 September 2017

Present:

Councillors M Sullivan D Mitchell
 S Williams

Apologies D Ball

13 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests, in connection with the item on the agenda.

No such declarations were made.

14 PETITION FOR LOWER SPEED LIMIT - BRIMSTAGE ROAD, BRIMSTAGE

The Road Safety Officer for the Council Mr D Rees addressed the Panel and drew attention to sections of the written report submitted and answered question from the Panel.

A review for all Council Roads including Brimstage Road in 2010, a consistent approach was taken by experienced consultancy firm in conjunction with Traffic Management and Local Police; this looked at the use of the road, the frontage, shopping area, volume and speed of traffic.

Brimstage road (A5137) is a strategic east- west route connecting Heswall and the A540 to the M53 at Clatterbridge. Following the recommendation of this review the speed limit was reduced from 60 to 50 Mph.

An analysis of road safety records on Brimstage Rd. in 2014 was undertaken during this study there had been 6 injury crashes over 5 year period within the 50 Mph section of this Rd, the Officer went into detail concerning these crashes.

To improve safety on Brimstage Rd a scheme was approved by Cabinet in 2015/16 introducing signs and road marking and a minor realignment of the main carriageway around the bend at the junction of Brimstage Rd and Whitehouse Lane.

During this investigation the Council received the petition with over 240 signatures from Mr Mason; in October 2016 the Road Safety manager and Cabinet Member for Highways met with Mr Mason and interested members of the public to discuss concerns over the speed of traffic on Brimstage Rd.

The finding of the survey undertaken 7 days before the scheme in October 16 and May 17 showed the majority of traffic in both directions speed was between 41 and 46 Mph.

Poor visibility from entrances from properties this is being addressed by Lever Hulme estates in cutting back the hedge rows now the birds have finished nesting to increase visibility.

It was noted that the Police had said it would be difficult to enforce a speed limit on this Rd if reduced to 40 Mph due to there being no laybys to pull cars speeding cars over on to.

The Traffic Management Officer finished off his report by referring to the conclusion from the panel of experts regarding to the wide scale speed limit review in 2010/11 is correct and the current 50 MPH speed limit for this Road is appropriate and within the guidance set out by the Department for Transport.

The Lead Petitioner Mr Peter Mason addressed the Panel and answered questions asked; he explained to the panel his industry background as a Civil Engineer involved in infrastructures projects overseas and here which involved Highways and Road Safety. Mr Mason has lived on the Wirral for 20 years during this time he has been concerned about road safety and his views are shared by many members of public. Mr Mason has been instrumental in reducing the speed limit on the section of Brimstage Road from the Clegg Arms Gayton to the Heswall Hills Railway Station from 40 to 30 Mph.

Mr Mason told the panel his 14 year old daughter was knocked down and killed outside Clatterbridge Hospital in 1990.

The concerns he raises are reflected by many people for the safety of the road users, elderly people and school children crossing the road. There are 2 care homes and visitors, staff and delivery vans have difficult in joining the road and the staff crossing the road to the bus stop due to the speed of traffic.

Brimstage Road has many blind bends and as it is a rural road you could encounter slow moving tractors, and Cattle crossing the road both leaving dirt and dung on the road.

He pointed out the road is used by HGV, cars, cycles and horses the road is not wide and there is no continuous footpath. The 50 Mph is misleading to users as some parts of the road have to be taken at considerable slower speeds.

He concluded that the reduction in the speed limit from 40 to 30 Mph has saved a number of casualties and he now needs to do the same for the rest of Brimstage road but as a compromise only reducing the speed limit from 50 to 40 MPH.

Mr Mason was asked to leave the room whilst the Panel discussed making their decision.

Mr Mason was invited back into the meeting to be given the decision by the Chair of the Panel

The panel had voted 2:1 to uphold the Recommendation for the speed Limit to remain the same.

The chair gave that the main reasons against changing the speed limit were:

Statistics show that there isn't a reason to change the speed limit.

The decision was far easier to make on the east side of Brimstage Village.

The Chair has made a recommendation to the Traffic Management Officer to go back and have a look at the signage and where it is placed, the slow signs prior to the bends. Check road markings and signage are in good condition.

If the situation changes on the safety of road users it will be reviewed again.

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POLICY INFORM:

Business



Policy Inform - November 2017

The Policy Inform briefings will provide an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, bills presented to Parliament and emerging policies.

The Policy Inform briefings have been produced specifically to inform Portfolio Holders and Elected Members and will be taken to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees for discussion.

CONTENTS

Contents	Page Number
Introduction	3
Queen's Speech 2017	5
Wirral Plan Business Pledges- Policy and Legislative Developments	
Greater job opportunities in Wirral	7
Workforce skills match business needs	10
Increase inward investment	12
Thriving small businesses	13
Vibrant Tourism Economy	15
Transport and Technology infrastructure fit for the future	17
Assets and buildings are fit for purpose for Wirral's businesses	22
Sources	24

INTRODUCTION

The Wirral Plan:

A 2020 Vision which sets out a shared partnership vision to improve outcomes for Wirral residents.

