



Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Wednesday, 27 November 2019
Time:	6.00 p.m.
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

This meeting will be webcast at
<https://wirral.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

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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 - 6)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September, 2019.
4. **2019/20 QUARTER 2 WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE (Pages 7 - 18)**
5. **POTHoles AND STREET LIGHTING - UPDATE (Pages 19 - 26)**

6. **UPDATE ON LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DEVELOPMENTS**
(Pages 27 - 32)
 7. **UNIVERSAL CREDIT - UPDATE REPORT** (Pages 33 - 46)
 8. **WIRRAL GROWTH COMPANY - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**
(Pages 47 - 50)
 9. **UPDATE ON INTERIMS AND CONSULTANTS** (Pages 51 - 58)
 10. **FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 2 2019/20**
(Pages 59 - 64)
 11. **HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATION PANEL MINUTES**
(Pages 65 - 66)
- The Committee are requested to note the minutes of the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel held on 21 October, 2019.
12. **BUSINESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE** (Pages 67 - 76)

Audio/Visual Recording of Meetings

Everyone is welcome to record meetings of the Council and its Committees using non-disruptive methods. For particular meetings we may identify a 'designated area' for you to record from. If you have any questions about this please contact Committee and Civic Services (members of the press please contact the Press Office). Please note that the Chair of the meeting has the discretion to halt any recording for a number of reasons, including disruption caused by the filming or the nature of the business being conducted.

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BUSINESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 17 September 2019

Present: Councillor D Mitchell (Chair)

Councillors	J Bird	J Walsh
	T Cox	G Watt
	M Collins	KJ Williams
	A Gardner	S Williams

Deputies: Councillors S Jones (In place of S Foulkes)
C Muspratt (In place of G Davies)
T Norbury (In place of K Greaney)
P Stuart (In place of J Stapleton)

16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors George Davies, Steve Foulkes, Karl Greaney and Jean Stapleton, 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.

No such declarations were made.

18 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 27 June and 4 July, 2019.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 27 June and 4 July, 2019, be approved.

19 NEW FERRY - A REPORT ON THE INCIDENT AND THE ACUTE AND RECOVERY PHASES

Mark Camborne, Lead Commissioner, Community Services and Resilience, introduced a report and gave David Ball's apologies to the Committee, as he was unwell. The report evaluated the role played by the Council, the

emergency services and other key stakeholders in respect of the gas explosion in New Ferry in March 2017. In particular, the level of effectiveness of the Council and its partners during the respective acute and recovery phases.

In addition the report provided an update on the Council and its key strategic partners' role in leading the current regeneration phase and any next steps.

During considerable discussion on the report, Mark Camborne, David Armstrong (Assistant Chief Executive) and Ray Squire (Economic Projects Manager) responded to questions and their comments included:

- An explanation as to how a 'major incident' could be declared and this could be by any agency. Mark Camborne, as one of the first Council officers to arrive on the scene, had defaulted to the Chief Fire Officer who was there and was dealing with the acute phase of the incident and was in essence the lead officer at the scene with control of the site.
- There was a meeting of people on site at the time but he would not class this as a typical Strategic Coordinating Group, which would meet in a designated command and control centre, such as at Bridle Road.
- Council officers provided what was requested by the Chief Fire Officer, such as closure of roads and the removal of some rubble to clear a pathway through the site whilst remaining mindful that the police would need to investigate the incident too. Once the Chief Fire Officer had been provided with all that the Council could provide Mark Camborne and David Armstrong then went to help at the Life Centre church where people had been displaced to.
- Upwards of £400,000 had been spent on demolition work, with much of the rubble and timber being removed to the site of the former Rock Ferry High School where a crushing plant was already in place to deal with demolition work taking place there.
- Progress had been made with regard to negotiations for the acquisition of properties affected by the explosion, although some negotiations were more protracted than others.
- With regard to health provision there were clear tried and tested plans in place and with the reception centre having been set up at the Life Church, Bebington, ambulance crews and medics were in that facility for the first 24/36 hours dealing with people who presented at the Life Church. People also presented at Walk-In centres and Accident and Emergency, an immediate concern was dealing with shock.
- In the medium to long term it was hoped people would refer to their own GP in respect of mental health issues and he was also aware that health representatives were present at most, if not all, the public meetings which had taken place during the recovery phase.
- Through the emergency planning process, the on-call Gold Commander for the NHS was aware of the incident and they put plans in place to deal with the incident, and there were medical practitioners there to deal with

the acute phase. It was acknowledged that maybe more could have been done by the health service in terms of help with mental health issues that may have arisen. People were seen to in ambulances on a one to one basis.

- The Council officers did provide support on a practical level but the health needs were more appropriately provided by medical practitioners.
- With regard to the condition of the site, the Council did not own any of it so permission was required from landowners and it would have been better if the Council had been able to improve the site sooner but negotiations had to take place with owners of some buildings, which had to be cleared out first, prior to demolition.
- With regard to ongoing mental health services provision this would need to be asked of the mental health service for them to address if there were to be any future incidents.
- With regard to consultation a number of senior officers did spend some time with people affected by the incident listening to the positive aspects of the Council's response along with comments on what the Council could learn. David Ball, Assistant Director Major Growth Projects and Housing Delivery, had also spent several months in the area feeding information back to the Council.
- Council staff who attended the site did have access to the Employee Assistance Programme through which they could access confidential counselling services. Formal debriefing sessions had also been held along with informal discussions between officers.
- The Council would accept a learning point of latent recovery from mental health trauma and there were reviews taking place across a city region level in terms of resilience planning.
- There were still engagement officers in the area and an engagement plan, albeit unwritten, had been executed. If improvements were required as to how this was carried out then this would be addressed.
- The Council had addressed the incident in the best way it could with reduced resources and with reduced access to facilities which ten or more years ago would have been at the Council's disposal (i.e. a significantly reduced workforce and schools, now academy trusts, which the Council no longer had control over).

All Members thanked all the officers involved for all their work on the night of the devastating event and over the months to follow.

The Chair referred to Members' comments, many of which were addressed in the Merseyside Resilience Forum debrief reports and which could be picked up by a future working party on the matter. There were nine recommendations in the multi-agencies debrief reports, two of which were for working parties in relation to the NHS and health and a further one would be picked up by this Committee in the work programme.

On a motion by the Chair, duly seconded, it was –

Resolved – That the report be noted.

20 **2019/20 QUARTER 1 WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE**

Alan Evans, Interim Director for Economic and Housing Growth, introduced a report which provided the 2019/20 Quarter 1 (April – June 2019) performance report for Wirral Plan pledges under the Business theme. The Quarter 1 report was included as Appendix 1 to the report, and provided an overview of the progress in Quarter 1, including available data in relation to a range of outcome indicators and supporting measures.

Responding to comments from Members, Alan Evans commented that he would be happy to bring a report back regarding businesses which were paying the apprenticeship levy but which were not actually taking on any apprentices and how this impacted on adult learning opportunities. With regard to the Wirral Chamber of Commerce, they had a contract from the Council to provide business engagement with a number of businesses each year providing additional support and providing outreach engagement across the Wirral business base.

Members requested further information on the number of businesses which the Chamber were engaging with which were not members of the Chamber. In response, Alan Evans stated that the Chamber did engage with businesses which were not members in several key sectors. If there were particular geographical areas in which no businesses were Chamber members then he would pick this up as an action to be addressed with the Chamber

A Member also suggested that the Chamber of Commerce could attend a meeting of the Committee and give a presentation on their work.

Resolved – That the report and comments be noted.

21 **FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT OUTTURN 2018/19 AND ESTIMATE FOR QUARTER 1 2019/20**

Sarah Cox, Principal Accountant, introduced the report of the Director of Finance and Investment which set out the Council's revenue and capital monitoring position for 2019/20 quarter 1 and also the final outturn information for 2018/19.

Responding to comments from Members, Sarah Cox and Peter Molyneux, Senior Manager Corporate Finance, stated that they could provide further details on those areas where income targets were being met and those areas where they weren't. An explanation was given as to how some expenditure had been re-profiled from the 2019/20 capital programme into the 2018/19 capital programme, in effect bringing the expenditure forward and some

projects had been put back from 2018/19 to the 2019/20 programme. With regard to the shortfall in the printing service income, options were being explored to bring in income from other sources.

The Chair thanked Sarah Cox for her first presentation to the Committee and on a motion by the Chair, duly seconded, it was –

Resolved – That the report be noted.

22 **UPDATE ON LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DEVELOPMENTS**

Alan Evans, Interim Director for Economic and Housing Growth, introduced a report which set out a brief overview of the latest developments at the Liverpool City Region (LCR). This included the development of a Local Industrial Strategy; a Household into Work scheme; funding for Tower Road, Birkenhead streetscape project; LCR Town Centre Fund; funding for Eureka National Children's Museum and the first LCR Cultural Awards to be held at the Lady Lever Art Gallery in November.

In response to a comment from a Member, Alan Evans stated that there were a number of plans in place to support businesses in the event of a 'no deal' Brexit and an ongoing dialogue was taking place across the Liverpool City Region (LCR) in terms of the impact on the port at Sefton and for Twelve Quays, Wirral with a view to maximising the funding available. He also referred to the possibility of 'free port' status and what this could mean if there were some added value process through imports of goods and then some assembly process before goods then left the ports and this was being discussed at a policy stage within the LCR.

In response to a further comment, Alan Evans, stated that collaboration took place at a Liverpool City Region level on the visitor economy. He could not reference anything specifically with regard to the heritage economy that was undertaken at a City Region level apart from, if Wirral asked for certain things to be marketed then they would showcase Wirral assets across the wider City Region.

On a motion by the Chair, duly seconded, it was –

Resolved – That the report be noted.

23 **BUSINESS O&S COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered a report from the Scrutiny Officer which explained the process of developing and managing a scrutiny work programme for the current municipal year. The report also updated the Committee on the current status of scrutiny reviews and workshops on a variety of topics. A report on the Council's scrutiny arrangements would be considered by the Standards

and Constitutional Oversight Committee at its meeting on 26 September, 2019. Councillor Lesley Rennie had agreed to chair the Camper Vans Task and Finish Scrutiny Review. A scrutiny workshop session had been held on 5 September to update Members on regeneration projects for Wirral Waters and Birkenhead Town Centre from which the view from all parties was that Members needed to see cranes on site and spades in the ground.

Councillor Jo Bird suggested that a Scrutiny Review Panel be established to look at the lessons learnt from the New Ferry explosion whilst hearing first hand from the victims and on the preparedness of the Council for disaster responses. After some debate on the potential remit of the Review Panel it was then -

Resolved –

- (1) That the contents of the Committee's Work Programme for 2019/20, be noted.**
- (2) That a Scrutiny Review Panel be established to look at the lessons to be learnt from the New Ferry incident and that dependent on the results of the review the Panel then look at a major incidents procedure and protocol.**



Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 27 November 2019

REPORT TITLE:	2019/20 Quarter 2 Wirral Plan Performance
REPORT OF:	Director of Economic and Housing Growth

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the 2019/20 Quarter 2 (July - September 2019) performance report for the Wirral Plan pledges under the remit of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Relevant Wirral Plan 2020 pledges are:

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

The report, which is included as Appendix 1, provides an overview of the progress in Quarter 2 and available data in relation to a range of outcome indicators and supporting measures.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION

Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to 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 delivery of 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 pledges partnership groups have 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 2019/20 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. 2018/19 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/wirral-plan-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 – Lucy Barrow
- 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: STAFFING, ICT 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 (a) Yes and impact review can be found at:
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2014-15/chief>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This is a summary of performance of key activities generated through the Business theme of the Wirral Plan. Some of the programmes of work included in strategy action plans will have an impact on the environment and climate. Individual pledge strategies are taking into consideration risks and adaptations to the changing climate.

