



## Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Thursday, 12 March 2020</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>6.00 p.m.</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Committee Room 2 - Wallasey Town Hall</b>

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

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### AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP**

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

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

3. **MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2020.

4. **2019/20 Q3 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT (Pages 5 - 12)**
5. **TREE STRATEGY SCRUTINY REVIEW (Pages 13 - 36)**

6. **A NEW CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY FOR WIRRAL (Pages 37 - 70)**
7. **FUTURE PROVISION OF FLORAL PAVILION THEATRE AND CONFERENCE CENTRE - UPDATE (Pages 71 - 78)**
8. **FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 79 - 84)**
9. **2019/20 QUARTER 3 WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE (Pages 85 - 96)**
10. **ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE (Pages 97 - 104)**
11. **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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

#### RECOMMENDED

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

12. **FUTURE PROVISION OF FLORAL PAVILION THEATRE AND CONFERENCE CENTRE - UPDATE. EXEMPT APPENDICES (Pages 105 - 276)**

#### ***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.*

## ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 30 January 2020

Present:

Councillor T Anderson (Chair)

Councillors	C Muspratt	H Cameron
	T Cottier	A Hodson
	G Davies	A Brame
	K Greaney	S Hayes
	L Rennie	J Bird (In place of B Kenny)
	I Williams	T Norbury (In place of S Spoor)

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

Councillor Christina Muspratt declared a personal interest in Item 5 (Allotment Provision in the Borough) as she had an allotment.

33 **MINUTES**

**Resolved - that the minutes of the meetings of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 28 November 2019 be approved as correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

34 **SCRUTINY OF BUDGET PROPOSALS 2020/21**

Shaer Halewood, the Director of Finance and Investment, introduced this report, which was part of the Council's formal budget consultation process, as set out in the Constitution and in accordance with the legal requirements to set a balanced and sustainable budget for 2020/21. The report also presented an update on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covering the period from 2021/22 to 2024/25 and would be taken to Cabinet on 17 February. Appendices to the report contained proposed spending, pressures and proposed savings

Members discussed aspects of the proposals including streetlighting, garden waste, gritting, car parking and leisure services. It was noted that climate change proposals would not be known until an action plan was more developed.

**Resolved - That**

- (1) the financial proposals for 2020/21 that will be subject to consultation and further consideration by Cabinet in February 2020 be noted; and**
- (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.**

**35 ALLOTMENT PROVISION IN THE BOROUGH**

Colin Clayton, Assistant Director for Community Services, introduced this report, alongside Mary Worrall, Senior Manager Parks Coast & Countryside Team, and Vicky Abbott, the P&C Technical Administrator. The report provided information on the provision of council allotments in the borough, the number of available plots, information about current waiting lists, areas of particular pressure and shortfalls, and outlines the actions being considered to increase availability of allotments in order to decrease length of time people have to wait to take up an opportunity to participate in allotment gardening.

Members noted the large demand for plots and were pleased that available plots were allocated and even divided to meet demand. Further areas for plots were investigated although they may require capital funding to develop them. Members were concerned at the unmet demand and suggested that community groups could assist.

Members thanked staff for their work.

**Resolved - That**

- (1) the content of this report be noted; and**
- (2) the relevant Cabinet Member be recommended to set up a Working Group in consultation with allotments societies and other stakeholders to explore increased provision in the Borough and the availability in the Borough and bring a report back to the relevant Committee.**

**36 PROPOSED DOG CONTROL MEASURES**

Mike Cockburn, Lead Commissioner for the Environment, introduced this report which provided an update following a review of dog control measures across Wirral. In January 2019 the Committee made several recommendations in response to proposals, including the use of existing bylaws to deal with the minority of dog owners who act in an irresponsible manner. Existing bylaws included the prohibition of dogs from cemeteries and some play areas, but the rules and areas covered could not easily be amended. A dog control Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was

proposed to replace these bylaws, to include: Cemeteries – dogs to be under control via use of a lead; Play areas; Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA); and Kickabouts – with dogs prohibited from entering, subject to conditions. Education and encouragement would be undertaken through signage.

The review of dog control measures in place across Wirral was brought about because of public concern about issues such as dog fouling and the apparent inadequacy of existing dog control measures in place. The Residents Survey of 2017 carried out by Ipsos Mori on behalf of the Council found that dog fouling was a major concern among residents. A previous environmental enforcement contractor terminated their contract by mutual consent in March 2019.

Members were concerned that the proposal had a lack of enforcement measures, had possibly not been consulted with on a wide enough basis and they were concerned at the possibility of extension of powers under the PSPO.

**Resolved – That**

- (1) Accept the recommendation that the PSPO allow dogs in cemeteries on a lead subject to consultation with user groups, and**
- (2) the PSPO proposal be supported in principle for play areas Play areas, Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA) and Kickabouts subject to conditions (including concessions for working assistance and therapy dogs) subject to a further report on how that will be enforced and bring it back to a future Committee.**

**37 ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in co-operation with the other three Overview & Scrutiny Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual scrutiny work programme. The work programme was to align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges which were within the remit of the Committee. It was envisaged that the work programme would be formed from a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports.

**Resolved – That the proposed Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2019/20 be approved.**

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## Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 12 March 2020

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2019/20</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the financial monitoring information for the Environment 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 Environment 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**

	<b>Capital Strategy</b> <i>(as agreed at Council)</i>	<b>Proposed Programme</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Delivery	36.454	23.179
Economic Housing Growth	27.712	6.169
Business	64.166	29.348

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

#### 3.1.2 Delivery

- Aids, adaptations and DFGs (£3.33m decrease): Substantial additional grant funding was included in the original budget. In May the Council received a further £4.3m. A realistic level of grant allocation is estimated to be £2.5m based on applications and resources available. The balance of funding has been re-profiled into 2020/21.
- LED street lighting/column replacement (£5.48m decrease): Contract awarded in September, works commencing October. Majority of expenditure will be incurred December onwards with funding reprofiled into future years.
- Transport for Growth (£0.90m increase): Adjustment to Integrated Transport grant allocation £1.1m and balance of funding brought forward from 2018/19. Reprofiling of £1.2m due to lack of resources to progress planning & design of schemes along with the statutory consultation processes that must be adhered to.
- West Kirby flood defence (£2.60m decrease): The expected tender period is December and January with appointment in February. Start on site will not be until the end of the financial year so apart from the ongoing consulting costs and some preliminary site work there will not be any significant capital outlay.
- Leasowe Leisure Centre/Evolutions: (£1.00m decrease): Various design options are still being considered in order to provide the most economical and effective solution.

The scheme itself is unlikely to start until the new financial year.

### 3.1.3 Economic and Housing Growth

- Business Investment Fund: (decrease £0.27m) 8 bids have been received for financial assistance from the fund with the latest estimate for likely approval from this year's allocation being £1.036 million.
- Housing Infrastructure Fund Marginal Viability (Northbank): (£2.00m decrease) Part of Homes England grant of £6m for infrastructure, land remediation, public realm works and utilities provision at Northbank, Wirral Waters. Estimated grant drawdown this year is £1m with the balance reprofiled into 2020/21.
- Investment in properties: (£8.60m decrease) Costs with respect to the acquisition of specific properties relating to regeneration have been included in the current year projections with other schemes anticipated to commence in 2020-21.
- New Ferry Regeneration Strategic Acquisitions: (£0.99m decrease) 25 properties have been identified for acquisition with 4 completed to date. Not all those identified will be completed this year. Any unused funding will be carried forward for use in 2020/21.
- Wirral Waters Investment Fund: (£5.62m decrease) The Marine Energy Automotive Park project does not yet have planning permission and therefore, it is anticipated that it will commence in the last quarter of this financial year at the earliest. Anticipated spend £0.375m.
- Community Bank: (£4.25m decrease) A due diligence exercise will review the case to establish a North West Regional Community Bank covering Cumbria, Lancashire and Merseyside. Depending on the outcome the majority of the Council's contribution will not be required this financial year.

## 3.2 Revenue Programme 2019/20 Position

### 3.2.1 Delivery Services: Forecast - £3.268m Adverse Variance Position

- The Adverse full year budget forecast for Delivery Services of £3.268m is largely due to income pressures and delays in implementing budget savings.

**Table 3: Delivery 2019/20 Full Year Revenue Budget and Forecast Position**

	Full Year				Adv/Fav
	Budget	Forecast	Variance		
	£000	£000	(+ Fav, - Adv) £000	%	
<b>Directorate Items</b>					
Community Services	14,332	15,553	(1,221)	-9%	Adverse
Delivery Services Management	187	189	(2)	-1%	Adverse
Highways & Streetscene Services	26,781	28,185	(1,404)	-5%	Adverse
Asset Management	3,843	4,484	(641)	-17%	Adverse
<b>Directorate (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>45,143</b>	<b>48,411</b>	<b>(3,268)</b>	<b>-7%</b>	<b>Adverse</b>
Support / Admin Building Overhead	8,452	8,452	(0)		
<b>Total (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>53,595</b>	<b>56,863</b>	<b>(3,269)</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>Adverse</b>

### 3.2.2 Community Services

- There remain ongoing pressures (£0.490m) within Sport & Recreation, these pressures are linked to the delayed building of a 3G pitch at Leasowe, the inability to realise commercial opportunities at the West Kirby Lake Sailing Centre facilities because of the delayed completion of the building improvements and the late delivery of a budget option to transfer the Beechwood Leisure Centre. The service is working to mitigate these pressures by utilising Commercial officers who have been appointed to the Service to improve demand for memberships and explore new income streams aimed at reducing this adverse pressure. The service is not likely to see a benefit from this work until next financial year. A number of capital projects have been approved and are progressing and more are being developed.
- The expectation of the 2019/20 budget was for the approved budget savings, relating to the transfer of operations at the Floral and two golf courses, to be fully achieved. However, continuing delays in the implementation of the Floral project and the Members recommendation to not proceed with the Golf Project will mean that the £0.66m saving target will not be realised in 2019/20.

### 3.2.3 Highways & Streetscene

- Due to demand not matching targets, car parking income is expected to fall short of the budget (£0.300m adverse). A comprehensive review of the transport strategy is being undertaken in this area to recommend improvements to Members.
- The termination of the Council's contract with Kingdom, which enforced fines for environmental breaches such as dog fouling, littering, trade waste and smoking offenses, has generated a budget shortfall (£0.500m adverse) within the Waste & Environment Service Area; alternative options are being reviewed with regard to environmental enforcement.
- The Garden Waste Subscription service is projected to underachieve against income by approximately £0.120m due to a reduction in take up compared to last year. This has improved from a projection of £0.200m at Quarter 2 due to the service attracting new subscribers through promotional activity and advertising. Action is being taken to reduce this deficit further.
- Highways Assets are showing £0.303m adverse position due to winter pressures (£0.151m) for gritting and unachieved income from development programmes (£0.155m). Both areas are subject to external factors.
- Assisted Travel (£0.270m adverse) is due to the increased demand for home to school transport and adult transport. There is currently a policy review of this area being undertaken to help address this organisation-wide issue of increasing demand.

### 3.2.4 Assets Management

- An adverse forecast variance of £0.641m has been recorded, driven by price increases from suppliers given mid-year.

### 3.2.5 Economic & Housing Growth: Forecast - £0.141m Favourable Variance Position

3.2.6 The Economic & Housing Growth Directorate now includes Culture and Visitor Economy, and a £0.141m favourable position is forecast, which is a £0.151m adverse movement from the forecast position at Quarter 2 (£0.292m).

**Table 4: Economic & Housing Growth 2019/20 Full Year Revenue Budget and Forecast Position**

	Full Year		Variance		Adv/Fav
	Budget £000	Forecast £000	£000	%	
<b>Directorate Items</b>					
Major Growth & Housing Delivery	23,173	23,329	(156)	-1%	Adverse
Culture & Visitor Economy	1,477	1,672	(195)	-13%	Adverse
Corporate Director for Economic & Housing Growth	(5,193)	(5,264)	72	1%	Favourable
Regeneration & Inward Investment	989	989	0	0%	Favourable
Housing	8,965	8,545	420	5%	Favourable
<b>Directorate (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>29,411</b>	<b>29,270</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>Favourable</b>
Support / Admin Building Overhead	1,552	1,552	0		
<b>Total (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>30,962</b>	<b>30,821</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>Favourable</b>

### 3.2.7 Major Growth & Housing Delivery

- The adverse forecast expenditure of £0.156m is due to planning related expenses and has been updated with latest agency costs.
- Delivery of the Local Plan remains a key priority. Reserves have been set aside to cover the local plan costs, estimated cost of delivery is £1.400m in 2019/20, £0.200m in 2020/21 and £0.400m in 2021/22.

### 3.2.8 Culture and Visitor Economy

- The adverse position within Culture results from the Tour of Britain event, which will be funded from General Fund reserves. This is partially offset by a favourable variance on the successful events programme, as well as small staff savings resulting from the recruitment freeze.

### 3.2.9 Corporate Director for Economic & Housing Growth Management

- Favourable variance of £0.072m due to vacant Director post April to August 2019.
- Income of £3.65m was originally anticipated in 2019/20 from development within the Wirral Growth company. However, as the partnership with Muse has matured, the partnership agreement has been refocused to ensure any development is designed in consultation with residents, members and partners to ensure the maximum financial benefits can be realised for the Council. This may result in additional income being

received in future years. This will be funded by a transfer from the Economic Growth reserve which was established to cover such delays in regeneration developments.

### 3.2.10 Housing Services

- The favourable position within Housing is forecast from the current cost of Supported Housing contracts based on current occupancy rates.

## 4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

## 5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

## 6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

## 7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

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

## 8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

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

## 9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 No because there is no relevance to equality.

## 10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report has no impact on emissions of CO2

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## APPENDICES BACKGROUND PAPERS

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

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

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## Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 12 March 2020

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Director of Delivery Services</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the findings and recommendations arising from a scrutiny review of Wirral Council's draft Tree Strategy. This review was commissioned as part of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee's work programme in 2019/20.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

The Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee is requested to;

1. Approve the findings and recommendations contained within the Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review report.
2. Refer the report to the next meeting of the Cabinet for consideration.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

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

- 1.1 So that the report of the Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review Panel may be subject to review by the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee and subsequently referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 No other options considered.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 As part of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee's annual work programme, a Task & Finish Scrutiny Review on the Council's draft Tree Strategy was established. The Review Panel was chaired by Councillor Tom Anderson.
- 3.2 The Panel's key objectives in undertaking this review were to review and understand the strategic guidance within the Council's draft Tree Strategy, and to make recommendation(s) to assist in shaping the final strategy. The review approach was to hold a number of evidence sessions including a focus group with technical arboriculture officers and a site visit to Arrowe Country Park.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications, although there may be costs associated with actions arising from this report and delivery of Wirral's Tree Strategy.

### **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 direct resource implications, although there may be resource implications as a result of actions arising from this report.

### **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 Although there were no engagement activities directly associated with this review, public consultation on the Council's draft Tree Strategy document took place in December 2019, with reference to the outcomes of this consultation included within the report in Appendix 1.

## 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 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to reduce emissions of greenhouses gases by contributing to a sustainable tree planting and management programme on Wirral, therefore increasing tree cover to a level considered desirable to help combat the harmful effects of climate change.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review Report

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Council's Tree Strategy

The Environment Partnership 'Wirral Council Tree Risk Management System'

Woodland Trust 'Local Authority Tree Strategies'

National Tree Safety Group 'Common Sense Risk Management of Trees'

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	2 July 2019

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## Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review

### Report of Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

March 2020



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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Trees are a key part of our natural life support system as well as a significant part of Wirral's landscape, contributing to the health and wellbeing of a population and the sustainability of our communities. In the midst of a climate emergency, the role of trees is crucial in ensuring that we look towards effectively tackling the devastating impact of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions and changing weather conditions. Trees provide a habitat for wildlife, a foundation for biodiversity and a basis for our ecosystem whilst also giving intrinsic beauty to our surroundings and economic value to our neighbourhoods. From the flood risk management benefits of tree roots to the improvement to air quality, the contribution trees make to our livelihoods cannot be undersold.

