



Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Wednesday, 4 March 2020
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>

Contact Officer: Andrew Mossop
Tel: 0151 691 8501
e-mail: andrewmossop@wirral.gov.uk
Website: www.wirral.gov.uk

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 - 10)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January, 2020.

4. **UPDATE ON LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DEVELOPMENTS (Pages 11 - 18)**
5. **NNDR AND BUSINESS RATES RETENTION (Pages 19 - 26)**

6. **COMMERCIALISATION UPDATE (Pages 27 - 52)**
7. **FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 3 2019/20
(Pages 53 - 58)**
8. **MANAGEMENT OF CAMPERVANS IN WALLASEY AND NEW
BRIGHTON SCRUTINY REVIEW (Pages 59 - 82)**
9. **2019/20 QUARTER 3 WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE
(Pages 83 - 92)**
10. **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE (Pages 93 - 108)**

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.

Persons making recordings are requested not to put undue restrictions on the material produced so that it can be reused and edited by all local people and organisations on a non-commercial basis.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 23 January 2020

Present:

Councillor D Mitchell (Chair)

Councillors	J Bird	J Stapleton
	T Cox	J Walsh
	M Collins	G Watt
	G Davies	KJ Williams
	S Foulkes	S Williams
	K Greaney	

Deputy:

Councillor I Lewis (In place of A Gardner)

36 **COUNCILLOR CHRIS BLAKELEY**

The Committee stood for one minute's silence in tribute to the memory of Councillor Chris Blakeley who had sadly passed away on 15 January, 2020.

37 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Andrew Gardner, who had a deputy standing in for him.

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

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

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

Councillor George Davies declared a prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 8, 'Scrutiny Review – New Ferry' by virtue of him being a member of the Cabinet at the time the incident occurred.

Councillor Jean Stapleton declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 8, 'Scrutiny Review – New Ferry' by virtue of her being a member of the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority.

Councillor Steve Foulkes declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 4, 'Update on Liverpool City Region Developments' by virtue of a passing reference to his place of employment.

39 **MINUTES**

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 27 November, 2019.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November, 2019, be approved.

40 **UPDATE ON LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DEVELOPMENTS**

The Chair introduced a report which set out a brief overview of the latest developments at the Liverpool City Region (LCR). This included Skills Capital Funding for skills education at colleges, local authorities and learning providers; the Strategic Investment Fund for a wide range of projects; tackling child and family poverty and piloting 'Housing First', a new way to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

A Member commented upon the outstanding work undertaken by the Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram and highlighted his manifesto pledge of tunnel tolls at £1 which he had introduced and which were being frozen for a further year.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

41 **SCRUTINY REVIEW - NEW FERRY**

Having declared a prejudicial interest, Councillor George Davies left the room whilst this item was under consideration.

The Chair introduced a report which set out the findings and recommendations arising from a scrutiny review into the Council's response to the New Ferry explosion.

The review panel consisted of Councillors Dave Mitchell, Jo Bird, Steve Hayes and Mike Collins. It was agreed during the scoping meeting that Councillor Dave Mitchell would chair the panel. A cross party panel was convened and at a scoping session held in October 2019 the following review outcomes were agreed.

- To ensure that all necessary steps had been taken to address those residents, traders and other people affected by the incident.
- To consider what improvements could be made by the council and partner organisations in their response to future disasters.

Over the course of November and December 2019 the review panel undertook several interviews and stakeholder sessions. The full report, recommendations and scoping document were attached as appendices to the report.

Councillor Jo Bird commented that it had been a privilege to be on the Review Panel and expressed thanks to all the officers, residents, victims, traders and organisations who had given evidence to the Panel. She urged the Committee to support the Review Panel's recommendations in full without amendment.

The Chair then read out a note of thanks from local residents to the cross-party panel for all their hard work in producing the scrutiny report, and asked for the recommendations to be supported in their entirety, without amendment or deletion. The Chair also thanked Anna Perrett, the Scrutiny Officer, for all her work on the review.

Members expressed their thanks to the Members, officers and former members of the Council for all their work.

Responding to comments from Members, David Armstrong, Assistant Chief Executive, stated that one project team would be established to drive forward the whole range of investment work to be undertaken in New Ferry. With regard to bills which had been sent out to residents for scaffolding, he had previously apologised for the tone of letters sent out and acknowledged that lessons had been learnt and he would pick this up further once details of individual cases had been provided. With regard to claiming costs back from those found guilty of a criminal offence, this would be something to be addressed through the Council's legal officers, though the Council had only been obliged to make the area safe it had gone beyond that in clearing the rubble from the site. The Council was in the final stages of buying the site and once it had done so the Council would take up the concrete slabs and foundations and make the site a more attractive space.

The Chair read out a statement issued by the Council that day on regeneration for the area and stated that things were now certainly now moving in the right direction.

A Member suggested that the report should be sent to everybody who took part and that it would be helpful to see a report back to this Committee following its consideration by Cabinet. Some Members expressed the view that this was going to be unlikely because of the change in governance arrangements to come in May. Members also expressed the wish for such pieces of work to be able to continue under the new committee system and Councillor Tony Cox, Chair of the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee assured Members that it would.

Resolved –

(1) That this Committee supports the contents and recommendations of the Scrutiny review ‘New Ferry Explosion’.

(2) That the report be referred to the next appropriate Cabinet Meeting for consideration of the recommendations made.

42 SICKNESS ABSENCE UPDATE

Tony Williams, Head of Human Resources, introduced a report which provided an update on absence levels in the organisation and set out the steps that were being taken to manage sickness absence in the organisation.

The Council’s current target was 10.75 days lost per full time equivalent (fte). The absence levels in 2018/19 were 10.60 days lost per fte. The projection for 2019/20 was currently 10.74 days lost per fte (based on figures submitted up to November 2019). However, based on figures just received in the last few days this was now at 10.55 days lost per fte. In 2017/18 performance was 11.12 days lost per fte.

Overall the Council’s absence figures remained higher than the Council would like them to be with a marginal increase currently projected compared to last year. The position was relatively steady and the Council remained comparable with other local authorities in the region.

This continued to be a challenge and a significant amount of work continued to be undertaken to address sickness absence. The benchmarking information and research from outside the organisation demonstrated that the Council was facing the same challenge as many large organisations, particularly in the public sector and specifically in relation to levels of mental health and wellbeing.

In response to comments from Members, Tony Williams stated that whilst there was some marginal improvements and the long term sickness rates were much better there was a lot more to do around short term absence and that was what needed to be focused on next, both from a policy point of view and a line management point of view too. He was hopeful that the roll out of mental health first aid training in the next financial year would lead to accreditation for ‘train the trainer’ so courses could be provided in-house rather than externally and that there would be the opportunity for shorter half day or one day courses. Due to the timing of the report, he was not able to provide recent comparator figures but the last report to the Committee did show that Wirral was about mid-table in terms of comparisons with other North West and LCR authorities. With regard to debt and financial concerns being associated with some of the causes of short and long term sickness some external advice had been commissioned for some courses which were

run for staff. There were also a range of services which employees could access including the Employee Assistance Programme and advice from the Merseyside Pension Fund, all of which were confidential.

Resolved – That the current position in relation to sickness absence and the approach being taken to manage sickness in the organisation, be noted.

43 **BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICE**

Paula Basnett, Chief Executive of Wirral Chamber of Commerce, introduced a report and gave a presentation which provided an overview of the Council's Business Support Service with Wirral Chamber and a flavour of activities delivered by the organisation outside of the Council's contract to support Members.

There were approximately 600 businesses which were members of the Chamber, representing 45,000 employees, of whom about 40,000 would be residents of Wirral. Up to 1,200 businesses were supported by the Chamber as the contract with the Council was to support any business, and not just the businesses which were members. This meant that approximately 80,000 – 90,000 residents were represented through the Chamber. She also elaborated on the figures in the report, such as jobs created, businesses supported and assisted, partnership working and the priorities for moving forward.

Responding to comments from Members, Paula Basnett agreed to look into the matter of the relationship between the Chamber and those involved in organising the Heritage Open Days on the Wirral. With regard to apprenticeships she stated that through the Liverpool City Region a dedicated 'skills broker' would be employed from 1 April to work with businesses and understand what skills shortages there were. Also, high on that agenda would be apprenticeships and to understand what the barriers to businesses were in taking on apprentices. With regard to jobs created, the Chamber worked with a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system and this confirmed the number of jobs created / safeguarded through the Chamber.

A Member referred to the success of the Woodside Ferry Village and the food outlet businesses there, some of which had been able to move to individual premises. Paula Basnett concurred that this had been a great success with the re-purposing of the former ferry terminal building. Similar plans for other buildings, including Egerton House which could be used by smaller digital and technical companies were also being progressed.

Responding to further comments, David Armstrong, Assistant Chief Executive, confirmed that Pacific Road was a textbook example of Council owned buildings being put to use for the benefit of small businesses, along

with the former Municipal building and the Council, with the Chamber, would continue to look at more of its buildings which could be put to such uses into the future, either indefinitely or for a shorter period until other uses were found.

Commenting further, Alan Evans, Director of Regeneration and Place, stated that there were a number of projects which the Council was working on with the Chamber, and partner organisations, including Mersey Maritime and associated clean technologies and other advanced manufacturing. With regard to the supply chains for businesses, Paula Basnett added that there were six sector forums meeting quarterly looking at this and this was helping businesses to collaborate.

In response to more comments, Paula Basnett stated that as well as Wirral businesses, there were some businesses from Chester, Ellesmere Port and Liverpool which were also members of the Chamber. With the Chamber's contract with the Council, businesses could be supported for up to two years and with the Liverpool City Region contract businesses could be supported for two years and beyond. With regard to those businesses that failed within the first twelve months she would have to supply that answer in writing. The Chamber was able to offer support to any business from a single person business up to a business the size of Typhoo, from community interest companies to social enterprises to private companies. In respect of engagement with schools, the Young Chamber engaged with 22 secondary schools and 6 primary schools in Wirral and help was also provided to teachers to enable them to help their pupils engage with industry and business sectors in the community, along with support for businesses going into schools to explain what opportunities there were and not just for children going onto further education.

The Chair then thanked Paula Basnett for her comprehensive presentation to the Committee and it was –

Resolved – That the presentation and report be noted.

44 **IMPACT OF APPRENTICESHIP LEVY**

Further to minute 20 (17/9/19), Paul Smith, Head of Service, Learning, Skills and Employment, introduced a report which the Committee had requested to respond to the following questions:

- Businesses which are paying the apprenticeship levy but which were not actually taking on any apprentices,
- How this impacted on adult learning opportunities.

While the request was to provide information on local businesses eligible for paying the levy but not taking on apprentices, there was no information

available regarding specific Wirral businesses. Council officers did not have access to individual businesses digital account system, the portal by which employers paid for apprenticeship training. The Government had not published any reports on individual business use of the levy. However, the report highlighted the impact the apprenticeship reforms had had on local and Liverpool City Region (LCR) apprenticeship numbers.

Locally and across the LCR there had not been any identified negative impact or displacement of adult learning opportunities. The Council's Lifelong Learning Services, funded by the Combined Authority using Adult Education Budget (AEB) funding, had delivered 1,046 course enrolments between September and November 2019 which was in line with planned delivery. Wirral Met College were similar with all AEB funding being committed for this academic year.

In response to comments from Members, Paul Smith stated that within the Liverpool City Region, Wirral had been asked to work with the Merseyside Police around their underspend of the apprenticeship levy to help identify and support transition into work for care leavers. He was also aware that the Department for Education were currently considering the effectiveness of the levy.

With the addition of a further recommendation, moved by Councillor Foulkes, seconded by Councillor Jo Bird, it was –

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted.**
- (2) That this Committee supports further close working with employers, Wirral Metropolitan College, other local training providers and the LCR Combined Authority with an agreed objective to increase uptake of apprenticeships and maximise use of the apprenticeship levy.**
- (3) That this Committee recognises there has been a huge reduction in apprenticeship take up since the Government introduced the Apprenticeship levy scheme. The 3 million new apprenticeships figure by 2020 will not be reached by a long way.**

That the Government be asked to revisit the apprenticeship levy scheme and set up a consultation with private and public sector businesses to make sure a revised scheme supports the introduction of new apprenticeships particularly at level 2 and 3, that is not to say that the higher level apprentice opportunities and the development of the existing workforce right up to degree level is not valued.

It is also important that there is a pathway to a level two apprenticeship for people who have not yet got to the level two attainment level as yet including training and financial support within a workplace setting adhering to the TUC apprenticeship charter.

This Committee also recognises the great work achieved by the Liverpool City Region in facilitating unspent apprenticeship levy being channelled into use by SME organisations which are not subject to the Apprenticeship levy – this has helped to give people skills and employment that they would not normally have got.

45 **BUSINESS SCRUTINY BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2020/21**

Shaer Halewood, Director of Finance and Investment, introduced a report on the formal budget process, as set out in the constitution and in accordance with the legal requirements to set a balanced and sustainable budget for 2020/21.

This report also presented an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covering the period from 2021/22 to 2024/25.

The full Council position for 2020/21 was now balanced and included pressures of £34.9m, offset by savings of £32.9m, the individual components of these were included in Appendices 2 and 3 to the report.

The pressures and savings relating to the Business portfolio were summarised in Appendix 1 to the report.

Shaer Halewood then elaborated upon a number of the nine proposals in turn and her responses to questions from Members included:

- With regard to the delivery of a new organisational structure and operating model, there were no plans for compulsory redundancies.
- For the reprofiling of the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), this was the third time that the Council had done this with money already set aside in its own budget. The Council had not renegotiated any of its loans it had changed the way that money was set aside for the repayment of debt. She would provide a more technical answer as to how this worked in writing to the Committee.
- In respect of income from new investments extensive due diligence would be undertaken before any investment was made and the Council would not invest in anything that was not ethical or that it thought could go wrong.
- The Council could purchase property that had an anchor tenant and become a landlord with the Council employing a company to manage that investment. There were many options available with regard to property investments but they would have to be the right ones for the Council.

- The 1% rise in public sector lending rates had not created any pressures at the moment as it was on new borrowing. If there was a new large item that went into the capital programme then there would be a pressure.
- She did not have the detail of the unachieved savings of £6.03m referred to in appendix 3 to the report but she was aware that some of these would be out of officers' control, such as the Assisted Travel Contract where demand had increased during the year. There were no savings which had not at least achieved some saving and she would be able to provide some more information on this. For 2020/21 a more robust process had been put in place on delivering savings through a process of feasibility, acceptability and deliverability.
- The savings put forward did not really impact on the services which the Council provided as the Cabinet had given a steer to officers that they did not want to see any cuts to services which the Council provided to vulnerable residents.
- With regard to the financial pressure referred to in appendix 2 and the Wirral Growth Company (WGC), this was a savings item from the previous year and anticipated income from WGC which unfortunately had not happened due to a delay in establishing the Growth Company. With the issue now moving and the Partnership Business Plan with Muse due to come to Cabinet for approval soon income was anticipated for 2020/21.
- In respect of the review of contracts savings item, this was a review of all contracts up for renewal and whether or not they should be renewed in the same way, whether they should be renewed at all or whether the service could be commissioned in a different way or in a different format. Conversations were also being held with suppliers of existing contracts along similar lines to see if costs could be reduced and some Councils were negotiating with suppliers to not pay any inflationary increases.

Resolved – That –

- (1) the financial proposals for 2020/21, that will be subject to further consideration by Cabinet, be noted;**
- (2) the financial challenges facing the Council in setting a sustainable and balanced budget for the MTFP period from 2021/22 to 2024/25, be noted.**

46

WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

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.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

This page is intentionally left blank



**Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 4th March 2020**

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

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to note and comment on latest developments.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

Scrutiny Committee have requested regular updates and consideration of LCR developments.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

N/a

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Wirral continues to play a key role as part of the Liverpool City Region. 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 <http://liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/>

3.1 COMBINED AUTHORITY BUDGET AND MAYORAL PRECEPT

At the Combined Authority meeting on 24th January 2020, the 2020/21 budget was agreed. Key headlines include:

- Combined Authority's precept frozen at 2019/20 levels This means that the precept for a Band D property in 2020/21 will be £19.00 for Band D and £12.67 for Band A.
- Tunnel tolls frozen at 2019/20 levels, with the fast tag offering city region residents the lowest toll in 20 years
- Transport Levy, paid by the city region's six local authorities, to increase by 2.1%, in line with inflation, the first increase in three years.

3.1.1 What is it used for?

Every part of the City Region benefits from the £900m Gainshare funding secured in the Devolution agreement and the £500m Strategic Investment Fund to ensure no borough is left behind. The Mayoral budget is focussed on investment in economic growth in the City Region including in infrastructure, skills and environment.

The Budget will also make special provision for key strategic priorities including the Mersey Tidal Power Project, the Liverpool City Region's Digital Connectivity Programme and improvements to the city region's bus services.

3.1.2 Headline Achievements

Since the Metro Mayor's election in May 2017, Wirral continues to benefit from a number of key City Region commitments including:

- a) providing £400m in funding for economic development projects across the city region, creating 9,000 jobs and 5,500 apprentices;
- b) Strategic Investment Fund that will provide an additional £500m in funding for the City Region over the next five years;
- c) introducing half price bus travel for all apprentices under the age of 25;
- d) investing £8.3m in first phase of a 372-mile walking and cycling network;

- e) introducing new publicly owned trains to Mersey Rail network by 2021;
- f) £6m Mayoral Town Centre Fund to support local high streets;
- g) Mersey Tidal Power Commission to drive creation of sustainable energy solution that harness the power of the River Mersey;
- h) establishing a City Region-wide task force to tackle poor air quality;
- i) creating a Fairness and Social Advisory Board to ensure that social justice and social value is hard wired into policy making;
- j) LCR became the first CA in the country as a Real Living Wage employer.