The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to:
 Have no impact on emissions of CO2.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Wirral Plan Business 2019-20 Quarter 2 Pledge Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	19 September 2017
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	29 November 2017
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	27 March 2018
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4 July 2018
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	18 September 2018
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	28 November 2018
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	5 March 2019
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4 July 2019
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	17 September 2019

Appendix 1

Wirral Plan Business Theme 2019-20 Quarter 2 Reports



Wirral Plan 2020

Growth Plan

Greater job opportunities in Wirral

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Delivery of the Growth Plan continues to progress well with a full schedule of planned activities to support growth. Highlights for pledge indicators in the second quarter of this financial year include a continued strong employment rate following last year's continuous improvement trend, with Wirral outperforming the North West average by 2.4 percentage points, and, for the first time, the England average by 0.8 percentage points.

Key activity highlights for Quarter 2 include:

EMPLOYMENT: The European funded Wirral Ways to Work Programme continues to perform ahead of target, supporting 6,150 participants since its start in April 2016. Local voluntary organisation, Involve North West, has successfully secured contracts through competitive tendering exercises to deliver two of Wirral Council's key employment support projects, the Worklessness Support Project and the Community Connectors Project, ensuring continuation of these successful services beyond 2020.

WORKFORCE SKILLS: The development of a collaborative bid from the Combined Authority and regional voluntary network lead VOLA which, if successful, will deliver a 2 year programme of 6 or 12 month work placements, paid at living wage rate, for 500 unemployed or inactive residents age 16+ across the City Region.

INVESTMENT: Significant progress has been made in finalising the funding package for Eureka! Mersey with confirmation of 3 awards this quarter: £6.4m from the LCR Combined Authority, £200k from Wirral Council and £200k from a national charity. Determination of their planning application is expected in Q3.

BUSINESS: Wirral Chamber is working in partnership with Wirral Council & the Department of Business Energy & Industrial Strategy to support businesses with Brexit Readiness. A readiness training programme, advisory and information sessions, strategy planning and dedicated advisory support are planned with a Brexit Readiness Week scheduled for 21st to 25th October offering marketing, engagement, training and bespoke support.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Increase the number of jobs created and safeguarded (via Wirral Chamber Data Reporting)	Quarterly Higher is better	970.0 (2014-15)		4,045.0 (2015-19)	178.5 (2015-2019)	352.0 (Jul - Sept 19)				Better	Performance ahead of target representing 269 jobs created and 83 safeguarded this quarter with strong performance in the manufacturing and retail services sectors.
Increase the employment rate in Wirral	Quarterly Higher is better	66.7 (2014-15)	England: 75.4 (Jan-Dec 2018) North West: 73.8 (Jan-Dec 2018)	74.5 (Jan 18-Dec 18)	Blue Actual: 76.2 (Jan 19 - Mar 19)	Blue 76.2 (Apr 18 - Mar 19)				Same	Performance, as reported by National Survey Data, has seen no change since the last quarter. Following on from the trend in 2018-19, this figure is still at an all-time high. Wirral's employment rate is higher than both the NW and England benchmark figures. ⁷

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	Trend	Comment
Percentage of working age people claiming out-of-work benefits (economic inactivity)	Quarterly Lower is better	(n/a)	North West: 10.10% (Nov 2016)	13.48% (2018-19)	13.69%	13.51%				Better	A marginal improvement from Q1. A proxy dataset has been locally calculated using the latest available benefit data. Elements of this dataset are calculated using Universal Credit data; as Universal Credit Full Service is rolled out, the number of people recorded on the Claimant Count is likely to rise. A new national dataset methodology was provisionally released in July 2019. This national dataset does not include legacy benefits such as Employment Support Allowance. Reporting this year will therefore continue based on the local proxy measure for ease of local trend comparison.

Workforce skills match business needs

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Reduce the Employer Skills Gap in Wirral	Annual Lower is better	15.0% (2015)		11.0% (2017)					11.0% (2019-20)	Same	This indicator shows results from the bi-annual Skills Survey. 2017 outcome released with corrections in October 2018. The Employer Skills Survey 2017 found that 11% of Wirral establishments reported skills gaps within their workforce. Not only does this show a reduction and therefore improvement over each of the four Employer Skills Surveys since 2011, Wirral also has the lowest skills gap percentage across the Liverpool City Region bar St. Helens. No further information is forecast for future publications but it is likely that the next series will be due for release in 2020, referencing the 2019 data capture. The final reporting date for this target was Q4 2018/19 when 11% was recorded via the bi-annual National Skills Survey; this represents an over achievement of the 2020 target set. This indicator set is now complete.

Increase inward investment

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Total investment secured into Wirral developments	Annual Higher is better	£38,044,660 (2014-15)		£198,766,672 (2018-19)						n/a	
Gross Value Added per head of population	Annual Higher is better	£12,482 (Jan-Dec 2013)	England: £27,060 (Jan - Dec 2016) North West: £22,899 (Jan - Dec 2016)	£15,164 (Jan-Dec 2017)						n/a	

Thriving small businesses

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	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)		8,550 (2018-19)						n/a	

Vibrant tourism economy

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Through the delivery of actions within the Wirral Visitor Economy Strategy with partners, progress has been made in Quarter 2 to achieve the Vibrant Tourism Economy pledge, which is a key element of the Wirral Growth Plan.

In addition to progress with the pipeline of Culture & Visitor Economy infrastructure projects, there was an extremely busy programme of events during Q2, helping us to deliver against objectives. September was particularly busy, with 30,000 visitors attending the Food and Drink Festival and associated evening events, and many more turning out to watch the first ever Wirral stage in the Tour of Britain, as well as the popular naming ceremony for RSS Sir Richard Attenborough at Cammell Laird. The Heritage Open Day programme and three exhibition openings at the Williamson Art Gallery added to the many reasons for visitors to come to Wirral, and helped in our longer-term aim to reposition and promote areas such as Birkenhead Park.

These, and other high-profile events during the quarter attracted widespread media coverage, spotlighting the borough and building our reputation, in line with our destination marketing objectives.

The events have also provided an ideal opportunity to extend our engagement with volunteers, who have been central to the delivery of the programme, improving the experience for visitors. The Ambassador programme has developed, as we continue to identify and thank local icons across arts, culture and creative industries who are raising our profile and championing our borough.

The appointment of a new Head of Tourism and Destination Marketing to the team has increased capacity to deliver the changes needed to increase our engagement with visitors and potential visitors; to raise our profile with media beyond Wirral; and to ensure that we use the events programme to showcase all that Wirral has to offer.

Meanwhile, progress has been made in developing a conference and business events marketing strategy and plan for Wirral, as part of a wider Liverpool City Region contract. This robust piece of work will include market analysis, a marketing delivery plan and development of a new commercial funding model to enable Wirral, as part of the wider city region partnership, to attract international and national conferences.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Increase visitor numbers each year based on the 2014 baseline (m)	Annual Higher is better	7.59 (Jan-Dec 2014)		8.79 (Jan-Dec 2017)						n/a	
Increase value of tourism economy by at least 5% each year (£m).	Annual Higher is better	£355.00 (Jan-Dec 2014)		£426.35 (Jan-Dec 2017)						n/a	

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	Trend	Comment
Increase overnight stays & hotel occupancy by 5% by 2020 based on the 2016 baseline	Annual Higher is better	77.75% (Jan-Dec 2016)		80.60% (2018)						n/a	
Increase the numbers of Wirral Visitor Economy Network members	Annual Higher is better	85 (Jan-Dec 2016)		88 (2018)						n/a	

Transport and technology infrastructure fit for the future

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

We have made significant progress this quarter and since declaring an Environment and Climate Emergency in July 2019, Wirral Council has committed to develop a Climate Emergency Action Plan. Transport will be a key element of this action plan and this steering group will play a huge role in driving forward these essential actions.

The LED light program will help to cut our direct carbon emissions by 1,346.34 tCO₂ per year and dramatically reducing energy use by 4,414,240 kWh per year.

To celebrate the Summer of Cycling and the two large-scale cycling events riding through Wirral, Wirral Council and partners promoted all cycling offers as a Summer of Cycling, encouraging everyone from enthusiasts and beginners alike to take to two wheels, for example Cycling UK held workshops to encourage women to learn cycle repair.

To make it easier for people to have an active lifestyle a state-of-the-art diagonal pedestrian crossing has been installed to improve road safety at the junction at Moreton Road/Old Greasby Road/Ford Road/Arrowe Park Road. The site at which the traffic lights are over 30 years-old, has undergone significant refurbishment to promote the safety of residents, pedestrians and road users alike.

A new website launched this month for 'Engage driving' a council-backed Young driver 'Engage' scheme operating across Cheshire & Merseyside which equips young drivers with the skills and knowledge to be smarter drivers. The project works with local 'engage' approved driving instructors and provides learner drivers with additional special learning modules, as part of their normal driving lessons, to fill in the gaps in the current driving test about issues such as fatigue, peer pressure, basic maintenance, drink and drug driving, speed and distraction. The project was featured last month on ITV's Granada Reports.

Moving forward there will be an increased emphasis on sustainable transport and travel across the Council with active travel at the heart of policies and infrastructure programmes from now on.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Increased the volume percentage of people cycling	Annual Higher is better	0% (index for 2013-14)		59% (2017-18)						n/a	
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)	99 (2018)	Green Actual: 19 Target: 19	Green (P): 17 Target: 19				Better	36 KSI casualties recorded (cumulative total for Q1-Q2 2019) Better than expected KSI casualty reduction for Q1 & Q2 as range of measures /schemes & initiatives identified in Wirral's Road Safety Plan continue to be developed & introduced.
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)	1.90% (2017-18)						n/a	
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: 6.00% (2015-16)	1.65% (2017-18)						n/a	

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	Trend	Comment
% levels of satisfaction overall with transport and highway services.	Annual Higher is better	56.7% (2015)	National Highways and Transport Survey: 54.0% (2017)	54.0% (2018)						n/a	
Increase levels of public satisfaction with public transport	Annual Higher is better	64% (2015)	National Highways and Transport Survey: 61% (2017)	64% (2018)						n/a	
Increase levels of public satisfaction with walking/cycling facilities	Annual Higher is better	56% (2015)	National Highways and Transport Survey: 55% (2017)	52% (2018)						n/a	
Travel Training – Number of successfully travel trained young people (Integrated Transport)	Annual Higher is better	26 (2014-15 Acad Year)		17 (Sept 18 - Aug 2019)						n/a	17 young people were successfully travel trained between Sep 2018 & August 2019

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

The indicators and measures for Assets are reported annually and will be updated later in the year. Work is ongoing to deliver the action plan.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	Trend (See Key)	Comment
£m Income generation from investment properties and underperforming space	Annual Higher is better	£1.6 (2015-16)		Amber Actual: £1.4 Target: £1.5 (2018-19)						n/a	
£m Capital Receipts generated by the disposal of Wirral Council's surplus assets	Annual Higher is better	£1.28 (2015-16)		Over Achieving Actual: £5.60 Target: £4.50 (2018-19)						n/a	
Commercial asset space available for release (m2)	Annual Higher is better	5,711 (2015-16)		Red Actual: 39,600 Target: 87,500 (2018-19)						n/a	
Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2018-19	2019-20 Q1	2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	Year End 2019-20	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)		Green Actual: 26,463 Target: 30,173 (2017-18)						n/a	
Number of multi-use of assets through shared / alternative use	Annual Higher is better	4 (as at April 2016)		15 (2018-19)						n/a	

Report Key

Trend - Performance is shown as Better, Same or Worse compared with the last reporting period except for below measures which are compared with same period the previous year.