In addition to protecting trees for our communities and for future generations, Wirral Council also has a duty to protect its residents from harm and to ensure a safe environment for all. In order to fulfil this, it is vital that trees and woodlands in the Borough are managed effectively and that any potential risks from trees are identified, assessed and addressed.

## **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In 2016, the large bough of a horse chestnut tree of around 25 metres in diameter fell onto a busy carriageway from the perimeter of Arrowe Country Park, resulting in the tragic death of a baby girl. Following a full investigation and inquest by the Senior Coroner for Liverpool and Wirral, it was concluded that Wirral Council's lack of a 'proactive, robust tree management system in place for Parks and Countryside' as well as failings in communication and accountability were a contributing factor to the accident. A Tree Action Plan was subsequently created by the Council in order to effectively address prior issues relating to tree management on Wirral. Alongside this, the opportunity to comprehensively plan for Wirral's future tree planting programme and climate change agenda was addressed through the creation of a tree strategy for Wirral.

In July 2019, the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee requested that a scrutiny review of the Council's developing Tree Strategy and programme of tree maintenance was added to the Committee's work programme, with a Task & Finish panel established to carry out this review.

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 this review;

- A site visit to Arrowe Park to gain an understanding of the range of challenges and issues currently faced.
- A focus group session with technical officers to hold detailed discussions around the draft strategy, tree risk management plan and additional areas of interest such as resourcing.

Following these initial sessions, an additional meeting was commissioned in order to further discuss findings, and to allow attendance of planning policy officers so that links between the draft Tree Strategy and Local Plan could be fully understood.

### 3. MEMBERS OF THE TASK & FINISH REVIEW PANEL

Chair of the Panel - Councillor Tom Anderson



#### Chair's Personal Statement

*"Wirral residents are fiercely proud of their local environment. Within our Borough, we are lucky to have a breadth of world class parks, green spaces and a beautiful expanse of coastline and as a Council we must ensure, in the public interest, that the conservation, maintenance and enhancement of our trees and woodlands is a priority. Over recent years, we have allowed siloed working to impact on our management of tree risk and as a result, we need to ensure a collaborative approach to how we maintain and encourage our tree stock. There is a fine balance to strike when it comes to protecting our natural assets whilst still fulfilling our statutory duty of care to Wirral residents and visitors and placing safety at the heart of tree management. This review has demonstrated the value of an extensive network of volunteers, Friends Groups, and diverse partner organisations who work with Wirral Council to help care for, improve and promote trees, woodland and open spaces and related activities throughout the Borough. I would also like to extend my thanks to my fellow Panel Members and to the Council officers who contributed to this report"*

Councillor Allan Brame



Councillor Christina Muspratt



Councillor Steve Hayes



Councillor Phil Gilchrist



Councillor Tony Norbury



Councillor Ian Lewis



Councillor Helen Cameron



## 4. DRAFT TREE STRATEGY

Wirral Council's draft Tree Strategy was initially developed in late 2019, with an aim to provide an essential set of priorities for safe and sustainable tree management and planting for the Borough. The purpose of the strategy is to 'provide overarching strategic guidance for trees in our Borough up to 2030', with a key focus on partnership working with stakeholders in order to deliver a holistic and aspirational 10 year plan. The strategy also looks to provide a clear vision and set of outcomes to be delivered over the course of the strategy's lifespan – putting a 'right tree for the right place' philosophy at the heart of the guidance.

*"In the ten year span of this strategy we will raise tree cover in the Borough to at least 10% to boost the benefits of trees and woodlands. We will seek to share these benefits across Wirral. Our planting will be based on "the right tree for the right place" building a strong legacy for our tree stock. If we are forced to fell any of our trees (because of a risk to the public) we will plant at least two more. We will work constructively with individuals and groups to deliver this vision."*

Ultimately, the strategy aims to more than double Wirral's woodland cover by 2030 in an effort to tackle climate change, as well as provide an enjoyable and pleasant environment for Wirral residents.

As part of this Scrutiny Review, Members of Panel took particular interest in the following areas of the Council's draft strategy;

### 4.1 Tree Risk Management

Each local authority has a number of statutory obligations to ensure the safety of the public, and there are key responsibilities regarding trees that the Council must fulfil. These responsibilities include repairing damage to roads caused by tree roots, safety surveys of roadside trees on a regular basis, and the removal of dying or dangerous trees that belong to the Council, amongst others. These actions minimise the risk of potential damage, injury or loss of life.

A key finding of the inquest into the 2016 incident in Arrowe Country Park was the impact of a lack of funding and failure to recruit and employ specialist staff for tree management, as well as inadequate training of Parks & Countryside staff with regard to tree management and identifying common hazards. At the time of the incident, there was no programme of mandatory, ongoing training and there had been no dedicated arboricultural officer employed within the Parks and Countryside team since 2003. The lack of a collaborative approach to tree risk management has been highlighted as an issue in recent years, with no previous policy in place for tree management within the Parks & Countryside team as well as a lack of understanding of the risk of trees falling from a park setting onto the highway.

When agreeing the scope of this review, Elected Members set a key objective that they would look for assurance that Wirral Council had implemented a robust system to control risk from trees to Members of the Public, employees and contractors and that lessons had been learned from previous failings. Although the draft tree strategy states the intention to build strong cross-departmental working partnerships to mitigate risk and encourage tree planting, the Wirral Council Tree Risk Management System document published by The Environmental Partnership (TEP) was also included for consideration as part of this review.

As previously mentioned, reductions in staffing within the Parks and Countryside team and a lapsed programme of maintenance for Wirral's tree stock had impacted on the regularity of tree safety inspections in recent years – with an indicated backlog of unfulfilled inspections of trees in a park setting dating 10 to 13 years. As a result, this maintenance was completed throughout late 2019/early 2020 in order to ensure that high risk trees were properly inspected and necessary works done. Although at the time of this review officers gave assurance that the programme of maintenance was due to come to an end, the short timeframe and extensive works that had taken place understandably raised concerns amongst Elected Members, residents and communities alike – a mass of tree felling with seemingly no consultation with interested groups. In this instance safety was the priority, and many trees which had not been inspected for a long time were diseased and requiring immediate works. To attempt to put the backlog maintenance programme into context, officers advised the Panel that approximately 1050 trees had been removed as part of essential safety work across the whole of the Borough – there are around 9000 trees that make up the 'shelter belt' boundary of Arrowe Country Park alone – so comparatively the number of trees felled had been kept as low as possible.

In the last year a permanent Tree Risk Management Co-ordinator has been appointed, with this role directly responsible for tree risk across the Parks & Countryside and Highways teams. The Panel were reassured that inspections will be carried out on all trees on highway verges over the coming months, with the expected recruitment of a dedicated Highways tree officer taking place shortly. The Council's workflow for tree management will be a cross-cutting endeavour, addressing the concerns of Elected Members around the implications of previous siloed working in relation to trees. All Panel Members agree that the prior barriers between the two departments needed to be broken down to ensure a holistic approach to tree risk across the Borough and are assured to be informed that steps have already been taken to improve the Council-wide system. Members were given further assurance that the current inspection programme ensures that trees on the roadside, or within falling distance of a highway, are inspected annually – isolated trees are likely to follow a five year inspection cycle.

### Arrowe Country Park Site Visit

Arrowe Country Park is made up of some 250 acres (1.0 km<sup>2</sup>) of open parkland, ponds and deciduous woodland at the heart of the Wirral Peninsula. The park site includes an 18-hole municipal golf course, a children's play area, an outdoor gym, tennis courts and a fishing lake (amongst a number of other features) with the Arrowe Brook flowing along the western edge of the park, from south to north, also incorporating Arrowe Park Lake. Arrowe Country Park is also a locally valued site of biological diversity; with a variety of bird life, wildflower meadows and ponds.

On 30th October 2019, Members of the Scrutiny Review Panel undertook a site visit to Arrowe Country Park. The purpose of this visit was to look at key area of woodland within the Borough in order to understand first-hand the range of issues and challenges faced when managing arboriculture, in addition to understanding the context around staffing resources and needs.

Arrowe Country Park, with its vast expanse of woodland in such close proximity to a busy highway network, is a prime location for tree risk to be identified, and for the implications of lack of action to be understood. In addition to the aforementioned incident in 2016, a large beech tree came down in the area in 2015, and despite it being within a park setting, fell across the highway on Arrowe Park Road. It was only when the tree was felled that fungus was discovered within the tree, something that Members were advised is difficult to observe through visual surveyance alone. Following these events, Amenity Tree Care were commissioned to carry out a tree safety survey on the perimeter of the park wall, with inspections taking place annually since 2016. Arboricultural officers informed Members that often the tree itself can be 'the tip of the iceberg' in terms of potential problems and often it is what can't be seen that causes the real danger. At the time of the park visit, Members were provided with information on the survey that had been undertaken of half of the Arrowe Country Park site - this can be found as Appendix 2.

Officers undertaking a visual survey of the tree take into account the following issues;

- Is the tree in a 'high risk' area?
- What will happen if the tree falls?
- What is reasonable action to take?

During the site visit, the Panel met with the newly appointed Tree Risk Management Co-ordinator, as well as the Trees and Woodland Officer. In addition to this, Members were advised that Parks & Countryside staff members have now been offered tree risk training to help them to note any potential issues, and visually recognise common problems. The Panel were also assured that this training came down to simple reporting rather than burdening the team with extra duties, and that discussion is due to take place with Trade Unions (although the training is not mandatory). This process was a deliberate step in improving the system and staff members do not hold any liability in the case of something going wrong.

As part of the visit, Members were keen to query how useful the iTree eco-tool might be for Wirral. iTree is a software application that quantifies the structure and environmental effects of urban trees and calculates their value to society. Although data collected through the app provides an understanding the urban forest such as canopy cover, species importance rankings and age distribution, it does not act as an inventory for trees nor does it assist to any extent with management. For a cost of approximately £18,000 the tool was generally thought to be unnecessary for Wirral – however, tree officers are aware of the software and its potential were it to become a more feasible option in future.

## 4.2 Tree Felling

A key commitment stated within the strategy is that *'the ultimate decision to remove or cutback a tree is always the absolute last resort and one we only take when there is no other option'* - with the Council's intention to replace every felled tree with two trees in the vicinity, or four trees in place of any mature tree felled. Members of the Scrutiny Panel echo the sentiment of the Council's Planning Sub-Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 in which the Bristol City Council model of tree replacement was referenced as a potentially beneficial benchmark for Wirral.

Members are keen to emphasise the point that the Council should be taking a firm line with developers to plant more trees, and that there is a clear need to monitor this. Bristol's guidance sets out a number of planning obligations in terms of the impact of development on tree cover, with a 'level of contribution' from the developer is required in the case of new tree planting to mitigate the impact of a development, or where trees are felled as part of the works and replacement planting is required on public land.

The contribution covers the cost of purchasing, planting, protecting, establishing and initially maintaining the new tree, on either open ground or hard standing;

- Tree in open ground (no tree pit required) - £765.21
- Tree in hard standing (tree pit required) - £3,318.88

Bristol City Council remain responsible for the planting of trees on public land in order to ensure a consistent approach and level of quality, and to increase the likelihood of new tree stock surviving. The number of trees required to compensate for loss of existing trees depends upon the size of the trees to be lost. This is set out in Figure 1 below;

Fig. 1

<b>Trunk Diameter of Tree lost to development (cm measured at 1.5 metres above ground level)</b>	<b>Number of Replacement Trees</b>
Less than 15	0 - 1
15 - 19.9	1
20 - 29.9	2
30 - 39.9	3
40 - 49.9	4
50 - 59.9	5
60 - 69.9	6
70 - 79.9	7
80 +	8

The Scrutiny Panel understands that promoting the benefits of a greener urban environment to developers and encouraging the retention of mature trees should always be encouraged in the first instance, but that the implementation of a scheme similar to the Bristol model (even if used on a case by case basis taking into account site conditions and affected species) would be the most effective mitigation of essential tree felling.

In stating this, the Panel do not advocate the loss of healthy established trees, with the priority always the preservation of mature trees and hedgerows, but in exceptional circumstances and if fully justified the replacement planting scheme needs to go further than the broadly simplistic 'two for one' pledge. In addition, 2020 is the International Year of Plant Health

(IYPH), with the Panel welcoming a greater emphasis on sourcing nursery stock locally rather than importing from the continent.

The process of sign off for tree felling was questioned by the Scrutiny Panel as part of the review, with Members seeking assurance that appropriate checks and balances were in place to ensure that the external tree specialist contracted to carry out tree maintenance only resorts to felling or pollarding where there is a clearly established and imminent risk to safety. Senior Council Officers confirmed that the strategy's outline procedure for tree felling (see Figure 2 below) is always followed – an independent surveyor carries out an initial assessment of the tree, with recommendations then considered by the Council's own expert before final sign off is obtained. The Scrutiny Panel were also advised that it is standard practice that the contractor is required to dispose of the tree in an environmentally-friendly way, which in turn creates a sustainable outcome and ultimately subsidises the service for the Council. Often these trees are decayed or diseased and therefore of no real value, however the transparency of this process was questioned – with the Panel stating that it would be advantageous for the Council to be more open about this disposal procedure, particularly as in some cases the public may wish to use this wood themselves.

Fig. 2



#### 4.2.1 Enforcement

A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is an order placed on a specific tree, group of trees or woodland by the local authority. A TPO prohibits any work to the tree without the authority's prior written consent, and arboricultural advice from competent contractors and consultants, or the authority, is usually required to inform tree owners of their responsibilities and options.

Following consultation with Planning Policy officers, the Scrutiny Panel became aware of the need for a thorough review of all TPOs currently enforced across Wirral – with a requirement to reassess historical orders and potentially implement new ones. It was apparent, however that a lack of resource within this team was a causal factor in the inability to carry out this piece of work. The Council website does however provide an online TPO mapping function that allows users to search locations of trees covered by a TPO across the Borough.

### 4.3 Public Consultation and Community Engagement

Trees are an important and very visible part of the local community, providing appealing neighbourhoods and shaping our social environment. It is therefore no surprise that residents feel connected to the green spaces and tree cover around their homes and experience a sense of apprehension when they discover tree felling is taking place within the locality. Members of the Panel were concerned with the lack of consultation with local residents in relation to the backlog of tree work carried out in 2019/20 and, whilst appreciating the time constraints and safety implications of the programme, sought clear assurance that all major future tree work would involve public engagement as a matter of course.

The draft Tree Strategy document references the importance of engagement and states that the Council will involve stakeholders (referenced in Figure 3 below) in delivery of the strategy;

Fig. 3

Communities	Groups	Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents</li> <li>• Elected Members</li> <li>• Visitors</li> <li>• Businesses</li> <li>• Landowners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree Wardens</li> <li>• Wirral Initiative for Trees</li> <li>• Wirral Parks Forum</li> <li>• Friends of Parks Groups</li> <li>• Wirral Environmental Network</li> <li>• The Wirral Society</li> <li>• Cheshire Wildlife Trust</li> <li>• Wirral Countryside Volunteers</li> <li>• Urban Beekeepers Association</li> <li>• Tree Council</li> <li>• Woodlands Trust</li> <li>• Forestry Commission</li> <li>• Merseyforest</li> <li>• Love Where you Live Forum</li> <li>• National Trust</li> <li>• Landmark Trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Magenta Housing</li> <li>• Wirral Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Merseyside Ecological Advisory Service</li> <li>• Liverpool City Region Local Nature Partnership</li> <li>• Parks &amp; Countryside</li> <li>• Public Health</li> <li>• Highways</li> </ul>

Although welcomed by the Panel, Members feel that this pledge requires a demonstrable process of communication in order to ensure that it can be delivered effectively. Simplistic yet useful processes could include erecting temporary signs prior to the commencement of works, promoting and justifying essential works online and formally meeting with 'Friends of' groups and other relevant community groups. The Panel also suggest that as well as informing residents and inviting their comment, there is a clear opportunity to involve them in tree planting by providing saplings and engaging with children to set the scene for future generations.