The Plan focuses on three key theme areas:



The Wirral Plan Business Theme states:

“Wirral is a place where employers want to invest and businesses thrive.”

Business Policy Briefing:

This policy briefing focuses specifically on policies and legislation relating to the Business Priority and is intended to provide Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support the committees work programme and future scrutiny work.

The following table outlines the timetable for the preparation and reporting of policy briefing papers:

Overview & Scrutiny Briefings	
September 2017	This policy briefing will provide an overview of emerging policy and legislation outlined within the Queen’s Speech, with a particular focus on legislation emerging as a result of the UK’s exit from the European Union. This policy briefing will also provide an initial analysis of any opportunities and implications for Wirral as a result of emerging policy and legislation.
November 2017	This policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant opportunities and implications for Wirral.
March 2018	This policy briefing will provide an update on emerging on policy and legislation and will

	further consider any relevant opportunities or implications for Wirral.
June 2018	This policy briefing will provide an update on emerging on policy and legislation and will further consider any relevant opportunities or implications for Wirral.

November’s policy briefing focuses on identifying the key implications and opportunities for Wirral and the wider Liverpool City Region as a result of emerging policy and legislation.

The Committee may wish to identify specific policy areas to focus upon which are in line with the Committee’s work programme. Detailed briefing papers can be prepared for these subject matters at the request of the Committee which would be in addition to the regular policy briefing papers outlined above.

QUEEN'S SPEECH 2017

On Wednesday 21st June 2017, the Queens Speech was delivered, outlining the Government's programme of legislation and policies for the coming year.

Below is a list of each individual Bill that will have implications for local government that was announced during the speech, including those Bills carried over from the 2016-17 session. The list identifies the Overview and Scrutiny Committee remit that the legislation most closely aligns:

Legislative Plans	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Repeal Bill	<p>Developments relating to these Bills will be reported within the Council's EU Exit Report. If you wish to request a copy of these reports please contact: rachelhowey@wirral.gov.uk</p>
Customs Bill	
Trade Bill	
Immigration Bill	
Fisheries Bill	
Agriculture Bill	
Nuclear Safeguards Bill	
International Sanctions Bill	
Automated and Electric Vehicles Bill	Business
High Speed 2 Phase 2A Bill	Business
Good Mortgages Bill	Environment
Smart Meter Bill	Environment
Draft Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill	Children and Families
Courts Bill	Environment
Data Protection Bill	Business
Draft Patient Protection Bill	Care and Health

Draft Tenants' Fees Bill	Environment
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Additional Bills that have been announced are outlined below. These will be monitored in relation to any emerging implications for Local Government and reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

Additional Legislative Plans
Space Industry Bill
National Insurance Contributions Bill
Travel Protection Bill
Civil Liability Bill
Financial Guidance and Claims Bill
Armed Forces Bill

The Bills relevant to Business are discussed in further detail in this paper.

WIRRAL PLAN BUSINESS PLEDGES- POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

GREATER JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN WIRRAL

We will provide an increase in the number and range of jobs in Wirral so all our residents can find employment opportunities.

Our Pledge Ambition:

To make progress towards this goal we will see the creation and safeguarding of 5,000 jobs by 2020. We will also seek to increase the number of employers who pay the living wage and will work with partners and others to reduce unemployment and improve access to skills. We will encourage more young people into work who are currently not in employment, education or training.

Outcome Strategy:

1. Ensure that residents furthest away from work have the right support to access employment,
2. Build growth in target sectors such as energy and advanced manufacturing,
3. Work with the Combined Authority (CA) to co-design and then co-commission with DWP the future employment support for harder to reach claimants,
4. Work with the CA to identify strategic employment sites for inclusion in the proposed single city region framework.



Associated Legislation:

Unpaid Work Experience (Prohibition) Bill

Reporting stage: Received its first reading in the House of Lords on the 7th June 2016. The second reading, which involves a general debate on all aspects of the Bill is scheduled for 27th October 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to: To make provision for the prohibition of unpaid work experience exceeding four weeks and for connected purposes. The Bill will amend the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 to ensure persons participating in a scheme designed to provide work experience, for a continuous or non-continuous period which exceeds four weeks, are paid beyond this point at least the relevant minimum wage rate.

Concerns and progress so far: There is concern in both houses that banning unpaid internships could reduce the opportunities for young people to gain valuable work experience. Additionally, it is unclear what effect this bill would have on volunteering and other employment law if it were to achieve royal assent. However the Bill has also been welcomed as a way to stop some employers abusing the system and using schemes to avoid paying employees, something which could be considered slave labour.

Associated Legislation:

Employment and Workers' Rights Bill

Reporting stage: The Bill received its first reading in the House of Commons on 19th July 2017. The Bill is scheduled for a second reading on 27th April 2018.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Make provision about employment conditions and workers' rights; and for connected purposes.

Concerns and progress so far:

Further details regarding this bill have yet to be published.