3.1.3 SIF funding to help us deliver Wirral's priorities and projects – for example

- Unilever Port Sunlight Materials Innovation Factory
- Tower Road
- Maritime Knowledge Hub
- Riverview Business Park Phase
- Riverbank Road, Bromborough
- Eureka project
- Wirral Waters Housing
- Transport infrastructure and improvements
- LCR cycling and walking networks in Wirral
- Wirral is benefitting from the £7.7million Housing First fund to tackle homelessness

3.1.4 High Streets and Town Centres

In addition to Liscard and New Ferry benefitting from the Metro Mayor's £6m Town Centres Fund, 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.

This grant ties in with the work of the Wirral Growth Company which has recently been carrying out the second phase of consultation on the future of Birkenhead and seeking the views of residents, visitors and shoppers as well as businesses and traders, and work on this regeneration continues to make good progress.

3.2 COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

Wirral is leading the drive across the LCR to roll out Community Wealth Building and inclusive economic growth. There is some positive activity already taking place across the City Region with proposals to build and enhance this, to tackle inequalities and embed an inclusive growth approach into City Region economic strategy. Activity includes:

3.2.1 LCR Fair Employment Charter

Work is underway to create a Fair Employment Charter as part of a bid to improve working conditions for thousands of working people across the Liverpool City Region.

3.2.2 SIF and Social Value

The CA has around half a billion pounds available to support projects through the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF). Applicants to SIF are required to demonstrate

positive social impact – for example, if they pay the living wage, recognise trades unions, create apprenticeships and use local supply chains and labour to deliver their projects.

3.2.3 LCR Good Business Festival

The Metro Mayor recently announced a brand-new global business event set to take place across the city region in October 2020.

The Good Business Festival will be a multi-venue event focused on showcasing, promoting and encouraging ethical business, and aims to attract household names from across the world to the Liverpool City Region.

With the lead message that “Profit comes from Purpose”, the festival aims to help businesses thrive while operating ethically and responsibly, in a way that benefits the community.

3.2.4 MERSEYRAIL

2020/21 will see the first of the new fleet of rolling stock in service on the Merseyrail Network. This is the largest capital programme currently in delivery across the City Region and the largest ever undertaken by Merseytravel.

3.3 MERSEYTRAVEL BUS REVIEW AND BUS FRANCHISING

3.3.1 District-focused Bus Network Reviews are carried out every three years across Merseyside and are coordinated by Merseytravel, with the aim of creating an improved and simpler network. Wirral is the latest area to be reviewed. Part of the review will look at the current supported bus network and consider how increasingly limited public resources can be focused where there is most need.

3.3.2 Merseytravel have recently been gathering feedback and information from Wirral residents and stakeholders about how they use the bus network in the area, particularly any supported bus service. There is an on-line survey link here <https://www.merseytravel.gov.uk/bus/busreview/>

3.3.3 A number of drop-in events took place in January/February in Wirral with Merseytravel officers to discuss bus services across the area. The initial consultation closed 12th February. Emerging findings will be circulated.

3.3.4 The Review is part of recent discussions to raise some concerns by Wirral about changes to local bus services, and, in particular, concerns that some Wirral residents have difficulty accessing health care and hospital services. Wirral Council’s Health & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee recently raised this and has written to the Metro Mayor to highlight local concerns and ask that local bus services be reviewed.

3.3.5 Bus Franchising: The Bus Review links to wider strategic current discussions underway between the Combined Authority and government about future Bus Franchising as the City Region aims for a London-style transport system. Key Points to note include:

- 8 out of 10 public transport journeys in the Liverpool City Region are made by bus, making buses essential to the wellbeing of the city region's economy and communities.
- The Combined Authority invests £64m a year in supporting the bus network, but under the current de-regulated structure gets very little strategic control of the network for this investment whilst operators can choose where and when they operate.
- The Bus Services Act 2017 provides Mayoral Combined Authorities with the powers to implement bus franchising in their area – similar to the system operated by Transport for London.
- Buses in London were never de-regulated and remained under control of local government. Since 2000, they have been run by Transport for London on behalf of the Mayor of London.
- The Combined Authority recently agreed a new 'Vision for Bus', based on people's views about buses, other key city region strategies and new and key emerging issues such as the Climate Emergency, poor air quality and the city region's Local Industrial Strategy.
- The Vision for Bus sets out a proposal for bus services which includes enhancements and expansion of the bus network, improvements to fares and ticketing arrangements, one brand identity for the bus network as part of a wider transport brand, phasing in zero emission buses, on board enhancements for customers and significant investment in bus infrastructure and bus priority.

3.3.6 Next Steps: Merseytravel officers will complete a detailed and independently audited assessment of bus franchising, alongside continuing existing partnerships and an Enhanced Partnership model, upon which the public and other statutory consultees will be consulted later in the year.

3.4 CONCLUSION

Further updates on all of the above will continue to be circulated 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

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

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

There are none arising from this report.

7.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

No direct implications. The Combined Authority is prioritising an increased focus on urgently addressing the climate emergency and accelerating what we can do locally to address this global issue.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

There are none arising from this report.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

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 The Combined Authority has a duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 10.2 Equality and Diversity Implications are comprehensively considered both strategically and at individual project level. Individual decisions, projects and strategies are assessed through project implementation. 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.
- 10.3 To ensure this happens effectively, the Combined Authority established the Fairness and Social Justice Advisory Board, to ensure that every policy, every service and every economic initiative is measured against the commitment to deliver a fairer and more equal city region. Established in 2017, the board is the first of its kind in the country and brings together people from a cross section of local communities, reflecting the diversity of the city region. It acts as an independent sounding board, ensuring that issues of fairness and social justice are considered as part of Combined Authority decision making.

REPORT AUTHOR: Rose Boylan, Policy and Strategy Manager
0151 691 8037
rosemaryboylan@wirral.gov.uk

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 & Scrutiny Committee	November 2019
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	January 2020

This page is intentionally left blank



Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 4 March 2020

REPORT TITLE:	NNDR and Business Rates Retention
REPORT OF:	Director of Finance and Investment

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the Business Rates Retention scheme for the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the impact of 100% retention for Wirral, as well as an update on the proposed changes including 75% rates retention.

RECOMMENDATION/S

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

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Business Rates, also known as National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR), form a large proportion of the authority's income, and therefore the income raised affects the council's ability to spend and deliver services. This update therefore allows Committee to understand the impact on the council's finances of changes to the Business Rates scheme.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

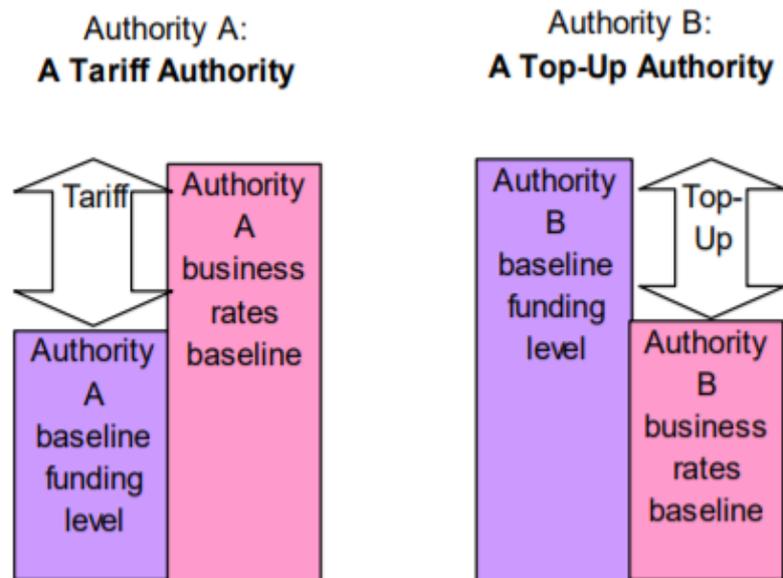
- 2.1 This report is for information only, therefore no other options have been considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 From 1993 local authorities were partly funded by a formula-based grant, which included an element of Business Rates. These rates were collected locally, paid into a national pool, and reallocated back to councils from the national pool based on a formula which bore no relation to the business rates they collected.
- 3.2 The funding system was significantly changed from 1st April 2013, following two consultations, with the introduction of the Business Rates Retention scheme to replace formula grant, resulting in billing authorities retaining 50% of their business rates income. Wirral Council retained 49% with 1% going to precepting authority Merseyside Fire and Rescue.

4.0 BUSINESS RATES RETENTION (50%)

- 4.1 The Business Rates Retention scheme is intended to remove Whitehall interference and give councils more freedom and flexibility, and more power to local people. It is also intended to create and support local jobs and local firms, as under the old scheme although councils collected the bills it didn't keep any of the money as it went into a Treasury pot and was redistributed back to local authorities via a complex formula, and councils were therefore not rewarded for increasing new business in their area.
- 4.2 In reality, some wealthier authorities earn more in business rates than they used to receive from the old formula grant, while there are other authorities who earn much less. Government therefore introduced a mixture of "top-ups" and "tariffs".
- 4.3 At the introduction of Business Rates Retention, the government calculated a funding level for every local authority – "baseline funding level" - which is the funding it believed the council needed to meet its 'needs'.
- 4.4 A "business rates baseline" was also calculated based on the average business rates contributed to the national pool over the two years from 2010/11. Where a local authority's business rates baseline was higher than its baseline funding level, central Government will take the difference via a "tariff". The tariffs collected are used to "top-up" local authorities whose business rates baseline was less than their baseline funding level.



With its business rates baseline being lower than its baseline funding level, Wirral is a top-up authority.

- 4.5 The government's intention was that the baselines would be fixed for 7 years, although a re-set of the business rates baselines has been postponed until at least 1st April 2021.
- 4.6 The business rates retention scheme allows councils to keep 50 per cent of the additional funds they generate. But without adjustment the scheme would be weighted towards richer authorities. This is because, for a comparatively small investment in growth, councils with a large amount of business property can gain large increases in their revenue. Whereas hard-pressed councils who put a lot in would get comparatively little out.
- 4.7 The following table demonstrates this for two authorities with different baselines who both increase their business rates income by 5%:

	Authority A	Authority B
Baseline funding level (a)	£50m	£50m
Business rates income (b)	£100m	£10m
5% business rates increase (c = bx5%)	£5m	£0.5m
New income (a+c)	£55m	£50.5m
% increase in funding level (c/a)	10%	1%

- 4.8 So while both authorities have grown their business rates income by 5%, this results in a 10% increase in overall funding for authority A due to their large amount of business rates, while authority B only increases their overall funding by 1%, and could be seen as a disincentive to grow the business rates income.
- 4.9 So to encourage growth and enterprise in councils irrespective of their resources, a levy and safety net system was introduced. Where a council's increase in revenue outstrips the increase in its funding level Government take the difference through a

“levy”. So, if an authority grows its rates by 2 per cent and its funding level growth is 4 percent, it will get to keep 2 per cent of that growth.

- 4.10 However, those levies collected are still reinvested in local authorities by way of a “safety net” which are used as a cushion to protect other authorities that see their income drop to a particular level, for example, as a result of a big business going under.
- 4.11 Concerns remained over the complexity of the scheme and lack of local control over the multiplier, a reliance on business growth and the economy which councils are not able to control, the baseline funding level being formed using a system recognised to be flawed, and that the link to any needs calculations was frozen until the baseline was reset.
- 4.12 The Business Rates Retention scheme also passed on an element of risk to Local Authorities. Under the old scheme central government fully bore the risk of rates income reducing due to businesses closing or successfully appealing their rateable value. However, under Business Rates Retention the Local Authority bears 50% of the risk.

5.0 100% BUSINESS RATES RETENTION

- 5.1 In 2015 the Government announced its intention to legislate to allow local authorities to retain 100% of growth in business rates in their areas and since 2017/18 Wirral, along with our Liverpool City Region (LCR) counterparts, has taken part in a Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) pilot to retain 100% of business rates.
- 5.2 In all pilots, authorities agree to forgo the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) as well as other funding streams, such as the Better Care Fund (BCF) in the LCR. Each LA keeps 99% of the Business Rates it collects in comparison to the 49% it would otherwise retain (the remaining 1% in each case goes to Merseyside Fire and Rescue as a precepting authority).
- 5.3 As part of the pilot agreement, MHCLG guarantee that LAs would not be worse off (or ‘in detriment’) by participating in the pilot compared to their position if they had remained on the standard national 50% retention scheme.
- 5.4 However, this guarantee is with LCR, as opposed to any individual LA. If one or more LCR authority is worse off as a result of the pilot, the gaining LCR authorities are responsible for passing on part of their gain to the LA(s) in a detriment position to bring them back to balance. The MHCLG would only contribute if the LCR authorities combined were in a detriment position.
- 5.5 There is therefore a risk that Wirral would have to pay over part of its gain to a neighbouring authority who was adversely affected by the pilot, and a Business Rates reserve is held that could be used for this purpose. However, to date no LCR authority has forecast or incurred a detriment position since the pilot began.
- 5.6 Wirral has been in a positive position of around £7m per year in the pilot as demonstrated in the following tables, which compare Wirral’s funding position under

the 100% retention pilot compared with how it would have been funded under the standard national 50% retention:

	2019-20		
	100% retention pilot *	50% retention ^	Difference
	£m	£m	£m
Retained Business Rates (forecast)	69.48	34.39	35.09
Section 31 grants	11.28	5.58	5.70
	80.76	39.97	40.79
General Grants:			
- Multiplier Cap - Top-Up (S31 Grant)	0.49	1.56	-1.07
- RSG	0.00	18.57	-18.57
- Top-Up	50.70	48.00	2.70
- IBCF	0.00	16.87	-16.87
	51.19	85.00	-33.81
Total	131.95	124.97	6.98

	2020-21		
	100% retention pilot *	50% retention ^	Difference
	£m	£m	£m
Retained Business Rates (forecast)	71.73	35.50	36.23
Section 31 grants	12.73	6.30	6.43
	84.47	41.81	42.66
General Grants:			
- Multiplier Cap - Top-Up (S31 Grant)	0.62	1.96	-1.34
- RSG	0.00	18.90	-18.90
- Top-Up	53.03	48.80	4.23
- IBCF	0.00	18.70	-18.70
	53.65	88.36	-34.71
Total	138.11	130.16	7.95

* figures are 99% of total, as 1% relates to precepting authority (Merseyside Fire)

^ figures are 49% of total, as 1% relates to precepting authority (Merseyside Fire)

- 5.7 As described above the 'betterment' position results from a growth in Business Rates income due to additional properties in the borough over the assumed Business Rates receipts set by MHCLG in 2012-13, and Wirral therefore retains 99% of the growth over that assumption as opposed to 49%.

5.8 Although Wirral has benefitted from taking part in the 100% retention pilot, it means that Wirral also bears all the risk of any reduction in business rates from Businesses closing, moving from the area, or successfully appealing against their rateable value.

5.9 Following the one-year spending review announced on 4th September 2019, MHCLG confirmed that existing 100% business rates retention pilots would continue in 2020/21.

6.0 75% BUSINESS RATES RETENTION

6.1 In line with a commitment to introduce 75% retention from April 2020, local authorities were invited to pilot 75% retention in 2019/20 with 15 authorities subsequently taking part. The 2020-21 provisional Local Government Finance Settlement confirmed that national implementation of 75% retention has been deferred to at least April 2021.

6.2 It is unclear at this point what the impact the revised retention level would have on Wirral. As demonstrated above Wirral benefits from the 100% retention pilot and it is likely that Wirral would also benefit from 75% retention compared with 50% retention, although not as favourably as 100%. However, due to several potential changes proposed for April 2021 it is impossible at this stage to calculate the impact.

6.3 A reset of the Business Rates Retention baseline is planned for 1st April 2021, as confirmed in the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. This means that any growth since the assumed Business Rates receipts set by MHCLG in 2012-13 will be built into the new baseline as an estimate of local share of business rates, and future income will be measured against this revised baseline for growth.

6.4 The next Business Rates Revaluation also comes into effect on 1st April 2021 and may result in large changes in rates payable across the borough and the country. Triennial revaluations are planned thereafter.

6.5 Finally the new Fair Funding Formula replaces the 2013 needs formula from 1st April 2021 and the make up of this and its impact are not yet known.

6.6 Although there are likely to be transition arrangements introduced to dampen the impact of these changes, it is not yet known if or how MHCLG would guarantee an individual LA's income under a 75% retention scheme.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The financial implications are considered throughout the report.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Local Authorities have a legal duty to collect Business Rates from businesses in their area.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

9.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report. However, Business Rates income retained by the authority influences the capacity to employ staff and deliver services.

10.0 RELEVANT RISKS

10.1 Relevant risks are considered throughout the report, specifically the risk of Wirral having to pay over part of its gain resulting from participating in the 100% Business Rates Retention pilot to a Liverpool City Region counterpart who was adversely affected by the pilot, and the risk of being adversely affected by changes to the Business Rates Retention scheme and Fair Funding Formula.