As part of the review focus group, officers advised Members of the imminent development of an interactive GIS map that will be made available for residents. The purpose of this map will be to allow the public to enter an address and be provided with narrative and justification around any tree works in the local area, with instant data retrieval for all Council held tree records. Although this project was welcomed by the Panel, the necessity for an immediate communication plan on tree works to Elected Members was asserted – as their capacity as ward representatives often requires the provision of assurance to concerned constituents. The Panel recommends that regular updates are provided to all Councillors as soon and as often as

practicable so that they may provide a much needed link between officers and residents whilst a more formal engagement plan is established.

The Panel are pleased with the inclusion of the 'Adopt a Tree' scheme in the strategy and highlight this programme as an area of good practice and potentially huge benefit. This scheme allows members of the public to make a payment towards the planting of a tree on the highway verge outside their property. The draft Tree Strategy notes that this scheme is of great value and that the Council intends to improve the current programme by working with businesses and other organisations. The Panel approves this scheme as a positive way of engaging with the public but suggests that the significant cost of the programme may be impacting on its take up.

A public consultation on the draft Tree Strategy took place between November 2019 and December 2019, with feedback received from 244 respondents through the Survey Monkey portal along with 8 responses of more substantive feedback received from a variety of partners and stakeholders via e-mail. Although at the time of this review consultation feedback had not yet been collated formally, Members of the Panel call for a full evaluation of all responses and ask that the draft strategy be amended as necessary based on consultation outcomes.

#### 4.4 Funding and Resources

In February 2020, Wirral Council learned of its successful bid for funding to cover an extensive planting programme through the government's Urban Tree Challenge Fund. The fund has awarded Wirral £300,000 which will be match funded through the Council's own capital investment programme, pending agreement at the Council meeting of March 2020. If successful, this programme will allow for more than 1700 new trees in around 50 different urban locations on Wirral, with planting season beginning in November and 2020 and continuing to February 2020. The Panel are greatly encouraged by the successful bid and the opportunity to green some of the most deprived areas in the Borough – ensuring a focus on the health and wellbeing of the population. The first phase of the planting programme is currently underway, with the second phase looking at more localised planting using community intelligence. The Panel suggests that this second phase could give further consideration to tree planting along a wider area of urban highways and residential verges (in consultation with ward members and communities) in order to supplement the aforementioned 'Adopt a Tree' scheme.

At present, Wirral Council does not undertake its own specialist arboricultural works but rather contracts a number of private businesses to carry out work on its behalf relating to tree and vegetation management and arboricultural maintenance. The Scrutiny Panel questioned whether, following the conclusion of the current backlog maintenance programme, it may be a more sustainable and cost-effective approach to look at using the Council's own workforce to undertake these duties – ultimately, bringing these services back under the direct responsibility of the local authority.

### 5. SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

The content of the draft Tree Strategy and its key objectives are accepted by the Scrutiny Review Panel as an adequate response to the Council's need for a comprehensive plan for tree management in terms of safety and sustainability. A number of crucial findings were gathered by the Scrutiny Panel as part of this review;

- i) *Collaborative Working* – Steps have already been taken to establish a whole system approach to tree management, with issues addressed around the previously disconnected working practices between Highways and Parks & Countryside Team.
- ii) *Openness, Transparency and Access to Information* – Residents and communities have a vested interest in the management of trees in the Borough. It is vital that the current engagement process between the Council and its residents is strengthened and formalised, through publication of key information online and promotion of community schemes to encourage public involvement in creating and sustaining our environment.
- iii) *Preservation of Trees and Woodlands* – It is important that the Council convey a strong message to potential developers that retaining our current stock of trees is a priority and that Wirral Council’s developing Local Plan is founded on this principle. The Scrutiny Panel understands that promoting the benefits of a greener urban environment to developers, and encouraging the retention of mature trees should always be encouraged in the first instance but that the implementation of a scheme similar to the Bristol model (even if used on a case by case basis) would be the most effective mitigation of essential tree felling.
- iv) *Resources* – Historic underfunding of specialist ‘in house’ tree services has resulted in poor outcomes. Although recruitment has taken place to ensure that there is a dedicated core staff for tree management, there could be potential for additional resource to the area and removal of the current reliance on contractors.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Whilst the Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review Panel largely endorse the content of Wirral Council’s draft Tree Strategy, it is requested that the following recommendations are referred to Cabinet for consideration.

The Scrutiny Review Panel recommend that;

1. **Wirral Council’s draft Tree Strategy is amended to place greater emphasis on the Council’s intention to prioritise preservation of existing trees across the Borough, with tree felling reserved for only exceptional circumstances. This ethos should be firmly communicated to local developers and contractors.**
2. **Where tree felling is essential, Wirral Council’s tree replanting programme is amended to reflect the Bristol City Council model of new or compensatory tree planting in which a level of contribution is applied and Wirral Council retain responsibility for the replanting and maintenance of trees on public land.**
3. **All available options are explored to ensure the most cost-effective provision of future tree management, including the potential for bringing Wirral Council’s tree maintenance contract back ‘in house’.**
4. **Additional resource is allocated to the Planning Development Control Team so that a comprehensive review of all historical Tree Preservation Orders can be undertaken, and the need for any new Tree Preservation Orders can be addressed.**

5. **Outcomes of the public consultation on Wirral Council's draft Tree Strategy are fully taken into account and the strategy document amended accordingly to reflect the opinions of Wirral residents and stakeholders where relevant.**
6. **A clear communication plan is produced to encourage improved engagement and consultation with residents, community groups and local businesses regarding planned surveyance and justification around proposed tree works in the Borough – in addition to a plan to involve communities, and particularly schools, in replanting schemes.**

## Scrutiny Review Scoping Template

**Review Title:** Tree Policy and Tree Risk Management Plan

**Responsible Committee:** Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019

<b>1. Contact Information:</b>	
<p><b>Scrutiny Panel Chair:</b></p> <p>Cllr Tom Anderson (<a href="mailto:tomanderson@wirral.gov.uk">tomanderson@wirral.gov.uk</a>)</p> <p><b>Panel Members:</b></p> <p>Cllr Christina Muspratt (<a href="mailto:christinamuspratt@wirral.gov.uk">christinamuspratt@wirral.gov.uk</a>)            Cllr Allan Brame (<a href="mailto:allanbrame@wirral.gov.uk">allanbrame@wirral.gov.uk</a>)            Cllr Steve Hayes (<a href="mailto:stevehayes@wirral.gov.uk">stevehayes@wirral.gov.uk</a>)            Cllr Ian Lewis (<a href="mailto:ianlewis@wirral.gov.uk">ianlewis@wirral.gov.uk</a>)            Cllr Phil Gilchrist (<a href="mailto:philgilchrist@wirral.gov.uk">philgilchrist@wirral.gov.uk</a>)            Cllr Tony Norbury (<a href="mailto:tonynorbury@wirral.gov.uk">tonynorbury@wirral.gov.uk</a>)            Cllr Helen Cameron (<a href="mailto:helencameron@wirral.gov.uk">helencameron@wirral.gov.uk</a>)</p>	<p><b>Key Officers:</b></p> <p>David Armstrong, Corporate Director for Delivery Services (<a href="mailto:davidarmstrong@wirral.gov.uk">davidarmstrong@wirral.gov.uk</a>)</p> <p>Alexandra Davidson, Scrutiny Officer (<a href="mailto:alexandradavidson@wirral.gov.uk">alexandradavidson@wirral.gov.uk</a>)</p>
<b>2. Review Aims:</b>	
<p><b>Wirral Plan Pledge/s:</b></p> <p>“Attractive Local Environment”</p> <p><b>Review Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review and understand the strategic guidance within the Council’s draft Tree Policy, and to make recommendation(s) to assist in shaping the final strategy.</li> <li>• To undertake detailed examination of the Council’s tree risk management plan to ensure that there is a robust system in place to control risk from trees to Members of the Public, employees and contractors.</li> <li>• To consider how the proposed planting and management programme will be</li> </ul>	

successful in increasing Wirral's tree cover to the level considered desirable to help combat change.

- To look in detail at how best the draft Tree Policy can be utilised to enhance the development and implementation of Wirral Council's Local Plan.
- To ensure that there is a joined-up approach to tree maintenance and risk– with consistent processes in place across Council departments.

#### **Scrutiny Outcomes:**

- The Council will be held to account over the effectiveness of provision in place to protect Wirral residents in relation to trees, and that statutory responsibilities as a local authority are met.

## **2. Risks and Implications**

#### **Potential Risks:**

- The absence of a comprehensive and sustainable policy for tree risk management may mean that the Council is left vulnerable to litigation.
- The Council cannot completely remove the risk from trees throughout the Borough, but this review will look to ensure that a robust tree risk management plan is put in place and delivered effectively.

#### **Other Implications:**

- Wirral Council must take action to adapt to, and mitigate against, the threats caused by climate change.

## **3. Review Plan**

#### **Review Approach:**

A Task & Finish approach will be undertaken for this review, which will include two evidence sessions held within one day.

##### Evidence Session 1

A site visit to Arrowe Park to gain an understanding of the range of challenges and issues currently faced.

##### Evidence Session 2

A focus group session with technical officers to hold detailed discussions around the draft strategy, tree risk management plan and additional areas of interest such as resourcing.

It is proposed that recommendation(s) will be agreed during these sessions, however in the case of an additional 'wrap up' session being deemed necessary to formulate final recommendations, this will be arranged.

**Review Duration:**

October to December 2019; with focus on a one-day evidence session.

**Scheduled Committee Report Date:**

Review Sign Off Deadline; 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Scheduled Committee; 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020

**Scheduled Cabinet Report Date:**

February 2020

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

Colin Clayton – Assistant Director, Community Services  
Mike Cockburn – Lead Commissioner, Environment  
Mary Worrall – Senior Manager, Parks, Coast and Countryside  
Michael Anders – Risk Management Co-Ordinator  
Colin Quinney – Tree & Woodland Officer  
Wirral Council Policy Team

**Supporting Papers / Documentation / Wirral intelligence Service Website:**

Wirral Council '*Draft Tree Strategy*'  
The Environment Partnership '*Wirral Council Tree Risk Management System*'  
Woodland Trust '[Local Authority Tree Strategies](#)'  
National Tree Safety Group '[Common Sense Risk Management of Trees](#)'

**Involvement of service users / public:**

Although not applicable for this review, it is proposed that a wider piece of work around trees in the Borough could be undertaken in 2020/21.

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

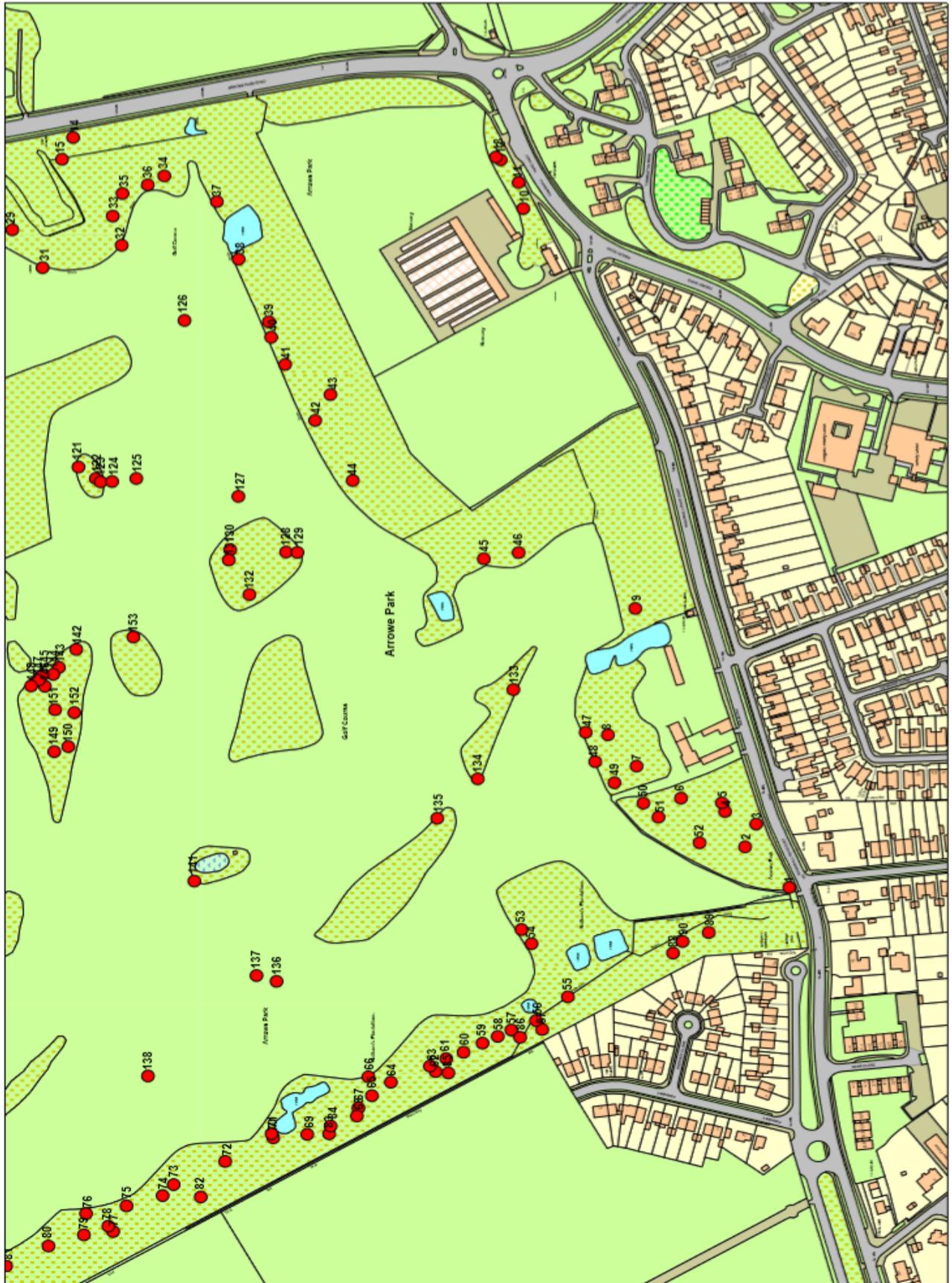
Cllr Elizabeth Grey  
([elizabethgrey@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:elizabethgrey@wirral.gov.uk))