Increase the number of jobs created and safeguarded (via Wirral Chamber Data Reporting)

Increase the employment rate in Wirral

Number of People Killed or Seriously Injured

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

Action - These are shown as either:

- Blue (Over-Achieving has met and surpassed target set)
- Green (on track to deliver on time)
- Amber (off track but action being taken to deliver on time)
- Red (off track and won't deliver on time)

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Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 27 November 2019

REPORT TITLE	Potholes and Street Lighting – Update
REPORT OF	Mark Smith, Interim Director – Highways and Streetscene

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides Members with an update on the measures being undertaken to reduce potholes in the carriageway and reduce the number streetlights not working across the borough.

The report also provides information regarding the methods being employed to bring about sustainable reduction improvements. Both areas of maintenance are important to the delivery of Wirral's 2020 pledges to ensure the network is safe and that we support healthy active travel. Having a well-maintained highway enables residents to access community services, enjoy our leisure facilities and commute to work.

This affects all wards in the Borough.

This report is not a Key Decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are requested to:

- (1) Note the report; and
- (2) Support the actions being taken to reduce pothole repairs and street lighting outages.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

1.1 To inform and seek endorsement from Members for the action being taken.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.2 None. The work is to meet the statutory requirement of providing a safe highway and the reduction in lighting outages which is a high priority for the Council.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Potholes Strategy

3.1.1 On the 1st February 2019, the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority awarded £2,625,000 of Highways Maintenance funding to Wirral Council to support investment in our highway assets. This is in addition to a further £315,000 from the LCR Combined Authority especially for the Key Route Network and £1,465,000 extra funding from the Department for Transport awarded late last year. The Council also allocated £500,000 from its own Capital Programme for Unclassified Roads.

3.1.2. The strategy has been to spend the funds available to improve carriageways in poor condition but at the same time, be proactive by using preventative treatments to extend the surface life and prevent potholes from forming.

3.1.3 From 2016 the Government has provided additional funding for the reduction of potholes in the network. The Council has spent this money in number of different ways:

- (i) Pro-active surface treatments
- (ii) Pro-active patching repairs
- (iii) General patching repairs

Year	Total Potholes Repaired
2015-16	348
2016-17	242
2017-18	276

TABLE 1: TOTAL POTHOLES REPAIRED FROM 2015-2018

3.1.4 This mixed approach strategy has worked very well, even though we have experienced some harsh Winter weather there has been an ongoing reduction in the number of potholes requiring repair.

3.1.5 This year Government provided extra funding which wasn't just for dealing with potholes. The outcomes from this funding will be published in March 2020.

3.2 Street Lighting Strategy

- 3.2.1 As previously reported, the LED Phase 2 Contract commenced early October 2019 and will see some 9,000 column improvements and over 26,000 new more efficient energy saving LED lanterns being installed.
- 3.2.2 Until the LED programme takes effect the current strategy being employed to keep pace with repair demand is to issue further small contracts which will increase repair capacity.
- 3.2.3 This strategy will continue to run parallel with the LED programme to reduce lighting outages.

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

4.1 Potholes

- 4.1.1 The current strategy utilises a variety of surface treatments and patching programmes. Table 2 provides the number of potholes repaired month by month. This indicates an improvement over the period April 2018 to April 2019. This trend has continued through from April 2019 to present (Table 3). This demonstrates that the strategy is working, having maintained the number of potholes on the network. However, we should not be complacent as without major investment the network will continue to deteriorate.

17-18	Potholes Repaired	18-19	Potholes Repaired
Apr-17	18	Apr-18	26
May-17	24	May-18	26
Jun-17	25	Jun-18	53
Jul-17	16	Jul-18	32
Aug-17	16	Aug-18	8
Sep-17	20	Sep-18	11
Oct-17	11	Oct-18	15
Nov-17	10	Nov-18	13
Dec-17	23	Dec-18	17
Jan-18	27	Jan-19	29
Feb-18	31	Feb-19	18
Mar-18	55	Mar-19	24

TABLE 2: POTHoles REPAIRED APR-18 TO MAR-19

2018	Potholes Repaired	2019	Potholes Repaired
Apr-18	26	Apr-19	28
May-18	26	May-19	45
Jun-18	53	Jun-19	13
Jul-18	32	Jul-19	22
Aug-18	8	Aug-19	7
Sep-18	11	Sep-19	25

TABLE 3: POTHoles REPAIRED APR-19 TO SEP-19

4.2 Street Lighting

4.2.1 Changes were required in the Contract Information, detailing the number of lanterns required and column replacement priority, which delayed the LED Phase 2 Contract in being able to go out to tender. Therefore, we were aware that we needed to increase the lighting resource to tackle the number of outages. To improve the repair times we placed Mega Electrical as a sub contractor using the 2016 BAMN contract rates to benchmark good value. Table 4 shows the increase in repairs.

Month	Street Lights Repaired
Apr-19	284
May-19	220
Jun-19	290
Jul-19	793
Aug-19	781
Sep-19	653

TABLE 4: STREET LIGHTS REPAIRED APR-19 TO SEP-19

- 4.2.2 Further contracts have been put together to provide resource to install new columns and presently we have just engaged Jenkins Electrical to undertake cable fault repairs. We have also appointed a new Street Lighting & Operations Manager to supervise and provide additional resource to facilitate and award additional contracts.
- 4.2.3 This strategy of using small contracts to provide additional resource is having an impact but, with the ageing asset, we will continue to have lighting issues through the Winter months. However, the huge capital investment of the LED Phase 2 will mitigate many of these issues in the coming weeks.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The additional Government Funding along with the Council Capital investment has had an impact in carriageway repairs but without such funding continuing repairs at the current level are not sustainable and would not only lead to increase potholes but also increase third party claims.

5.2 The increased lighting resource is not sustainable within the existing revenue budget and additional funding will be required to continue the current level of repairs.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Council has a statutory duty to maintain the highway.

6.2 The Council does not have a duty to provide light but must ensure the safety of the lighting assets.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

7.1 Existing staff resources will be used to identify and arrange the necessary pothole repairs.

7.2 Additional contracted support, to maintain the level of Street Lighting services, will continue as funds allow.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

8.1 Repairing potholes is an essential element of maintaining the network, any reduction in funds would impact the safety of the highway and expose the Council to increased third party insurance claims.

8.2 Maintaining lighting repairs is an essential part of providing a safe environment and without additional funding this would impact on the Council's 2020 pledges.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

9.1 Whilst has been no consultation, the council will report, the outcomes from the additional Government funding to be published in March 2020.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None.

11.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The repairing of the highway and the provision of streetlights are major contributors to our carbon emissions.

11.2 The increased use of surface treatments means we are using considerably less fossil material, also, with no excavation we have no contaminated waste issues.

11.3 One of the advantages of having our own inhouse contract provision, is that we have been able to trial new products when undertaking conventional patching repair. Charts 1 and 2 show the cost and carbon efficiencies that can be made.

Estimated Annual Costs

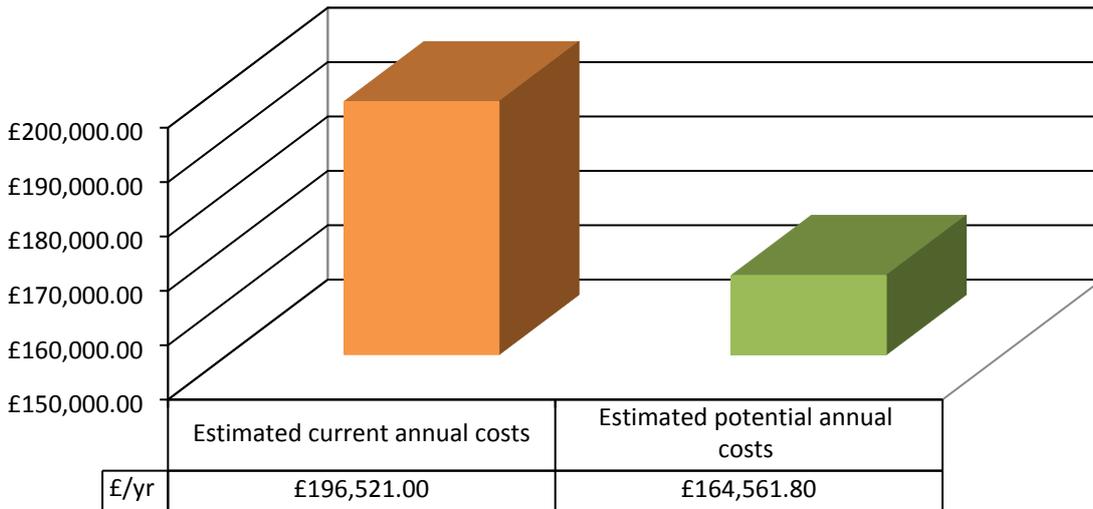


CHART 1: ESTIMATED CURRENT/POTENTIAL ANNUAL COSTS - CURRENT MATERIALS VS ULTIPATCH VIAFIX

Estimated Annual Emissions

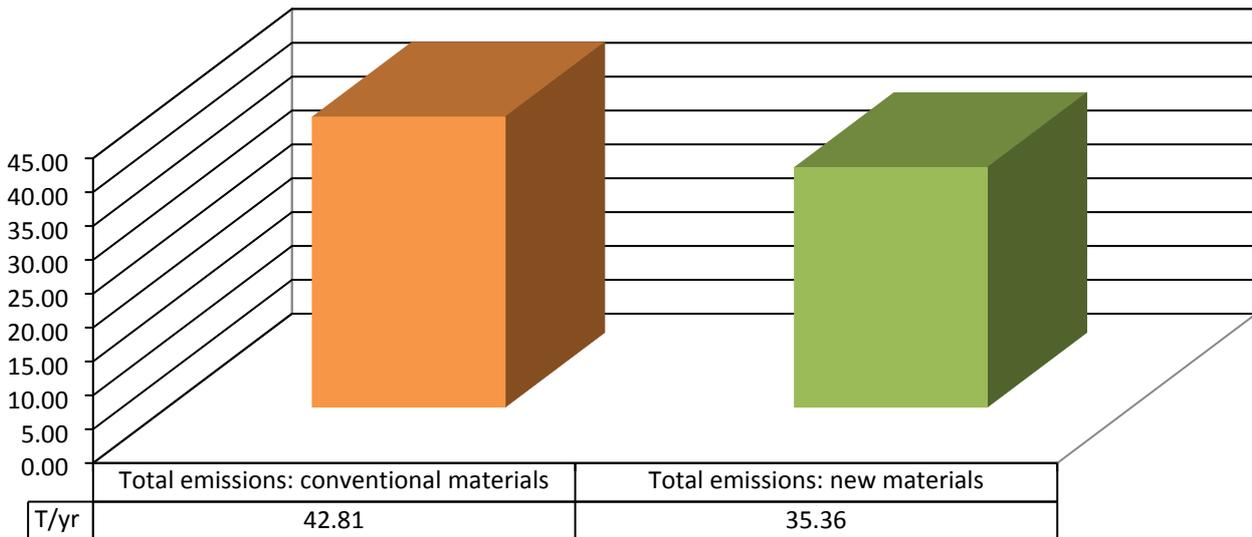


CHART 2: ESTIMATED CURRENT/POTENTIAL ANNUAL CARBON EMISSIONS - CURRENT MATERIALS VS ULTIPATCH VIAFIX

11.4 Trials are also in progress using hot and cold applied micro-asphalt patching. Such materials and working methods remove the need to excavate, reduce waste by using only the materials required and reduce the risk of vibration injury to operatives. The results of these trials will be published at the end of this financial year.