11.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

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

12.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

13.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are not expected to have an impact on emissions of GHG.

REPORT AUTHOR: Shaun Allen
Senior Finance Business Partner
telephone: (0151) 666 4644
email: shaunallen@wirral.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

Business Rates Retention A step-by-step guide, July 2012 (Department for Communities and Local Government)

Business Rates Retention System – TIS Online.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

This page is intentionally left blank



**Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 4th March 2020**

REPORT TITLE:	Commercialisation Update
REPORT OF:	The Director of Delivery Services

REPORT SUMMARY

This report has been produced at the request of Business Overview Committee and provides an update on commercialisation activity taking place within the Council. It summarises the 5 key commercial strands and where current commercial activity is taking place. It also highlights some commercial benefits to the Council already from the commercial approach.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1. That the Committee notes the report

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

The report provides Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the update on commercialisation that was requested.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Prior to 2016 there was very little coordinated commercial activity across the Council.

3.2 The Council established two new companies in 2015/2016:

- Edsential (jointly owned with Cheshire West and Chester Council)
- Evolutions (wholly owned by the Council)

3.3 Cabinet approved the Councils overall vision and approach to income generation through a cabinet report (June 2016) and in November 2018 Cabinet agreed the Council's Commercial Strategy.

3.4 The Commercial Approach originated as a transformation project back in 2016. This has since transferred to the newly established service, the Commercial Management Service (June 18) with a key focus on income generation. The service is responsible for enabling and challenging the commercial approach across the Council.

3.5 The commercial programme launched with 5 key work streams:

3.6

Themes	Summary
1. Growth	Developing new commercial ideas which covered range of commercial opportunities from Wirral Growth Company to charging for green waste collection. Also established governance and workflow arrangements.
2. Income & debt management	Focus on recovering even more Council Tax and Business Rates and reducing debt
3. Fees and charges	Optimising fees and charges through income targets (total additional income across the Council was £32m for 2018/19) – Wirral' s top 5 income generators, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure (£8.5m annual income, net cost to Council of £1.5m); • School Traded Services (£4.5m, breaks even); • Cemeteries and crematorium (£2.8m net cost £400k) • Car parking (£2.7m income and makes £1.5m surplus which is invested back into highways infrastructure etc) • Floral Pavilion (£2.6m, cost to Council of £900k)
4. Investments	Through effective Treasury Management, developing appropriate investment opportunities, opportunities to work with other councils; eg. Warrington

5. Developing commercial skills across the Council	<p>OD programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligned to launch of commercial approach; developed staff training programme which included: • 5 day Commercial Skills training – this is now into Cohort 4 and we have had interest from other Councils for buying our services to deliver this programme • 5 e-learning commercial modules (Covering key commercial messages and staff can utilise this is their own roles) • Regular commercial network meetings running within the Council
---	---

- 3.7 The service areas that carry the most potential for the Council include:
- Wirral Growth Company – large scale regeneration and mixed use of assets bringing long term revenue streams. Other opportunities with housing developers to build/sell land, assets
 - Review of Council assets to rent or sell as part of longer term investment strategies (align to One public estate and working with partners; rationalization and sharing of assets/costs)
 - Innovative investment opportunities (Treasury Management) – opportunities to learn from other public sector organisations including Warrington

3.8 Managing commercial risk – any new commercial ideas go through an internal governance framework which includes evaluation of financial, economic and reputational risk. Existing commercial activities are regularly reviewed through risk management and risk profiling.

3.9 Current activity

Themes	Outputs so far
1. Growth – Identify, support and build new innovative commercial ideas and develop a coordinated approach to maximise high quality value for money income generation opportunities to a wider business-to-business client base, which includes trading our services to Partner organisations and other LA's.	Over 200 new commercial ideas have been prioritised down to around 18 for further evaluation and development. Key ideas being developed include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore options to rationalise and improve the operational services and assets delivering Council transport and vehicle logistics and relevant commercial opportunities • Optimise opportunities for events hosted by Wirral Council venues. • B2B services for our public sector partners, building on the successes of our Wirral Traded Services offer to schools that generates £4.5m of annual income and achieves high customer satisfaction.
2. Income & debt management - Introduce a new way of working that is fit for purpose for a future Revenues and Benefits service aligned to the Council's corporate vision.	The ultimate objective is to increase revenue and reduce overall cost to serve and future proof the function as part of a new and enhanced Transaction Centre operating model and Council Tax and Business rate collection is up for 18/19 whilst debt has been reduced.
3. Fees and charges - Develop more robust and rigorous customer focussed approaches to income generation through financial management and modelling. This will include a focus on the profit and loss of current commercial activities and full cost recovery of trading non-statutory services.	All 1200 fees and charges have been reviewed annually over the last 3 years linking these to expected annual income targets. Individual challenge sessions with the largest current income generating services across the Council along with support and challenge to all other income generating services have resulted in £2m of additional income for 18/19.
4. Investments – Through effective Treasury Management consider and develop appropriate investment opportunities. We will understand how traditional and alternative financial instruments will fund new options.	The Treasury Management Strategy sets out the expected treasury operations for 2018-2021, linked to the Council's MTFs, Capital Strategy, Asset Management Plan and the Wirral Plan. Key strands include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The optimisation of returns on investments whilst ensuring security and liquidity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination of new opportunities for innovative investments, balancing risk with opportunity to be more risk aware to generate short and long term income. • Use of prudential borrowing where it is supported by a sound business case in accordance with the principles of the Treasury Management Strategy. Treasury Management brought in around £2m of savings for 18/19.
--	---

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Commercialisation realised benefits so far to the Council:

	Activity	Amount of additional income	Reporting period
1	Additional income across services that set fees and charges	£2m	18/19
2	New school traded service income – Legal/Print/DPO	£152k	18/19
3	Tour of Britain income	£32k	Up to Sep 19
4	Street/house naming	£15k	Jan – Dec 19
5	Procurement activity - MPF	£28k	18/19

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council has powers to charge for services and in certain circumstances to trade. This may require different delivery models, specific commercial projects will be examined to ensure that they are within the Council's powers. As projects are developed the legal implications will be identified as part of the project plan.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 The Council has invested in a new Commercial Management team. This includes 6 new Commercial Business Development Officers (1 specifically focussed on Leisure and 2 in Parks and Countryside), whose main aim is to support commercial development across the Council and deliver new income generating projects.

6.2 The Commercial Team has been supporting individual and organisational development around commercial thinking including intrapreneurialism (innovation and progressive change within an organisation). We will develop the skills of our workforce and it will also influence the skills that we require in the people that we recruit in future into key roles and in the partnerships that we develop. So far this has included:

- Intranet support site for commercial approach launched
- E-Learning modules developed
- Training packages for managers and above
- Network meetings for commercial leaders and managers

6.3 This report does not have any direct implications relating to ICT or Assets.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 Management of risk is central to our commercial approach and all potential activities will be assessed with due regard to the risks being taken. This will be in line with the Council's corporate approach to risk management including review of risk frequency.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Specific engagement and consultation are considered for each commercial project as necessary.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The potential impact will be reviewed for each commercial project as necessary.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

This report is for Members information and does not have any direct Environment or Climate Implications. The potential impact on environment and climate are reviewed for each commercial project as necessary

REPORT AUTHORS: **Stuart Bellerby**

Senior Commercial Manager

telephone: (0151) 666 4336

email: stuartbellerby@wirral.gov.uk

Nicola Butterworth

Director of Delivery Services

telephone: (0151) 606 2130

email: nicolabutterworth@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Cabinet – Approval of the Wirral Council Commercial Strategy
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Scrutiny Report on Workshop on Commercial Strategy

Background Papers

As above

Cabinet - Developing our Commercial Approach

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Scrutiny Report on Workshop on Commercial Strategy	Tuesday 18th September 2018
Cabinet - Developing our Commercial Approach	Monday 27th June 2016

WIRRAL COUNCIL'S COMMERCIAL STRATEGY

**Wirral Council
2018 - 2021**

1. Table of Contents

1.	Table of Contents	2
2.	Foreword	3
3.	Introduction	4
4.	Vision	7
5.	The scope of our commercial approach	8

2. Foreword

We have made a commitment to Wirral residents that we will achieve all 20 of our Pledges for 2020. Despite our ongoing financial reductions, it is a commitment which we are determined to meet.

The Council, together with the majority of Local Government, is facing a challenging financial future. The mix of austerity, with reducing central government grant, and increasing financial demands is making the Council address questions about the long term sustainability of all the services arranged by the Council.

To get there requires a fundamental change in how we do business. This commercial strategy is one element of this change. Our approach to becoming more commercial is not about simply charging more for our services, it is not about becoming purely profit driven, it is about making our organisation more business-like, more able to take advantage of commercial opportunities which will benefit our borough, and our residents. We have **defined commercial** as:

Maximise charging, trading, assets and investment opportunities to generate income, surpluses and reduce costs.

It is about having a private sector head, with a public sector heart. It is on this principle that we will begin to change how the Council thinks and behaves, making sure that every possible opportunity to drive up income and root out inefficiency is identified and maximised. The ideal scenario is investing to earn with a financial and social return.

Our Commercial Strategy aims to take a commercial approach to service design, management and decisions, encouraging innovation whilst optimising assets and services to exploit opportunities to generate income surplus for reinvestment and reduce costs. An important element of the Commercial approach is finding the right balance between our public sector ethos and delivering social value and our commercial practices, ensuring we meet our pledges, to improve the lives of Wirral residents supporting local businesses, as well as increasing income and opportunity.

Commercial activity is not new to us. Wirral currently operates commercial services in a range of diverse sectors including leisure, theatre events, car park charging, garden waste and services to schools through a Community Interest Company (Edsential). This strategy will consolidate our existing commercial activity and provide a structured corporate framework for commercial projects and all future commercial activity. This will include links to the new Wirral Growth Company. We're delivering a new regeneration vision for Wirral and a new dynamic organisation to deliver it. This is a new way to deliver regeneration through a joint venture with a leading development and investment partner with the skills, track-record and resources we need to drive future growth and prosperity. The creation of a joint venture property company – Wirral Growth Company – will bring new expertise, new ideas and new investment to Wirral.

3. Introduction

What we know

Financial

Over the next 4 years we anticipate rising costs (inflation) and demand for services alongside reduced central government funding that will result in a budget gap of £45m in 2019/20 and £67m by 2022/23. In 2018/19 alone, we will see a reduction of £7m of government grant funding, which together with increased costs and demands, resulted in a budget gap of £61m. We have already saved over £100m between 2011/12 and 2018/19 and therefore finding further efficiencies and savings becoming progressively more challenging.

Budget Projections 2019/20-2022/23: Budget Gap Forecast

PROJECTIONS	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
Cumulative Budget Gap	45	62	65	67
Annual Budget Gap	45	17	3	2

Our *Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20-2022/23* (MTFS) focus is on building the foundations for a sustainable financial future with sufficient support for services and describes how to provide the funding and services so that residents receive the support for their lives and communities. Outlined, in addition, is how the Council will invest in our local economy to encourage growth to continue.

The MTFS and the 2018/19 Budget is the first step in resolving the financial challenges we face and moving to a more self-sufficient funding position.

Maintaining business as usual whilst reforming services and regenerating the local economy will be the future focus to target our resources. Establishing the correct baseline to do this is an essential component of our delivery and the MTFS sets out how we plan to do this in line with our financial principles. It details the financial remit within which the Wirral Plan directs all services up to 2023.

A key approach in the MTFS is to increase income for the Council and two key themes within this are:

- **Fees and charges**

- The introduction of new income sources through charges and trading, for example with local businesses.
- Review of and ensuring fees and charges take account of costs, demand and comparable charges made by others for similar services.
- Ensure the fees and charges are recognised as a key and increasingly important part of the financial resources of the Council.

- **Treasury Management**

The Treasury Management Strategy sets out the expected treasury operations for 2018-2021, linked to the Council's MTFS, Capital Strategy, Asset Management Plan and the Wirral Plan. It is inextricably linked to delivering the Council's priorities and strategy. Key strands include:

- The optimisation of returns on investments whilst ensuring security and liquidity.
- Examination of new opportunities for innovative investments, balancing risk with opportunity to be more risk aware to generate short and long term income.
- Use of prudential borrowing where it is supported by a sound business case in accordance with the principles of the Treasury Management Strategy.
- Ensure that Treasury Management is recognised as a major contributor to the Councils overall financial standing the resilience. Whilst operating within the relevant guidelines and regulations.

Wirral Plan

In order to achieve the ambitions of the Wirral Plan we are committed to delivering a modern public service, organising ourselves to deliver our aims and recognising the need for the Council to be much more commercially focused, harnessing the spirit and practices of commerce to secure outcomes for residents. This will mean leveraging greater value from assets and resources as well as maximising commercial opportunities and income generation through a range of service models delivered within a public sector ethos. This Strategy is important as it will provide a commercial framework, promote innovation and ensure cost effectiveness through contract and service review and support the growth plan.

The Wirral Plan highlights that we must become an innovative outward looking organisation that is responsive to new technologies, to cultural and societal change, and to the evolving needs of Customers in order to achieve its objectives. Many Local Councils are leading the way, demonstrating resourcefulness and initiative to rise to the challenges that communities face.

Our Commercial Success to Date

We currently operate commercial activities in a range of diverse sectors including, leisure, theatre events, garden waste and services to schools. This range of activities, including income generated through fees and charges, is estimated to bring in annual income for 18/19 of around £38m. Where there is not an agreed subsidy from the Council to cover core Council functions, the income generating services are expected to at least break even.

We have also successfully created some local authority trading companies, which is very much in line with a developing trend in local government of more Council owned trading companies. As trading bodies, they can provide their services to a much wider market than a council department. Local authority companies represent alternative service delivery vehicles and exist alongside in-house delivery, trusts, social enterprises, outsourcing and other delivery models, but with particular emphasis on the concept of trading. The advantages of such operations are that a local authority can only enter into trading in the wider commercial market through a company. An example is Edsential, established in December 2015, a community interest company established and jointly owned by Wirral Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council to provide traded services to the Education sector.

The financial context, as stated before, in which we operate means that we already undertake a range of activities to generate income and make savings. These range from

sharing services with other Councils, traded services to commercial activities such as Leisure services. Without these we would have had to make even more efficiency savings.

4. Vision

An important element of the commercial approach is finding the right balance between our public sector ethos and our commercial practices, ensuring we meet our pledges, to improve the lives of Wirral residents, as well as increasing income and delivering social value. This is reflected in the commercial approach vision and principles.

To define our Commercial approach the following vision has been adopted by the council;

“Wirral Council will take a customer focussed, innovative, commercial and entrepreneurial approach to secure the delivery of high quality and value for money services to support the Wirral Plan.”

To underpin this strategy the following key principles have been developed;

- AIM - Maximise charging, trading, assets and investment opportunities to generate income, surpluses and reduce costs.
- STRATEGY - To develop and implement a plan that will transform the operation of the Council into a business that takes a commercial approach to ensure that we are more flexible, more efficient, more effective and will ensure we deliver better and sustainable outcomes for local people.
- CUSTOMERS & MARKETS - To provide goods, services, and works to Wirral residents and other public organisations and operate within a complex model of multiple markets, rather than a single service model, within a social value ethical framework.
- CULTURE - Foster and embed an innovative and commercial approach through a commercial development programme across the Council.
- SUPPORT TO SUCCEED - Provide rigorous, flexible processes and support services that promote and develop commercialism.

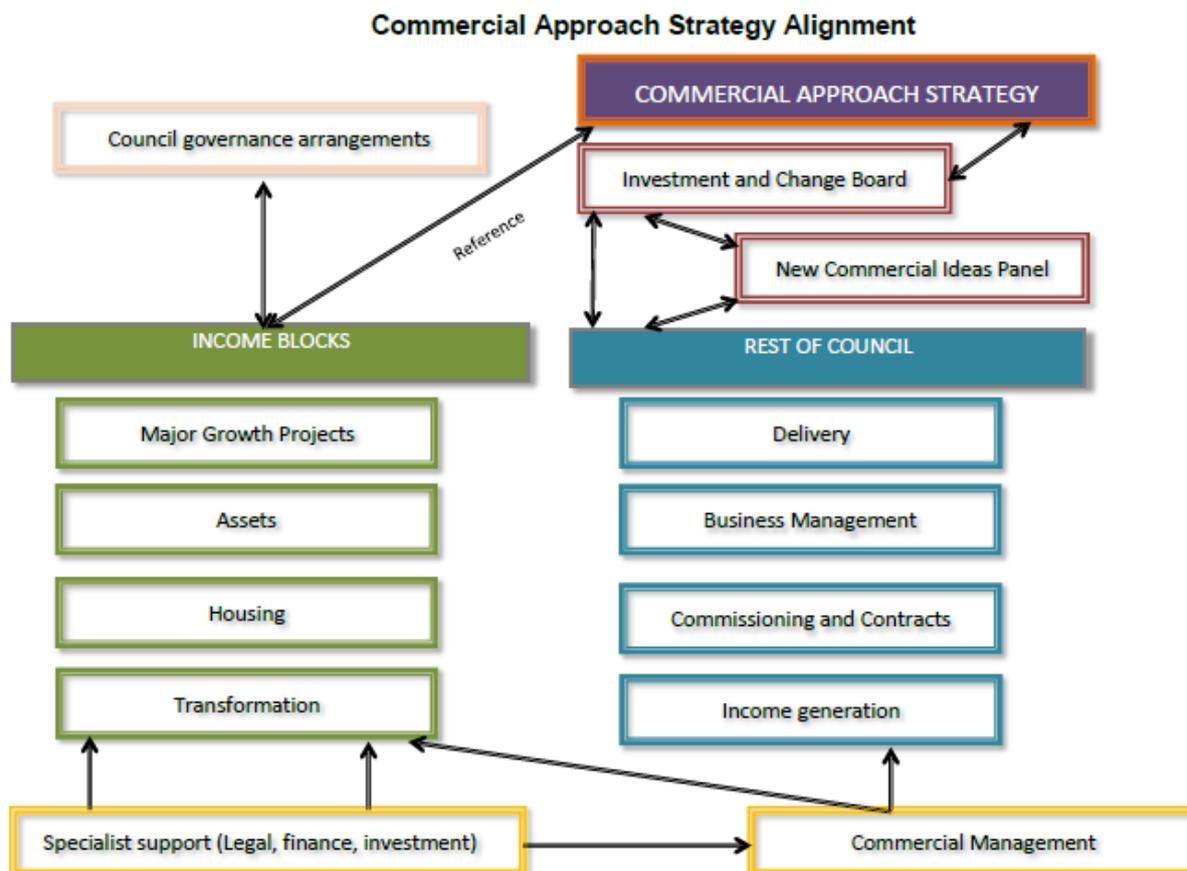
Management of risk is central to our Commercial approach and all potential activities will be assessed with due regard to the risks being taken

In order to achieve the joined up and efficient delivery of this vision, the commercial strategy will align with the overall Council strategy and other relevant financial strategies, such as the MTFS, to support the delivery of the Wirral Plan.