**Press Office:**

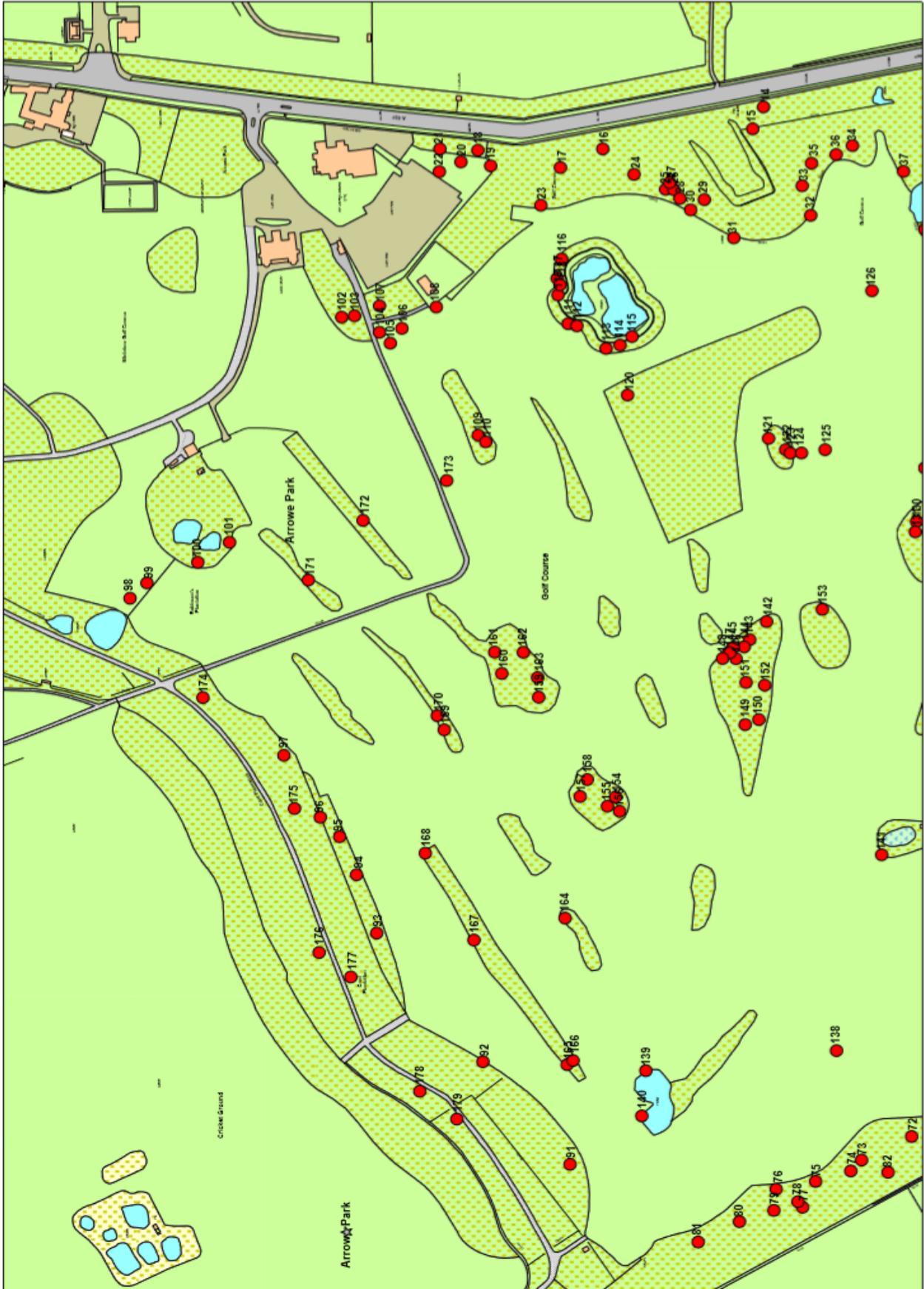
To be notified if appropriate.

**APPENDIX 2**

**ARROWE COUNTRY PARK – SITE SURVEY 1**



ARROWE COUNTRY PARK – SITE SURVEY 2



ARROWE COUNTRY PARK – SITE SURVEY DETAILS

Eastings	Northing	Tree No.	Tag No.	Common Name	Maturity	Est. Stem Dia. (mm)	Est. Height (m)	Avg. Crown Spread (m)	Comments	Recommendations	Priority Timeframe
327031.31	384978.46	1	2670	Ash	Mature	750	14	9	There is an open cavity on the stem of the tree at 4m above ground level on the south side of the stem. The cavity is partially obscured by ivy and an inspection was not possible from ground level. There is significant wound wood around the edge of the opening to the cavity. Minor deadwood is visible throughout the tree crown.	The ivy that is growing up the tree stem should be severed at ground level. A climbing inspection of the cavity is recommended in order to determine the extent of decay in the stem of the tree.	Moderate
327061.63	385009.15	2	2671	Beech	Mature	700	19	12	The fruiting bodies of Kretzschmaria deusta (primary decay fungi) are present between buttress roots on the north and northeast side of the stem at ground level. There are no signs of decline in the tree crown. The tree is leaning towards the footpath and highway (Thingwall Road East).	Reduce the overall height of the tree to 1.5m above where the stem first divides. The stem will no longer be within falling distance of the highway and can be retained for habitat.	Significant
327078.67	385001.47	3	2672	Sycamore	Semi-Mature	300	10	N/A	The tree is in a state of significant physiological decline.	Reduce the overall height of the tree to 3m above ground level and retain for habitat.	Moderate
327088.09	385023.09	4	2673	Ash	Mature	600	18	11	Branch decline is evident around the crown periphery. No structural defects were identified at the time of survey.	Reinspect the tree within 3yrs.	Minimal
327094.61	385025.17	5	2674	Ash	Mature	550	18	11	Branch decline is evident around the crown periphery. No structural defects were identified at the time of survey.	Reinspect the tree within 3yrs.	Minimal
327098.05	385053.55	6	2675	Oak	Semi-Mature	300	14	N/A	A dead oak tree has failed at ground level and is leaning against an oak tree on the opposite side of the footpath.	Fell the dead oak tree leaning over the footpath to ground level.	Moderate
327122.05	385084.27	7	2676	Oak	Mature	600	19	12	The tree has major stem and basal decay that has affected many of the supporting buttress roots. The tree is approximately 2m off the woodland footpath in the direction of the golf course.	Fell the tree to ground level.	Moderate
327145.4	385104.05	8	2677	Oak	Semi-Mature	350	11	N/A	The tree is dead and has fallen against the stem of an adjacent oak tree. The tree is approximately 2m off the woodland footpath in the direction of the white house.	Fell the tree to ground level.	Moderate
327240.03	385085.13	9	2678	Larch	Early-Mature	400	15	4	The tree has structurally failed and has fallen into a sycamore tree that is adjacent to the woodland footpath.	Fell the larch tree to ground level.	Moderate
327539.18	385162.74	10	2679	Ash	Mature	900	21	12	There is a very old small open cavity on the east side of the tree stem at ground level. The tree stem is encircled in mature ivy and should be removed to facilitate a detailed inspection of the tree stem.	Sever the ivy around the circumference of the tree stem at a height of 3.5m above ground level. All ivy below 3.5m should be removed and the tree should be reinspected by an arboriculturist.	Slight
327558.62	385165.98	11	2680	Sycamore	Semi-Mature	250(3)	11	5	The tree is in decline and is infected with Cryptostroma corticale. The tree is within falling distance of the footpath and the highway.	Fell the tree to ground level.	Moderate
327575.54	385178.4	12	2681	Beech	Early-Mature	475	15	7	The tree is in significant decline and is in a poor structural condition. The fruiting bodies of Kretzschmaria deusta are evident on the lower tree stem.	Fell the tree to ground level.	Significant
327577.7	385181.64	13	2682	Beech	Mature	700	18	12	Standing dead tree within falling distance of the footpath and the highway.	Fell the tree to ground level.	Significant
327592.25	385474.52	14	2683	Beech	Mature	900	23	16	There is Ganoderma australe bracket on the south side of the tree stem at ground level. A second bracket of G. australe is emanating from a point on the stem just above ground level on the west side of the tree stem. There is a longitudinal crack on the west side of the stem that starts at 1.5m above ground level and extends to 1.8m. A sounding hammer was used to aid the risk assessment and identified two areas of low resonance on the south and west side of the stem between the buttress roots and close vicinity to the two fruiting bodies.	Fell the tree to ground level.	Significant
327575.93	385482.2	15	2684	Beech	Mature	800	23	14	There is a large bark wound on the northern buttress root. Wound is evident around the margins of the wound. There is minor decay of the exposed wood.	Reinspect the tree within 3yrs.	Minimal
327561.11	385588.65	16	2685	Beech	Mature	850	23	12	There is a fungal fruiting body emanating from the tree stem at a height of 8m above ground level. The stem is covered in mature ivy which has precluded a detailed tree inspection. A climbing inspection is recommended to confirm the id of the fruiting body and its mode of decay. Due to the size of the bracket it is likely Ceriophorus squamosus or a species of Ganoderma.	Sever the ivy at ground level. A climbing inspection is required to id the fruiting body.	Moderate

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## ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2020

<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>A NEW CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY FOR WIRRAL</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	Acting Corporate Director of Delivery Services

### REPORT SUMMARY

A new climate change strategy is needed. The Council's resolution on the Climate Emergency of December 2018 called on the Cool Wirral Partnership to ensure the new climate change strategy included a challenging target for emissions reduction in line with the latest scientific guidance. It also asked it for ambitious recommendations to address this challenge. A new strategy has since been prepared by the partnership. It takes on board the latest evidence and changes in policy globally and nationally. The new strategy has been created using newly available tools. It has also involved a series of engagement events and a public consultation. The new strategy - Cool 2 - was finally agreed by the Cool Wirral Partnership in December 2019. Partners have been asked to each endorse the new framework and to develop actions in support. This report seeks council endorsement for the new strategy. A separate report will detail the Council's climate emergency action plan which will form the council's principal contribution to the new strategy.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

1. Note the new strategy and the steps taken by the Cool Wirral Partnership to create an up to date framework that reflects the climate emergency.
2. Note the efforts underway to develop a Council climate emergency action plan as the council's principal contribution to the new strategy.
3. Recommend that the strategy be endorsed and that others be encouraged to play their part by developing locally determined contributions in support of it.
4. Provide any further comments to the Cabinet member on Environment and Climate Change about council actions to support the strategy for consideration as part of the climate emergency action plan.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 Council endorsed the previous climate change strategy for Wirral, called Cool, in 2014. This covered the period 2014 to 2019. The Cool strategy indicated that a new strategy should be prepared during its final year to ensure a 'seamless transition' in work. Much has changed since the original Cool strategy was adopted. In the light of alarming new evidence presented in the wake of the UN Paris Agreement, the Council asked the Cool Wirral Partnership to take this into consideration when developing the new strategy. A new strategy, Cool 2, has now been agreed by the Cool Wirral Partnership. Partners have been asked to endorse the strategy and develop actions in support. The Council has already committed to develop a climate emergency action plan and work is underway on this which will set out the actions being taken in support of the strategy.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 One option is not to endorse the new Cool 2 strategy, however, the council has already made several commitments on climate change and requested that the new strategy addresses the climate crisis. Officers and members have also played an active part in shaping the new strategy, through participation in and support for the work of the Cool Wirral Partnership.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Council has had a longstanding interest in and commitment to act in the face of climate change. Unlike some councils, it did not abandon work to support local climate action in the face of challenging financial conditions. To help fulfil its commitments it has worked in partnership with a host of local organisations to develop a local climate change strategy and to encourage action in support of this. There have been regular annual reports on climate work to council via this Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.2 In recognition that the original climate change strategy was approaching its end date, work began on its replacement towards the end of 2018. The Council's climate emergency resolution of December 2018 recognised that in the light of more recent global evidence more urgent action is necessary. Council therefore asked the Cool Wirral partnership to take the latest information on board when developing the new framework and to ensure the new strategy included ambitious recommendations to address the challenge.
- 3.3 Since the original strategy was adopted there have been several significant developments. The UN's Paris Agreement on Climate Change (UN, 2015) formally came into force in 2016. This sets out the globally agreed approach to mitigating carbon emissions and adapting to unavoidable change. The global goal is to limit average rises in temperature to 'well below' 2°C above the preindustrial level and pursue efforts to limit the rise to 1.5 °C. Under this agreement nations are required to develop their own Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) setting actions to

help achieve the global goal. The agreement includes a 'ratchet mechanism' designed to encourage progressive improvement in these NDCs which must be updated periodically and reported to the UN. At present the NDCs submitted do not yet put us on a safe path.

- 3.4 In the wake of the Paris Agreement and subsequent review by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of evidence concerning the impacts of 1.5°C warming (IPCC, 2018), the UK Government's own independent Climate Change Committee has made recommendations to Government (CCC,2019). As a result, the UK Government has now tightened its legally binding target for emissions reduction. The target is now to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Previously it was an 80% reduction in emissions compared to 1990 levels. More work will now be needed to keep within future legally binding carbon budgets.
- 3.5 The Cool Wirral Partnership began work to develop a new strategy in the latter part of 2018. The creation of the new strategy has involved: a review of the existing strategy; consideration of more recent policy developments and the latest evidence available; local data sets; use of newly available models and tools; and partner and public engagement activities and public consultation on a draft strategy (detailed on part 8 below). In response to the Council's request to consider the latest evidence, the work has drawn on the UK Climate Change Committee's report on net zero emissions (CCC, 2019) and has used the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change's Local Carbon Budget tool. The carbon budget tool was used as the basis for the new emissions reduction goal based on an independent assessment of what Wirral's fair share of the global emissions reduction burden is.
- 3.6 The new Cool 2 strategy (Appendix 1) sets two goals:
- (i) To stay within a local emissions 'budget' of 7.7 million tonnes (Mt) of CO<sub>2</sub> between 2020-2100 and to reach 'net zero' pollution as early as possible before 2041.
  - (ii) To ensure a climate resilient Wirral adapted to cope with existing change and further unavoidable disruption this century.

In support of these goals the strategy sets 11 objectives for:

- i. **Leaner use of energy:** To reduce the overall demand for energy in Wirral across residential, commercial and industrial sectors making sure all homes currently below Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C that can be upgraded are improved to this level or better by around 2030.
- ii. **Clean energy:** To generate and/or source all our local energy needs from zero carbon and renewable sources by around 2041.
- iii. **Clean Travel:** A complete transition to fossil fuel free local travel by around 2030
- iv. **Wiser decisions:** To use resources – materials, land and food - in a sustainable way so that our collective decisions do not add indirectly to the burden of climate damaging pollution in Wirral or elsewhere – cutting waste, changing land uses and our diets.
- v. **Storing more carbon:** To capture more carbon naturally by increasing woodland cover in line with national recommendations and by protecting soils and natural habitats.

- vi. **A clear view of climate risk:** To identify vulnerabilities in the face of present extreme weather and further, already unavoidable, changes in the climate and sea levels this century.
- vii. **Adaptation:** To put in place policies, practices and infrastructure, including natural 'green and blue' infrastructure, that help limit negative impacts from existing and future changes in the climate.
- viii. **Wider climate understanding:** To educate and raise awareness about the climate emergency and about the opportunities and benefits of taking climate action, together with the risks and threats of inaction across Wirral to make sure we understand the problem and have the right skills in place to do what needs to be done.
- ix. **Adequate resourcing:** To secure increased investment to match the scale of the challenge.
- x. **Stronger partnerships and networks:** To ensure climate action is given the priority it needs and is developed in a collaborative and co-ordinated way with key organisations, interests and networks involved to provide mutual support.
- xi. **Evidence informed action:** To build a better picture of where we are at, what needs to be done and the impact of our actions through the ongoing collation and examination of the evidence and data available to include the identification of indicators and associated targets.

3.7 The strategy signals the direction of change needed to move towards for each of the objectives. It calls on all who back the strategy to develop action plans in support and share these 'locally determined contributions' (borrowing from the UN's approach) with the partnership. It also details a series of 19 early steps where action by more than one partner will help accelerate progress. These steps range from developing an adaptation programme to producing a tree strategy; and from establishing a zero carbon buildings taskforce to ensuring the policies of the local plan reflect climate concerns. Several of the early steps involve providing support and encouragement to different sectors to develop locally determined contributions. The council has already resolved to develop a climate emergency action plan. This will be its locally determined contribution to the wider strategy.