11.5 To reduce our lighting energy consumption, any new lanterns being installed from April have been LED.

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APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet Highway Structural Maintenance Programme	25 March 2019
Cabinet Member report Structural Maintenance Programme unclassified roads	26 April 2019
Cabinet Member report, Highway Structural Maintenance Programme, local roads	4 September 2019
Cabinet Street lighting Investment Programme Leader Report.	16 July 2018
LED Phase 2 contract award	12 August 2019

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**Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 27 November 2019**

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 and the work of the Combined Authority.

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

- 1.1 Committee have requested regular updates and consideration of LCR developments.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 N/a

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 A wide range of activity continues, of which the following is just a small extract. Further detail on all of the most recent developments can be found here <https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/>

The Combined Authority recently agreed several considered several developments including the following:

3.1 Developing a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)

- 3.1.1 One of the ongoing updates provided to this Committee is the work that the LCR Combined Authority is doing to develop a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). It is a key strategic priority that will set out the City Region's economic strengths, our challenges, and how we can best address them. It will demonstrate the positive contribution the LCR is making to the national economy and outline what we will do to raise productivity. The document will be central to informing local priorities, guide our future local investment decisions, and support national decision making.
- 3.1.2 A review of relevant evidence, and extensive stakeholder consultation has been taking place in recent months to help inform the LIS. This is starting to shape a number of emerging strategic priorities for the Local Industrial Strategy, and the formulation of policy interventions.
- 3.1.3 The draft LIS is based on a strategic framework, made up of five emerging inter-dependent priorities which align with the Government's five foundations of productivity:
- (i) People with the opportunity to transform passion into prosperity: supporting people across the City Region in maximising their potential, whilst meeting the future skills needs of employers.
 - (ii) Revitalised and distinctive places: joined up place-based approaches to foster resilient neighbourhoods, quality living environments and strong sense of community across the City Region.
 - (iii) Connecting all our communities to opportunity: ensuring that the strategic infrastructure is in place to ensure a well-connected City Region that supports businesses and communities everywhere.
 - (iv) A dynamic business base that creates opportunity: providing the enabling conditions for business growth and uplift in productivity across the whole economy, which provides quality jobs and progression within the labour market.

- (v) Collaboration that transforms research into reality: supporting the coordination of the City Region's innovation assets to deliver the scale of innovation and digitisation required across the economy and society.

3.1.4 The LIS also sets out a distinctive LCR 'Grand Challenge' – 'becoming the most inclusive economy in the UK'. This reflects the progressive ambition of the City Region to ensure that all people and communities both contribute to, and benefit from, growth and productivity uplifts.

3.1.5 The other LCR 'Grand Challenges' include a carbon neutral and sustainable city region and a focus on 'Tech for Good' which considers how digital innovations in the City Region will support all areas of society and economy, including improved health outcomes.

3.1.6 Further engagement will take place in the coming weeks to shape the LIS, which will be drafted over November and December. The aim is to then consult further with Government, and to produce the final LIS for sign off at the Combined Authority in March 2020.

3.2 Towns Fund

3.2.1 Birkenhead is one of 100 towns that have recently been selected nationally to work towards a Town Deal as part of Government's £3.6bn Towns Fund to further improve the ability of towns to realise their growth ambitions.

3.2.2 The list included four towns from the Liverpool City Region – Birkenhead, Runcorn, Southport and St Helens to apply for up to £25m to support their approaches to economic regeneration, infrastructure and housing.

3.2.3 Even if all 100 listed towns draw down the maximum offer of £25m, this will leave a surplus of £1.1bn. Central Government is currently considering options on distribution of this funding, and have stated that they are open to approaches from Combined Authorities which take a strategic approach to the opportunity, and offer innovative ideas for use of the Funds. Discussions are underway between the Combined Authority, LCR Local Authorities and Government.

3.2.4 Additional guidance is due to be published in early 2020 with greater detail on scope of interventions, business case development and how Deals will be agreed.

3.3 Liverpool City Region Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan

3.3.1 The Combined Authority recently agreed the LCR Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which sets out the City Region's vision, plans and priorities for a strategic cycling and walking network over the next ten years. The aim is to significantly increase the number of journeys made on foot or by bike.

3.3.2 The vast majority of journeys in the LCR are short journeys: 66% of all trips are less than 5km in length. Around 50% of these are undertaken by car, despite the fact that many of these trips will easily be within comfortable walking or cycling distance. Currently, only 2% of these journeys are cycled and around 30% walked, and these figures have remained static for a number of years. The latent demand for more

journeys to be made by bike or foot is significant provided we can provide the right conditions to allow people to make these journeys in a safer manner.

- 3.3.3 The intention is to make walking and cycling the natural choice for shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey. Realising this ambition will take sustained investment in cycling and walking infrastructure, and partnership working with local bodies, the third sector and the wider public and private sector to build a local commitment. The approach supports the transformation of local areas: change that will tackle congestion, change that will extend opportunity to improve physical and mental health, and change that will support local economies.
- 3.3.4 Feedback from consultation indicates that for more people to walk and cycle, routes should be designed that look, feel and are safer and easy to use.
- 3.3.5 The Infrastructure Plan is the mechanism to help deliver this step change in growing the number of journeys made by bike and on foot. It is made up of routes comprising a City Region strategic network. These will be complemented by a web of local cycling and walking routes, including quieter residential streets and routes through green spaces, which together make many journeys suitable for travel by foot or by bike.
- 3.3.6 The LCWIP has been developed through a steering group of representatives from each of the LCRCA constituent Local Authorities, which works within the governance of the City Region Authorities. A comprehensive evidence base drawn from local and national sources has helped inform the development of the LCWIP by the steering group. From this, a network of 31 strategic routes has been identified with a selected, prioritised programme to be implemented over the next 10 years, including the following Wirral routes:

Phase 1

- Leasowe – Seacombe Ferry Terminal (3.7km new cycleway)

Phase 2

- New Brighton – Birkenhead

Phase 3

- Birkenhead to Hooton

3.4 LCR Year of the Environment

- 3.4.1 Members are aware that 2019 is LCR Year of the Environment, and a wide range of events and activity has been taking place over the year, when Wirral organisations, along with partners from across the Liverpool City Region have come together to support people and communities from all backgrounds to get involved in action to improve the natural environment.
- 3.4.2 Latest developments include the LCR's first ever Environmental Summit in November which highlighted the range and scale of community environmental projects and activities.
- 3.4.3 To ensure the legacy of this year, the Summit announced the creation of LCR Climate Partnership, to co-ordinate the city region's response to the climate emergency, as well as launching a £500,000 fund to support community environment projects to improve their local environment.

3.5 Conclusion

Further updates on all of the above will be brought back to this Committee as further detail emerges in the coming months. As previously stated, the above is just a short snapshot of LCR activity, and further detail on all of the most recent developments can be found here

<https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/>

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The devolution of financial resources to LCR means that there are opportunities for Wirral to access additional funding.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 N/a

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 N/a

7.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No direct implications. The Combined Authority is prioritising an increased focus on collectively doing what we can locally to address this global issue.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

8.1 N/a

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

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

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 No direct implications. The overarching strategic goal of the LCR Combined Authority and related strategies and programmes are all centred on tackling inequalities and achieving an inclusive economy for Liverpool City Region.

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SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
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
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	29 November 2017
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	23 January 2018
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	27 th March 2018
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4 th July 2018
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	September 2018
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	November 2018
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	January 2019
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	March 2019
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	July 2019
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	September 2019



Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 27 November 2019

REPORT TITLE	Universal Credit Update
REPORT OF	Director of Finance and Investment /Head of Customer Services

REPORT SUMMARY

This report is intended to further update Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members following the report brought to Committee in July 2018 on the Early Impact of Universal Credit and corresponding workshops. In accordance with Committee Members' request it focuses on the ongoing roll- out of Universal Credit, the ending of 'Universal Support' programme and introduction of 'Help to Claim' together with the experience of and any associated impacts upon the operational service delivery teams.

The matter links to several Wirral's associated 20/20 Pledges, particularly the People pledge, 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 understanding of the matter, it is not subject to the requirement of a related key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The report is intended as an update and Members of the Committee should note the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The report is in response to the request by members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee and is intended to provide an update upon the ongoing roll-out of Universal Credit both for the future *move on* of current Housing Benefit claimants and the impact upon the authorities operational services, together with Officers response to the feedback received at a workshop and Members corresponding suggested actions.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 There are no alternative options. The authority is legislatively required to support and as may be necessary, administer any changes emerging from this key reform. Universal Credit Live Service was introduced in Wirral in July 2014, replacing six means tested legacy benefits and tax credits, including Housing Benefit. Subsequently, in November 2017, Universal Credit Full Service commenced roll-out in Wirral, on a post code basis. The roll-out is amongst the working age population only.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Universal Credit Full-Service rollout was completed nationally in December 2018, at that time there were 1.3 million people claiming Universal Credit, this is expected to increase to 3 million by December 2019.
- 3.2 National *Managed Migration*, now known as *Move to Universal Cred*” commenced in July 2019 for approximately 10,000 people. Each being given up to 3 months’ notice to make a claim for Universal Credit. It is understood those concerned were selected from a single LA area. No further details regarding next steps are available currently.
- 3.3 A notable change occurring in the delivery of Universal Credit since Members *Early Impact of Universal Credit* report (July 2018) is the end of Universal Support delivered by local authorities upon behalf of the DWP and introduction of the new *Help to Claim* programme, delivered nationally, by the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- 3.4 *Help to Claim* replaced *Universal Support* from April 2019 and is intended for those who need help to apply for Universal Credit. This service is funded by the DWP and is scheduled for review some six months following commencement. As local authorities no longer work on the DWP’s behalf, in the delivery of *‘Personal Budgeting Support’* (part of Universal Support), the associated element of grant funding to local authorities was withdrawn at 31 March 2019. Funding, in respect of related back office administration remains.
- 3.5 *Help to Claim* offers support from the point of submission of the Universal Credit application to receipt of the first full payment. Help is available face-to-face, over the phone and online through webchat. This may include assistance with the online application form or help with providing evidence such as childcare costs. Locally, Officers from the Citizens Advice Bureau attend the Jobcentre at Birkenhead weekly to provide support to claimants.