5. The scope of our commercial approach

Governance

Commercial development across the Council will be overseen by the Investment and Change Board ensuring the delivery of the Commercial Approach Strategy.



The New Commercial Ideas Panel reports into the Investment and Change Board and the remit of the Panel are:

- New Commercial Opportunities.
- Council commercial activity oversight.
- Commercial intelligence.
- Promoting commercial successes.

Customers and markets

We already operate a wide variety of commercial activities across a range of customers and markets. These are mainly focused across the Council footprint to a range of customers including residents, businesses and other public sector organisations, with some income generated from members of the public and businesses and other public sector organisations beyond the Council boundaries.

If we are to realise the ambition of this commercial strategy then for all current income generating services and future new services and investment opportunities, we will need to increase and maximise income from our customers and markets.

We also need to ensure all services are **customer focused** and we will achieve this through establishing core customer focus principles that all services adhere to.

Overall approach to customers and markets

New customers and markets	Maturity of market	Due diligence through new commercial governance arrangements
Existing customers and markets	Retain and grow customer base and cross sell	Ability to sell on from existing services
	Existing services and investments	New services and investments

Commercial Opportunities

Understanding and prioritising the best opportunities available to us is the key to the success of this Commercial Approach. This will include reviewing existing commercial activity for costs, **quality and value for money**. Also we will establish a new commercial ideas framework to ensure new **innovative** commercial ideas are encouraged, evaluated and where prudent supported to deliver.

What success will look like

The overall expected outcomes from our commercial approach are:

- Initial financial expectations are £1 million surplus per year from the commercial approach for the next three years from 18/19.
- Introducing and embedding a more commercial culture across Wirral Council.

Culture

Delivering our ambitious plans for the future will require a fundamental shift in how we do business and a change in culture. The new operating model is designed to move us towards that new culture, values and behavior's where we think commercially and design our approach based on outcomes for residents, around partnerships, insight and evidence – working to achieve a new Wirral, where all public resources and activity are invested in achieving the vision we set in the Wirral Plan.

This will require individual and organisational development around commercial thinking including intrapreneurialism. We will develop the skills of our workforce and it will also influence the skills that we require in the people that we recruit in future into key roles and in the partnerships that we develop.

Risk management

The risks and issue management will be done in line with the Council's Risk Management Policy.

Legally compliant

There is complex legislation and case law that governs local government's ability to generate income. This includes trading in services to make surplus and the recovery of part (contribution) or the whole of the cost of a service through charging.

We will need to make sure that its commercial activities are legally and state aid compliant, including having consideration of the Public Sector Duty within the Equality Act 2010. Also following *The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities*. Where necessary specialist external advice will be sought to inform sound decision-making.

Action plan

What do we need to do?
1. Growth – Identify, support and build new innovative commercial ideas and develop a coordinated approach to maximise high quality value for money income generation opportunities to a wider business-to-business client base, which includes trading our services to Partner organisations and other LA's.
2. Income & debt management - Introduce a new way of working that is fit for purpose for a future Revenues and Benefits service aligned to the Council's corporate vision. The ultimate objective is to increase revenue and reduce overall cost to serve and future proof the function as part of a new and enhanced Transaction Centre operating model.
3. Fees and charges - Develop more robust and rigorous customer focussed approaches to income generation through financial management and modelling. This will include a focus on the profit and loss of current commercial activities and full cost recovery of non-trading statutory services.
4. Investments – Through effective Treasury Management consider and develop appropriate investment opportunities. We will understand how traditional and alternative financial instruments will fund new options.
5. Culture - Embed a more entrepreneurial commercial culture across Wirral Council through effective support, challenge and CPD. This will include, Commercial Skills training; intranet resources; e-learning modules; commercial networks.



COMMERCIAL STRATEGY

Scrutiny Report of the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee

August 2018



CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
1 INTRODUCTION	3
2 DEVELOPING THE COMMERCIAL APPROACH AND STRATEGY	3
3 SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS	5
4 WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS.....	9
5. APPENDICIES.....	10
Appendix 1 - Commercial Approach Strategy Alignment.....	10
Appendix 2 - Workshop attendance.....	11

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As part of the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee's Work programme for 2018/19, it was agreed to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the Council's Commercial Strategy before it is submitted to Cabinet for approval. As a result, a scrutiny workshop was held on 20th August 2018 and was open to all Overview & Scrutiny Committee Members.
- 1.2 A presentation was delivered by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and Stuart Bellerby, Senior Manager (Commercial Approach) before the session was opened up for Member questions. A summary of the outcomes from the workshop are detailed in this report.

2. DEVELOPING THE COMMERCIAL APPROACH AND STRATEGY

- 2.1 Council agreed the Commercial Strategy's vision and principals in June 2016 through Cabinet. As well as generating more income to support the financial challenges faced by the Council, the strategy's aim was to make Wirral more business-like and more able to take advantage of commercial opportunities to benefit the Borough and residents.
- 2.2 The Cabinet Report details how the Council needs to modernise and work in new ways to deliver the 2020 vision for Wirral and also highlights a requirement for a commercial approach to be adopted. Specifically looking at ways Wirral can generate income, maximise assets and reduce pressure on service delivery.
- 2.3 The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-21 was agreed and adopted by Council on 3rd March 2016. This included the development of a commercial approach as one of the Council's Financial Strategy Principles.
- 2.4 The vision and principals for the commercial approach aim to balance the public sector ethos and Wirral's commercial practices, ensuring the Wirral Plan pledges are met to improve the lives of Wirral Residents, as well as increasing income. The vision – agreed by Cabinet – states:

"Wirral Council will take a customer focussed, innovative, commercial and entrepreneurial approach to secure the delivery of high quality and value for money services to support the Wirral Plan"

- 2.5 Underpinning the strategy, the following key principals were developed:

AIM - Maximise charging, trading, assets and investment opportunities to generate income, surpluses and reduce costs.

STRATEGY - To develop and implement a plan that will transform the operation of the Council into a business that takes a commercial approach to ensure that we are more flexible, more efficient, more effective and will ensure we deliver better and sustainable outcomes for local people.

CUSTOMERS & MARKETS - To provide goods, services, and works to Wirral residents and other public organisations and operate within a complex model of multiple markets, rather than a single service model, within a social value ethical framework.

CULTURE - Foster and embed an innovative and commercial approach through a commercial development programme across the Council.

SUPPORT TO SUCCEED - Provide rigorous, flexible processes and support services that promote and develop commercialism.

- 2.6 The Cabinet report set out the requirements for a new approach to enable the Council to become a more commercial organisation as well as setting out the strategic vision and principals to govern the Commercial Strategy.

3. SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

3.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2019-23 – agreed in July 2018 - sets out the national picture for local government and key questions from this document were adapted and used to support discussion for the workshop. THE MTFS states:

“The future for local government finances is one in which Councils aim to be financially self-sufficient. This means that Wirral has to plan to establish a strong and buoyant tax base and other sources of direct income.”

3.2 It was explained to Members that the MTFS for 2019 -2023 has a much greater emphasis on income generation than in previous years, with four main areas identified for increasing income:

- Council Tax base
- Business Rate base
- Fees and Charges
- Treasury Management

3.3 In developing a commercial strategy for Wirral, Members were assured that other local authority strategies were reviewed to understand their commercial approach and what aspects could be adopted by Wirral. In particular, Warrington, Nottingham and Harrow were noted to be good strategies. National literature has also been consulted, including the Local Government Association's 'Enterprising Councils – Supporting Councils income generation activity'.

3.4 The commercial approach and strategy alignment is shown in Appendix 1. This makes a distinction between what the Commercial Strategy is about, and what it is not about. Existing major projects, such as Wirral Growth Company and transformation projects are reported to continue with their own governance arrangements and any other layers of bureaucracy are deemed to be unnecessary.

3.5 Fees and Charges

Members were informed that there is an expectation that the Council will generate £1 million per year through its commercial approach. Most of this will be generated through fees and charges. Members emphasised that it is critical that income from existing services which are provided is maximised, including the collection of income from services and activities where it is known that this may not always be the case.

3.6 It is understood that in the last 18 months, all fees and charges have been challenged through reviews. Relevant service managers have also been challenged around setting the right fees and charges but, importantly, ensuring that volume is also considered to ensure the customer base is not lost. The emphasis, therefore, has been to concentrate on income and not necessarily the fees and charges and this approach was acknowledged by Members.

3.7 Property Investment

Members were presented with annual statistics from government to the end of March 2017 showing that total local government borrowing is £92.2 billion with total investment of £33.1 billion. Research carried out highlighted the growing trend in investment in property which a

third of councils have done so since 2010 and with a reported spending of £2.4 billion between them. (Commercial Healthcheck – Grant Thornton, 2018).

3.8 Concerns were raised in relation to how the Council would invest in property as part of its Commercial Strategy moving forward to maximise commercial returns. In particular, how this would be achieved with the Council selling some assets for capital receipts. However, it is understood that the strategy would look at investment for both residential and commercial properties and that each property - whether owned or invested in - would be considered as part of a more commercial approach as to whether it is sold or not. Members noted that although some local authorities look in their own locality as part of their growth agenda, others may look outside their boundaries to identify properties. However, it was reported that government is looking at prohibiting local authorities from borrowing from the public sector to invest outside of their boroughs.

3.9 Business Rates

To generate more income from business rates, there is a need to encourage business growth in Wirral. The provision of business rates relief was identified by Members as having an impact on trying to maximising income as the Council moved to 100% retention of business rates. Liverpool City Council was cited as an example of some businesses being initially exempt from business rates for a period of time. It is acknowledged, however, that Wirral offers exemptions to businesses below a certain value to encourage start-ups in low value properties. Although it is reported that Wirral Council has a high collection rate, Members had a longer-term view that generating significant income through business rates could be challenging.

3.10 Members also highlighted that rent of properties may present more of an obstacle for small business than business rates and the impact this has on growth. Although this is more relevant to the Council's growth agenda, officers will be encouraged to have a more business-like approach as part of the commercial approach going forward.

3.11 Development of new commercial ideas and opportunities

Examples of commercial successes from other local authorities were highlighted to Members. These included:

- Nottingham – Embedding a more business-like approach across the Council's workforce and businesses which has generated several million in increased revenue.
- North Lincolnshire – Commercial services provided include construction and site management services, arboriculture and landscaping and procurement consultancy.
- Buckingham County Council – Established 'Buckingham Law Plus' which delivers legal services to local authorities and wider public sectors.

3.12 Although Members acknowledged the commercial successes delivered by other local authorities, it was highlighted that Wirral's strategy should identify what it has to offer and what makes Wirral unique to maximise income. This includes its coastline that links to the tourism and leisure industry. Members also highlighted the need to not just rely on a captive customer base but to draw people in from outside the Borough. The return of the Giants to Liverpool and Wirral was an example presented to Members of how the strategy will be applied to maximise income from the event.

- 3.13 To draw people in to Wirral, which Members recognised as a challenge, it was explained that there is a need to look at existing infrastructure, business, assets etc. and what will work best for Wirral.
- 3.14 Members recognised that the need to generate new commercial ideas was pivotal to the success of the strategy to maximise income. It is also important to have the right culture embedded across the council, with staff having the right knowledge and expertise. Members highlighted the challenge of how to incentivise staff to generate ideas and heard that the lack of formal mechanisms previously by which new commercial ideas can be considered and ratified had been an issue.
- 3.15 It was reported that an Investment and Change Board has now been established and will look at many of the bigger projects. Additionally, underneath this, there is a New Commercial Ideas Panel which is chaired by officers and has been in existence for a few months. The objective is to encourage staff to present new ideas to the Panel. Both the Board and Panel currently meet on a monthly basis to encourage staff to present any new ideas. Although Members welcomed these arrangements, it was agreed that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee could receive presentations from both the Investment and Change Board and the Commercial Ideas Panel to better understand how they operate and to receive an up to date position on what has been achieved.
- 3.16 The Senior Manager for Commercial Approach acknowledged that many ideas will need investment and up to £25K can be considered by the New Commercial Ideas Panel but Members were assured that the business case has to identify how this will be paid back as part of the generation of income. It is anticipated that staff may be encouraged to develop and discuss ideas knowing that there is investment available.
- 3.17 Within the structure, there is a new department called 'Commercial Management'. This provides capacity and support for staff across the Council to develop new ideas. There is also a new member of staff with a specific role to support, develop and monitor new commercial ideas, but Members were assured that there is a requirement that the role has to generate its own salary by year 2.
- 3.18 Members suggested that the strategy should ensure more work is done with the third sector when looking to maximise income. It is understood that consideration is being applied to looking at the services Wirral provides which may be of interest to the third sector.
- 3.19 In relation to the impact on local businesses, Members had a concern that new commercial ideas may create competition and have an impact on other businesses. Although Wirral would be operating under a free market philosophy, this would be taken into consideration when looking at new ideas.
- 3.20 A number of questions were raised in relation to embedding the right culture across the council and ensuring the right messages are conveyed to achieve a more commercial approach. It is understood that an intranet site has been established around commercialisation and e-learning modules have been included as part of the suite of training packages, as well as running training courses. Network meetings have also been established with Council officers sharing ideas and to

understand what it means to be more commercial. It was welcomed that different Council services are talking to each other, such as leisure services, the Floral Pavilion and schools traded services to tap into the available expertise and to promote the sharing of ideas. It is also understood that managers will be provided with resources and materials to deliver their own commercial training.

3.21 Members agreed that these mechanisms are vital to ensure the Council can deliver on its strategy and also suggested that, with shrinking budgets and challenges to deliver services, commercialisation will become more important to the role of Members. It was agreed that, as part of Member development, appropriate training should be delivered to Members on commercialisation

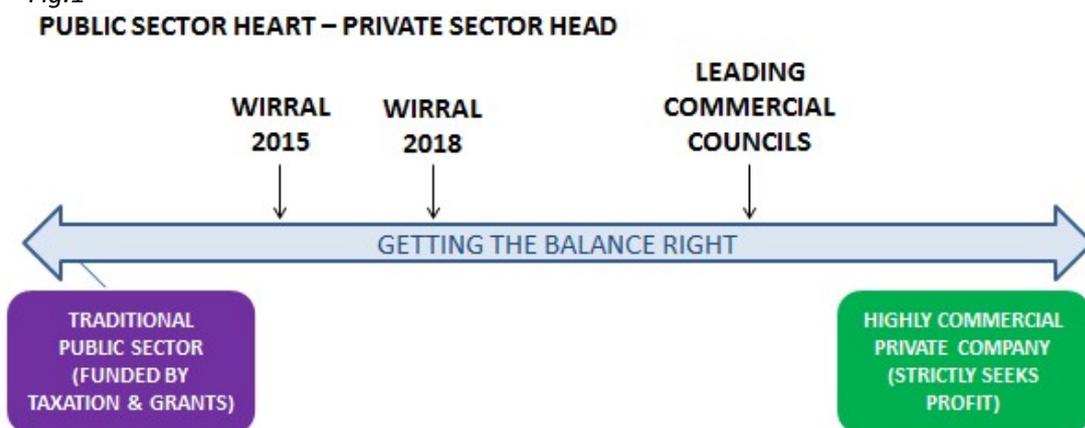
3.22 Income monitoring

Members emphasised the need for effective monitoring of income to measure the success of the strategy. It is reported that income is not currently scrutinised on a regular basis but this will change moving forward. Income is only looked at on a service to service basis but there is a need to understand what the pressures are and identify who is doing well and who isn't. The Investment and Change Board will monitor on a quarterly basis how well income targets which will be set have been met and to ensure that targets are realistic but challenging. Members suggested that periodic income reports should be presented to Overview & Scrutiny for consideration.