#### 4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications to endorsing the new strategy, although the changes that it anticipates will have implications as they are translated into action. It should be noted that taking no action is not cost neutral and the lack of a local response is likely to be more costly in the long run. In addition to costs from inaction, there may be potential savings from efforts to cut the use of fossil fuels for heat power and transport. The approach adopted based on partnership work is considered most prudent.

#### 5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications foreseen because of the recommendations of this report. It should, however, be noted that the adequacy of national and local government action is under scrutiny by environmental interests with the threat of potential legal challenge in some areas.

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

- 6.1 There are no direct resource implications to endorsing the strategy. Work to support the partnership comes from within existing resources. There will be resource implications from the associated Climate Emergency Action Plan which will be the subject of a separate report.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 Unnatural climate change presents an existential threat. There are already many direct risks associated with existing and unavoidable change locally including disruption and damage from more frequent extreme weather events including storms, heat waves and flooding. The actions needed to prevent more dangerous change demand a response from all parties from global to local. Having a robust up to date local strategy in place is an important mechanism to mitigate risk and play a part in wider efforts to address the problem.
- 7.2 The Council has made a series of public commitments to act on climate change, most recently declaring an Environment and Climate Emergency in July 2019. A failure to act proportionately presents a reputational risk

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 There were a series of engagement activities to help shape the new strategy with both partner organisations and the wider public. The first public engagement event held in Seacombe, took place in December 2018 to coincide with the UN's climate Conference of the Parties held in Katowice, Poland. Further engagement activities included: a partner workshop in Birkenhead; public events at Hulme Hall in Port Sunlight and an event for schools at Port Sunlight River Park. These engagement activities were used to help shape a draft strategy. This draft was published on the Council's website in August 2019 alongside a consultation survey. The consultation generated 185 responses. Issues identified from the consultation were then used to shape the final version.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- (a) The Equality Impact Review is attached via link below:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2017/delivery>

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The Environment and Climate Emergency Declaration was resolved with all party support at Council in July 2019 due to 'extreme concern' about the impact of climate change and the urgent need for action. The Council has been developing a Climate Emergency Action Plan which responds to the declaration and the transformation the Council and its provision will undertake. This report provides Committee with an overview of the Cool 2 Strategy developed for Wirral by the Cool Wirral Partnership. The Council's Climate Emergency Action plan will be the Council's contribution to the Cool 2 Strategy and partners and other Wirral organisations will be urged to establish their own plans and contributions to the Cool 2 Strategy. Therefore, the

actions and planning set out in this report are designed to have a positive effect on the environment and climate.

All reports and briefing notes produced on behalf of the Council now set out the environmental and climate implications of the recommendations or advice being put forward.

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

- Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases

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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Cool 2 Strategy

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Climate Change Group (2014) [Cool: Wirral Climate Change Strategy 2014-2019](#)

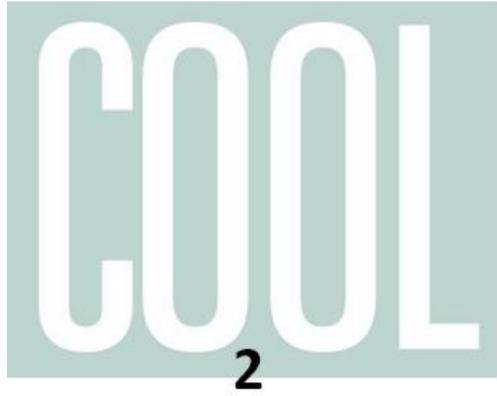
UN (2015) [Paris Agreement](#)

IPCC, 2018: [Summary for Policymakers](#). In: *Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty*

CCC (2019) [Net Zero: The UK's contribution to stopping global warming](#)

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	24/9/2019
Council - Extraordinary Meeting	15/7/2019
Council	6/12/2018
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	28/11/2018
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	31/01/2018



# **A strategy for Wirral in the face of the global climate emergency**

December 2019

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## FOREWORD

The latest scientific evidence<sup>1</sup> about climate change paints a worrying picture. It makes clear we must get rid of all climate damaging pollution fast. Damage caused by past pollution is already with us. If we continue to pollute, we are heading towards catastrophe.

By taking responsibility now we can begin to protect ourselves and our families from the dangers we face. Locally much of what we hold dear is at risk from climate disruption: our lifestyles; the places we love; the sports we watch and play; the food we enjoy; and our treasured wildlife and wild spaces. As a coastal peninsular, sea level rise is a direct threat too.

Whilst the costs of doing nothing about climate change will be high, the potential benefits from doing the things we need to do are many. The challenge we face creates a huge opportunity to improve our health, economy and environment. We can't afford for Wirral to miss the opportunity.

We already know many of the things we need to do to tackle the climate crisis. We are not starting from scratch. We have been working together to co-ordinate action for several years. Many objectives from our original strategy<sup>2</sup> were met. Hundreds of actions were taken in support. We have built valuable relationships. We have also learned valuable lessons along the way. Useful foundations are now in place. Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) pollution from Wirral has been falling – though not fast enough. Well done to everyone who has helped so far. Now the evidence has changed, we need to ramp up local efforts to make faster progress. We need to cut climate damaging pollution altogether. We face an emergency and we all need to act fast.

We know that people in Wirral believe the climate is changing and want to do something about it<sup>3</sup>. We need your help to turn this desire into widespread practical action. In the face of the global climate emergency, the Cool 2 strategy sets out a local path towards safety. By taking this path individually we can all make a difference; by moving together we can succeed.

### Cool Wirral Partnership

*The Cool Wirral Partnership champions and co-ordinates local action on climate change. It is supported by, but independent of, Wirral Council. At the present time, the partnership includes representatives from Wirral Council, Wirral Environment Network, Energy Projects Plus, Faiths 4 Change, Peel Land and Property, Merseytravel, Merseyside Police, Magenta Living, Forum Housing, Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Trust, Wirral Chamber, Merseyside Recycling and Waste Disposal Authority, Planet Heswall and Community Action Wirral. The membership of the partnership has evolved over time.*

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<sup>1</sup> IPCC (2018) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C

<sup>2</sup> Wirral Climate Change Group (2014) Cool, Wirral Climate Change Strategy 2014-2019

<sup>3</sup> Nicola Moss & Joe Wheeler, Ipsos MORI North, (2017) Residents' Survey 2017

## If you read nothing more...

Everyone has a part to play stopping unnatural climate change. Failure to act will have huge costs but doing the right thing will bring many benefits. Cool 2 indicates where we need to be, the direction of travel to get there, and some early steps so we can move quicker.

In Wirral, to meet our fair share of the global effort to tackle climate change we need:

- Deep and fast cuts in climate damaging pollution. We must reduce carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) pollution by around three and a half times more each year than we have achieved so far to stay within our local 'budget'. We must get rid of nearly all climate damaging pollution from Wirral by 2041 *at the latest*

To limit the impact of a changing climate locally we need to:

- Recognise that climate change has started and the impacts are with us now
- Be better adapted to extreme weather patterns and rising seas
- Take a long-term view and make changes now, before we are hit with even greater extremes

To make progress together we must see:

- A swift reduction in demand for energy across all sectors - business, industry and household. At least 100,000 homes alone need upgrading to be more energy efficient over the next ten years.
- A complete switch to clean 'zero carbon' energy sources by around 2041
- A complete shift to fossil fuel free local travel by around 2030
- Wiser decisions so we don't add pollution indirectly. This means changes to our diets with less meat, a big reduction in waste, and more careful choices about what we buy and how we live and work
- More trees and woodlands to capture and store carbon naturally
- A greater understanding of climate risks both now and in the future
- Changes to the way we do things in order to limit disruption from changing weather patterns
- Much wider understanding about the climate crisis and the actions we must take
- Increased investment to match the scale of the challenge
- Stronger partnerships and networks to drive progress
- Better use of data to inform our actions

Working together we can have a bigger impact. We must all identify and take further actions<sup>4</sup>. Cool 2 establishes a mechanism to drive local progress. It calls on people and organisations with an interest in Wirral *to identify their locally determined contribution* now. If you don't already have a plan of action, it's time to create one.

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<sup>4</sup> We recognise that not every organisation or individual has the same influence, capacity and resources to act, but we are not powerless and there is something we can all do

## INTRODUCTION

This strategy seeks to speed up the action and investment needed to change Wirral into a place that:

- No longer adds to the problem of unnatural climate change
- Is adapted to cope with the damage already being done by climate change; and
- Plays a part in reversing this damage

To do this, it sets the direction we need to travel over the next decades<sup>5</sup>.

It is an evolving strategy that is the outcome of a continuing conversation. It needs more work and wider support. Many have helped shape it, but many more need to rise to the challenges it sets.

Cool 2 is not a fixed and detailed action plan, but a strategy. One for the whole borough not just for one organisation. As such it provides a basis to guide local decisions. It does indicate some 'early steps' to help move things forward, but its ultimate success will rest on what you and others do in response. Everyone has a part to play.

### **Waking up to the climate crisis**

Unnatural climate change is happening. We are living through it. There has already been 1°C of abnormal heating<sup>1</sup>. The damaging impacts are being felt now. We are on a dangerous path and need to change direction. We need to stop the pollution that causes unnatural heating fast. If left unchecked, it will drive more overheating. This will cause severe and irreversible damage on a planetary scale. Humankind - and much of the natural world upon which we rely - is currently heading for disaster. We need to change course.

Current instability in the climate is as a result of a rise in global average temperature. The damaging build-up of excess heat is caused by 'greenhouse gas' pollution from our activities. This is mainly from burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas for power, heat and transport<sup>6</sup>. We need to get rid of this pollution to prevent the damage getting out of hand.

This strategy aims to ensure Wirral plays its part to limit the rise in global average temperatures to no more than 1.5°C above the pre-industrial period<sup>7,8</sup>. It also charts a path to ensure we adapt to current and unavoidable climate change. Damage has already been done. Some further impacts are expected from pollution already produced.

## **A bigger impact together**

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<sup>5</sup> From an initial vantage point of 2019

<sup>6</sup> Green Alliance (2011) Climate science explained

<sup>7</sup> In line with global ambitions in the UN Paris Agreement on climate change which came into force in 2016

<sup>8</sup> Beyond 1.5°C of unnatural warming even more dangerous climate change will happen.

Transformation on an extraordinary scale is needed. Locally we must cut the main climate damaging pollutant, CO<sub>2</sub>, by around three and a half times more each year than we have managed to do so far. This is a challenge, but it's not impossible. By co-ordinating local action, we can have a greater impact. Here the strategy indicates the direction of change needed. It sets clear goals and what we must aim for.

## The Global Picture

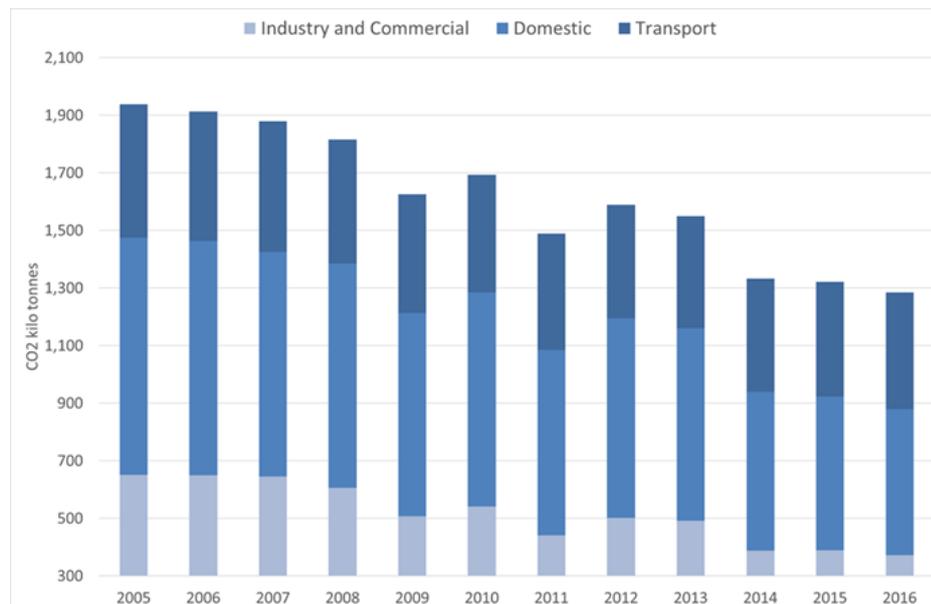
Globally, greenhouse gas pollution (CO<sub>2</sub>e) continues to rise. Pollution reached a record high in 2017 of 53.5 Gt CO<sub>2</sub>e. This was an increase of 0.7 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e compared with 2016.<sup>9</sup>

The UN 'Paris Agreement' on climate change seeks to limit global average temperature rises to 1.5 °C above the pre-industrial period. Unless there is a rapid fall in pollution we could see 1.5°C of unnatural heating as early as 2035<sup>10</sup>.

## The Local Picture

In Wirral, our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have fallen across all sources<sup>11</sup> (Figure 1). Between 2005 and 2016 the annual average fall in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions was 3.8%.

**Figure 1: Wirral CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 2005-16**



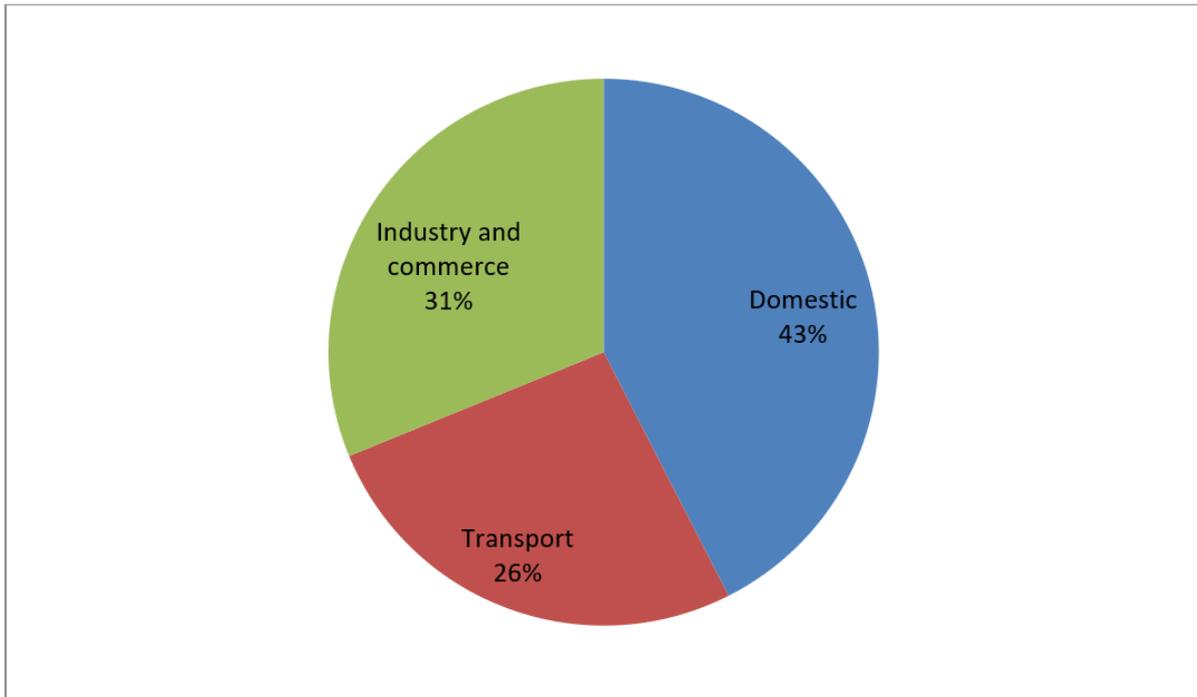
<sup>9</sup> UNEP (2018) Emissions Gap Report 2018

<sup>10</sup> IPCC (2018) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C

<sup>11</sup> Wirral Intelligence Service (2019) CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Wirral, 2005-2016

The biggest source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Wirral is now from our homes (42.5%). The second largest source is from industrial and commercial activities (31.2%). The third largest is from transport (26.3%) (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Source of CO2 in Wirral -2016**



## GOALS

The strategy sets Wirral on the path to achieve two main goals:

**To stay within a local emissions ‘budget’ of 7.7 million tonnes (Mt) of CO<sub>2</sub> between 2020-2100 and to reach ‘net zero’ pollution as early as possible *before 2041*** (Box 1.1).