- 3.6 Notwithstanding the 'ending of Universal Support and local authorities' role in supporting those wishing to claim Universal Credit, officers did anticipate, at least some initial difficulties borne out of confusion to residents who may continue to rely upon the authority to assist and advise.
- 3.7 In practice this does appear not to have been the case, with the transition being reported as generally having progressed without complication and with impact as a result of the changeover being limited.
- 3.8 Where potential Universal Credit applicants do present to One Stop Shops, or perhaps contact the Revenues and Benefits Call Centre, Customer Service staff are aware of the procedures to follow with regard to 'Help to Claim' and the nature of the service offered by the Citizens Advice Bureau advising and sign-posting accordingly.
- 3.9 The DWP continue to expect local authorities to direct claimants with debt problems and managing money issues, to the national 'Money Advice Service'; as debt and financial support is not part of the Citizens Advice Bureau contract.
- 3.10 Collaboration between Customer Service staff and their Citizens Advice Bureau colleagues is good and ensures appropriate support in accessing services where a customer may be or may appear to be particularly vulnerable.
- 3.11 Notwithstanding early observations, Customer Service managers will continue to monitor taking active note of any emerging issues with specific regard to customer need together with any impact on service delivery and / or staffing capacity.
- 3.12 In putting some context to Wirral's Benefits Service's overall experience of Universal Credit it is probably relevant to refer to Wirral Councils work with the DWP in preparing for and responding to the original introduction of Universal Credit locally. Whilst, together with our peer Local Authorities we have experienced many hurdles and it is fair to say that early collaboration, which continues, has helped mitigate operational progress and delivery of our respective services.

4.0 Present operational practice and observations

- 4.1 On a day to day basis, Wirral Council will notify claimants of any errors identified with their UC award and encourage the claimant to make direct contact with the DWP. This in practice has operated with reasonable efficiency in terms of assisting the claimant secure resolution, particularly as any other form of intervention necessary otherwise requires explicit consent at the DWP contact centres and a need for Wirral 's Benefit service officers to take up each case individually, which is not practical and for which it is simply not resourced.
- 4.2 For particularly difficult matters, or perhaps where the service user may be vulnerable, a locally established 'escalation process' is in place, whereby local authority staff and other partner organisations are able to contact the DWP's Local Work Coach Team Leader assigned to the Universal Credit claimant. In such cases, explicit consent is required. This invariably resolves issues where other communication channels have failed or have been significantly delayed securing a response. Alternatively, where officers may require specialist advice in order to progress a matter, then in-house Welfare Rights Specialists are available to advise.

- 4.3 One related noted typically problematic issue concerned Corporate Appointees which impacted Council Officers acting as Appointees. Broadly this was an outcome of the DWP's requirement for an individual email address for each claimant. More recently the process has improved in that telephone claims may be made for Universal Credit, negating the need for individual email accounts.
- 4.4 Officers continue to share areas of concern with the DWP partnership manager in respect of any apparent widespread anomalies with procedures/ policy implemented by the DWP. This in the main concerns unreasonable time limits for advising local government on policy changes.
- 5.0 Specific examples of UC development which has presented challenges to operational services and those seeking to access UC, and/or other means of support.**
- 5.1 Mixed Age Couples -Issues occurred with DWP policy changes linked to gateway conditions for "mixed aged couples" (working and pension age) wanting to claim Housing Benefit or having to claim Universal Credit. Several DWP advisory bulletins were issued as it was unclear what the criteria was, due to discrepancies in respect of who could remain entitled to Housing Benefit, or who would have to claim Universal Credit for couples were one partner reaches pensionable age.
- 5.2 A linked impact for mixed aged couples who move to Universal Credit, is that of entitlement to local Council Tax Support. Under Wirral's current Local Council Tax Support Scheme, they are subject to a reduced support award with a maximum starting point of 78% entitlement; as opposed to being treated as a pensioner couple with a 100% starting point for support entitlement. There is a corresponding operational impact for officers regarding collection of council tax.
- 5.3 Housing costs in respect of Sheltered and Specified Accommodation are not met through Universal Credit and so residents must continue to apply for Housing Benefit. This has presented 'gateway issues'; for primarily vulnerable service users who need care and support. The DWP's website is misleading in this matter, as a result of which there is continued dialogue between the local authority contact and the DWP Partnership Manager, who acknowledge the website has misleading information relating to the claim process for Housing Benefit and the Universal Credit on line application. Suggestions have been made to amend their website and Universal Credit online application. In the meantime, Officers have developed local arrangements to help address gateway issues.
- 5.4 Recent case law resulted in the introduction of Transitional Protection in relation to a DWP policy change which impacted people originally receiving Employment and Support Allowance together with the severe disability premium. In moving to Universal Credit, the premium was lost. Transactional Protection Payments are additional lump-sum payments made, to covering the period since they moved to Universal Credit.
- 5.5 Issues impacting officers' ability to determine applications in respect of Council Tax Support (which have been shared with the Partnership Manager) concern the standard

and/or level of information in UC notification of award letters received from the DWP which present the most challenge on a daily basis.

- 5.6 Local Welfare Assistance – a notable change in Universal Credit claimants requesting further financial help, even though up to 100% of an advance Universal Credit award can be paid when a Universal Credit claim is made, furthermore more than one advance can be made.

The table below shows Wirral’s Local Welfare Assistance expenditure year to date. The data clearly demonstrates the demand for support through this hardship provision and the impact this is having upon the funds capacity

2019/2020																		
	Apps	Clothing/Bedding		Expenses		Food		Furniture		Other		Utilities		White Goods		Total Aw	Monthly Tot	Ongoing Tot
		Awards	Total	Awards	Total	Awards	Total	Awards	Total	Awards	Total	Awards	Total					
Apr	515	40	£2,110.00	1	£15.00	167	£9,610.26	58	£6,001.80	0	£0.00	192	£3,455.66	53	£4,715.65	511	£25,908.37	£25,908.37
May	540	27	£1,400.50	0	£0.00	135	£7,542.60	36	£3,790.24	1	£10.00	155	£2,702.50	39	£3,716.01	393	£19,161.85	£45,070.22
Jun	582	51	£2,240.27	0	£0.00	168	£9,407.00	75	£7,979.36	1	£8.36	188	£3,162.50	97	£9,290.49	580	£32,087.98	£77,158.20
Jul	556	26	£1,373.00	1	£5.00	152	£7,993.31	34	£4,441.02	2	£14.54	150	£2,495.60	40	£2,833.10	405	£19,155.57	£96,313.77
Aug	508	19	£805.00	1	£20.00	106	£5,834.20	40	£3,692.00	0	£0.00	130	£2,285.00	58	£4,592.18	354	£17,228.38	£113,542.15
Sep	528	29	£1,433.00	1	£60.00	123	£7,258.00	49	£5,183.05	4	£66.01	149	£2,572.50	65	£6,400.24	420	£22,972.80	£136,514.95
Oct	503	34	£1,388.00	0	£0.00	139	£7,853.49	56	£6,234.15	1	£10.75	189	£2,920.00	53	£4,572.46	472	£22,978.85	£159,493.80
Nov																0	£0.00	£159,493.80
Dec																0	£0.00	£159,493.80
Jan																0	£0.00	£159,493.80
Feb																0	£0.00	£159,493.80
Mar																0	£0.00	£159,493.80
	3732	226	£10,749.77	4	£100.00	990	£55,498.86	348	£37,321.62	9	£109.66	1153	£19,593.76	405	£36,120.13	3135		

- 6.0 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) - applications and expenditure in respect of help meeting rent are cumulatively increasing from Universal Credit recipients, this is to be expected, yet makes overall management of the cash limited Discretionary Housing Payment fund challenging. **The table below shows Wirral’s Discretionary Housing Payment expenditure year to date. The data clearly demonstrates the incremental increase of DHP expenditure in relation to Universal Credit recipients.**

DHP fund spend on UC DHPs

2018/19		
Date	Total paid	monthly increase
01/05/2018	£10,558.93	£10,558.93
01/06/2018	£34,032.58	£23,473.65
01/07/2018	£50,321.88	£16,289.30
01/08/2018	£69,197.10	£18,875.22
01/09/2018	£92,472.56	£23,275.46
01/10/2018	£109,323.16	£16,850.60
01/11/2018	£137,995.24	£28,672.08
01/12/2018	£160,732.57	£22,737.33
01/01/2019	£175,857.39	£15,124.82
01/02/2019	£209,552.48	£33,695.09
01/03/2019	£249,849.23	£40,296.75
01/04/2019	£322,390.84	£72,541.61

2019/20		
Date	Total paid	monthly increase
01/05/2019	£20,075.23	£20,075.23
03/06/2019	£54,454.66	£34,379.43
01/07/2019	£78,078.75	£23,624.09
05/08/2019	£115,261.96	£37,183.21
02/09/2019	£141,248.48	£25,986.52
30/09/2019	£166,402.23	£25,153.75
01/11/2019	£201,053.90	£34,651.67
		-£201,053.90

In short it is paramount to ensure staff are briefed and fully understanding of any changes and their corresponding impact on operational procedures and / or advice to service users. Operational software procedures and gateway aides are routinely updated for customer service and operational delivery assessment staff.

- 6.1 Looking ahead, the primary known gateway change is confirmed as being effective from January 2021 and will see those entitled to a severe disability premium within their income moved to Universal Credit, when a change in their circumstances occurs. Operational readiness will be required for any volume impact relating to enquiries for service users and for customer service advisors and back office staff. The authority's website information will need to be agreed, informative and clear to ensure clarity for service users.
- 6.2 In advance of this, on 1 November 2019 the Secretary of State Therese Coffey announced a £10 million Universal Credit 'Transition Fund' for outreach programmes to help vulnerable people make Universal Credit claims. It is understood the fund will be available to partner organisations from April 2020. It will aim to help vulnerable people, including disabled people, care leavers and those with mental health issues, claim Universal Credit as a route into work. It will support innovative ideas for engaging with vulnerable people early, helping them to make timely claims to the new benefit. The £10 million funding was allocated to DWP as part of the 2019 Spending Round process.

7.0 CASELOAD DATA

- 7.1 The data below confirms the incremental reduction in Housing Benefit claims as the number of people on Wirral claiming UC increases.

DWP statistics Wirral area August 2019 - Universal Credit all claim types- householder, private renters and non-dependants

	UC	% increase
Birkenhead	9806	+2.2%
Bromborough	3180	+3.3%
Upton	3724	+2.9%
Total Wirral	16,710	Overall +2.5%

Remaining DWP legacy benefit case count for Wirral August 2019

	ESA	% drop	Income Support	% drop	JSA	%drop
Birkenhead	7099	-0.1%	1529	-2.8%	380	-3.5%
Bromborough	2365	-1.3%	358	-4.1%	146	-2.1%
Upton	2037	-0.6%	500	-2.0%	153	-0.7%
Total Wirral	11501	Overall -0.5%	2387	Overall -2.8%	679	Overall -1.7%

Wirral's Benefit case count

	Total cases I	Private Tenants	Council Tax Support
August 2019	32,990	20,588	30,906
August 2018	35,316	23,783	32,123
August 2017	37,103	27,350	33,401

7.0 DWP Collaboration with LA

Our regular contact with DWP Partnership Manager advises they are focusing on improving support within the community, outreach work, Wirral Ways, Registered Social Landlords, McMillan nurses to maximise benefits and currently working with Foster Care team. This noted there is an opportunity for joint working, attending community events to support ongoing Universal Credit transition for service customers.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no known immediate financial implications connected with this report. The administration of Housing Benefit is, in part, supported through the Department for Work and Pensions administration grant awarded to the authority, together with supplementary, in-year funding. This grant is incrementally reducing.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications emerging out of this report.