3.23 Getting the balance right

Members agreed that the balance between social value and the generation of income is critical and where Wirral is placed on the spectrum, particularly in the use of public funding and taking risks. Fig. 1 below shows where Wirral has moved to since 2015 and where it currently sits against other leading commercial Councils. Members were informed that these other more commercial local authorities are taking bigger risks for the bigger returns but Wirral is looking to become more risk aware than risk averse and this was acknowledged by Members.

Fig.1



4.0 WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the workshop presentation and the question and answer session, Members agreed to the following recommendations detailed below:

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that officers and Cabinet considers the content of this report prior to approval of the Commercial Strategy.

Recommendation 2

To acknowledge the importance of Wirral's commercial approach moving forward, it is recommended that Member development should also include commercialisation training.

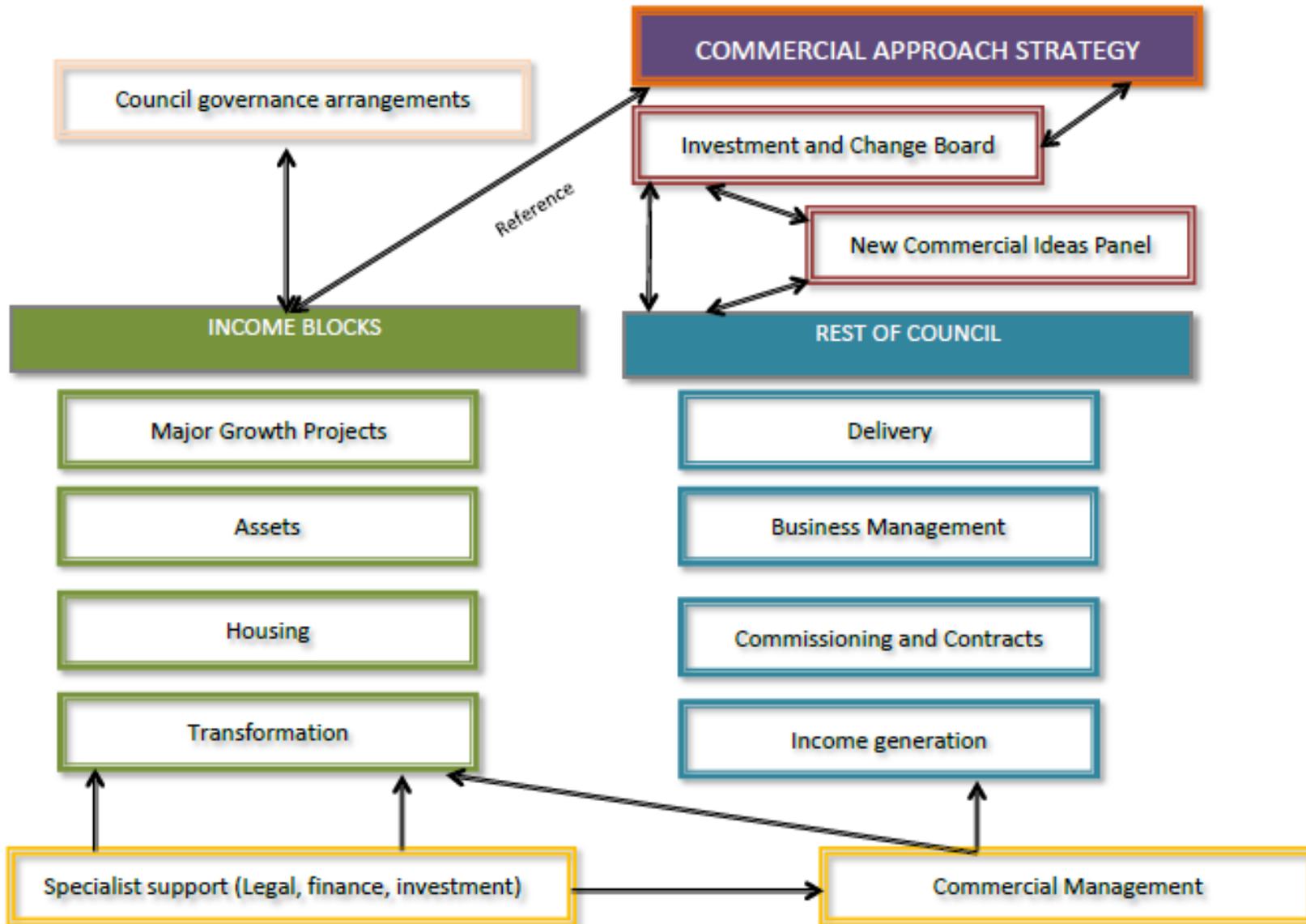
Recommendation 3

The Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee should receive presentations by the Investment and Change Board and the New Commercial Ideas Panel as part of its work programme to understand how they operate and to scrutinise their effectiveness.

Recommendation 4

The Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee should receive an annual report detailing the progress made to deliver the Council's Commercial Strategy. This should include reporting on income received under its remit and details of whether targets have been met or not.

Commercial Approach Strategy Alignment



Appendix 2 – Workshop Attendance

Cllr. Mike Sullivan (Chair)

Cllr. Dave Mitchell

Cllr. Tony Cox

Cllr. Pat Hackett

Cllr. Phil Gilchrist

Cllr. Chris Carubia

Cllr. David Elderton

Cllr. Gerry Ellis

Cllr. Anita Leech

Cllr. Thomas Usher

Officers / Cabinet Members

Stuart Bellerby – Senior Manager (Commercial Approach)

Cllr. Jeanette Williamson – Cabinet Member (Finance and Resources)

Michael Lester – Scrutiny Officer



**Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 4 March 2020**

REPORT TITLE:	Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 3 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 3 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 3

Programme	Budget £m	Forecast £m	Variance £m	Variance %
Business Management	12.915	11.076	1.839	14%

3.1.1 Table 1 provides the full year capital budget and forecast position for 2019/20. 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 Capital Programme

- **Digital Corporate Storage** (£0.46m decrease): 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.
- **Key Route Network** (£0.9m increase): 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).
- **Sustainable Transport** Funding brought forward from 2018/19 (£0.47m increase)
- **Transport Advisory Group Feasibility Studies** (£1.18m increase): 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).
- **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.

- **Windows 10** (£0.96m increase): 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; school's 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.
- **Enterprise Resource Planning** (£4.10m decrease): 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.
- **Treasury and Hamilton Data Centre** (£0.50m decrease): I.T have rescinded this scheme due to the life of the Treasury building being extended for a longer period of time. A future bid may be required if/when the longer-term future of the Treasury building is decided.
- **Worksmart I.T.** (£0.38m decrease): The residual budget for this project has now been reallocated to fund additional works required as part of the Windows 10 project.

3.2 Revenue Programme 2019/20 Position

3.2.1 Business Management: Forecast £0.832 Adverse Position

The £0.832m forecast adverse position reported at Quarter 3, is an increase of £0.403m from the Quarter 2 forecast position (£0.429m). The adverse position is largely due to expectations that income budgets will not be fully achieved and increased costs from the Coroners Service will be incurred. Some pressures are forecast to be managed by employee vacancy savings.

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

	Full Year				Adv/Fav
	Budget	Forecast	Variance		
	£000	£000	(+ Fav, - Adv) £000	%	
Directorate Items					
Change & Organisational Design	5,014	5,114	(100)	-2%	Adverse
Finance & Investments	(20,621)	(20,746)	125	1%	Favourable
Commercial Management	(588)	(147)	(441)	-75%	Adverse
Strategic Commissioner Environment	16,485	16,485	0	0%	
Governance & Assurance	3,961	4,377	(416)	-11%	Adverse
Directorate (Surplus) / Deficit	4,249	5,081	(832)	-20%	Adverse
Support / Admin Building Overhead	0	0	0		
Total (Surplus) / Deficit	4,249	5,081	(832)	-20%	Adverse

3.2.2 Change & Organisational Design

- There is a £0.260m adverse variance in Communications and Marketing due to a shortfall in advertising income, both on roadside sites and the Wirral View publication. Wirral View has now closed to stop expenditure continuing. The overall position is mitigated by further recruitment delays in HR department and Digital as a result of the recruitment freeze, resulting in a £0.100m net adverse forecast variance.

3.2.3 Finance & Investment

- There is a £1.2m adverse forecast variance reported due to a reduction in the Housing Benefit Admin Grant from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), which is reduced each year and replaced with ad hoc grants. These are insufficient to replace the shortfall however. This pressure has been managed through a favourable variance within Employees due to part year staffing vacancies and the freeze on recruitment.
- £0.783m costs of pension strain contributions for employees who retired after April 2016 will be funded from the flexible use of capital receipts (FUCR).
- A £0.100m favourable variance is anticipated in Treasury Management, due to a reduction in interest payable and a small saving (£0.020m) relating to the employer pension contributions.

3.2.4 Commercial Management

- There is a £0.107m adverse forecast variance due to a projected shortfall of income within the Design Team, the team are not operating at full capacity due to staff vacancies. Recruitment for these roles are underway which are expected to improve income.
- There is also a predicted £0.334m shortfall in income as a result of customers largely choosing not to buy-back Wirral Council services, or not to continue to buy-back services following initial buy-back agreements having ceased.

3.2.5 Governance & Assurance

- 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.
- There is also £0.150m of agency costs included in the forecast that will be funded via the flexible use of capital receipts

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 There are no equality implications at this time.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report has no impact on emissions of CO2

REPORT AUTHOR: **Vikki Gregorich**
Senior Finance Manager
telephone: (0151) 666 3104
email: vikki@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

All information is sourced from the Core Finance System

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
Cabinet – Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring	25th November

This page is intentionally left blank



Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 4 March 2020

REPORT TITLE:	Management of Campervans in Wallasey and New Brighton Scrutiny Review
REPORT OF:	Director of Delivery Services

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the findings and recommendations arising from a scrutiny review into the management of campervans in Wallasey and New Brighton. This review was commissioned as part of the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee's work programme in 2018/19 in response to a number of resident concerns around overnight parking of campervans in Wallasey and New Brighton.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee is requested to;

1. Approve the findings of the Scrutiny Review Panel.
2. Refer this report to the most relevant committee within the new governance arrangements for 2020/21 for consideration so that these findings might be used to inform future provision for motor caravans at coastal locations.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 For Members of the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee to endorse the work of the Scrutiny Review Panel and to refer to the relevant decision-making committee for addition to its work programme in 2020/21 and further consideration.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In 2018, the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee requested that the effective management of campervans at coastal locations in Wirral was added to the committee work programme. Between July 2017 and July 2018, a number of complaints had been received by residents of the New Brighton and Wallasey wards in regard to overnight parking of campervans and similar vehicles in the area, primarily along the Kings Parade and Coastal Drive areas of New Brighton.

- 3.2 A Task & Finish Group was established in order to review these issues with campervan parking and to understand resident concerns, whilst ultimately looking to inform the development of a future policy for Wirral to encourage its thriving visitor economy.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications, although there may be costs associated with actions arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no resource implications.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 A number of risks were identified as part of the scoping exercise for this review, details of which can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 As part of this review, Panel Members engaged with key stakeholders in Wallasey and New Brighton wards by way of a focus group session held in February 2020.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 This report is for information to Members and there are no direct equality implications, although there may be equality implications as a result of actions arising from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to:

Have no direct impact on emissions of greenhouse gases.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Alexandra Davidson**
Scrutiny Officer
(0151) 691 8381
alexandradavidson@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Management of Campervans in Wallasey and New Brighton Scrutiny Review Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Development of motorhome services in County Cork Policy Paper 2018
Gwynedd Council Strategic Plan
Sefton Coast Topic Paper Series 2016

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	18th September 2018

This page is intentionally left blank



**Management of Campervans in Wallasey and New Brighton Scrutiny Review
Report of Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

March 2020



Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	3
2.	BACKGROUND INFORMATION	4
3.	CAMPERVAN MANAGEMENT IN THE UK.....	5
	3.1 Exmouth, Devon.....	5
	3.2 Hawick, Scottish Borders.....	6
	3.3 Gwynedd, Wales	7
	3.4 Other Countries.....	8
	3.5 Benefits and Risks	8
4.	CAMPERVAN MANAGEMENT IN THE NORTH WEST	9
5.	CAMPERVAN MANAGEMENT ON WIRRAL.....	9
	5.1 Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO)	9
	5.2 Stakeholder Session	11
6.	FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	13

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2018, the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee requested that the effective management of campervans at coastal locations in Wirral was added to the committee work programme. Between July 2017 and July 2018, a number of complaints had been received by residents of the New Brighton and Wallasey wards in regard to overnight parking of campervans and similar vehicles in the area, primarily along the Kings Parade and Coastal Drive areas of New Brighton. A Task & Finish Group was established in order to review these issues with campervan parking and to understand resident concerns, whilst ultimately informing the development of a future policy for Wirral to encourage its thriving visitor economy.

As per the scoping document attached as Appendix 1 to this report, it was initially envisaged that the following sessions would take place as part of the scrutiny review:

- Initial session to explore key background information, examine relevant case studies and review any comparable policy or procedures elsewhere in the UK.
- Evidence gathering sessions and focus groups to engage with stakeholders on all sides, in order to gather evidence, information and opinion on current issues and potential solutions.
- Discussion around commercial opportunities to establish a permanent alternative site for campervans.
- Evaluation of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) implemented in November 2018.

This report sets out the research, engagement and findings of the Scrutiny Review Panel.

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

Chair of the Panel – Councillor Lesley Rennie



Councillor Dave Mitchell



Councillor Sarah Spoor



It should be noted that the previous Chair of the Panel, Councillor Pat Hackett, stepped down following his appointment of Leader of the Council in May 2019.

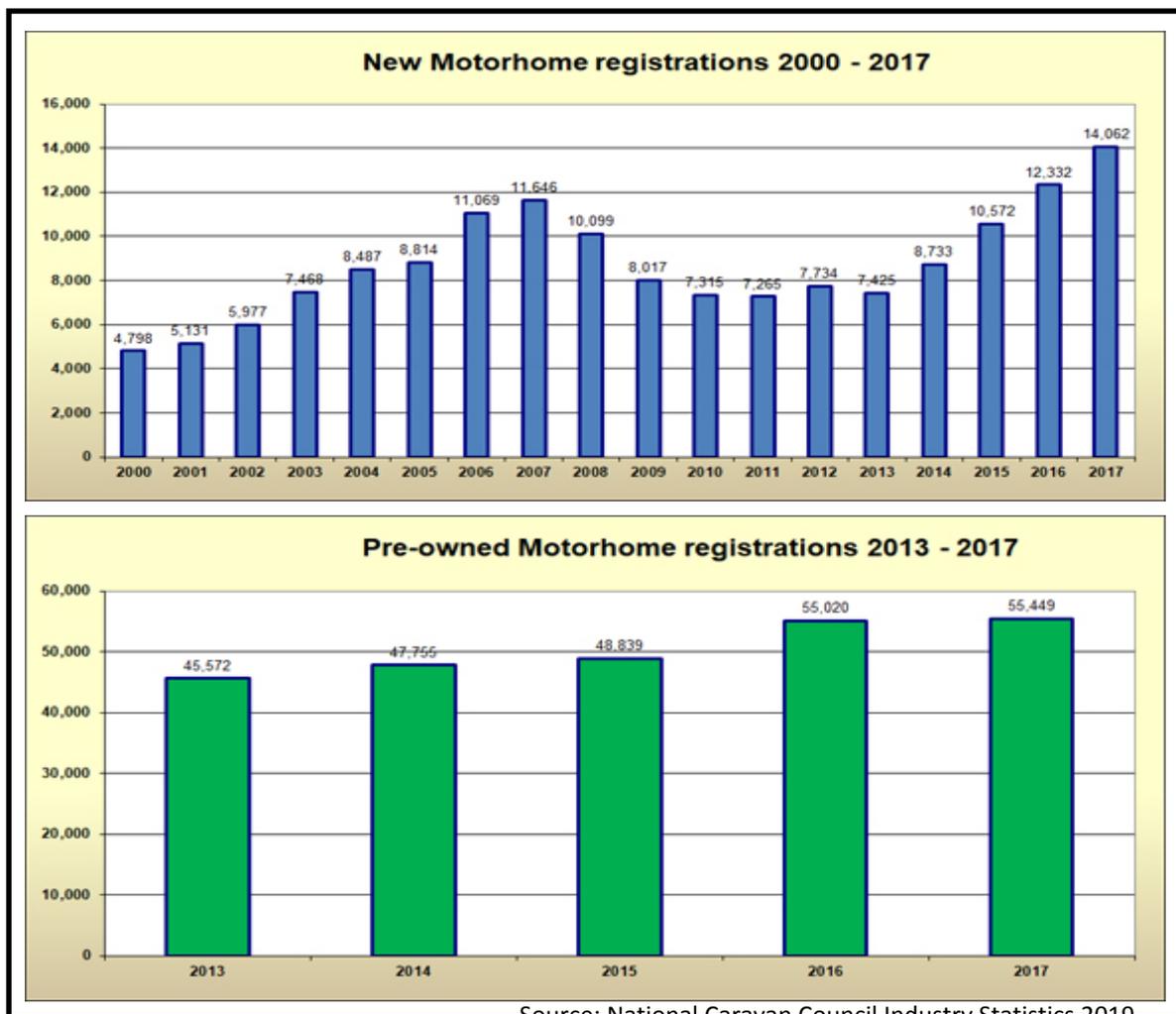
2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The caravan industry in the UK contributes more than £6 billion per annum to the UK economy, with this revenue primarily a result of product sales, holiday bookings and related services. Across the country, the industry is responsible for the employment of 130,000 people (including part time and seasonal staff).