Associated Legislation:

National Living Wage (Extension to Young People) Bill

Reporting stage: The Bill received its first reading in the House of Commons on 19th July 2017. The Bill is scheduled for a second reading on 6th July 2018.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Extend the National Living Wage to people aged 18 to 24.

Concerns and progress so far:

This Bill is a Private Member's Bill. These are often not printed until close to the second reading debate.

Associated Legislation:

Unpaid Trial Work Periods (Prohibition) Bill

Reporting stage: The Bill received its first reading in the House of Commons on 19th July 2017. The Bill is scheduled for a second reading on 16th March 2018.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Prohibit unpaid trial work periods in certain circumstances; and for connected purposes.

Concerns and progress so far:

This Bill is a Private Member's Bill. These are often not printed until close to the second reading debate.

Policy Developments:

Job creation for inclusive growth in cities

[LGIU, 25/09/17](#)

Summary –

The 'Job creation for inclusive growth in cities' report, published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, sets out the aims, rationales and types of demand-side policies for inclusive growth. Demand side policies are defined as "policies that seek to raise the level and enhance the quality of demand for labour in a city economy, increase labour demand for specific groups within the city, and/or improve the quality of jobs".

Analysis –

The report argues that the devolution of more powers and resources for economic development to local government might offer the opportunity to pursue more inclusive local development strategies. The report offers some suggestions for the strategies that local authorities could pursue both with existing powers and resources and with more devolved powers. The report ends with a list of five priorities for UK cities in designing local industrial strategies, including identifying and targeting inclusive growth sectors, fostering demand-led skills development, building closer public and private sector employer engagement, and leading and lobbying for greater devolved powers and resources for city authorities

Best Practice Example –

The report highlights good practice examples which are derived from case studies of six cities, including Chicago, Melbourne, and Limerick.

Chicago - The Chicagoland Manufacturing Renaissance Council (CMRC) is an association of representatives from the private and public sectors with a vested interest in advanced manufacturing. It was established in 2005. First, it aims to strengthen demand linkages and multipliers between manufacturers in Chicago. By so doing, it promotes labour pooling, increasing returns to scale and productivity growth through sharing technologies and good practice, and creates further employment opportunities. Second, it targets co-ordination and information gaps resulting from inadequate communication and co-ordination between business and government. Bringing together the public and private sectors, CMRC champions the provision of infrastructure and investments from government to benefit advanced manufacturing industry. Third, through promoting advanced manufacturing and creating high value added, high skill, high wage jobs, CMRC addresses the low skills trap to ensure Chicago's economy does not become locked into a cycle of low value added, low skill and low wage employment.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

There are currently no potential implications that will directly impact on the Wirral Plan as the emerging legislation is in the early stages of development.

The legislation will continue to be monitored and implications will be captured in the next Policy Inform paper.

WORKFORCE SKILLS MATCH BUSINESS NEEDS

To meet the needs of local businesses and attract those interested in investing in Wirral we must develop an appropriately skilled workforce that meets the needs of businesses for the future.

Our Pledge Ambition:

We will work with our partners in education and training to closely align the provision of training offered with the skills businesses will need to develop the borough. We will measure and close this skills gap by 2020.

Outcome Strategy:

Wirral's Growth Strategy – 1. Greater job opportunities in Wirral, 2. Workforce skills match businesses needs, 3. Increase inward investment, 4. Vibrant Tourism Economy.



Associated Legislation

Currently there is no emerging legislation aligned to this Wirral Plan Pledge. The Pledge will continue to be monitored for any developments.

Policy Developments:

Position on Skills and Local Economic Growth

SOLACE

Summary –

Local Government is at the forefront of tackling the skills crisis hampering local economic growth and renewal, and it is also in the midst of pioneering new partnership approaches to intervene with positive economic benefit in the skills and employment support reform agendas across the country. Solace has invested new energy in this agenda to develop a position statement and policy capacity to help lead this debate across our membership, capitalising on good practice across the country, and exploring the new leadership roles and expectations of senior management in local government acting in the skills and local economic growth space.

Analysis –

Solace's work identifies a small number of big skills and employment challenges facing local authorities.

- Firstly, place leadership, cohesion and managing the impact of national “trickle down” economic strategy – reframed as “inclusive growth” agenda – plays a critical role.
- Secondly, devolution remains a crucial part of the local government narrative; the demand for devolution will continue to grow, with the flexibility this affords local growth planning in an increasingly constrained financial reality facing all authorities.
- Thirdly, practice shows Councils are challenging their regeneration programmes to require a better balance between the physical transformation of many places matched with improved performance on skills.

Emerging Policy- Continued:

- Finally, local government has to learn to better understand and navigate a complex skills and employment system which will continue to be “reformed” by government. This system is increasingly marketised, and determining local government’s place in the provider-employer individual equation is probably the biggest challenge most local areas now face as this market develops.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

There is currently no legislation aligned to this pledge.

Emerging policy will continue to be monitored for potential implications and opportunities.