**To ensure a climate resilient Wirral adapted to cope with existing change and further unavoidable disruption this century** (Box 1.2).

### Box 1.1: Staying within Wirral’s emissions budget and reaching ‘net zero’ pollution soon

There is only so much more greenhouse gas pollution we can risk without breaking globally agreed temperature limits. This is referred to as our remaining ‘carbon budget’. Our local ‘fair share’ of the global budget for 2020 to 2100 has been calculated to be 7.7 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Staying within this local budget means sharp reductions in emissions from Wirral each year. Without such reductions we could use up our entire local budget in as little as six years. By 2041, at the latest, the amount of pollution produced locally needs to be less than or equal to that which is removed from the atmosphere, either naturally e.g. taken up by growing plants, or by artificial means. Artificial means of removing and storing CO<sub>2</sub> are currently very limited and costly.

### Box 1.2: A climate resilient Wirral

Even if successful in reaching ‘net zero’ pollution, some further impact will be inevitable from pollution already in the atmosphere. We are living through climate change. This change will continue for some time. We need to adapt.

Wirral is experiencing:

- Higher summer temperatures with longer dry spells and more frequent heat waves;
- Warmer and wetter winters;
- More storms and floods; and,
- A rise in sea levels.

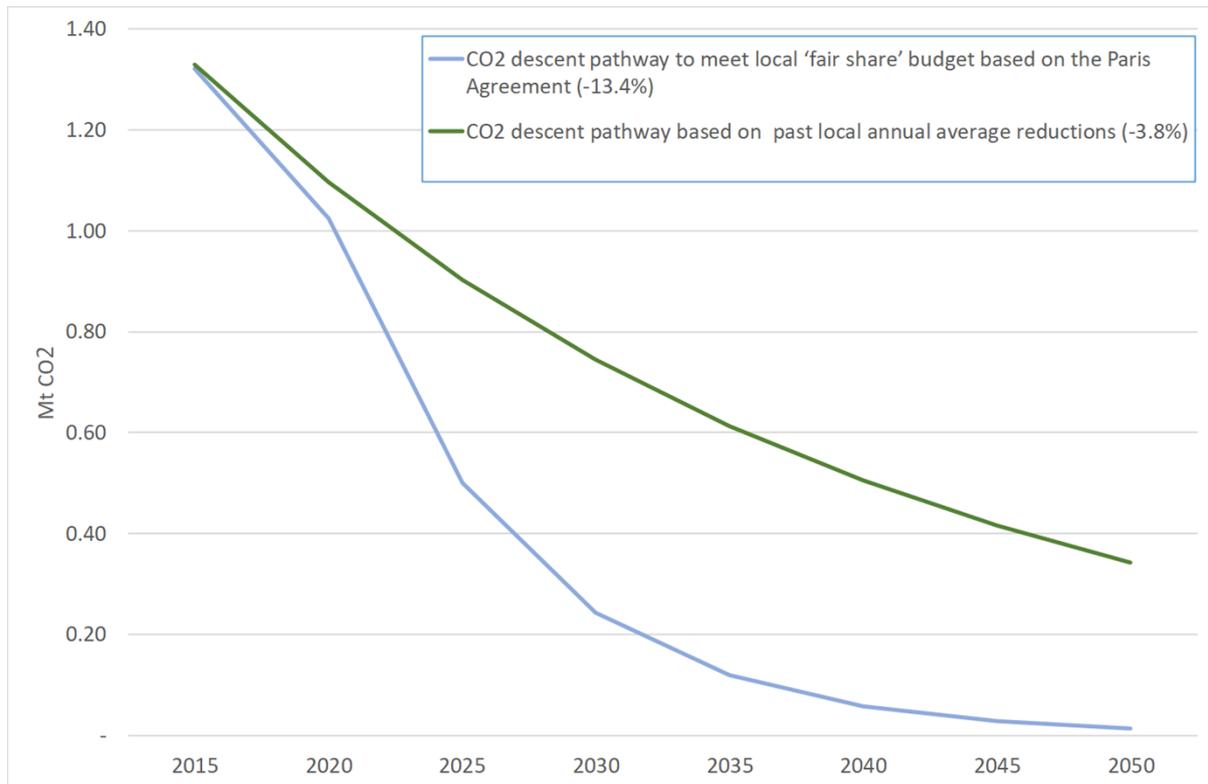
Wirral organisations and households need to adapt to these changes to avoid further disruption

To meet our fair share of the global pollution reduction burden means cutting CO<sub>2</sub> by an at least an average of 13.4% each year compared to the present reduction of around 3.8 % per year (Figure 3)<sup>12,13</sup>, i.e. around three and a half times more.

<sup>12</sup> Taken from the Wirral report generated by Tyndall Centre for Climate Change local carbon budget tool. A more recent version of the tool with updated emissions data indicates the need to reach near zero by 2042.

<sup>13</sup> Ideally, we need to reduce pollution by more than 13.4% early on. Doing this would help stretch our remaining budget over a longer period. If we do not manage to achieve at least a 13.4% reduction in the first years from 2020 we risk using up our remaining budget sooner so would need to achieve higher annual savings thereafter.

**Figure 3: Paris Agreement compatible local carbon ‘budget’ descent pathway for Wirral (13.4% reduction per year) compared with present pathway (3.8% reduction per year) <sup>14</sup>**



<sup>14</sup> Based on information generated by Tyndall Centre for Climate Change local carbon budget tool

## OBJECTIVES

To stand a chance of staying within our emissions ‘budget’ and getting to **net zero climate pollution** and we must aim for:

**Leaner use of energy:** To reduce the overall demand for energy in Wirral across residential, commercial and industrial sectors making sure all homes currently below Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C that can be upgraded are improved to this level or better by around 2030<sup>15</sup>

**Clean energy:** To generate and/or source all our local energy needs from zero carbon and renewable sources by around 2041

**Clean Travel:** A complete transition to fossil fuel free local travel by around 2030

**Wiser decisions:** To use resources – materials, land and food - in a sustainable way so that our collective decisions do not add indirectly to the burden of climate damaging pollution in Wirral or elsewhere – cutting waste, changing land uses and our diets.

**Storing more carbon:** To capture more carbon naturally by increasing woodland cover in line with national recommendations and by protecting soils and natural habitats

To create a **climate resilient** Wirral, we must aim for:

**A clear view of climate risk:** To identify vulnerabilities in the face of present extreme weather and further, already unavoidable, changes in the climate and sea levels this century.

**Adaptation:** To put in place policies, practices and infrastructure, including natural ‘green and blue’ infrastructure, that help limit negative impacts from existing and future changes in the climate

To provide the **foundation for change** we must aim for:

**Wider climate understanding:** To educate and raise awareness about the climate emergency and about the opportunities and benefits of taking climate action, together with the risks and threats of inaction across Wirral to make sure we understand the problem and have the right skills in place to do what needs to be done

**Adequate resourcing:** To secure increased investment to match the scale of the challenge

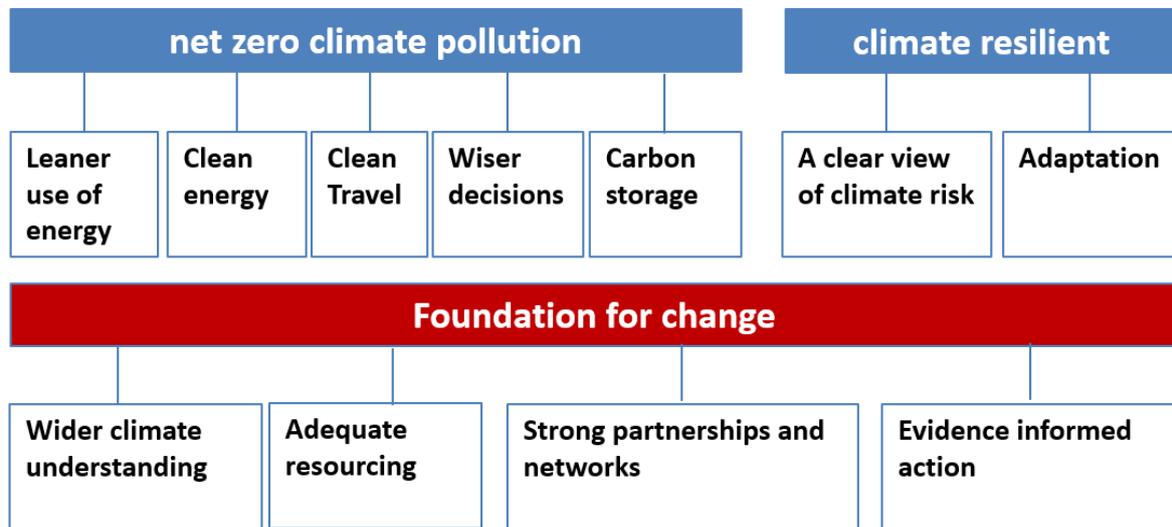
**Stronger partnerships and networks:** To ensure climate action is given the priority it needs and is developed in a collaborative and co-ordinated way with key organisations, interests and networks involved to provide mutual support

**Evidence informed action:** To build a better picture of where we are at, what needs to be done and the impact of our actions through the ongoing collation and examination of the evidence and data available to include the identification of indicators and associated targets

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<sup>15</sup> There are just over 100,000 owner-occupied and privately rented homes in Wirral below EPC Band C

**Goals and objectives for Wirral in a nutshell...**



## MOVING FORWARD AND STAYING ON TRACK

### A mechanism to drive progress

The key mechanism that this strategy introduces is based on the UN's global approach. Under the Paris Agreement, nations submit their own 'Nationally Determined Contribution' (NDC) towards the global climate goal. The local carbon reduction goal presented in this strategy is based on Wirral meeting its fair share of the Paris Agreement<sup>16</sup>. The Wirral approach thus seeks to secure 'Locally Determined Contributions' from all those with an interest in our borough to help meet this local goal. Some organisations already have climate-related action plans. Others are committed to develop them. Many more need to be encouraged and supported to do so. These 'Locally Determined Contributions' vary but together need to add up to the scale of ambition set out here. We will get a sense of whether the strategy working by the number and quality of 'Locally Determined Contributions' coming forward. If such plans are not developed, our strategy will fail.

### Working in Partnership

The Cool Wirral Partnership has helped create this strategy. To support its progress, it will:

- Provide a forum with an independent voice to co-ordinate and champion local action to tackle the climate crisis
- Help to grow the wider network of interest
- Encourage those who support the strategy to identify their 'Locally Determined Contributions' and to share these action plans publicly
- Gather and present data to inform action with a set of indicators to show if we are making progress
- Produce annual reports on local progress that consider both actions taken in partnership and the 'Locally Determined Contributions' shared – and crucially any gap between actual and necessary reductions in emissions
- Organise a public annual climate emergency forum to report progress, share experience and encourage further action
- Arrange citizen panels on climate strategy topics where progress is limited. These panels will review the evidence and make further recommendations for action

### Early steps

The following steps will be taken early on to build momentum. These steps involve different organisations working together. They draw on both organisations in the Cool Wirral Partnership and those beyond:

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<sup>16</sup> Based on the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change local carbon budget tool

Purpose	Step	Background/Description	Lead and key stakeholders	Timescale
<i>Accelerate sustainable energy transition</i>	Set up a zero carbon buildings and infrastructure taskforce	The energy transition demands the widespread upgrade of existing buildings, higher standards for new buildings and changes to energy infrastructure to decarbonise heat and power. The taskforce will focus on quantifying and costing the changes needed in our buildings and infrastructure, identifying solutions and seeking opportunities to realise them. The taskforce will be asked to report on building retrofit, new build and upgrading infrastructure within the first year of the strategy.	Wirral Council, Energy Projects Plus, <i>developers, architects, academic interests, utilities, House builders, Social landlords,</i>	Taskforce in place Jan' 2020  Reports Dec' 2020
<i>Accelerate sustainable energy transition</i>	Assess the potential feasibility of heat networks in the Birkenhead area	Heat networks are a key potential way to de-carbonise heating. They involve the supply of heat over a wider area from a central source via a network of pipes. The prospect for heat networks was identified in Cool 2014-2019 with a heat mapping/master planning study undertaken. The principal opportunity in Wirral is in the Birkenhead area. To realise the opportunity, the detailed feasibility and business case now need to be developed.	Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, North West Energy Hub, Wirral Waters - Peel Land and Property, Peel Energy, Wirral Council	Feasibility report  April 2020
<i>Accelerate sustainable energy transition</i>	Identify further renewable energy opportunities	The potential for local renewable generation was investigated partially through work associated with the Cool 2014-19 strategy. Potential urban sites for community owned solar PV were identified by Wirral Community Renewables through an Urban Community Energy Fund supported feasibility study. Wirral Council identified and installed solar PV on 24 council buildings. Four schools benefited from solar PV via Solar 4 Schools. Work on potential sites for onshore wind was aborted after a change to government planning advice. There is a need to look across the borough at further potential for renewable energy generation. A local clean energy study will be conducted to identify opportunities and constraints for clean energy development. There is also a need to identify options for local ownership of renewable generation within and beyond the borough to meet local needs.	Wirral Council, Wirral Community Renewables <i>Scottish Power Energy Networks</i>	Report on clean energy study  June 2020
<i>Accelerate sustainable travel transition</i>	Prioritise transport interventions that support rapid decarbonisation of travel	Existing transport policies and programmes do not reflect the scale and urgency of the changes needed to address the climate emergency. A challenge is to make sustainable transport a natural, convenient and safe option by giving sustainable modes – walking, cycling and public transport- priority; priority for funding, priority for road space, priority in the design of new spaces, networks and junctions. In parallel there is a need to identify ways to support a rapid shift in the motor vehicle fleet to ultra-low emission vehicles including electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles and provision for their charging. Different organisations in the public and	Wirral Council, Transport Steering Group, <i>Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Merseytravel, bus and train operators</i>	Terms of reference and work programme March 2020

Purpose	Step	Background/Description	Lead and key stakeholders	Timescale
		private sectors have roles in the planning and provision of transport infrastructure and services. There is a need to ensure future decisions made by these organisations take account of the need for decarbonisation. The existing transport steering group supported by Wirral Council will refocus its activities to encourage interventions to meet the challenge.		
<i>Accelerate reduction in indirect emissions</i>	Develop 'The Loop: Wirral' circular economy programme	The way the economy presently operates has been characterised as a 'linear economy' in which natural resources are taken, transformed, used for a relatively short period of time and then discarded as 'waste'. This environmentally damaging approach can't be sustained. A circular economy is one more in tune with natural systems not damaging to them. Waste is designed out, resources are kept in productive use as much as possible with products, components and/or materials 'looping back' through the system. The transition to a circular economy will require many changes – legal, financial, technical and cultural - along with the active involvement of multiple parties. Some pioneering businesses are already actively adopting circular practices and/or developing technologies that will assist. To increase the uptake of such activities and technologies 'The Loop: Wirral' circular economy programme will be developed to promote and accelerate circular practices and provide incubator space to nurture businesses developing circular technologies and approaches.	Wirral Council, Merseyside Recycling and Waste Disposal Authority, <i>Wirral Chamber, private sector, academic and research interests</i>	'The Loop' governance and business model, April 2020
<i>Accelerate reduction in indirect emissions</i>	Ensure policies in the Local Plan reflect the climate emergency	Planning policy and the new local plan for Wirral will have a key influence on the nature of future development across the borough. It is vital that the plan takes full account of the climate crisis and its implications for Wirral, both the need to reach net zero emissions rapidly and the need to adapt to unavoidable change in climate and sea levels. Public Consultation on the new plan under Regulation 18 of the Local Plan Regulations 2012 is due to begin in 2020. The Cool Wirral Partnership will be a consultee at this stage.	Wirral Council, Cool Wirral Partnership	
<i>Accelerate reduction in indirect emissions</i>	Boost reuse and recycling and prepare for the introduction of food waste collection	The local domestic recycling collection is based on a system that was developed approximately 15 years ago and needs to be updated to reflect new technologies, markets and legislation. The Government's Resources & Waste Strategy seeks to achieve a 55% recycling rate for household and business waste by 2025, rising to 65% reuse and recycling for municipal solid waste by 2035. The UK's independent Climate Change Committee	Wirral Council, Merseyside Recycling and Waste Disposal Authority, third sector organisations, Registered Social Landlords	Develop new strategy by June 2020.