In 2016, £2 billion was spent on caravan holidays across the UK and 9.8 million domestic caravan holidays were taken – resulting in the region of 50 million nights spent in both static and touring caravans each year.

The UK motorhome market experienced annual growth rates every year until 2008 after which economic difficulties in the UK impacted upon sales of new products. However, sales have since started to climb again (see figure 1).

Fig 1.



Source: National Caravan Council Industry Statistics 2019

In the UK, it is estimated that there are currently in use;

- 555,000 touring caravans
- 365,000 caravan holiday homes
- 225,000 motorhomes

A number of different terms are used to describe a motorised vehicle used for camping – generally, campervans are more compact with motorhomes tending to be larger two to six berth

vehicles, built on a long wheel base. Motorhomes usually include kitchen and bathroom facilities along with other features generally found in a home (television etc), although some campervans have these facilities.

For the purposes of clarity and continuity, any reference to ‘campervans’ and ‘motorhomes’ in this and any subsequent documentation will be interchangeable and used to cover tourers, motorhomes and any other larger motorised vehicles.

3. CAMPERVAN MANAGEMENT IN THE UK

As part of this review, Members looked at campervan management case studies across the UK to utilise best practice to inform potential policy for Wirral.

There is currently no national guidance for local authorities in the UK regarding the development of motorhome facilities, nor is there a consistent approach nationally. Each individual authority is responsible for the provision of services for motorhomes, and often any action taken tends to be reactive.

Due to a lack of detailed data around workable models for motorhome provision, it is difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions from other authority frameworks. However, the following case studies may help to inform ideas of what ‘best practice’ could look like and how some Councils have started to accommodate the sector, allay resident concerns and ensure stakeholder involvement.

3.1 Exmouth, Devon

Exmouth is a port town and seaside resort located 11 miles southeast of Exeter. With a population of 34,432, Exmouth is the fifth most populous settlement in Devon. The area has a substantial summer tourist trade and serves as a regional centre for leisure activities - particularly water sports.

In 2018, East Devon District Council identified the issue of increasing number of motorhomes and similar types of vehicles using Exmouth seafront for extended stays. This had been causing growing concern among local residents in recent years (27 complaints over a 3-year period) and had prompted action. Exmouth Town Council, East Devon District Council and Devon County Council convened a ‘task and finish’ forum to look into the issue, and to review how best to manage parking for campervans in the area. Motorhomes were banned from the coastal area between 8pm and 8am in a restriction that reflects Wirral’s current ETRO. Alongside the parking restriction, East Devon District Council also advertised amendments to its off-street parking provision, with three long stay car parks in the area offering overnight motorhome parking with a total of 70 spaces – at a charge of £11 for 24 hours stay, and a maximum of 3 consecutive nights.

Although these new plans are currently still in a trial period for up to 2 years, so far the scheme has been touted as a successful resolution to the initial parking issue.

Cllr Bill Nash of East Devon District Council, who chaired the campervan task and finish forum, made the following comments;

“We want to improve the seaside experience for both camper van owners along with all visitors and residents. We are offering these new arrangements on a trial basis for up to two years to enable us to carefully assess any impact they might have on the town. We will then take views from all parties with the plan to improve facilities still further.”

“After a trial period of twelve months, should the parking after 8pm be taken up strongly within all designated car parks, I would urge the committee to assess the need for extra services such as electric points and foul waste facilities for users.”

“It has been a clear and long-held desire of the majority of residents to implement some restriction on motorhomes to enable more residents and visitors to enjoy our stunning location. This restriction is an example of what can be done when local authorities listen and work together.”

The initial review into motorhome parking in Exmouth assigned £15,000 to implementing on-road parking restrictions. It is forecasted that the introduction of this scheme could also provide an income to the Council of up to £50,000 per year in car parking fees.

Although this scheme is in the trial phase and the long-term implications yet to be realised, it shows that the combination of parking restrictions and an improved off-highway parking offer for campervan users has the potential to provide a successful outcome for campervan management at a coastal location.

Further information can be found at www.eastdevon.gov.uk.

3.2 Hawick, Scottish Borders

Hawick is a town in the east Southern Uplands of Scotland. It is one of the farthest towns from the sea in Scotland, and the biggest town in Roxburghshire. The population is 14,294 (Census 2011), with the area’s main income from the manufacturing trade – Pringle wool was based in Hawick until recently.

In 2011, the Hawick Campervan Welcome Initiative was introduced, with the intention of generating interest from tourists arriving in Hawick looking for facilities and to stay one or two nights in the area. The initiative was actually set up as a private sector led project to enhance the visitor experience in the area, present a positive image of the town and to provide opportunities to the town’s tourism and retail sector to improve performance. Scottish Borders Council’s Members and planning and economic development departments were consulted and included in the planning process.

Consultation took place in 2012 in connection with the practicalities of putting together a formal plan for campervan users. The initial plan was to pilot a project to set aside bays in one car park for motorhomes – with stays limited to one night, but free of charge. The scheme operates from Easter to the end of September.

Those campervan users who have utilised the facility have reported their appreciation of the location and the opportunity to spend the night, despite the limited stay of one night.

Feedback included;

“We congratulate you on the Hawick Campervan Welcome initiative and will do our best to publicise it. This must be the first time we have ever felt welcome in a town car park. We are often met with indifference or even hostility. We frequently encounter height barriers, we tend to move on to spend our money elsewhere.”

The following statistics show the usage of the car parks for overnight campervan stays – but do not include those who parked during the day and then moved on (see Fig 3).

Fig. 3

Weekly usage of overnight campervans stays

Week Commencing	20/4/2012	3
	27/4/2012	1
	04/05/2012	6
	11/05/2012	2
	17/05/2012	2
	24/05/2012	4
Closed 2 weeks	Common Riding	
	22/06/2012	9
	29/06/2012	5
	06/07/2012	4
	13/07/2012	7
	20/07/2012	10
	27/07/2012	14
	04/08/2012	11
	10/08/2012	8
	17/08/2012	11
	24/08/2012	21
	31/08/2012	14
	7/09/2012	10
	14/09/2012	10
	21/09/2012	3
Total		155

There are guidelines for campervan users located at the car park, including encouragement for them to take advantage of facilities in the local area. Local spend by campervan users was captured by way of surveys amongst those visitors using the car park for an overnight stay. On average, £50 was spent per campervan per stay in the local area (in local restaurants, shops and other amenities) with a total income of £7,750 from April to September.

Although a relatively small area against the larger demographic of Wirral (the population of Hawick does however reflect that of New Brighton's 14,919 residents), the scheme was reviewed after one year and deemed to be a success. A number of outcomes were noted, including increased tourism awareness of the area and its facilities – as well as a small boost to the local economy. It was noted that further funding was required to manage and support the project and increase awareness through additional marketing and improved publicity and project management.

This scheme is an example of the benefits of encouraging campervan users to continue to visit Wirral by virtue of their assumed contribution to the local economy through utilisation of local businesses throughout the duration of their stay.

3.3 Gwynedd, Wales

Gwynedd is the second largest authority in Wales in terms of land area and also one of the most sparsely populated. The area covers 2,548 square metres and has a population of 121,874 (Census 2011).

The area has a thriving tourist economy, with many visitors attracted by the many beaches and mountains as well as Snowdonia and the surrounding areas of natural beauty – although this

tends to be seasonal. Since 2016, there has been an increase of 5.5% in visitors staying overnight in the region.

In July 2018, concerns were raised by residents and owners of nearby camping sites, that motorhome owners had been camping on Morfa Bychan beach overnight – causing environmental concerns and fears that the beach was becoming an overnight campsite for motorhome users. Some visitors were also reportedly using nearby business facilities and amenities without contribution.

As a result, local Councillors met with local residents and businesses to engage in a new way of encouraging campervan users away from this area of coastline. Warning signs that prohibit overnight sleeping on the beach are in place, with officers issuing initial polite warning notices to those that flout these rules – and Fixed Penalty Notices issued to those who continue to ignore the warnings. There is currently provision for day parking for campervans at a number of Council owned car parks across this region, with a £5.00 charge for 24-hour parking. However, overnight sleeping is prohibited and none of the car parks offer electric charging points or waste disposal facilities.

This course of action has addressed the environmental issues that were caused by motorhome beach parking but does not seem to go any way to promoting alternative services and facilities for campervans – it remains to be seen whether this could have the potential to impact on the local economy in the long term by discouraging tourists.

3.4 Other Countries

Ireland

There are no local authorities that have developed formal policies on motorhome provision, although Cork County Council published a policy paper on the issue in 2018 (further details on this can be found later in this report).

France

France has an extensive network of community run ‘Aires de Service’ that provide basic facilities for motorhomes, an approach that is reflected in other European countries.

Australia and New Zealand

There are a number of communities set up for welcome motorhomes (or ‘RVs’) and facility standards must be met to achieve this accreditation.

3.5 Benefits and Risks

A policy paper issued by Cork County Council identified a number of issues, benefits and recommendations in relation to development of service and facilities for motorhomes in the Cork area.

This study recognised the importance of acknowledging current growth in the touring campervan sector and the benefits to the local area, whilst also carefully considering impact on residents and stakeholders. The paper stated that a well-defined partnership between all parties can mitigate any potential negative consequences.

The following rationale was included in the report:

Opportunities;

- Improved local tourism industry
- Increased local spend

- Extended tourist season

Threats;

- Illegal Parking
- Increased traffic
- Illegal Dumping

Recommendations;

- Support existing caravan and camping parks in the area.
(Increased signposting and comprehensive traffic management and parking policies to make clear which parking places are available to motorhomes – and at which times they are available. It may be, for example, that vehicles are permitted to stop for short periods on the street or in car parks, but be required to move to alternative facilities, such as Caravan and Camping parks, for overnight stops.)
- Local/Multi-Use Community Provision.
- Direct provision by Local Authorities.

4. CAMPERVAN MANAGEMENT IN THE NORTH WEST

Currently, none of Wirral's closest neighbouring authorities provide dedicated overnight camping sites for motorhomes, nor any formal policy for the provision of services to campervan users. Further information can be found in Appendix 2 of this report.

5. CAMPERVAN MANAGEMENT ON WIRRAL

Wirral has long been a destination for tourists, thanks to its natural beauty and close proximity to areas of interest such as Liverpool and Chester. It is reported anecdotally that New Brighton is promoted amongst the campervan fraternity as a place to visit. In fact, a brief internet search returns a number of different posts on campervan websites and discussion boards relating to Wirral. Not only do campervan users promote and endorse New Brighton as a beautiful place to visit, but also alert other users from across the UK as to the free parking provision (prior to the introduction of the overnight parking ban). It is also reported anecdotally that a proportion of those people staying in campervans visit the local attractions and make use of the food and drink offer, contributing to the local economy. A number of online forums relating to campervans in Merseyside have also previously discussed utilising the free parking in New Brighton as a base for a visit to the tourist attractions in Liverpool.

Specific issues raised by local residents in relation to the parking of campervans in New Brighton stated that waste from these vehicles had not been disposed of properly (and allegedly dumped into the sea), as well as concerns raised over the aesthetics of such vehicles parked in a scenic location. Following the reported environmental offences at sites in New Brighton, officers visited the locations on numerous occasions and, as of July 2018, found no tangible evidence of offences committed that would warrant formal enforcement action being taken.

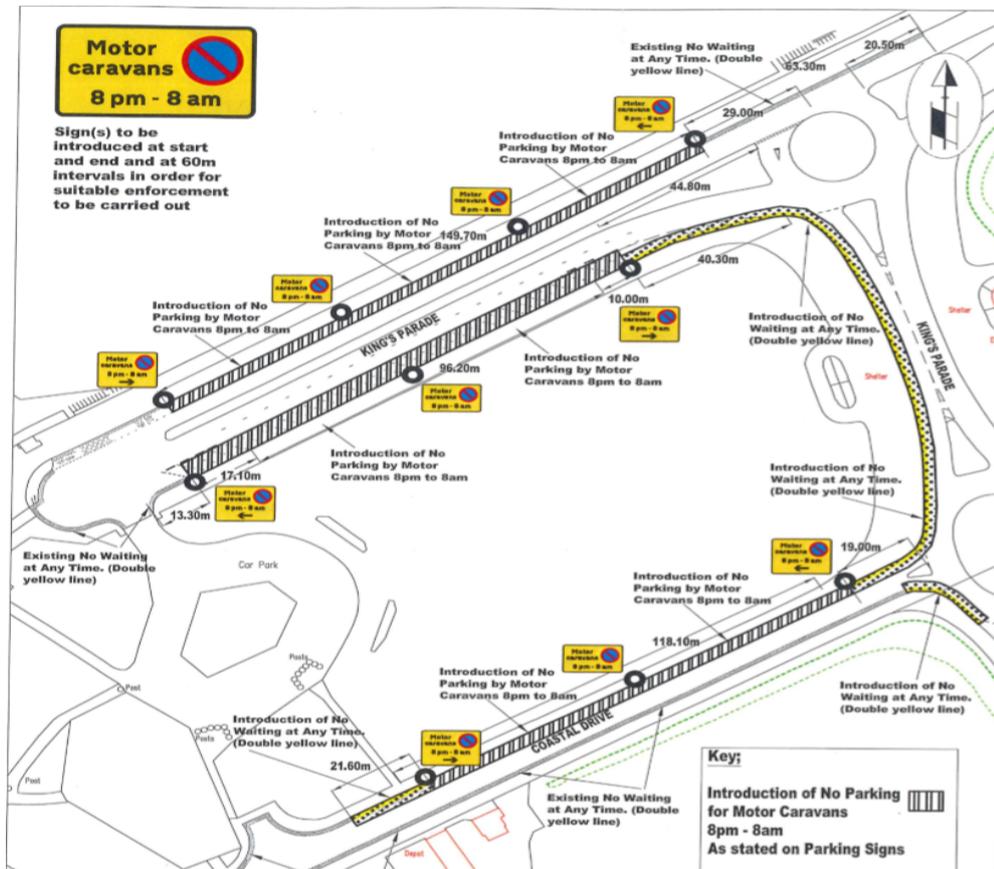
5.1 Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO)

In October 2017, Ward Members met with relevant officers to look at potential options for the management of campervans visiting New Brighton. The options identified during the meeting focused on discouraging campervans from parking on the highway, either by the implementation of regulation (i.e. a Traffic Regulation Order to ban or charge for vehicles) or by

incentivising such vehicles to park at an alternative off-highway site. A summary of the options discussed at the meeting is attached to this report (see Appendix 3).

Following discussion with Department for Transport and other Local Highway Authorities, an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) was introduced in November 2018. This order prohibits the 'waiting of motor caravans between 8pm to 8am' and places 24 hour waiting restrictions on the approach roads leading to the two cul-de-sacs of Kings Parade and Coastal Drive (see figure 2)

Fig. 2



The scheme was introduced to assist in preventing overnight stays by motor caravans and to act as a deterrent to stop such vehicles from parking there. A traffic sign has been erected in this area to show restrictions and will be used without road markings but with repeater signs in use along the length of the restriction. Parking officers proposed to have the restrictions in place for a maximum period of 12 months, with measures monitored and assessed during the first six months, including consideration of any comments or objections. It was proposed that this would provide a flexible approach to allow for immediate feedback on the success of the scheme and minor changes. The ETRO came into operation during November 2018 and was initially to be in place for 12 months but was extended during August 2019 to run for 18 months (expiring in May 2020). This was to allow for any further comments or objections to be made during the summer period. A period of 18 months is the maximum period an experimental order can be in place.