INCREASE INWARD INVESTMENT

To continue to grow our economy we have to identify local, national and international opportunities to bring more investment into Wirral.

Our Pledge Ambition:

We will increase the borough's gross value added at a faster rate than the regional average and commit to securing £250 million of Private sector investment.

Outcome Strategy:

We will have a clear focus on key growth sectors and aim to become a world class location for investment in those sectors, taking advantage of having one of the UK's strongest small business sectors and our unique geographical position at the Western gateway to UK and Europe.

Associated Legislation & Policy:

There is no emerging legislation or policy aligned to this Wirral Plan Pledge.

The Pledge will continue to be monitored for any developments.



THRIVING SMALL BUSINESSES

Our economy is also supported by entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Our Pledge Ambition:

We will work with our partners and other community groups to deliver net additional 250 new businesses in Wirral over the coming five years. We will make it easier for our small businesses to grow and will work to improve local high streets and our town centre economy.

Outcome Strategy:

1. Create a more dynamic and growth focused business population, 2. Raise the level of business starts; 3. Increase growth aspiration, skills and competence among business leaders; 4. Improve productivity and competitiveness; 5. Encourage diversification into emerging markets; 6. Increase the scale of export activity and the number of businesses that export their goods and services; 7. Promote supply chain development activity in key sectors.



Associated Legislation

Currently there is no emerging legislation aligned to this Wirral Plan Pledge. The Pledge will continue to be monitored for any developments.

Policy Development:

'Unstacking the Deck: Balancing the Public Procurement Odds'

Federation of Small Businesses

Summary –

The latest report from the Federation of Small Businesses highlights that the majority of small businesses are still fighting an uphill battle to secure public sector contracts, which means the Government's new targets for SME public procurement are unlikely to be met.

FSB is calling on Government and the public sector to step up efforts to remove blockages which are preventing smaller firms from supplying to the public sector.

Analysis -

The report highlights that just 23 per cent of SMEs had worked for the public sector over the last twelve months– down 2 percentage points from 2014. The report also shows that the number of SMEs, which had expressed an interest in competing for a public sector contract in the last year, had also fallen (10%) –down 4 percentage points. This suggests that the Government has some work to do to reach its target of increasing procurement spend with SMEs to 33% by 2020.

Policy Development - Continued:

FSB's proposals include:

1. Require local authorities to publish all contracts over £10,000 on Contracts Finder, as central Government is required to.
2. Give the Mystery Shopper Service (MSS) legal power to enforce its findings, and to more effectively name and shame poor performers.
3. The Government must publish a thorough action plan concerning how it will better enforce the law requiring detailed feedback from local authorities to unsuccessful tenderers.
4. Local authorities should recognise comparable accreditations to reduce existing barriers of entry to small firms seeking public procurement contracts.
5. Replace framework agreements with Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS), where possible, so small businesses are not locked out from lists of potential suppliers to local authorities.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

There is currently no legislation aligned to this pledge.

Emerging policy will continue to be monitored for potential implications and opportunities.

VIBRANT TOURISM ECONOMY

We are proud of our home and we will work to promote and grow the borough's tourism offer, making Wirral a place even more people enjoy visiting.

Our Pledge Ambition:

We will review and make best use of our heritage, leisure and cultural assets to drive tourism, the associated creation of jobs and increase revenue for Wirral's visitor economy to £450 million by 2020.

Outcome Strategy:

- 1) Developing Wirral's tourism marketing strategy and positioning the peninsula as an outstanding destination
- 2) Generating greater benefit from conferences, business meetings and events
- 3) Developing Wirral's tourism assets and experiences to increase competitiveness and attract new visitor markets
- 4) Encouraging sustainable and accessible tourism in Wirral.



Associated Legislation

Currently there is no emerging legislation aligned to this Wirral Plan Pledge.

The Pledge will continue to be monitored for any developments.

Policy Development:

Goldmine or Catastrophe? Impacts of new forms of tourism accommodation

[LGiU, 15/08/17](#)

Summary –

The briefing explores the experiences of several European capitals – London, Madrid, Amsterdam, Barcelona and Edinburgh – dealing with the issue of short-term tourist rentals promoted by online platforms, and what local and regional governments can do about it.

Analysis –

Tourism accounts for a significant portion of the GDP in cities with strong service sectors. The revenue generated by tourism, however, is not evenly distributed, and the activity itself requires important support from the public sector to grow strong and successful (cultural promotion, investment in infrastructure and transport, additional security, etc.). The report also highlights that small and medium-sized local authorities in areas with increasing number of tourists can introduce direct and indirect tourist taxes to fund additional services (depending on their powers to do so), and collaborate with relevant stakeholders to elaborate sustainable development plans supported by tourism.