Purpose	Step	Background/Description	Lead and key stakeholders	Timescale
		has recommended that biodegradable waste should be banned from landfill by 2025 and Wirral's residual waste is all currently sent to create heat and power, instead of going to landfill. The government has signalled it will legislate for mandatory separate food waste collections by 2023 and will update the list of core materials that must be collected from households for recycling to include "plastics". Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority has recently stated that it is developing a Zero Waste Strategy to be launched in 2020. Wirral Council will be developing a new Waste Management Strategy in 2020, to continue and build on work carried out as part of the Wirral 2020 Plan. This will include developing a new domestic collection service for residual waste, reuse, recycling and composting/anaerobic digestion and working with partners to increase levels of waste prevention, reuse, repair and recycling in Wirral.		
<i>Accelerate reduction in indirect emissions</i>	Establish a food forum/network	Food production, consumption and waste have an impact on climate. There are many food related initiatives in or relevant to Wirral, for example, Love Food Hate Waste, which provides information and advice to help individuals and families to save money and waste less food. These initiatives often cover different aspects of our relationship with food and are not always 'joined up'. The 'Better Food Wirral' initiative, which was established during the period of the previous Cool strategy, brought together some local food interests and helped build a 'brand' around which to develop local food related conversations on health and climate amongst others. Reimagining a food forum/network that builds on the foundation provided by Better Food Wirral to engage a broader range of stakeholders and community from across the wider local system would help to unite and amplify the impact of local food initiatives to create a healthy, sustainable and 'climate-friendly' food environment. Recommendations from a series of Healthy Weight Workshops, run by Wirral Council's Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November and December 2019, are expected to focus action in this area.	Wirral Council, <i>food projects, food producers, food banks, schools, Edsential, Youth Parliament</i>	Set up Forum/network Post-March 2020
<i>Increase carbon capture</i>	Develop a tree strategy for Wirral	Trees can play many useful roles in relation to climate change from storing carbon to moderating temperatures and slowing the flow of water during intense downpours. A 10-year strategy will be prepared to help realise these benefits.	Wirral Council, Wirral Initiative for Trees.	March 2020

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Step</b>	<b>Background/Description</b>	<b>Lead and key stakeholders</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<i>Accelerate adaptation</i>	Set up a climate adaptation group and develop a local adaptation programme	Some work on adaptation was initiated in support of the Cool (2014-19) strategy, but there has been a greater focus on reducing emissions. To ensure adaptation is given greater attention, an adaptation subgroup of the Cool Wirral partnership will be established to bring together and provide a forum for those with a direct interest in adaptation. The subgroup will initially be tasked with developing an adaptation programme for Wirral to take on board the implications of the latest information on climate risks.	Wirral Council, Cool Wirral Partnership, <i>Environment Agency, Local nature and biodiversity interests, utility companies, transport and health interests</i>	Set Up group Jan 2020
<i>Showcase the sustainability transition</i>	Promote the 'Sustainability Central' initiative	The need to ensure that major redevelopment opportunities in and around Wirral Waters and Birkenhead reflect climate change was identified as part of work on the Cool (2014-19) strategy. The aim is to ensure these regeneration activities are harnessed to create exemplars of the transition to a 'zero carbon' 'climate ready' place and that opportunities are created for community led sustainability transition in the wider Sustainability Central area. A "Sustainability Central" task group has mapped existing activity and community and physical assets in the area and have drafted a prospectus as a vision for the change needed. The plan is to launch the prospectus as an invitation for wider involvement and as a provocation to stimulate investment and action. A steering group will be formed to help co-ordinate activities, ensure widespread involvement and to secure resources and realise opportunities to progress the initiative.	Cool Wirral Partnership, <i>Wirral Council, Peel, Energy Projects Plus, Wirral Environmental Network, Wirral Met College, Merseyside Recycling and Waste Disposal Authority, Wirral Chamber, Faiths 4 Change</i>	Launch prospectus  Steering group  Jan/Feb 2020
<i>Showcase the sustainability transition</i>	Establish a community eco-hub/s	At workshops to develop the Cool 2 strategy the benefit of co-locating practical community environmental initiatives was highlighted with the suggestion that a community eco hub/s be established building on those that currently exist. The intention is to develop existing or create new space/s to bring practical projects together, e.g. at start, those concerned with growing trees and food; sustainable energy; and resource re-use. The first step is to identify opportunities.	Energy Projects Plus, Wirral Environmental Network	Review existing provision and gaps June 2020
<i>Accelerate climate understanding</i>	Implement a climate literacy programme	There is a need to build a common understanding about the climate crisis across communities and organisations in Wirral and what we can do about it. The Carbon Literacy programme ( <a href="https://carbonliteracy.com/">https://carbonliteracy.com/</a> ) is an established structured training programme that provides common	Wirral Council, Energy Projects Plus, Cool Wirral Partnership,	Councillor sessions Feb 2020

Purpose	Step	Background/Description	Lead and key stakeholders	Timescale
		standard for awareness. Several tools (e.g. SCATTER <sup>17</sup> ) have been used to help develop the Cool 2 strategy and can be also used to help develop understanding about the scale of the challenge locally and the impact of different measures. Awareness sessions will initially be held with Councillors to introduce the Cool 2 strategy and highlight the scale of the local challenge. In parallel funding opportunities to progress a wider carbon literacy programme will be explored.		
<i>Accelerate climate understanding</i>	Maintain an expanded climate emergency communications programme	Despite efforts initiated under the Cool (2014-19) strategy, there is limited awareness of local work on climate change. There is a need for much wider awareness and engagement if the Cool 2 strategy is to be successful. In addition to a concerted effort to ensure local climate related action has a higher profile generally, efforts will focus on recruiting interested parties to a mailing list and related social media channels to increase awareness about Cool 2. Efforts will also be directed at building recognition of the existing Cool Wirral 'brand' and heightening the sense of urgency through the new 'Wirral Climate Emergency' label.	Wirral Council, Cool Wirral Partnership	
<i>Support development of 'locally determined contributions'</i>	'Cool Business' programme	Wirral Chamber has created a bespoke energy and environment sector forum to bring together local businesses active or interested in these issues. The chamber has recently consulted its members and responding to the climate emergency this has been identified as a priority area for employers to address. The Cool Business programme will be developed to engage and encourage local businesses to respond to the climate emergency and support both innovation over new products and services. This service will also look at current operations and to support business to make sustainable changes in line with the requirements for the climate emergency	Wirral Chamber, Wirral Council, local businesses	April 2020
<i>Support development of 'locally determined contributions'</i>	'Cool School' programme	Wirral has a very successful eco schools programme with a thriving network of teachers and pupil eco committees working on a variety of environmental initiatives in schools and the wider community. The Cool Schools programme will provide support to develop school climate action plans. There will be bronze, silver and gold standard with associated rewards to encourage schools to take part	Wirral Council, Eco schools network, local schools	

<sup>17</sup> SCATTER (Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emissions Reduction) is a local authority area focussed emissions modelling tool

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Step</b>	<b>Background/Description</b>	<b>Lead and key stakeholders</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<i>Support development of 'locally determined contributions'</i>	'Cool Places of Worship' programme	The faith and climate network for Merseyside was established and has grown as a result of work initiated as part of the Cool 2014-19 strategy. The Cool places of worship programme seeks to build on this by engaging with faith communities in Wirral directly in order to help these communities develop climate action plans for their places of worship (POW).	Faiths 4 Change, Faith and Climate Network - Merseyside, Wirral Council	Promote across all faiths. 4 POW action plans by April 2020
<i>Support development of 'locally determined contributions'</i>	'Cool homes' programme	Past research shows there is a willingness for local people to do their bit to help tackle climate change. The challenge is to get the message out about what people can and need to do in their daily lives. 'Cool Homes' will engage with citizens through their home environment. Initially it will be an eight-month media focused 'reality tv' type campaign. Ordinary families will be recruited to make changes and to record and share their experiences. The aim is to create shareable and relatable content to encourage and guide wider practical household action.	Energy Projects Plus Wirral Council	
<i>Support development of 'locally determined contributions'</i>	'Cool communities' programme	The first Cool strategy set an objective to increase the number of low carbon community/transition town type groups. One new group was formed over the life of the strategy. To encourage further expansion of community level activity, the Cool Communities programme will run a series of events to bring people together to encourage practical action. The aim will be to encourage new groups to form and develop action plans and to support existing groups to do so.	Wirral Environmental Network Wirral Council	Pilot programme by March 2020

## MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

The following parts of the strategy indicate the direction of travel we must move in to get closer to our goals. Each introduces a strategic objective and the associated direction of travel. To start building your own action plan in support of the strategy, as you read, please consider the things you or your organisation can do to help move us in these directions. You can record them using the ‘action plan builder’ in the appendix. For those who need more information, a separate technical appendix provides wider context and details of what we know and where we are at.

The following principles should help guide our actions for maximum impact:

**Recognising Win-Wins** – Many actions we need to take in the face of climate chaos have other benefits too: job creation; new investment; education; local environmental improvements; better air quality; stronger communities; and better health. We must recognise and seize these opportunities. We need to seek and secure the ‘win-wins’.

**A just transition** – The investment needed to create a ‘net zero’, climate resilient community creates a huge opportunity to reshape Wirral for the better. To secure success we need to take a just approach so that the benefits are shared, and the burden is not borne unfairly.

**Near and present danger** - Climate damage already impacts vulnerable groups most harshly. In Wirral, the groups most vulnerable now are young children, older people, residents experiencing multiple deprivation and people suffering from cardiovascular disease or respiratory illnesses (JSNA, 2018)<sup>18</sup>. Our actions can help people in Wirral today.

**Creative collaboration** – We don’t yet have all the tools and resources locally to do what needs to be done. Individual leadership is vital but is not enough. We can and must change our own organisations, policies and practices and invest the resources we have better. But we must also be creative in areas where powers and resources are not yet in place. We must innovate and collaborate in order to make a bigger impact and close the gap between where we are and where we need to be.

**Root and branch change**- Small changes start us on the journey but will only get us so far. We don’t just need to do existing things a little differently, we will need to do different things too. Modern society has been organised as if there will always be access to cheap and abundant natural resources. But the high consumption ‘throw away’ fossil-fuelled economy has proven to be both destructive and unsustainable. We have seen great advances and positive change but can now see wider costs and damage. We need to think about the wider system when planning our actions. We need to focus our efforts on the roots of the problem not just the symptoms.

**Local to global** - No single individual, organisation, locality or nation can halt global warming, but each has a crucial role to play. We must translate the global changes needed to our unique locality and make the best of our local resources and skills. We must also be outward looking and learn from others. We must participate in and help shape wider action. We must engage with government and highlight where national policies frustrate local ambition. We can and must learn from each other from local to global.

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<sup>18</sup> Wirral JSNA (2018) climate change and health 2018

## LEANER USE OF ENERGY

**Objective: To reduce the overall demand for energy in Wirral across residential, commercial and industrial sectors making sure all homes currently below Energy Performance Certificate Band C that can be upgraded are improved to this level or better by around 2030**

Using energy as efficiently as possible is a no brainer. We can't afford to waste energy anymore. We need to get more from the energy we use. We need to use less overall. Cutting energy waste will cut our energy costs and carbon emissions. Cutting energy demand through energy efficiency will also reduce bills, improve levels of comfort in our homes and businesses and help tackle fuel poverty too.

### Direction of travel

- Refurbish existing buildings so that they use less energy
  - o *Improve the fabric of existing buildings to stop unnecessary heat loss or overheating*
  - o *Operate existing heating and cooling systems more efficiently*
  - o *Upgrade heating and cooling systems and their controls*
  - o *Adapt buildings to make use of natural light, passive heating and cooling*
- New buildings designed for extreme low energy 'zero carbon' use
  - o *Design new buildings to much higher standards that make use of natural light, passive heating and cooling, and enhanced insulation and air tightness with controlled ventilation*
  - o *Stronger compliance. Reduce the gap between standards and what is built*
- Review existing practices and equipment to stop wasting energy
- Adopt the most energy efficient plant, processes, appliances and lighting
- Create a 'lean energy' culture where the highest standards of energy and water efficiency and good housekeeping are the norm
- Establish 'heat networks' in urban areas
- Develop 'smart grids' taking advantage of enhanced data, connectivity and the decentralisation of energy generation and storage

## CLEAN ENERGY

**Objective: To generate and/or source all our local energy needs from zero carbon and renewable sources by around 2041**

As we use energy in a leaner way, we must also shift to use cleaner energy. Much of the energy we have used for power and heat has traditionally involved dirty fuels – coal, oil and gas. Recently there have been remarkable changes in how we generate power. There has been a rapid shift towards clean renewable energy, primarily from the wind and sun. This 'renewables revolution' must continue. 'De-carbonisation' must also extend to our use of heat. Much of our heat still comes from burning natural gas. We will need cleaner sources of heat both for space heating and industrial processes. In the northwest opportunities for making more use of hydrogen (combined with carbon capture and storage) are being explored through the Hy-Net project. The investment needed to

change our energy infrastructure is a fantastic opportunity for new jobs and training as the existing and future workforce will need new skills too.

### Direction of travel

- Exploit new renewable energy opportunities on and off-shore – wind, solar, tidal
- Purchase energy from renewable sources to meet our needs locally
- Shift heating completely away from fossil fuels - a switch to electric heating, heat pumps, heat networks and the use of biogas and hydrogen in place of natural gas. No new houses connected to the gas grid by 2025
  - o *Develop more heat networks in urban areas*
  - o *Increase use of heat pumps and hybrid heat pumps*
  - o *Make new homes suitable for low carbon heat with appropriately sized radiators and low temperature compatible thermal stores*
  - o *An increasing use of non-fossil fuel alternatives to natural gas injected into the gas grid including bio-methane the potential for hydrogen.*

## CLEAN TRAVEL

### Objective: A complete transition to fossil fuel free local travel by around 2030.

Compared to the power sector, emissions from transport remain stubbornly high. Improvements in vehicle emission standards have not delivered expected benefits in ‘real world’ conditions. Rising motor traffic has also limited progress. Cars still dominate over public transport, walking and cycling. Shifting to cleaner travel will bring benefits for health and environmental quality. Locally, there is frustration and annoyance about the cost and limited integration of local public transport services. There is also concern about limited provision for cycling and walking.