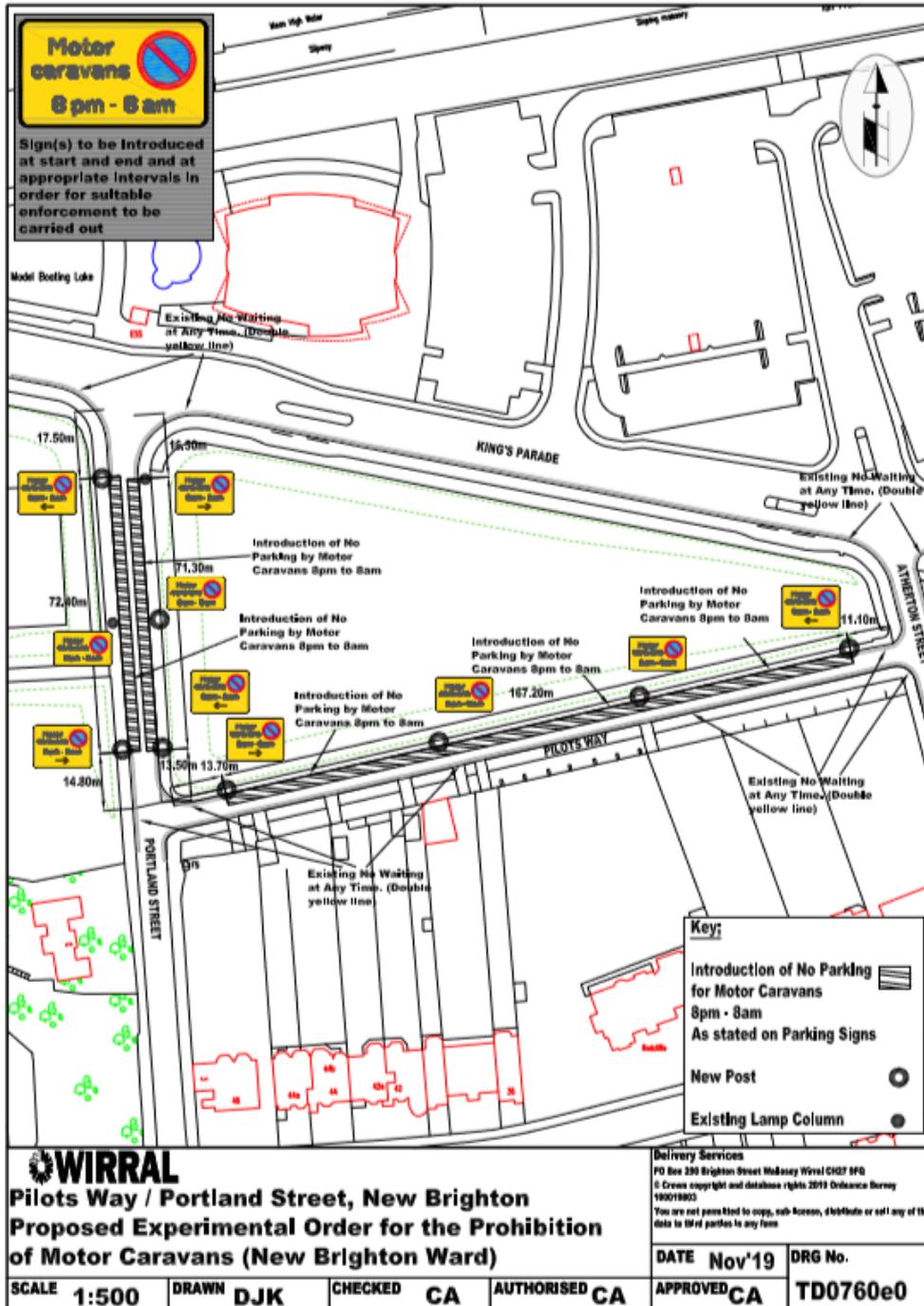
At the time of publication, a decision on the permanency of the ETRO at Kings Parade and Coastal Drive had not yet been taken.

One of the potential risks identified as part of this review was the possibility that the introduction of the ETRO set out above, whilst addressing the immediate issue in that area, was

likely to cause displacement – with those wishing to park their motorhome overnight simply doing so elsewhere along the stretch of promenade.

In December 2019, a similar set of overnight parking restrictions were established along Pilot’s Way and part of Portland Street, New Brighton. Members of the public will be given the opportunity to make representations within six months, with possible modifications to the order as a result of comments received in this period. The overall duration of the ETRO will be 18 months (expiring in June 2021) when a decision will be made as to whether the order should continue indefinitely. The area affected as part of this ETRO can be found in figure 3 below;

Fig. 3



5.2 Stakeholder Session

One of the key objectives of this scrutiny review was “to understand the current issues around campervan parking on Wirral; with particular focus on resident concerns and environmental impact”. In order to ensure that local residents and motorhome users were given a voice as part of this review, a focus group was convened for Elected Members to take part in open discussion with stakeholders so that their comments may be taken forward as part of plans for any future provision for campervans. Local residents from New Brighton and Wallasey were in attendance, along with the Chair of the Wellington Road Conservation Area Committee, a member of the New Brighton Coastal Community Team and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth.

Mr C Leckey, a seasoned motorhome user and member of the New Brighton Coastal Community Team, presented his views to the panel on the introduction of the ETRO on Coastal Parade in Wallasey. Mr Leckey’s concerns centred around Wirral’s reputation as a welcoming location for motorhome users and he expressed his worries regarding the detrimental impact that the ETRO had seemingly had within regional motorhome communities. The lack of engagement and fact that the ETRO had been imposed very quickly were key issues that had caused alarm within campervan communities, with motorhome users feeling that they had been targeted over other irresponsible general motorists. Mr Leckey was keen to assure Members that a number of resident concerns, particularly in relation to environmental implications, were a result of a small number of reckless motorhome users, and to penalise the whole community of campervan enthusiasts was not a proportionate response. Mr Leckey suggested the Wirral bases its provision for campervans on the New Zealand model – stating that they have an incredibly organised and efficient approach to campervan use, with self-contained sites, clean facilities and security controls.

Mr K McGonigle, a resident of New Brighton and motorhome user, echoed Mr Leckey’s comments in relation to the common confusion between responsible campervan users and those that live in the vehicle overnight. Mr McGonigle stated that the vast majority of motorhome users are incredibly ‘green-minded’ and that the nature of owners is that they stay in a certain area for 1-2 days before moving on. A number of thoughts were provided as to a possible future solution including a suggestion to restrict motorhome parking in Wallasey and New Brighton to a 48 hour maximum stay, in order to discourage any long-term parking and associated problems.

Members also took representations from Mr H Batterbury, Chair of the Wellington Road Conservation Area Committee. As a local resident, Mr Batterbury was keen to emphasise the importance of parking restrictions as a way to preserve the character of the local area and the wellbeing of the local community. The Wellington Road conservation area was established in 1973 as a way to improve local housing stock and has successfully achieved this objective over the years. Alongside his concerns around previous overnight campervan parking causing the area to become an ‘unregulated campsite’, Mr Batterbury also apprised Members of the impact on parking for local residents. On-street parking around Pilot’s Way in particular has been difficult and for residents with garages in this area, it is incredibly problematic for them to move their own vehicles whilst large motorhomes are parked along the highway. Mr Batterbury stated that a more holistic approach to parking in the area is needed, with further understanding of how congestion along with promenade impacts on pedestrian and cycling amenities,

displacement of motorhomes to other areas, and ultimately the implications for the area as a local visitor attraction.

In addition, two Wallasey residents with homes very close to the Coastal Drive promenade expressed their views to the Panel. Mrs J Foster expressed her gratitude for the introduction of the ETRO in the area, stating that the parking of motorhomes on the highway had created an unwelcome environment and that campervans were often parked for days on end, leaving no space for visitors to the area. In addition to this, there were a number of superficial impacts such as spoilt views. Mrs J McCallum presented an overview of the situation for local residents prior to the introduction of the ETRO, stating that the roads were dominated by motorhomes, with uncaged water and gas bottles as well as generators littering the highway. Parts of Kings Parade were used for tables, chairs and other motorhome accessories meaning difficulty for wheelchair and mobility scooter users in navigating the area. In addition, Mrs McCallum asserted that she had witnessed a number of environmental hazards; with the public conveniences on Harrison Drive used for disposal of the contents of chemical toilets, overflowing litter bins and waste emptied onto the beach. Since the overnight parking ban was introduced, both residents reported that there is now more visitor parking and that residents feel safer, as well as there being a noticeable improvement in the general appearance of the area.

There was consensus amongst all stakeholders in attendance, including the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth, that a sustainable and properly managed site for motorhomes on Wirral is the best long-term solution.

6. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of this scrutiny review, a number of crucial findings were gathered;

- i) Initial evaluation of the effectiveness of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order along Kings Parade and Coastal Drive has shown that the prohibition of overnight parking in this area has proven to be a successful resolution to previously reported concerns. The Panel therefore endorse that this order be made permanent following cessation of the initial 18 month temporary order in May 2020.
- ii) As expected, displacement of these vehicles has occurred and caused similar issues in alternative areas of New Brighton. Although similar restrictions are currently in place along Pilot's Way in New Brighton, it is clear that an aspirational, integrated and holistic approach to the management of campervans in Wallasey and New Brighton is necessary, to continue to encourage visitors to the areas whilst reducing any detrimental impact on local residents and communities.
- iii) There is a clear need for an alternative off-highway provision with dedicated facilities for motor caravans at a central location along the North Wirral coast. Whilst the Panel recognise that there will be inevitable financial implications, capital investment and significant resource involved in identifying the most suitable site, Members suggest that such a facility could become self-financing or even income generating in the long-term.

The Management of Campervans in Wallasey and New Brighton Scrutiny Review Panel request that the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee;

1. Approve the findings of the Scrutiny Review Panel.
2. Refer this report to the most relevant committee within the new governance arrangements for 2020/21 for consideration so that these findings might be used to inform future provision for motor caravans at coastal locations.

APPENDIX 1

Scrutiny Review Scoping Template

Review Title: Campervans Scrutiny Review

Responsible Committee: Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 5th November 2018

1. Contact Information:	
Scrutiny Panel Chair: Cllr Lesley Rennie lesleyrennie@wirral.gov.uk	Lead Officer: Mark Smith marksmith@wirral.gov.uk
Panel Members: Cllr Dave Mitchell davemitchell@wirral.gov.uk Cllr Sarah Spoor sarahspoor@wirral.gov.uk	Scrutiny Officer(s): Alexandra Davidson alexandradavidson@wirral.gov.uk
2. Review Aims:	
Wirral Plan Pledge/s: "Vibrant Tourism Economy"	
Key Issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members have identified issues relating to the overnight parking of campervans at coastal locations in Wirral; notably within the New Brighton and Wallasey wards. Resident concerns have highlighted the need for effective management of these campervans.• An Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) has been introduced to prohibit overnight waiting of campervans in the Kings Parade/Coastal Drive area of Wallasey. Monitoring and assessment will take place during the first six months of the order.	
Review Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To understand the current issues around campervan parking on Wirral; with particular focus on resident concerns and environmental impact.	

- To help inform the development of an all-encompassing campervan policy for Wirral, including potential affiliation with the Culture and Visitor Strategy.
- To contribute to a series of recommendations to ensure the effective management of campervans at coastal locations, and across Wirral.

Scrutiny Outcomes:

- To ensure that Wirral develops a comprehensive and inclusive campervan policy that meets the needs of existing residents, whilst encouraging Wirral’s thriving tourism economy.

2. Risks and Implications

Potential Risks/Implications:

- Members have identified that any temporary or permanent Traffic Regulation Order has the potential to displace parking to other areas of the local vicinity, thus causing possible disruption to other residents.
- In addition, discouraging a high number of campervan users from utilising Wirral’s amenities has potential to impact the local economy of the area.

3. Review Plan

Review Approach:

It is proposed that the scrutiny review will comprise of a number of Member discussions and evidence gathering sessions.

- An initial session will be convened for Members to explore key background information; including examining case studies, reviewing similar local authority policies and benchmarking against comparable procedures elsewhere.
- Evidence gathering session; Communication will be arranged with residents affected by current issues, along with a separate session to engage with campervan users. Potential methods of information gathering will include focus group style conversations, surveys and feedback.
- Discussions with key departmental officers to discuss potential opportunities and implications of campervan management on the visitor economy, and possible commercial solutions.
- A session will be arranged to evaluate the initial effectiveness of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order.
- Review conclusion and recommendation setting.

Expected Review Duration:

6 Months

Scheduled Committee Report Date:

July 2019

Scheduled Cabinet Report Date:

August 2019

4. Sources of Evidence:**Key Witnesses:**

- Assistant Director, Culture and Visitor Economy
- Senior Manager, Parks Coast and Countryside
- Parking Services Team

Supporting Papers / Documentation / Wirral intelligence Service Website:

Supporting documents are likely to include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Committee reports and Member briefing notes – including ‘Management of Campervans at Coastal Locations’ and ‘Management of Campervans at Coastal Locations – Update Document’.
- Case study documents detailing policies at other local authorities.
- Relevant legislation.
- Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) document.
- Relevant news articles.
- Survey and questionnaire feedback.

Involvement of service users / public:

- The review will engage with local residents who have previously raised issues with campervans. Members will also look to engage with campervan owners who frequent Wirral, in order to understand their needs. This is likely to be through the format of face to face interviews and/or questionnaires.

5. Key Communications and timings:**Cabinet Member:**

- The scope document will be shared with the relevant portfolio holder at the start of the review.

Press Office:

- The press office will be notified of commencement of scrutiny review, and the scope document will be sent on approval for information.

APPENDIX 2

Local Authority	Dedicated Council Site	Parking Costs	Overnight sleeping permitted?	Notes
Cheshire East	No	Variable dependent on car park.	No	Council car parks limit parking vehicles to cars and LGVs below 3.5 tonnes Where the motorhome does not fit in one bay, two tickets must be purchased.
Cheshire West and Chester	No	Motorhomes must pay the coach tariff of £10 for more than six hours.	No	Only 1 car park in Chester that accommodates larger vehicles.
Halton	No	Variable dependent on car park	No	Limited information on parking for larger vehicles, with height barriers in operation at many car parks in the area.
Knowsley	No	Over 3 hours - £2.40	No	Long stay car parks (for up to 9 hours) available in Huyton, Kirby and Prescot.
Sefton	No	Variable dependent on car park	No	Some car parks are too narrow for motorhomes (such as Crosby).
St Helens	No	N/A	N/A	No designated motorhome parking areas.
Warrington	No	N/A	N/A	No designated motorhome parking areas at Council car parks but private facilities in the area are openly promoted. (Such as Lymm Services and Taylor Business Park)

APPENDIX 3

CAMPERVANS, NEW BRIGHTON PROMENADE – POTENTIAL OPTIONS

Option:	Details:	Benefits:	Issues/ Risks:
A1. Regulate highway – prohibit campervans	Traffic Order with simple night-time ban (8pm-8am)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Directly addresses the issue raised -Some evidence of inconsiderate parking during daytime peak periods which may not be addressed -Requires minimum number of signs to enforce (approx. 200) and no markings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cost of implementation: just over 200 signs (approx. £20k) -Risk of displaced parking into nearby residential areas/ other locations -Risk of objections/ legal challenge to Traffic Order -Only ad-hoc enforcement regime possible in absence of ongoing revenue funding -Need clear criteria for enforcement (eg. DfT motorvan definition?) -Possible effect on tourism/ visitor economy and loss of income to local businesses
A2. Regulate highway – charge for campervans	Traffic Order introducing parking charges eg. £10 campervans overnight (8pm-8am); daytime £1 up to 2 hrs, £2 all day for all vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Directly addresses the issue raised including daytime inconsiderate parking -Creates revenue stream to fund day and night-time enforcement and make implementation self-funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Significant cost of implementation: signs, markings and pay and display machines (over £100k) -Risk of displaced parking into nearby residential areas -Signs and machines: cost of ongoing maintenance in coastal environment -Transient nature of some campervans may make it difficult to chase fines -Possible effect on tourism/ visitor economy and loss of income to local businesses

B. Provide alternative off-highway site	Establish and promote dedicated campervan site on nearby Parks & Countryside land with nominal cost (£2 for 12 hours 8-8) to make proposal self-funding and cover cost of signage, hard-standings etc	-A more passive approach to discourage/ reduce campervans that will not affect tourism/ local business and not have risk of potentially displacing parking into nearby areas -Potential to provide an attractive campervan/ motorhome offer as part of the tourism/ visitor economy strategy to promote business in New Brighton	-If charge is necessary to make self-funding then may not be sufficiently attractive if campervans can still park on the highway for free -Local residents may not want campervans parking on areas of open space in the locality
C. Combination A1 or 2 plus B	Introduce enforcement and alternative provision in tandem	-The most effective method of removing/ discouraging campervans from parking on the highway: regulation/ enforcement combined with a more attractive and cost-effective nearby off-highway location -Potential to provide an attractive campervan/ motorhome offer as part of the tourism strategy to promote business in New Brighton	-Significant cost of regulating the highway as per A1 and A2 above -Local residents may not want campervans parking on areas of open space as per B above
D. No further action	No highway regulation or alternative off-highway site: continue to just take action on any enforceable offences	-No resource implications	-Insufficient evidence re traffic management or environmental effects of campervans to justify significant resources/ action



Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 4 March 2020

REPORT TITLE:	2019/20 Quarter 3 Wirral Plan Performance
REPORT OF:	Director of Regeneration and Place

REPORT SUMMARY

In the development of the Wirral Plan 2020 the Council made a commitment to develop a robust monitoring framework to ensure effective oversight of delivery was available to all stakeholders across the Wirral Partnership. Quarterly reporting over the five-year period has been delivered to Members through Overview and Scrutiny Committees. In March 2020 the plan will be completed and the final closedown report which will summarise the impact on outcomes for residents through the delivery of the plan will be reported through the new Council Governance arrangements; these are due to commence in May 2020.

This report provides the 2019/20 Quarter 3 (October - December 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 3 and available data in relation to a range of outcome indicators and supporting measures.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

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 – Alan Evans
- Transport and technology infrastructure fit for the future – Mark Smith
- Assets and buildings are fit for purpose for Wirral’s businesses – Alan Evans

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: 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 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

(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

REPORT AUTHOR: *Nancy Clarkson*
Head of Intelligence
telephone: (0151) 691 8258
email: nancyclarkson@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Wirral Plan Business 2019-20 Quarter 3 Pledge Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Plan Pledge Strategy Action Plans 2019-20 are published on the Council website:
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/wirral-plan-2020-vision/wirral-plan-strategies>

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
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
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	27 November 2019

Appendix 1

Wirral Plan Business Theme 2019-20 Quarter 3 Reports



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 third quarter of this financial year include an all-time high employment rate following last year's continuous improvement trend. Wirral is currently outperforming the North West average by 3 percentage points, and the England average by 1.1 percentage points.

Key activity highlights for Quarter 3 include:

EMPLOYMENT: The European funded Wirral Ways to Work Programme continues to support residents into work or training performing ahead of target, supporting 6,548 participants since its start in April 2016. Building on it's success to date, the Community Connectors project will be launching a Wirral wide service from February 2020.