10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

It is increasingly difficult to forecast the pace at which the working age Housing Benefit Caseload will reduce given the absence of a clear schedule leading to conversion of all remaining Housing Benefit cases. Best estimates, purely based on recent developments such as the Severe Disability Premium gateway, the introduction of Mixed Aged Couples together with the likelihood of changes circumstance triggering the move of those in receipt of Child Tax Credits and Working Tax Credit to Universal Credit suggests a time line of between 2023 and 2025.

For this reason, as Universal Credit Full Service continues to roll-out and evolve, any corresponding impact on the services capacity must continue to be both closely monitored and understood. Whilst increased data matching has affected improved working practice, the incrementally increasing volumes challenge resource. It is

imperative the authority continues to ensure it is sufficiently equipped and resourced to meet requirements emerging out of Full Service.

11. RELEVANT RISKS

As the authority is no longer required to provide Universal Support, risks in terms of any failure to deliver against the associated Delivery Partnership Agreement with the DWP are removed. Other risks which may emerge and have previously been drawn to the attention of Members must continue to be monitored and broadly include wider poverty issues together with accessing UC services and the quality of those services. As with any major Welfare Reform, 'change' continues to be an underlying risk. The ongoing capacity of 'Ask Us Wirral' needs to be understood as any excess in service demand is likely to directly impact both Customer Service and Operational team capacity.

12. ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

There is no requirement to consult however Officers will continue to engage both locally and regionally with DWP colleagues, endeavouring to optimise service delivery and ongoing support of Wirral residents remaining on Housing Benefit, moving from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit and in other ways as may become evident.

Following the originally scrutiny workshops, representatives of the stakeholder organisations provided a list of recommendations or issues which the Council could consider helping manage the roll-out of Universal Credit. These are summarised as appendix 1 together with the corresponding Officer comment.

13. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Remain and are as previously reported. Services affected will work to remain fully compliant and ensure [Equality Impact Assessments](#) are reviewed as the need arises.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

There are no measurable environmental or climate implications arising out of this matter.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - update

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- 1 - Overview and Scrutiny Members proposals following meeting of July 2018.
- 2 - 'Early Impact of Universal Credit' - Scrutiny Report - Business & Overview Scrutiny Committee - July 2018
- 3 - 'Universal Credit Full Service November 2017' - Report of the Managing Director For Delivery.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	29 November 2017
	4 July 2018

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Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee

27th November 2019

APPENDIX 1

Early Impact of Universal Credit Update report.

The below provides Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update of recommendations made as a result on the Universal Credit Workshops held in February, 2018.

National Asks of the Government

1. **Advanced loan to become a payment that claimants do not have to repay.**

For the purposes of clarity, the DWP offer the following.

- **Advance Payments** is a loan and may be applied for if a person cannot manage whilst waiting for their first Universal Credit payment. It can be repaid over a period of up to 12 months.
- **Personal Budgeting Loan** may be applied for once the first payment of Universal Credit has been made and is intended for help with expenditure such as unexpected bills, clothing, repairs to the home. It is repaid by direct deduction from the Universal Credit award, usually within 12 months.
- **Other deductions** may be made from a person's Universal Credit entitlement in respect of debts such as rent arrears, rent arrears and other housing costs like service charges. The deduction can be between 10% and 20% for rent arrears.

2. **Apply the same premiums that were provided in the legacy benefits**

- **Severe disability premium** (£62.45 per week), **Enhanced Disability Premium** (£15.90 per week) and the £65 per month **for lone parents** under the age of 25. If these premiums are not re-introduced; transitional arrangements should be put in place to help these claimants' budget for the lower income over a longer period of time. Transitional protection has now been introduced and mitigates the above.

3. **Asks of the DWP locally**

- **Increase the number of appointments available for ID checks** (there is currently a 9 day wait).
- **Help to Claim** is intended to support service users in the early stages of the Universal Credit claim, from the application, through to the first payment. Support available includes help in gathering evidence for the application and how to prepare for the first Jobcentre appointment.
- **For vulnerable client's** longer appointments to support them to do the ID checks, make the claim, and meet their Work Coach. This would reduce the number of times claimants would have to travel to the jobcentre to make a claim. Appointments are scheduled within 7 days of the on-line/telephone application.

4. Asks of the Council

- **Holistic, targeted support put in place for very vulnerable adults who do not have the capacity to navigate the complex system themselves e.g. refugees, people with mental health problems, people with learning disabilities etc.**

Telephone applications have now been introduced by the DWP which ought to mitigate difficulties previously experienced

- **Advocacy support needs to be provided to support people at medical assessments for benefits to ensure their true situation is assessed, and the wrong decision is not made.**

The Local Authority no longer has a dedicated advocacy resource, it's Welfare Rights service being withdrawn with effect from April 2018.

- **Wirral reviews its delivery of Personal Budgeting Support (PBS) to encourage take up of the service. It is possible that the way it is being delivered is dissuading claimants to take up the service. Consideration should be given to determine whether Wirral is securing best value from the £150,000 per year funding supplied by the DWP for the service.**

Following review of Universal Support, the DWP have engaged with Citizens Advice Bureau nationally to deliver support in applying for Universal Credit.

- **Support for vulnerable claimants should be increased.**

When they are identified by the WP, the referral for personal budgeting support or ICT support should ideally result in a proactive approach from Wirral. When someone who contacts the claimant by phone to discuss their issues, the appropriate support should be arranged in a timely manner.

The authority no longer partners the DWP in delivery of Universal Support. Notwithstanding this both customer service advisor and operational staff do their utmost to support, advise and signpost those residents presenting who appear to be in need of assistance.

- **Wirral Council should review their current practice of only granting Discretionary Housing Payments to UC claimants for 3 months.**

The duration of award can vary and officers will apply appropriate discretion in considering applications for Discretionary Housing Payment, the likelihood of the applicants finding work, together with the capacity of the remaining DHP fund are key considerations made. Where there is little chance of moving into work, then it is likely the officer will recommend a longer period of award.

- **To avoid duplication and to ensure the claimant is provided with the best level of support, the Council should liaise with social landlords. Links are developing between Magenta and the DWP locally but there is nothing similar developing between Magenta and those in the Council providing personal budgeting support.**

The local authority no longer provides 'personal budgeting support' for those in receipt of Universal Credit, it is apparent that a number of Registered Social Landlords have in-house support provision, extending to benefits / income maximisation and assistance accessing means tested means of support. Social Landlords regularly attend the DWP's Customer Relationship Group forum with opportunity to engage locally accordingly.

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Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 27 November 2019

REPORT TITLE	Wirral Growth Company – Pre-decision Scrutiny
REPORT OF	Alan Evans – Corporate Director of Economic and Housing Growth

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out proposals for the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the Wirral Growth Company Partnership Plan and associated Business Cases. This work is time sensitive with a scheduled Cabinet Decision early in 2020. The approach set out in this report will enable the Committee to review the proposals and submit any comments to Cabinet to inform the decision.

The report supports the Council Plan outcome - A prosperous, inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations. The report affects all wards within the borough but with particular emphasis on Birkenhead Town Centre.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee be recommended to convene a workshop to review the Wirral Growth Company Partnership Plan and associated Business Cases.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the Wirral Growth Company Partnership Plan and Associated Business Cases.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The 'do nothing' option would not provide Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise the scheduled Cabinet decision. The proposals set out in this report, provide a sufficient timeframe for the Committee to review the decision in advance.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Wirral Growth Company has been established as a Joint Venture (JV) with partner Muse Developments. The JV provides the opportunity for the Council to regenerate key sites across Wirral creating jobs and investment.
- 3.2 Significant work has been undertaken with Muse to develop the Wirral Growth Company Partnership Business Plan which sets out the timeframe for development of priority sites. A key priority site within the plan is the Birkenhead Commercial District. On 26 November 2018, Cabinet approved a Draft Business Case for Birkenhead Commercial District and initiated an extensive public consultation programme to inform the proposals to be brought forward. The Partnership Business Plan is scheduled to go to Cabinet for approval early 2020 along with related full business cases for Birkenhead Commercial District and Birkenhead Market.
- 3.3 Consideration has been given to enable Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review these proposals in advance of a Cabinet decision. In line with established practice for pre-decision scrutiny, it is suggested that a dedicated workshop is set up for Committee Members to review the proposals. The session will involve an overview of each of the reports followed by a question and answer session. Members' feedback and comments will be compiled in a report of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee and included in the Cabinet report pack in February. It is proposed that Members of Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee are also invited to the workshop session.
- 3.4 The timing of the workshop will be constrained by the preparation and availability of the Cabinet reports. All reports will include some commercially sensitive information and will be exempt from publication. In the event of a tight turnaround in getting committee's feedback report to Cabinet, it may be necessary to seek approval of the report by the Chair and party spokespersons.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising as a result of this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no resource implications arising as a result of this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 There are no risks arising from this report. In line with good programme and project management practice, a detailed register of risks is maintained and regularly reviewed in support of the Wirral Growth Company programme.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 A detailed programme of consultation has been delivered in support of the emerging proposals for Birkenhead Commercial District.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equality implications arising as a result of this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environment or climate implications arising as a result of this report. The development of the Birkenhead Commercial District will, in due course, have significant environmental and climate implications with opportunities to reduce carbon emissions through the creation of modern, efficient buildings. These implications will be monitored as part of the on-going development of the scheme.

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APPENDICES - N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS - N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Strategic Options Report to Cabinet	27 th February 2017
Property Company Full Business Case to Cabinet	19 th June 2017
Wirral Growth Company: Preferred Bidder Report	28 th February 2018
<u>Draft</u> Full Business Case FBC	26 th November 2018

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**Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 27 November 2019**

REPORT TITLE	Update on Consultants and Interims
REPORT OF	Director of Change and Organisational Design

1.0 REPORT SUMMARY

1.1 This report was requested by the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide an updated position on the Council’s use of interims and consultants.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to note the contents of the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 The Committee requested this further update in relation to the Council's use of, and approach to managing interims and consultants.

4.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 The current agency contract continues to be managed through Matrix SCM who operate a 'managed service' on the Council's behalf, acting as a 'broker' with the wider recruitment market to ensure best value and the right candidates are put forward for temporary placements. The contract is the result of a collaborative tender process within the Liverpool City Region (LCR), contracted to March 2021.
- 4.2 Matrix act in the same way as an insurance broker: the Council provides details of requirements, including rate and role brief for the work required and they automatically circulate those details to all agencies who are signed up to supply workers in the relevant category.
- 4.3 Matrix is able to use their preferred supplier position to negotiate the percentage margins from agencies who want to supply workers to the Council. The Council gets a quarterly rebate from Matrix which is a share of the savings that Matrix has made from negotiating the lower percentage fees. The Council has been using Matrix since 2010 to date.
- 4.4 In some cases, the role covered by the interim or consultant is an established and budgeted role in the staffing structure. In these circumstances, the costs of the interim/consultancy arrangement needs to be offset against the total cost of the Council employing someone directly (including associated on costs for pension etc)
- 4.5 When we have a short-term, clearly defined piece of work to deliver which requires specialist skills, it is cost-effective to bring in a company or an individual on a shorter-term contract to complete the work, get paid and leave the organisation. Using temporary staff brings much less additional costs such as sickness, holidays, pension and national insurance. We are also not required to continue paying them once their work is complete.
- 4.6 From the Council's perspective, whilst there are agency fees, an interim appointment does not carry pension or other on-costs (approx. 28% for directly employed staff) or any long-term cost to the organisation. There are other benefits to the engagement of interims and consultants. Experienced interims are used to hitting the ground running, able to pick up organisational context quickly and depending on the nature of the role, can add capacity very quickly.