Policy Development - Continued:

Best Practice Example-

The city of Amsterdam is considered by most the more developed example of a good policy to regulate short-term tourist rentals. This is due to two reasons: first, it is the first city in the world to create a binding agreement of collaboration with AirBnb (and other local based companies of the same sector) to eliminate illegal hotels and collect the Tourist Tax (5% charge over the accommodation costs). Second, the city has a well-defined policy for short-term tourist rentals and a well-funded team of local government officials whose only task is to keep improving and implementing the policy. To protect the local housing market for long-term residents, the local government implemented regulations stipulating that only 10% of the housing offer in each of the city districts can be destined to licensed short-term rentals, stimulating the construction of new private housing buildings (to increase the available housing and control the percentage of short-term tourist accommodations).

Policy Development:

Past, present and future – Heritage and a sense of place

[LGIU, 22/07/17](#)

Summary –

In local government we often discuss the role of heritage in encouraging tourism and bolstering the local economy but we less frequently consider its role in helping to shape a place and strengthen its identity and the sense of place of its residents.

Analysis –

Funding the arts and culture has become increasingly difficult for local authorities. However, what is being discussed in this briefing is not necessarily about money. It is about councils thinking more strategically about the role of heritage in shaping communities and in bringing people together. And how working collaboratively with those communities and partners can transform how heritage can be effectively supported.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

There is currently no legislation aligned to this pledge.

Emerging policy will continue to be monitored for potential implications and opportunities.

TRANSPORT AND TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE FIT FOR THE FUTURE

Ensure that Wirral has safe, affordable, well maintained and efficient transport networks for residents to access community services, enjoy our leisure facilities and commute to work.

Our Pledge Ambition:

We will use engineering to improve our road networks, to build new cycle routes, improve pedestrian facilities and take advantage of new technology to travel efficiently, safely and sustainably. People will feel confident to change their travel habits and try healthy, environmentally friendly ways of getting around. Residents, business and visitors will know how to get around and where to find information. In a digital economy we will also complete the deployment of a high speed broadband network for more residents and businesses in Wirral with 98% having access by 2017.

Outcome Strategy: Transport

1. Keep traffic moving safely and efficiently
2. Reliable and affordable public transport
3. Encourage healthy active travel
4. Inclusive integrated transport that supports our residents needs

Outcome Strategy: Digital

1. Every resident with the ability and the skills to get the most out of technology to improve their lives
2. Every business benefitting from market-leading technology infrastructure, helping them to open up new markets and compete globally
3. Every public service is joined up, integrated and available online in a way which makes it simple and accessible to get support online.



Associated Legislation:

Data Protection Bill

Reporting Stage: During second reading of the Bill on 10 October, a wide-ranging discussion took place on issues including the reform of protections for the processing of general personal data, age verification and security.

Committee stage - line by line examination of the Bill - is scheduled to begin on 30 October.

The purpose of the Bill is to: A Bill to make provision for the regulation of the processing of information relating to individuals; to make provision in connection with the Information Commissioner's functions under certain regulations relating to information; to make provision for a direct marketing code of conduct; and for connected purposes.

Associated Legislation Continued:

Data Protection Bill

Concerns and progress so far: The Bill is intended to balance the needs of organisations and protection of individuals at a point when, to quote the government 'Our digital economy is creating mind-boggling quantities of personal data'.

Associated Legislation:

Automated and Electric Vehicles Bill

Reporting stage: The Bill was introduced to the House of Commons and given its First Reading on Wednesday 18 October 2017. MPs will next consider the Bill at Second Reading on Monday 23 October 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to: Ensure the UK continues to be at the forefront of developing new technology in electric and automated road vehicles.

The Bill will:

- Allow the regulatory framework to keep pace with the fast evolving technology for electric cars, helping improve air quality
- Provide for the installation of charging points for electric and hydrogen vehicles
- Extend compulsory motor vehicle insurance to cover the use of automated vehicles, to ensure that compensation claims continue to be paid quickly, fairly, and easily, in line with longstanding insurance practice

Concerns and progress so far:

The Bill seeks to cement the UK as a research and development hub for modern transport technologies and a world-class infrastructure providing automated vehicles to a mass market of consumers - official research indicates that the market will be worth an estimated £28bn by 2035.

Following a Department for Transport consultation last year on the issue of self-driving car insurance, the Government earlier this year proposed to extend compulsory motor (under Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1988) to include the use of automated vehicles, and establish a single insurer model, where an insurer covers both the driver's use of the vehicle and the automated vehicle technology.

The proposed single insurance policy is considered to be the most effective way to support a functioning market for automated vehicles which ensures that innocent victims of an automated vehicle collision receive compensation quickly, fairly and easily, whilst allowing flexibility for the insurance industry to decide which insurance products they wish to offer.

Implementation of the Bill remains in its infancy as there are consultations on the specifics of the regulatory framework and the ambit of vehicles classified as "automated" will be a matter for the Secretary of State to determine.