WORKFORCE SKILLS: Development work and consultation is underway for the City Region Fair Employment Charter, one of the City Region Mayoral Pledges. The launch of the Fair Employment Charter is planned to coincide with the Good Business Festival in October 2020.

INVESTMENT: The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has jointly commissioned Culture Liverpool and Hemingway Design to deliver a re-imagined International Business Festival in October 2020.

The Good Business Festival will be a multi-venue event focused on showcasing, promoting and encouraging ethical business, and aims to attract household names from across the world to the Liverpool City Region.

BUSINESS: LCR Town Centre Fund Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) for £1m was accepted in November with detailed Action Plans outlining activity proposed for Liscard and New Ferry submitted to LCR Combined Authority in December for approval.

This will enable each project to commence activity from Q4 onwards.

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)	Actual: 178.5 Target: 140 (Q1 2019-20)	Actual: 352.0 Target: 280 (Q2 2019-20)	Actual: 629.0 Target: 420 (Q3 2019-20)			Worse	Performance ahead of target representing 340 jobs created. In line with the data quality methodology for this KPI, a mop up against all files and evidence is conducted for final report in Q4 of each year to record jobs created but not previously reported. Wirral Chamber has commenced this process which accounts for 244 of the recorded jobs for Q3. This process will continue into Q4.
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)	76.2 (Q1 2019-20)	76.2 (Q2 2019-20)	76.9 (Q3 2019-20)			Better	Performance, as reported by National Survey Data, has seen a 0.7 percentage point increase 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.
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 in-activity)	Quarterly Lower is better	(n/a)	North West: 10.10% (Nov 2016)	13.48% (2018-19)	13.69% (Q1 2019-20)	13.51% (Q2 2019-20)	13.63% (Q3 2019-20)			Worse	This proxy figure has been locally calculated using the latest benefit data-sets available. Elements of this data-set are calculated using Universal Credit data - as Universal Credit Full Service is rolled out in particular areas, the number of people recorded on the Claimant Count is therefore likely to rise. The national indicator set is still subject to change. A new national methodology was provisionally released in the Autumn of 2019; this data is classed as experimental and subject to revisions. Subject to confirmation of national roll-out, this new data-set will be adopted to re-enable bench-marking.

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	Data due year end 2019-20
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)	£15,456 (2018-19)						Better	This is an improvement on last year's position; previously Wirral had the lowest GVA in England; this year moving one place above Torbay. Regionally, Sefton is one place ahead of Wirral in this year's statistical release with a GVA per head of £15,478.

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	Data due year end 2019-20

Vibrant tourism economy

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

In addition to progress with the pipeline of Culture & Visitor Economy infrastructure projects, there was another busy programme of events during Q3, helping us to deliver against objectives. In October, we presented Constellations as part of a Liverpool City Region-wide commission, closely followed by Museum of the Moon at Birkenhead Town Hall. In November the annual River of Light event attracted thousands of people to the New Brighton waterfront to watch a firework display, organised for both sides of the Mersey. The events have also provided an important and ideal opportunity to extend our engagement with volunteers and Ambassadors.

Major events during this Quarter resulted in social media reach of at least 1.2m, and media coverage included BBC North West Tonight, ITV news online, Liverpool Echo, Wirral Globe, BBC Radio Merseyside and Radio City among others.

The business conferencing project has had a strong start, with closer partnerships being forged with the city region's convention bureaux:

This will ensure Wirral benefits from improved joint marketing to conference organisers and business travellers, and will position us well to take forward the business conferencing marketing strategy currently in development.

While it has been a busy final few months of the Borough of Culture year, Q3 has also been a busy time for planning the 2020 events programme.

Planning is well underway for the February announcement of next year's exciting events, which will provide a fitting legacy to the Borough of Culture year and continue to engage residents and visitors.

An integrated destination marketing campaign will support promotion of the events, building on Wirral's raised profile and attracting new visitors to the borough.

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)		9.05 (Jan-Dec 2018)						n/a	Wirral attracted 9.05 million day and short break visitors in 2018 (2.9% up since 2017). 2019 figures will be available in the next annual STEAM report (from Global Tourism Solutions via the Local Enterprise Partnership), which quantifies the local economic impact of tourism, from both staying and day visitors using a range of visitor economy measures.
Increase value of tourism economy by at least 5% each year (m).	Annual Higher is better	£355.00 (Jan-Dec 2014)		£426.35 (Jan-Dec 2017)						n/a	The Wirral tourism economy was worth £455.83 million (6.9% up since 2017). 2019 figures will be available in the next annual STEAM report, (see above).
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	2019 figures will be available in the next annual STEAM report.
Increase the numbers of Wirral Visitor Economy Network members	Annual Higher is better	85 (Jan-Dec 2016)		88 (2018)						n/a	This figure is reported annually, however, up to December 2019 there are 100 visitor economy Chamber of Commerce members recorded.

Transport and technology infrastructure fit for the future

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

We are continuing to make significant progress this quarter, the key projects remain on track and we are working to develop a forward programme for transport to support the climate emergency and ensure active travel is at the heart of our policies and programmes. We have met with Chris Boardman the Manchester Cycling and Walking Commissioner to learn from his experience delivering the BeeLines network in Manchester. More recently Simon O'Brien the new Liverpool City Region Cycling and Walking Commissioner and over the coming months we will be working intensively with Simon to review our network – with a focus in identifying quick wins to expand the network. In November we hosted a winter Driving for Work Seminar as part of their Mind Your Business programme, funded by Road Safety Trust. The seminar, the first of its kind specifically aimed at employees, saw more than 30 individuals from a variety of organisations attend. The event formed part of a fortnight of activity across the borough marking Road Safety Week, during which almost 500 young people were educated on the importance of road safety. We have been awarded funding to commence a pilot project for the installation on street charging points in residential areas. The project will enable residents without off street parking to charge their vehicles and is the start of the work we are progressing to develop an EV strategy for Wirral. The Tower Road Streetscape project will start on site in the Spring and this project will be the start of a step change in the delivery of infrastructure projects. The project which will deliver high quality public realm, pedestrian and cycle facilities and reduce traffic speeds on this key strategic route making it easier for people to travel about safely and sustainably. We look forward to continuing to work with partners across the Wirral to develop our transport programme to support our climate 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
Increased the volume percentage of people cycling	Annual Higher is better	0% (index for 2013-14)		59% (2018-19)						n/a	This figure is reported annually
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 (Q1 2019-20)	Green Actual: 17 Target: 19 (Q2 2019-20)	Green Actual: 21 Target: 19 (Q3 2019-20)			Better	57 KSI casualties reported by Merseyside Police. (cumulative total for Q1-Q3 Jan-Sept 2019) Better than expected KSI casualty reduction for Q1 & Q3 as range of measures /schemes & initiatives identified in Wirrals Road Safety Plan continue to be developed & introduced including road safety education & engagement; engineering measures as well as ongoing enforcement activities.
Maintain the condition of Wirral's strategic network – Principal 'A' Roads	Annual Lower is better	1.40% (2014-15)	English Metropolitan Authorities: 4.00% (2015-16) North West: 4.00% (2015-16)	1.90% (2018-19)						n/a	This figure is reported annually
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% (2018-19)						n/a	This figure is reported annually
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	This figure is reported annually
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	This figure is reported annually
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	This figure is reported annually
Travel Training – Number of successfully travel trained young people (Integrated Transport)	Annual Higher is better	26 (2014-15 Acad Year)		17 (2018-19)						n/a	This figure is reported at the end of each academic year.

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

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Asset Management continues to play an important role in the Economic Growth and Regeneration of Wirral, this relies on sound Asset Management principals, supporting major Regeneration and Housing projects but also by continuing to invest in those assets required for service delivery and education across the Borough. Investment in good quality asset data is helping the speed at which Asset Management can respond to opportunities and also in providing informed advice to support investment in existing assets. Whilst it is recognised that more work is required with partner agencies, this should evolve as wider reaching projects become mature in their development. Q3 has seen some very good progress over the wide asset remit, in terms of generating capital receipts, undertaking asset surveys, supporting larger regeneration projects and delivering quality Capital schemes, this will continue into Q4.

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)		£1.4 (2018-19)						Worse	Performance has been impacted by the sale of a number of income generating assets using an opportunity given by central government to utilise capital receipts to fund vital transformation projects. This is considered a corporate priority. The future direction of the investment portfolio will be driven in part by the activities of the Growth Company and more general strategic asset requirements including One Public Estate in respect of regeneration and commercial growth. A number of key strategic acquisitions were made in 2018/19 which will help shape the Birkenhead Commercial District and support the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy. Until the BCD programme is determined the income streams have not been reflected as part of this performance indicator.
£m Capital Receipts generated by the disposal of Wirral Council's surplus assets	Annual Higher is better	£1.28 (2015-16)		£5.60 (2018-19)						Better	A pipeline of surplus assets has continued to be disposed of in a consistent manner. These include those large development sites that had become protracted in previous reporting. We will work with finance colleagues over the coming months to determine the future requirements for capital receipts from the sale of assets.
Commercial asset space available for release (m2)	Annual Higher is better	5,711 (2015-16)		39,600 (2018-19)						Better	The monitoring process is now embedded in the corporate system, enabling users to report on the performance measure(s) associated to each property transaction. Two large sites have been released for residential development, which once completed will make a significant contribution to the socio-economic growth of Wirral.
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)		26,463 (2017-18)						Better	Corporate performance over the 2017/18 financial year has exceeded the 2017/18 emissions target by 12.3%. To date, we have reduced emissions of CO2 by 19,018 tonnes from a 2008/09 baseline of 45,481 tonnes, a reduction of 41.8% over 8 operational years. The year-on-year reduction is 5.85%.
Number of multi-use of assets through shared / alternative use	Annual Higher is better	4 (as at April 2016)		15 (2018-19)						Better	Performance is calculated as a cumulative figure from the baseline data e.g. the number of new/additional assets brought into multi-use within each financial year (added to the baseline figure) to give a cumulative total over the life of the Plan. The monitoring process is now embedded in the corporate system, enabling users to report on the performance measure(s) associated to each property transaction. The number of multi-use assets continues to grow and will be further improved by the opportunities generated by the Wirral Growth Company and the Birkenhead Commercial District.

Report Key

Trend - Performance is shown as Better, Same or Worse compared with the last reporting period except for Increase the number of jobs created and safeguarded (via Wirral Chamber Data Reporting) , Increase the employment rate in Wirral and Number of People Killed or Seriously Injured which is compared with same period the previous year.

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

Action - These are shown as either:

- 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)



**Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday, 4 March 2020**

REPORT TITLE:	Business Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Update
REPORT OF:	Head of Intelligence (Statutory Scrutiny Officer) Business Services

REPORT SUMMARY

The Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in co-operation 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.

It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports. This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to;

1. Approve the proposed Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2019/20, making any required amendments.
2. Note the contents of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Regeneration Workshop Report

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 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

- 2.1 Not Applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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

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

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

3.3 DELIVERING THE WORK PROGRAMME

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

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

As some of the selected topics may cut across the Wirral Plan themes and Council Priorities, 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.

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS

In February 2020, Members of the Business & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committees attended a workshop on the Wirral Growth Company and Key Regeneration Projects. A workshop report is included as an appendix to this report.

5G and Public Health; Following interest from Members, and a public question at the Council meeting of 14th October 2019, a workshop for all Members on the implications of the roll out of 5G on Wirral is due to be arranged. This workshop is provisionally scheduled to take place in March 2020.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The governance arrangements of the Council have recently been reviewed and as of May 2020, the current scrutiny model and committee structure will change. The Chairs of all four current Overview & Scrutiny Committees have worked collaboratively to address cross-cutting matters and ensure that the necessary prioritisation and scheduling of Committee work programme items has taken place.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

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

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 Whilst this report is for information to members any risks in delivering the items on the work programme have been considered and mitigated against

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 All items on the work programme have been subject to engagement or consultation with relevant stakeholders.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

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

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report is for information to members and there are no direct Environment or Climate change implications. The content of this report has no impact on emissions of CO₂.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Anna Perrett**
Scrutiny Officer
telephone: (0151) 691 8564
email: annaperrett@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Business O&S Work Programme

Appendix 2 Business O&S Regeneration Workshop Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	27th June 2019
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4th July 2019
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	17th September 2019
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	27th November 2019
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	23rd January 2020

This page is intentionally left blank

**BUSINESS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME**

AGENDA ITEMS – March

Item	Format	Officer
Minutes		
LCR Update	Report	Rose Boylan
2019/20 Q3 Finance monitoring	Report	Finance
NNDR Update	Report	Shaer Halewood/ Lisa Jamieson
Commercialisation update (Traded Services)	Report	Stuart Bellerby
Camper Vans	Report	Alex Davidson
Q3 Quarterly Wirral Plan Performance Report	Report	Nancy Clarkson
Work Plan Update	Report	Anna Perrett

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	March 2020	Mark Smith	Completed
New Ferry Scrutiny Review	Task & Finish	January 2020	Mark Camborne	Completed
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	Completed
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

Work Programme Completed

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	

This page is intentionally left blank



**A report produced by the
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Key Regeneration Projects workshop

March 2020 Final Report

DRAFT



Contents

Workshop Overview	3
Presentations.....	3
Recommendations.....	4
Attendance	5

DRAFT

Workshop Overview

This workshop was requested by the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Director of Regeneration and Place to give members of the Committee the opportunity to gain an insight into the current regeneration projects, and to provide an overview of the first Wirral Growth Company Partnership Business Plan.

Given the cross-cutting nature of the workshop, the chair agreed to invite the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to attend.

Confidential papers were sent out in advance, so members of both committees had an opportunity to view the draft cabinet report, business plan and business cases.

The session focused on:

- Wirral Growth Company
- Site Development Plans
- The Principles and Financial overview of WGC Business Plan
- And the recommended funding route for Birkenhead Commercial District

Presentations

Members received a comprehensive presentation from the Director of Regeneration and Place, as well as representatives from MUSE. Also, in attendance were the Assistant Directors for Regeneration and Inward Investment, and Finance and Investment.

The presentation included slides on Wirral's approach to regeneration and provided information on the ongoing Local Plan and Wirral Growth Company. It also provided visual guides to the Moreton sites (Foxfield and Pasture Road Sites) and the redevelopment of Birkenhead Town centre.

Members were then presented with slides on the various funding options, which complimented the financial information that had already received.

Members Questions

Q. One member felt that the indicational profit was front loaded and queried the prophet phasing for Birkenhead. They were interested in the profit profile over time and the risk profile.

A. Finance assured they could provide the profit profile, and the Member was assured that demand for office space has grown in the Wirral, but not supplied.

Q. A query was raised regarding proposals for a Hotel within Birkenhead Town Centre and whether there had been any interest from Large Chains.

A. Members were advised that is was still at an early stage, but an increase in a student population, as well as an incremental plan to reinvigorate Birkenhead as a commercial, leisure and residential hub means that there is confidence that the interest will be there

Q. Sustainable transport was queried, with members interested in knowing if this was being considered.

A. It was confirmed that this will play a bit part of the regeneration process, but there would need to be consideration as to what would be the best mode of transport for Birkenhead.

Q. Members also queried the Building Research and Established Environmental Assessment Method Assessment Method (BREEAM) for buildings and asked if it would be possible to achieve and 'Outstanding' assessment, rather than 'Excellent' which is what developers are aiming for.

A. It was noted that the 'Outstanding' assessment is usually only gained by bespoke buildings and would not be feasible financially, and the environmental impact between the two assessments is negligible.

Q. The possible relocation of Birkenhead Market was questions, with Members wanting assurance that existing traders would be included within the development.

A. Consultation with traders will be starting shortly and moving premises can be done quickly to minimise disruption. A FAQ sheet will be developed for ward members. Ideally, any new market facility will be bespoke and have the facilities in place to cater for all trades.

Further questions were raised regarding Council premises, and Members reiterated the need to be open and transparent. Further information was requested on Profit Phasing, Council Tax and NNDR which officers agreed to supply.

Recommendations

Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee Business O&S Committee on 27th November 2019, Committee resolved that:

"a workshop be convened to review the Wirral Growth Company Partnership Plan and associated Business Cases and, if necessary, the feedback report to Cabinet be approved by the Chair and party spokespersons".

Further to the workshop held on 4th January 2020 Members of the Business and Environment Overview and Scrutiny committee have had sight of the financial papers, plans and draft cabinet report for WGC and have received copies of the presentation.

The Chair and Party Spokespersons of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee are satisfied with the information received and endorse the report going to cabinet on 24th February 2020, with the recommendation that members receive regular updates from the Director of Place and Regeneration and have sight of further plans and financial documents as they progress.

Attendance

Councillors

Cllr Dave Mitchell
Cllr Phil Gilchrist
Cllr Steve Hayes
Cllr Brian Kenny
Cllr Helen Cameron
Cllr Steve Hayes
Cllr Pat Cleary
Cllr Karl Greaney
Cllr Tony Norbury
Cllr Jo Bird

Officers

Alan Evans (Director for Regeneration and Place)

Sally Shah (Assistant Director for Regeneration and Housing Growth)

Daniel I Kirwan (Assistant Director for Finance and Investment)

Mike Horner & Jonathan Ashcroft (Muse Developments)

James Dair (Avison Young)

Anna Perrett and Alexandra Davidson (Scrutiny Officers)

This page is intentionally left blank