4.7 The number and cost of interims and consultants the Council has engaged in 2018/19 and 2019/20 to date are as follows:

Year	Number	Total Net cost
2018/19	40	£1,251,947
2019/20 to date	28	£747,219

4.8 Please see Appendix A and Appendix B for breakdown of job roles engaged in each year.

4.9 The level of spend on executive interim/consultants was £1.8m in 2017/18, so therefore the cost has reduced for 2018-19. However, the expected level of spend for the full year 2019-20 is likely to be the same as 2018-19 at approximately £1.2m.

4.10 The Council has explored the use of fixed term contracts as an alternative but generally there is limited scope at more senior and executive level from candidates on the interim market.

4.11 Earlier this year some significant changes were made in consultation with the Council's internal audit service to improve the governance around process for engagement of agency and interims.

4.12 This approach includes the following measures:

- Requests by all agency/interim staff must be made via an online internal request approval system and signed off by Finance and HR.
- Implementation of a 'cap' on placements at 12 weeks – any further extensions require a further business case before approving.
- Monthly status report presented to SLT; detailing placements and associated costs
- Monthly status report to each Departmental Management Team with details of use and spend in each area.
- Improvement to the process in circumstances where Matrix are unable to supply an agency/worker and so an alternative supplier is sought.

4.13 There is a full-time resource from the Council's Commercial Management Team dedicated to drive this new approach and model forward, working closely with HR and Finance.

4.14 Earlier this year there was a Special Audit and Risk Management Committee which considered some specific issues in relation to interims following an internal audit report. There were a number of recommendations to Cabinet arising from this in relation to the application of IR35 legislation and the approval process for interims. This will be reported back to Audit and Risk Management as part of the internal audit assurance process.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The costs associated with agency and interims are set out above.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Interims and consultants are not employees of the Council. However, the agency worker regulations 2010 guarantee equal treatment with regards to basic working and employment conditions for any agency worker after 12 weeks of service in the same job.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

7.1 All interim and consultant arrangements are met within existing resources. The costs of which are set out elsewhere in the report.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

8.1 The Council may be at risk of breach of contract with Matrix SCM if it were to not use the corporate contract for engaging temporary workers.

8.2 The Council will also be at risk of increased costs in both internal resources to manage agency and interim workers together with higher agency margins.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

9.1 N/A

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from the report. The Council has a duty to ensure agency/interim workers are treated in accordance with the relevant equality legislation.

11.0 ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no implications environmental and climate implications arising from this report.

REPORT AUTHOR (S): Nikki Boardman
Director of Change and Organisational Design

APPENDICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	28 November 2018
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	18 September 2018

Appendix A

	Service Area	Job Title	Start Date	End Date	Ltd Pay Rate
1	Adult Care and Health	Interim Assistant Director: Adult & Disability Services	01/12/2016	10/05/2018	£675.00
2	Adult Care and Health	Education, Health and Care Plan Co-ordinator	03/01/2019	04/08/2019	£249.20
3	Adult Care and Health	Education, Health and Care Plan Co-ordinator	01/11/2017	04/11/2018	£256.18
4	Business Management	Interim Project Manager	08/08/2016	31/05/2018	£375.00
5	Business Management	Interim Infrastructure Manager	15/05/2017	17/02/2019	£499.99
6	Business Management	Communications Lead	14/08/2017	31/05/2018	£257.00
7	Business Management	Interim Finance Adviser	07/02/2018	22/03/2019	£240.00
8	Business Management	Assistant Director of Finance and Investment	21/05/2018	21/12/2018	£517.09
9	Business Management	Interim Director of Change and Organisational Design	01/06/2018	07/12/2018	£750.00
10	Business Management	Accountant	22/05/2018	17/08/2018	£460.00
11	Business Management	Interim Senior HR Manager/Business Partner-Children's Services	18/06/2018	29/03/2019	£550.00
12	Business Management	Communications Lead	26/06/2018	31/03/2019	£380.03
13	Business Management	Interim Project Manager	23/07/2018	24/12/2019	£300.00
14	Business Management	Budget Project manager	08/10/2018	14/01/2020	£250.00
15	Childrens' Services	Development Support Lead	20/03/2017	01/07/2018	£499.99
16	Childrens' Services	Group Manager	08/06/2017	13/05/2018	£400.00
17	Childrens' Services	Safeguarding Quality Assurance Manager	13/07/2017	28/04/2019	£411.19
18	Childrens' Services	Interim Head of Services	17/07/2017	23/03/2019	£539.71
19	Childrens' Services	Permanence Co-ordinator	14/08/2017	28/10/2018	£411.21
20	Childrens' services	Performance Team Development Lead	04/09/2017	07/10/2018	£514.01
21	Childrens' Services	Quality Assurance and Coaching Auditor	13/11/2017	10/06/2018	£350.00
22	Childrens' Services	Service Manager	02/01/2018	01/07/2018	£400.00
23	Childrens' Services	Head of Children's Safeguarding	04/01/2018	17/11/2019	£499.99
24	Childrens' Services	Education Psychologist	22/01/2018	15/11/2019	£499.99
25	Childrens' Services	Service Manager	31/01/2018	08/04/2018	£400.00
26	Childrens' Services	Quality Assurance and Coaching Auditor	14/02/2018	15/09/2019	£340.00
27	Childrens' Services	Strategy & Transformation	26/02/2018	31/07/2018	£498.40
28	Childrens' Services	Commissioning Manager	26/02/2018	29/04/2018	£399.99
29	Childrens' Services	Service Manager	05/03/2018	02/03/2019	£400.00
30	Childrens' Services	Service Manager	16/04/2018	28/09/2018	£400.00
31	Childrens' Services	SEND Senior Manager	26/07/2018	02/05/2019	£747.60
32	Childrens' Services	Information Officer	01/10/2018	31/12/2018	£253.01
33	Childrens' Services	Information Officer	01/10/2018	21/07/2019	£253.01

34	Childrens' Services	Strategic Lead – Children's Services	08/10/2018	27/01/2019	£700.00
35	Childrens' Services	Interim Head of Service	28/01/2019	27/10/2019	£514.00
36	Childrens' Services	Complaints Manager	25/02/2019	30/12/2019	£504.40
37	Children's Services	Education Psychologist	29/01/2018	30/04/2018	£499.99
38	Delivery Services	Interim Assistant Director	24/10/2016	28/06/2019	£719.61
39	Delivery Services	Programme Manager	11/06/2018	01/05/2019	£499.99
40	Economic and Housing Growth	Interim Director - Local Plan	04/02/2019	03/09/2019	£850.00

Appendix B

	Service Area	Job Title	Start Date	End date	Ltd Pay Rate
1	Adult Care and Health	Education, Health and Care Plan Co-ordinator	03/01/2019	04/08/2019	£249.20
2	Adult Care and Health	Principal Social Worker and Safeguarding Lead (New)	09/09/2019	30/11/2019	£529.55
3	Business Management	Interim Senior HR Manager/Business Partner-Children's Services	18/06/2018	29/03/2019	£565.40
4	Business Management	Communications Lead	26/06/2018	31/03/2019	£282.69
5	Business Management	Interim Project Manager	23/07/2018	24/12/2019	£400.00
6	Business Management	Budget Project manager	08/10/2018	14/01/2020	£257.00
7	Business Management	Developer	15/04/2019	27/12/2019	£400.00
8	Business Management	Accountant (Year End)	15/04/2019	03/12/2019	£400.00
9	Business Management	Interim Project Manager	15/04/2019	24/12/2019	£650.00
10	Business Management	Developer	14/10/2019	31/12/2019	£400.00
11	Childrens' Services	Safeguarding Quality Assurance Manager	13/07/2017	28/04/2019	£400.00
12	Childrens' Services	Head of Children's Safeguarding	04/01/2018	17/11/2019	£514.00
13	Childrens' Services	Education Psychologist	22/01/2018	15/11/2019	£514.00
14	Childrens' Services	Quality Assurance and Coaching Auditor	14/02/2018	15/09/2019	£349.52
15	Childrens' Services	SEND Senior Manager	26/07/2018	02/05/2019	£768.54
16	Childrens' Services	Information Officer	01/10/2018	21/07/2019	£260.01
17	Childrens' Services	Interim Head of Service	28/01/2019	27/10/2019	£514.00
18	Childrens' Services	Complaints Manager	25/02/2019	30/12/2019	£504.40
19	Childrens' Services	Head of Children's Safeguarding	23/04/2019	29/11/2019	£514.00
20	Childrens' Services	Education, Health and Care Plan Co-ordinator	09/07/2019	19/12/2019	£249.20
21	Childrens' Services	Education, Health and Care Plan Co-ordinator	09/09/2019	26/11/2019	£254.20
22	Childrens' Services	Interim Project Manager	20/08/2019	31/10/2019	£675.00
23	Delivery Services	Interim Assistant Director	24/10/2016	28/06/2019	£719.61
24	Delivery Services	Programme Manager	11/06/2018	01/05/2019	£514.00
25	Delivery Services	Programme Manager	24/06/2019	27/12/2019	£499.99
26	Economic and Housing Growth	Interim Director	04/02/2019	03/09/2019	£850.00
27	Economic and Housing Growth	Interim Project Manager	24/02/2019	30/10/2019	£800.01
28	Economic and Housing Growth	Interim Project Manager	20/08/2019	10/01/2020	£675.00

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**Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 27 November 2019**

REPORT TITLE:	Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2019/20
REPORT OF:	Director for Business Services (Assistant Chief Executive)

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the financial monitoring information for the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The report provides Members with detail to scrutinise budget performance for this area of activity. The financial information covers the financial information as at quarter 2 2019/20.

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).
- Performance against the capital budget.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the report and appendices and give their views.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committees receive regular financial updates throughout the year. These allow Committees to understand the financial position of the Council and to scrutinise decisions and performance as required.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Not applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Capital Programme 2019/20 Position

Table 1 – Capital Monitoring at Quarter 2

	Capital Strategy <i>(as agreed at Council)</i>	Proposed Programme	Q1 Actual Spend
	£m	£m	£m
Business	12.915	10.895	

- 3.1.1 Table 1 provides an update on the 2019/20 capital Programme. A number of significant variations have arisen since the programme was agreed in March 2019. These include the inclusion of additional grant funded schemes, variations to spend forecasts and the re-profiling of expenditure into and out of the 2019/20 financial year. Further detail is provided below.

3.1.2 Business Management

- Tower Road National Productivity Investment Fund (£0.51m decrease): Design and procurement of the scheme have taken longer than originally anticipated. Contractor has yet to be appointed.
- Key Route Network: Funding brought forward from 2018/19 (£0.3m increase). Additional costs will be incurred in respect of cabling on the A41. Transfer from the savings on the street lighting budget (£0.6m increase).
- TAG Feasibility Studies: Additional grant funding was approved by the Combined Authority on 26th July 2019. The A41 North Corridor scheme (£0.65m increase) and the Wirral Waters scheme (£0.53m increase).
- Sustainable Transport: Funding brought forward from 2018/19 (£0.47m increase)
- Windows 10: the programme to provide all staff with the latest Operating System (Windows 10) and additional software to enable agile working is continuing. Three additional areas of work have been identified: Computer Aided Design and Geographical Information Systems; schools installations; the additional demand for docked type monitors. The net additional requirement for this year (£0.35m) can be funded from savings anticipated in the Digital Corporate Storage scheme.
- Digital Corporate Storage: A reassessment of the budget requirement indicates that costs will be less than anticipated with some of these savings utilised to fund the additional schemes referred to above in the Windows 10 project (decrease £0.46m)
- Enterprise Resource Planning: soft market testing has been undertaken and suppliers

have profiled their cloud based offer. We are now approaching the procurement phase but the significant costs will only start to be incurred in the following financial year (decrease £4.1m).