Associated Legislation:

High Speed 2 Phase 2A (West Midlands to Crewe) Bill

Reporting stage: On 17 July 2017, the government introduced the High Speed Rail (West Midlands to Crewe) Bill into Parliament. This hybrid bill is to authorise the next part of the HS2 railway network, known as Phase 2a. This will run between Fradley in the West Midlands and Crewe in Cheshire. A hybrid bill mixes the characteristics of public and private Bills.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

The bill will grant powers to:

- build and maintain HS2 and its associated works
- compulsorily acquire interests in the land required
- affect or change rights of way, including the stopping-up or diversion of highways and waterways (permanently or temporarily)
- modify infrastructure belonging to statutory undertakers (e.g. utility companies)
- carry out work on listed buildings and demolish buildings in conservation areas
- carry out protective works to buildings and third-party infrastructure
- make necessary changes to existing legislation to facilitate construction and operation of HS2

Concerns and progress so far:

Journey times - already shortened by Phase 1 between London and Birmingham when the line opens in 2026 - will be reduced even further by the Phase 2a extension to Crewe in 2027.

Trains between London and Crewe, Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow will be 13 minutes faster once the extension is completed, according to the Government.

Phase 2b, from Crewe to Manchester and from the West Midlands to Leeds, South Yorkshire and the East Midlands, is scheduled to begin operation in 2033.

Most intercity trains will run on the HS2 network, allowing more commuter services on the West Coast line. Campaigners against HS2 have pledged to continue to oppose the scheme amid concerns about its budget and environmental consequences.

Associated Legislation:

Telecommunications Infrastructure (relief from non-domestic rates) Bill

Reporting stage: Members of the Lords, including the CEO of the TalkTalk Telecom group, discussed the key principles and purpose of the Telecommunications Infrastructure (Relief from Non-Domestic Rates) Bill during second reading, on 9 October 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- The bill will aim to implement 100 percent relief from non-domestic rates (business rates) for all new full-fibre infrastructure over the next five years in England and Wales.

Associated Legislation:

Telecommunications Infrastructure (relief from non-domestic rates) Bill

Concerns and progress so far:

Members discussed the key points raised by the bill including new fibre broadband investment not being subject to business rates until 2022 and the development of 5G.

Members also raised issues around wider access to superfast broadband.

Policy Development:

Data Protection: Step Change or Revolution?

[\(DfT, 01/08/2017\)](#)

Summary:

This briefing outlines the reforms introduced by the General Data Protection Directive (GDPR) to individual rights, and summarises the governance and accountability mechanisms that underpin the new regime, and with which local authorities must comply. Data Protection is a reserved matter, and with minor exceptions, the Bill extends and applies to the whole of the UK.

Analysis:

Safeguards are needed as the use of data becomes more integrated into the daily lives of individuals and impacts on commercial and public organisations, and the GDPR is widely regarded as a remarkable public protection initiative and promoter of standards for the commercial handling of data: the new regulatory regime positions the European Union as a world player in an increasingly challenging field.

Compliance with the GDPR is intended to strike a balance between supporting the commercial objectives of trade and commerce, and the requirements of government and the public sector, with the protection of individual privacy.

Policy Development:

High Speed Rail Update

[LGiU, 18/09/17](#)

Summary-

Progress on the HS2 project seems to have upset as many people as it has pleased. The campaign group, Stop HS2, have also continued their vigorous opposition highlighting concerns about the cost of the project and the disruption associated with the construction.

The Government's perceived lack of enthusiasm for Northern Powerhouse Rail is also proving controversial. There have been calls for more commitment to high-speed rail connections between the north of England's major cities from a wide range of people including the new Chair of the Transport Select Committee, Labour MP Lillian Greenwood and former Chancellor, George Osborne, who was recently appointed chair of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership.

Policy Development Continued:

High Speed Rail Update

[LGiU, 18/09/17](#)

Summary-

The Government has also been heavily criticised for scaling back plans to electrify rail lines in the Midlands and the North of England at the same time as giving support to the Crossrail 2 scheme in London. Concerns about regional disparity in rail investment were raised again when research by the Press Association was published in August showing that British trains are 'up to four times slower outside the south-east of England.' A group of more than 80 politicians, campaigners and community groups have now signed an open letter urging Chris Grayling to reverse his decision on rail electrification.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

Data Protection: Step Change or Revolution?

The Council has an opportunity in coming months to reassess compliance with governance standards, and ensure through the Information Commissioner's consultation process that any concerns are addressed in forthcoming guidance.

ASSETS AND BUILDINGS ARE FIT FOR PURPOSE FOR WIRRAL'S BUSINESSES

Wirral businesses are looking for new and refurbished commercial space to grow and expand into. We must ensure the best use of our real estate assets by linking them to business and community aspirations.



Our Pledge Ambition:

We need to make Wirral a business-friendly borough and one way to achieve that is to make our planning processes simpler to encourage growth over the next five years.

Outcome Strategy

1. Delivering more integrated and customer focused services, 2) Creating economic growth, 3) Generating capital receipts and revenue streams, 4) Reducing running costs

Associated Legislation

Currently there is no emerging legislation aligned to this Wirral Plan Pledge.

The Pledge will continue to be monitored for any developments.