3.2 Revenue Programme 2019/20 Position

3.2.1 Business Management: Forecast - £0.429 Adverse Position

- The £0.429m forecast adverse position is a £0.238m increase from Quarter 1 forecast position (£0.198m). The adverse position is largely due to income targets not being fully met and increased costs from the Coroners Service. some pressures are forecast to be mitigated by employee vacancy savings.

Table 2: Business Management 2019/20 Full Year Revenue Budget and Forecast Position

	Full Year				Adv/Fav
	Budget	Forecast	Variance (+ Fav, - Adv)		
	£000	£000	£000	%	
Change & Organisational Design	5,847	5,788	59	1%	Favourable
Finance & Investments	(21,508)	(21,413)	(95)	0%	Adverse
Commercial Management	(523)	(416)	(107)	-20%	Adverse
Strategic Commissioner Environment	16,485	16,485	0	0%	
Culture & Visitor Economy	1,478	1,516	(38)	-3%	Adverse
Governance & Assurance	4,002	4,251	(248)	-6%	Adverse
Directorate (Surplus) / Deficit	5,781	6,210	(429)	-7%	Adverse
Support / Admin Building Overhead	9,875	9,875	(0)		
Total (Surplus) / Deficit	15,655	16,085	(429)	-3%	Adverse

3.2.2 Finance & Investment

- This is primarily due to income shortfalls due to reduction in the Housing Benefit Admin Grant from Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The grant is reduced each year and replaced with smaller ad hoc grants throughout the year, however, these grants are insufficient to replace the shortfall. The overall shortfall against income is projected to be £1.204m. This pressure has been partly mitigated through a favourable variance within Employees of £1.106m due to part year staffing vacancies.

3.2.3 Commercial Management

- This is due to a projected shortfall of income within the Design Team and has been forecast prudently as the Design Team are not operating at full capacity due to staff vacancy. Recruitment for this role is underway and is expected to improve income from Quarter 2 onwards.

3.2.4 Legal & Governance

- The key driver for the deficit is within the Coroners service. The deficit position is due to an increase in accommodation costs, an increase in demand for the service and a change in the contractor used for the removals service. Currently the risk is not mitigated, but analysis is being undertaken with Liverpool City Council as this is a shared service, with the aim of reducing expenditure in future years.

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 There are none arising directly from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 There are none directly relating to this report. The monitoring of financial performance is important to ensure robust financial control procedures are in place. The Council faces financial challenges in this period as it seeks to increase income, reduce costs whilst transforming its approach to services. There is a risk in future years that the Council does not achieve a planned approach.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

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

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 No because there is no relevance to equality.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report has no impact on emissions of CO2

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APPENDICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Budget Council	4th March 2019
Cabinet – Financial Monitoring Outturn 2018/19	22nd July 2019
Cabinet – Quarter 1 Financial Monitoring 2019/20	2nd September 2019

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HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATION PANEL

Monday, 21 October 2019

Present: Councillor S Williams (Chair)

Councillors D Mitchell

G Davies

1 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the panel were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item on the agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

2 PROPOSED ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS - LOWWOOD ROAD BIRKENHEAD

A report by the Interim Director of Highways and Streetscene considered objections submitted against the proposal to introduce a scheme of proposed accessibility improvements on Lowwood Road and Circular Road, Birkenhead.

The report recommended that the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel note the levels of objection and support received and the Officers' responses; and

Recommend to the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the proposals as shown on attached drawing no. DC/0334/100 are withdrawn due to significant levels of concern raised by Merseyside Police and supported by Wirral Council's Road Safety Manager.

Members were made aware of the consultation period which took place in November 2018. Members were told the results of this consultation period garnered a negative opinion towards the scheme from Merseyside Police. Merseyside Police believe the scheme will encourage a conflict between road users and pedestrians, as the pavement is too narrow to accommodate pedestrians safely. Members were informed that there would be little to no benefit from the scheme compared to the negative impact it would have. Members noted the concerns of local residents and heard a summary of their letters of objection and support. Members were told of the total cost for the proposed scheme which was £26,000. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out which found the scheme will not generate any additional traffic.

A Ward Councillor addressed the panel.

Councillor Pat Cleary voiced the views of the residents of Circular Road. Councillor Cleary requested that it be raised at Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee; that members should have more training before putting forward proposals such as this, which may cause a divide between residents, specifically requesting they seek further involvement and opinions from outside bodies such as Merseyside Police before going forward with proposals.

Resolved - That:

(1) the Highway and Traffic Representation Panel note the report and objections received and;

(2) the proposed scheme of accessibility improvements on Lowood Road and Circular Road Birkenhead as set out in the report should not be implemented.



**Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 27 November 2019**

REPORT TITLE:	Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Work Programme Update
REPORT OF:	Nancy Clarkson, Head of Intelligence Statutory Scrutiny Officer

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.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are requested to:

1. Note the contents of the Committee’s Work Programme for 2019/20.
2. Consider any additional items to be included on the Committee’s work programme for 2019/20 and prioritised as appropriate.

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 Forward Plan
- Service performance information
- Risk management information
- Public or service user feedback
- Referrals from Cabinet / Council

The Wirral Plan pledges 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

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 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 cut across the Wirral Plan themes, it is anticipated they 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 will be explored.

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

4.0 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS

4.1 Camper Vans Task & Finish Scrutiny Review

The Task & Finish group met with senior officers in October to evaluate the initial effectiveness of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) introduced to prohibit overnight parking of recreational vehicles in the Kings Parade/Coastal Drive area of Wallasey. This order has proven to be a successful response to problematic campervan parking, and a similar order will now be introduced to Pilots Way and parts of Portland Street in New Brighton. The Review Panel will also be looking to engage with residents and stakeholders in due course to address wider issues and solutions regarding campervan parking in the Borough.

4.2 New Ferry Task and Finish Scrutiny Review

The review panel met with residents and traders who received the hardship fund at a public meeting in October. They have subsequently met with several residents who were directly affected by the explosion, as well as receiving several witness statements. Further meetings are planned with officers, first responders and traders in due course.

4.3 Review of Council's Overview & Scrutiny Arrangements

The scrutiny review into Scrutiny arrangements was presented to the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee on 26th September with all recommendations being agreed. The report was then presented at Council on 14th October where Members agreed that the findings highlighted in the report should be taken into consideration when forming the new governance arrangements.

4.4 Scrutiny Workshop – Wirral Waters

A scrutiny workshop to be held in relation to Wirral Waters was held in September and was opened to all Overview & Scrutiny Members. This was hosted by the Director for Economic and Housing Growth. This was followed by two informal 'drop in' sessions held in October which gave members the opportunity to speak to Peel and Muse and view projected plans and consultation documents.

5.0 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY (LCRCA) OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

5.1 The role of the LCRCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to:

- Scrutinise the decision and actions taken by the Combined Authority or the Metro Mayor;
- Provide a 'critical friend to policy and strategy development;
- Undertake scrutiny reviews into areas of strategic importance for the people of the Liverpool City Region; and
- Monitor the delivery of the Combined Authority's strategic plan

5.2 The Committee is made up of 3 elected Members from each of the constituent Local Authorities of the LCR Combined Authority, along with one elected Member from both

the Liverpool City Region Liberal Democrat Group and the Liverpool City Region Conservative Group. The three Members from Wirral Council are Cllrs. Jean Stapleton, Adrian Jones and Helen Cameron.

- 5.3 The LCRCOA Overview & Scrutiny Committee will meet five times during the municipal year with all meetings now webcasted. The work programme for the municipal year will be agreed at the first meeting of the Committee on 19th June. Work programme updates and copies of relevant scrutiny reports will be sent to all Committee Members for information. For information, the meeting schedule and agenda details are available on the link below:

[LCRCOA O&S Meeting Schedule and Agenda](#)

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report is for Members information and there are no direct financial implications.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Not Applicable.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

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

9.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 9.1 Not Applicable.

10.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Not Applicable.

11.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

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

12.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 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

Background Papers

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

**BUSINESS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME**

AGENDA ITEMS - November

Item	Format	Officer
Minutes from Business OSC	Minutes	
Update on Street Lighting & Pot Holes	Report	Mark Smith
Universal Credit Update	Report	Lisa Jamieson/Nicki Dixon
Programme office – Tower Road, Birkenhead regen Full Cases and WGC Business Plan	Report	Mike Callon
Follow up on use of consultants and interims.	Report	Nicki Boardman/Tony Williams

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

Item	Format	Officer / Councillor
2019/20 Quarterly Finance Monitoring Report	Report / Presentation	Finance to present report
2019/20 Quarterly Wirral Plan Performance Report	Report	Shaer Halewood - Director of Finance and Investment David Armstrong - Corporate Director for Delivery Services / Assistant Chief Executive
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Update	Report / Presentation	Rosemary Boylan, Policy and Strategy Manager (External)

WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

Item	Format	Timescale	Lead Departmental Officer	Progress / Comments
Camper Vans Scrutiny Review	Task & Finish	January 2020	Mark Smith	Focus groups to be arranged with relevant stakeholders.
New Ferry Scrutiny Review	Task & Finish	January 2020	Mark Camborne	Ongoing.
Review of Scrutiny Arrangements	TBC	September 2020	TBC	Completed
Celtic Manor Golf Resort	Workshop	June 17 th , 2019	Shaer Halewood	Completed
Budget Scrutiny	TBC	December 2018 / January	TBC	
Reality Check Visits	Site Visit	TBC	TBC	

SPECIAL MEETINGS / CALL-IN MEETINGS CONVENED

Item	Format
Celtic Manor Golf Resort 27 th June, 2019	Special Meeting

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Format	Approximate timescale	Lead Officer
NNDR	Report	TBC	Shaer Halewood/Lisa Jamieson
Commercialisation Developments	Report	TBC	Stuart Bellerby
Chamber of Commerce	Report	TBC	TBC

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY O&S COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME

Item	Format	Timescale	Progress / Comments
Local Enterprise Partnerships	Task & Finish	September 2019	Review Panel of three Members confirmed
Bus Services Act and bus Ticketing	Workshop	September 2019	Workshop established with a further Task & Finish review undertaken if required.
Air Quality Action Plan Update	Committee Report	September 2019	
Year of the Environment	Committee Report	September 2019	
Mersey Tidal Power Project	Committee Report	September 2019	
Housing Strategy Update	Committee Report	November 2019	
Housing First Update	Committee Report	November 2019	
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Financial Performance Report 2018/19, 2019/20	Committee Report	January 2020	
Liverpool City Region Budget for 2021/21	Committee Report	January 2020	
Apprenticeships	Committee Report	January 2020	
Digital Connectivity Update	Committee Report	January 2020	
Skills Investment Strategy	Committee Report	January 2020	

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