Emerging Policy:

Councils spent £1bn on property assets last year to boost income

[LocalGov, 04/07/17](#)

Summary –

Local authorities spent more than £1bn acquiring property in 2016 as a way of generating new revenue, according to a new report published by APSE and CIPFA.

Analysis –

The report, published by APSE and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), shows that more councils are purchasing property for investment purposes. It shows how some councils are using this revenue to support public services, with a small number arguing it will allow them to become fully independent of national grant funding.

‘This report shows that property investment, if conducted properly, provides councils with the opportunity to raise substantial funds,’ said APSE chief executive Paul O’Brien.

‘APSE is not arguing that all councils can use this to meet their budget needs, but it is a further mechanism that councils can deploy to generate much needed funding to plug the gaps created by ongoing austerity. Essentially, what we are seeing is investment for social purpose.’

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

There is currently no legislation aligned to this pledge.

Emerging policy will continue to be monitored for potential implications and opportunities.

SOURCES

UK Parliament, Automated and Electric Vehicles Bill 2017-19. Available here:

<https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/automatedandelectricvehicles.html>

UK Parliament, High Speed Rail (West Midlands – Crewe) Bill 2017-19. Available here:

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/highspeedrailwestmidlandscrewe.html>

UK Parliament, Data Protection Bill 2017-19. Available here:

<https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/dataprotection.html>

UK Parliament, Unpaid Work Experience (Prohibition) Bill 2017-19. Available here:

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/unpaidworkexperienceprohibition.html>

UK Parliament, Employment and Workers Rights Bill 2017-19. Available here: [http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-](http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/employmentandworkersrights.html)

[19/employmentandworkersrights.html](http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/employmentandworkersrights.html)

UK Parliament, National Living Wage (Extension to Young People) Bill 2017-19. Available here:

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/nationallivingwageextensiontoyoungpeople.html>

UK Parliament, Unpaid Trial Work Periods (Prohibition) Bill 2017-19. Available here:

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/unpaidtrialworkperiodsprohibition.html>

UK Parliament, Telecommunications Infrastructure (Relief from Non-Domestic Rates) Bill 2017-19. Available here:

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/telecommunicationsinfrastructurerelieffromnondomesticrates.html>



**Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday 29th November 2017**

REPORT TITLE:	BUSINESS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE
REPORT OF:	THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE – COUNCILLOR MICHAEL SULLIVAN

REPORT SUMMARY

This report explains the process of developing and managing the scrutiny work programme for the municipal year. The Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in cooperation with the other three Overview & Scrutiny Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual scrutiny work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges which are within the remit of the Committee.

It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports. This report provides the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are requested to:

Approve the proposed Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2017/18, making any required amendments.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

To ensure members of the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not Applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND THE WIRRAL PLAN

The work programme should align with the priorities of the Council and its partners. The programme will be informed by:

- The Wirral Plan pledges
- The Council's transformation programme
- The Council's Forward Plan
- Service performance information
- Risk management information
- Public or service user feedback
- Referrals from Cabinet / Council

The specific Wirral Plan pledges and associated plans and strategies of particular relevance to the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee are:

Pledge	Plans & Strategies
Greater job opportunities in Wirral	Wirral Growth Plan
Workforce skills match business need	Wirral Growth Plan Skills Strategy (In development)
Increase inward investment	Wirral Growth Plan
Thriving small Businesses	Wirral Growth Plan
Vibrant tourism economy	Growth Plan Wirral Visitor Economy Strategy
Transport & technology infrastructure fit for the future	Transport Strategy Digital Strategy
Assets and buildings are fit for purpose	Asset Strategy

3.2 PRINCIPLES FOR PRIORITISATION

Good practice suggests that, in order to maximise the impact of scrutiny, it is necessary to prioritise proposed topics within the work programme. Members may find the following criteria helpful in providing a guideline towards ensuring that the most significant topics are prioritised:

Principles for Prioritisation	
Wirral Plan	Does the topic have a direct link with one of the 2020 pledges?
	Will the review lead to improved outcomes for Wirral residents?
Public Interest	Does the topic have particular importance for Wirral Residents?
Transformation	Will the review support the transformation of the Council?
Financial Significance	Is the subject matter an area of significant spend or potential saving?
	Will the review support the Council in achieving its savings targets?
Timeliness / Effectiveness	Is this the most appropriate time for this topic to be scrutinised?
	Will the review be a good use of Council resources?

By assessing prospective topics using these criteria, the Committee can prioritise an effective work programme that ensures relevance and the highest potential to enhance outcomes for residents.

3.3 DELIVERING THE WORK PROGRAMME

It is anticipated that the work programme will be delivered through a combination of:

- Scrutiny reviews undertaken by task & finish groups
- Evidence days and workshops
- Committee reports provided by officers
- Standing committee agenda items, for example, performance monitoring and financial monitoring
- Spotlight sessions
- Standing panels (where deemed necessary)

As some of the selected topics may well cut across the Wirral Plan themes, it is anticipated that some of the scrutiny topics may be of interest to members of more than one committee. In these circumstances, opportunities for members of more than one committee to work jointly on an item of scrutiny work will be explored.

Regular work programme update reports will provide the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

3.4 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS

Pre-decision scrutiny of the Council's Road Safety Plan

At the September Committee meeting, members agreed to add pre-decision scrutiny of the Council's Road Safety Plan to the committee work programme. A workshop has now been scheduled for Wednesday 13th December with key senior officers and Members of this committee have been emailed directly for expressions of interest to attend.

Budget scrutiny 2018 / 19

In line with previous municipal years, it is anticipated that workshops will be held for members of each of the scrutiny committees to review proposals as the 2018/19 budget is being developed. The dates and format for these sessions have yet to be finalised.

Resident Parking Scrutiny Review

At a meeting held on 4th July 2017, the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee referred the Resident Parking Scrutiny Review report to Cabinet following agreement of the findings and recommendations made by the Review Panel. The [report](#) was considered by Cabinet at the meeting held on 6th November 2017 and the minute from the meeting is detailed below:

"Councillor Stuart Whittingham introduced the report, which stated that, following a report presented to the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2016, a Task and Finish scrutiny review on Resident Parking was added to the Committee's work programme. The main objective of the review was to understand the issues around the Resident Parking Policy and to help inform the development of a new policy for Wirral.

The scrutiny review was conducted over a number of question and answer evidence sessions and the report set out the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Scrutiny Review Panel.

Councillor Whittingham informed the meeting that he supported the majority of the recommendations in the Review but had some new proposals to insert into the recommendations. These new proposals were due to the fact that some of the historic schemes were in areas where households were struggling to make ends meet.

Councillor Phil Davies informed the meeting that the Chair of the Scrutiny Review Panel, Councillor Jean Stapleton, was unfortunately unable to attend to present the review and had sent her apologies. He commented that the amended proposals put forward struck the right balance in maintaining those historic schemes which had been introduced with no charge for residents and which they shouldn't now have to pay for and a reasonable charge of £10 per annum for new schemes.

On a motion by Councillor Whittingham, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, it was -

RESOLVED: That -

(1) Cabinet notes the findings of the report and approves the first three recommendations of the Task and Finish Group;

(2) for new schemes and those introduced since 2007 under the most recent policy, the charge for resident permits should continue to be fixed at £10 per year until further notice;

(3) for the majority of historic schemes introduced before 2007 where residents do not currently pay a charge for resident permits, existing residents already living in these areas should continue to enjoy these for free with the exception that new residents moving into these areas from 1 April 2018 should pay £10 per year;

(4) officers are instructed to commence the necessary legal processes to amend the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders on that basis.

The implementation and impact of these recommendations following Cabinet approval will be followed up by this committee at an appropriate time.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

The delivery of the scrutiny work programme will be met from within existing resources.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Not Applicable

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Not Applicable

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: Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Work programme

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

AGENDA ITEMS – Wednesday 29th November 2017

Item	Format	Officer / Councillor
Universal Credit	Officer Report / Presentation	Lisa Jamieson
Notice of Motion – Wirral Well-Made Need for Infrastructure Support	Notice of Motion	Proposed by Cllr. Chris Blakely Seconded by Cllr. Lesley Rennie
Notice of Motion – Making more time for Pedestrians	Notice of Motion	Proposed by Cllr. Phil Gilchrist Seconded by Cllr. Chris Carubia
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Update	Officer Report / Presentation	Rosemary Boylan, Policy and Strategy Manager (External)
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority O&S Committee Update	Verbal Update	Cllr. Mike Sullivan (LCRCA Scrutiny Link)
Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 2	Report	David Armstrong, (Assistant Chief Executive)
Financial monitoring – 2017/18 Quarter 2	Report	Corporate Finance to present report
Policy Inform	Report	Policy Team
Scrutiny Work Programme Update	Report	Report of the Chair of the Committee

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS – Wednesday 23rd January 2018

Item	Format	Officer
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority - Update	Officer Report	Rosemary Boylan, Policy and Strategy Manager (External)
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Update	Report of the Chair	Cllr. Mike Sullivan (LCRCA Scrutiny Link)
Policy Inform	Report	Policy Team
Work Programme Update	Report	Report of the Chair

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Format	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer
Disaster Recovery Scrutiny Review – Follow-up report	Committee Report / Presentation	TBC	TBC
Tourism Scrutiny Review – Follow-up report	Committee Report / Presentation	TBC	TBC
Pre-decision scrutiny of the Commercial Strategy	TBC	TBC	TBC

WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

Item	Format	Timescale	Lead Departmental Officer	Progress / Comments
Road Safety Plan	Workshop	Scheduled for 13 th December 2017	Mark Smith	
Wirral Waters Briefing Sessions	Presentation	TBC	TBC	
Budget scrutiny 2018 / 19	TBC	Dec 2017 / Jan 2018	TBC	
Transforming Wirral – further business cases	Workshop	TBC	TBC	