### Direction of travel

- A greater proportion of local journeys made by bike or on foot
  - o *Priority for cyclists and pedestrians rather than for motor vehicles*
  - o *Better infrastructure and environment for people to walk safely*
  - o *Better infrastructure and environment for people to cycle safely and park cycles securely*
  - o *Greater use of cargo and delivery bikes for final mile deliveries*
- A greater proportion of journeys in town and between towns made by public transport
  - o *Priority for public transport over other motor traffic*
  - o *Better public transport infrastructure and vehicles*
  - o *More flexible and affordable payment and ticketing options that enable interchange between services*
  - o *Extensive, interconnected regular and frequent public transport services*
- Easier connection between different modes of sustainable travel – walk and ride, cycle and ride, park and ride, bus and train
- A shift from individual ownership of vehicles to the use of travel services, e.g. car clubs, travel passes

- Increase in the proportion of zero emission vehicles with widespread adoption of electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids
  - o *Investment in infrastructure to support large scale electric vehicle charging including provision for electric bikes*
    - *Cabling for charging/chargers for new parking places*
  - o *Phase out of conventional fossil fuelled internal combustion engine cars and vans by around 2030*
  - o *Adoption of electric or zero carbon fuelled rail*
  - o *Use of hydrogen as a fuel in heavy goods vehicles, buses and trains*
- More people adopting smarter efficient and safer driving styles

## WISER DECISIONS

**Objective: To use resources – materials, land and food - in a sustainable way so that our collective decisions do not add indirectly to the burden of climate damaging pollution in Wirral or elsewhere.**

Decisions about where we live and work, what we buy and eat and what we throw ‘away’ all have implications for climate pollution. By thinking about these wider implications, we can often make wiser decisions that help cut pollution. The benefits are not limited to pollution. Wiser decisions can strengthen the local economy and improve health. Locally there is frustration about the limited range of materials collected for recycling.

### Direction of travel

- Reduction in the impact of our diet on climate
  - o *Reduction in meat consumption particularly the consumption of beef and lamb where rearing livestock has a higher climate impact*
  - o *Shift to a lower energy intensity diet e.g. consumption of local and seasonal food*
- Shift to a zero waste ‘circular economy’
  - o *Elimination of waste by design*
  - o *Education, to increase awareness of choices available as a consumer*
  - o *Increase in the life of products with more facilities for servicing and repair*
  - o *More re-use of resources rather than ‘single use’*
  - o *More remanufacturing where items are returned to the original manufacturer to be restored*
  - o *Increase in recycling with a wider range of materials collected for recycling*
  - o *No biodegradable waste to landfill by 2025. More anaerobic digestion of biodegradable wastes to produce biogas and fertilisers*
- Spread environmentally informed procurement practices
  - o *More focus on the ‘whole-life’ impact of products*
  - o *Shortening supply chains to reduce unnecessary travel and promote the procurement of local goods and services*
- Consider the sustainability implications of all key decisions.
  - o *More utilisation of sustainability appraisals*

- A shift to land use patterns and technologies that reduce the need for motorised travel

## **MORE CARBON STORAGE**

**Objective: : To capture more carbon naturally by increasing woodland cover in line with national recommendations and by protecting soils and natural habitats**

To help reach ‘net zero’ emissions, more carbon needs to be removed from the atmosphere and stored for long periods. Artificial means of carbon capture and storage (CCS) are being explored but there is nothing yet in place at the scale needed. Locally, there may be potential to store captured carbon by reuse of the Liverpool oil and gas fields in the Irish Sea. This opportunity is being explored in the northwest as part of the Hy-Net project. Natural storage is a more immediate opportunity. Woodlands are particularly good at capturing and storing carbon both in trees and the soil. Commercial forestry can also help capture and store carbon where the timber is used in buildings in place of bricks, steel and concrete. Looking after the natural environment and soils helps protect natural carbon stores.

### **Direction of travel**

- Plant more trees. A sharp and sustained increase in tree planting is needed - around three times the current rate nationally
- Increase in woodland cover. Around 45% more woodland is needed nationally by 2050. A fifth of agricultural land is anticipated to be converted to woodland or the growing of energy crops.
- Increase use of timber in buildings
- Protect and enhance ‘natural capital’
- Explore opportunities associated with artificial carbon capture and storage

## **A CLEAR VIEW OF CLIMATE RISK**

**Objective: To identify vulnerabilities in the face of present extreme weather and further unavoidable changes in the climate this century.**

Understanding the risks faced, is the first step to developing resilience. Extreme weather events already impact Wirral and cause disruption and damage. These events will become more commonplace. It is important we are aware of existing vulnerabilities and future ones as weather patterns change.

### **Direction of travel**

- Heightened awareness of changes in the local climate and their impacts
- Wider understanding of the main risks and vulnerabilities from a changing climate
- Wider appreciation of the advantages of preparing for change and the tools to help

## ADAPTATION

**Objective: To put in place policies, practices and infrastructure, including natural ‘green and blue’ infrastructure, that help limit negative impacts from existing and future changes.**

With better understanding of local climate risks, we can begin to adapt to ensure Wirral remains open for business whatever the weather.

### Direction of travel

- More efficient use of water
- Upgrades to critical physical infrastructure to cope with expected changes
  - o *Develop Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) to ‘slow the flow’ of water into the hard drainage system*
  - o *Use of property level flood protection in areas at risk from flood*
  - o *Changes to coastal defences in the face of rising sea levels*
- More investment in nature and water features [‘green and blue infrastructure’] to limit negative impacts
  - o *Increase urban green space and the use of green roofs and walls*
- Building resilience in organisations to enable continuity of business and services; creating a change in culture not just an emergency response
- Develop support networks in communities to improve responses to emergency situations and support vulnerable groups
- Promote behaviour change to adapt to likely changes in the climate

## WIDER CLIMATE UNDERSTANDING

**Objective: To educate and raise awareness about the climate emergency and about the opportunities and benefits of taking climate action and the risks and threats of inaction across Wirral and make sure we have the right skills in place to do what needs to be done.**

Education, awareness, training and better communication are cited again and again (and again!) in discussions about actions needed to tackle the climate crisis. Building wider understanding is widely seen as a critical foundation for change. We need to do more to understand the problem and the solutions.

### Direction of Travel

- Raise awareness about the issues and how people and organisations can play their part
- Develop local climate-related educational programmes and resources
  - o *Engage key decision makers*
- Make climate-related education a key part of life-long learning and vocational training
  - o *Spread carbon literacy*
- Ensure we have the necessary skills in place to support the changes needed
- Showcase ‘real-world’ examples of best practice to inspire wider action

## ADEQUATE RESOURCING

**Objective: To secure increased investment to match the scale of the challenge.**

To secure progress we need to marshal resources to the tasks at hand. Resources will need allocating differently. Patterns of public, private and personal investment will need to change. Inadequate resourcing now will be a costly mistake over the longer term. Action now is cheaper than trying to undo damage later.

### Direction of Travel

- Allocate resources – both people and money – to match the scale of the challenge
  - o *Consider long term costs and benefits of procurement decisions*
  - o *Seek ‘invest to save’ opportunities*
  - o *Bid for funding opportunities when they arise*
  - o *Argue for reallocation of existing resources to address the climate crisis*
- Shift the allocation of resources away from activities that contribute to the problem and towards those that provide solutions
  - o Divest from fossil fuel investments

## STRONG PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

**Objective: To ensure climate action is given the priority it needs and is developed in a co-ordinated way with key organisations, interests and networks involved to provide mutual support.**

To accelerate local action, the climate crisis needs to be a higher priority. We need to ensure that we have key local interests on-board and active. We also need to provide opportunities for people and organisations to connect and share their experiences. With more on-board and better co-ordination, we can make a bigger impact.

### Direction of travel

- Make climate change a priority amongst existing partnerships and networks that have an interest in Wirral
- Create new opportunities for people and organisations to connect with one another to share information and develop new initiatives
- Foster connections between groups active in different places - within and beyond Wirral

## EVIDENCE INFORMED ACTION

**Objective: To build a better picture of where we are at, what needs to be done and the impact of our actions through the collation and examination of the evidence and data available.**

The climate emergency is a global crisis. To make better decisions locally we need to better understand the local dimensions of this crisis. Having the right information to hand can help

motivate and guide action. By gathering the evidence, we can take more effective action. We can also better measure and monitor progress.

#### **Direction of travel**

- Gather data to build a better understanding of our impact on the climate and the impact of actions being taken
  - o Understand our 'carbon footprint'
  - o Understand the impact of actions to reduce our 'carbon footprint'
- Use information more to help motivate and guide action

## Appendix: Build your own Cool action plan

### What can/will you do...

#### **...to help ensure a shift to leaner use of energy?**

- from today...
- this month...
- this year...
- within the next five years...

#### **...to help ensure a shift to clean energy?**

- from today...
- this month...
- this year...
- within the next five years...

#### **...to reduce the indirect impacts of our decisions on climate damaging pollution?**

- from today...
- this month...
- this year...
- within the next five years...

#### **...to help store more carbon?**

- from today...
- this month...
- this year...
- within the next five years...

#### **...to help get a better understanding of local climate risks?**

- from today...
- this month...
- this year...
- within the next five years...

**...to help adapt to the climate risks we face locally?**

- from today...
- this month...
- this year...
- within the next five years...

**...to support wider understanding of the climate emergency?**

- from today...
- this month...
- this year...
- within the next five years...

**...to ensure adequate resources are allocated to responding to the climate crisis?**

- from today...
- this month...
- this year...
- within the next five years...

**...to help build stronger local partnerships and networks?**

- from today...
- this month...
- this year...
- within the next five years...

**... to support evidence informed action in the face of the climate crisis?**

- from today...
- this month...
- this year...
- within the next five years...



## **ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, 12 March 2020**

## **FUTURE PROVISION OF FLORAL PAVILION THEATRE AND CONFERENCE CENTRE - UPDATE**

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the proposed transfer of the Floral Pavilion Theatre and Conference Centre to an alternative specialist theatre provider on a long lease, while the Council retains the freehold ownership. This was a part of the 2019/20 Budget options.

This report outlines the process undertaken to offer the long lease transfer of the Floral Pavilion, the response received and makes recommendations as to the future operation of the Theatre and Conference Centre.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

It is recommended that:

- The offer received following the bid process detailed in this report does not fulfil the aspirations of the Council, does not match the bid process and should not be accepted.
- The Floral Pavilion be retained 'in house' and opportunities for additional income and cost savings be explored in order to reduce the Council subsidy.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Floral Pavilion in 2018/19 received a budget subsidy of £899,300 per year, but reported an overspend, which including the subsidy was, £1,137,000. As a mid-scale (800 seat) receiving theatre the Floral Pavilion is limited as to the performances it may attract, the percentage of ticket sales it may retain and the income it may generate. While the Council can and will continue to develop new commercial opportunities within the facility – extended bar opening and maximising secondary spend, reviewing programming, developing marketing campaigns to attract new conference and wedding business among others; it is not thought the Council can get the subsidy to '£0' within the medium term using the current business model.
- 1.2 A number of options for the future delivery of the Floral Pavilion were considered. The option of seeking an alternative specialist theatre provider to operate the Theatre and Conference Centre on a long lease, while the Council retains the freehold ownership, was progressed as a Budget option for 2019/20. The intention was that the Council seek to achieve a nil subsidy, once the long lease transfer was complete, and a payment for the building (rental / lease arrangement). The savings from the transfer of the Floral Pavilion at a nil subsidy were expected to be £550,000 per annum (net expenditure less fixed support costs and capital charges). This Budget Option was agreed by Council on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
- 1.3 The services of Lambert Smith Hampton, an experienced property real estate consultancy, were acquired in March 2019 to undertake the marketing of the Floral Pavilion via a long lease. Marketing particulars were developed and agreed in conjunction with Lambert Smith Hampton in preparation for advertisement.
- 1.4 A series of consultation activities were undertaken between June and September 2019 with stakeholders. This included briefing sessions and questionnaires with staff, trade unions, members, volunteers and ambassadors, customers, partners and suppliers. This was used to develop the essential criteria that any future operator would need to ensure the Floral Pavilion remains an important community asset.
- 1.5 The marketing of the venue commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019 with an initial deadline for completed submissions from interested parties of 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019, although this was extended to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019. One submission was received from a large national theatre provider by the deadline. This provided a conditional offer setting out in broad terms a nil subsidy and either a gain-share model or a commercial rent, but with no specific financial details. The conditions of this offer were that further information be passed to the theatre provider around existing contracts, financial information and further information of the condition of the building, prior to confirmation of the final details (provided as exempt Appendix 1 to this report).
- 1.6 The conditional offer was considered by Lambert Smith Hampton and Council officers in August / September 2019. It was agreed, at that time, that the submission from the theatre provider met the standards required for further consideration but did not detail any specific financial offer. It was also noted that the theatre provider had requested further information.

- 1.7 Council officers, having completed a number of consultations, also wished to receive additional information from the provider on specific aspects of any future operation. It was agreed by both parties that further clarification on the submission was required. The Council requested responses to additional questions in September 2019 with a response received from them in October 2019 (provided as exempt Appendix 2 to this report).
- 1.8 A visit to the Floral Pavilion was arranged for the theatre provider on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2019 and queries raised by the theatre provider were responded to following the visit by the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019. It was then agreed that the theatre provider submit an updated proposal by no later than 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019; however, a number of extensions to this deadline were requested by the theatre provider and the updated submission was received by the Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020 (provided as exempt Appendix 3 to this report).
- 1.9 The revised offer from the theatre provider was considered by Council officers on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020. It was noted that the revised submission did not meet the financial expectations of the Council as it included a management fee, payable by the Council over the next 15 years. The current budgeted subsidy is £550,000 (current net expenditure less fixed support costs and capital charges). Under the management fee proposal put forward by the alternative provider this subsidy would only be reduced from year 3 and would not achieve a zero subsidy position during the life of the 15 year lease proposed by the theatre provider (provided as exempt Appendix 4 to this report). It was also noted that the Council would retain responsibility for the larger expenditure items under the repair and maintenance arrangements proposed by the theatre provider and this was not the basis on which offers had been sought.
- 1.10 The revised financial offer received following the bid process detailed in this report does not fulfil the aspirations of the Council and does not match the bid process. It should therefore not be accepted. The Floral Pavilion should be retained 'In house' and seek to reduce the requirement of a Council subsidy through a mixture of income generation and by reviewing its expenditure.

## **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 The recommended option is to retain the Floral Pavilion 'in house' and seek to reduce the Council subsidy through increased income and reduce controllable expenditure. While this will not achieve a 'Nil' subsidy, there may be opportunities to reduce the Council subsidy in future years. There are two other options. These are to re-advertise the Long Lease opportunity or to advertise for an operator to run the Theatre under a concession contract under a full procurement route.
- 2.2 The option of re-advertising the opportunity for a long lease is not recommended, at this time. The number of experienced theatre operators in the United Kingdom is limited. The Council advertised for an 8-week period, between 1<sup>st</sup> June and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019. This generated interest from several organisations. The interest shown from this marketing indicates that the 'market' was aware of the opportunity. However, by the submission deadline, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019, only one bid submission was received. This was from one of the larger theatre groups. Re-advertising after less than a year has

passed since the previous marketing exercise is unlikely to produce a significantly different result.

- 2.3 Commercial management via a Contract - The most common models for commercial operation of local authority owned theatres involve an agreement of 10 years or longer for a management company to run a theatre on behalf of the Council. Since every theatre operation, and the service expected of an operating management, is unique, there are no standard contractual and financial arrangements. These can only be determined through a process of market testing and negotiation. Having tested the market, for a Long Lease, the previously reported potential subsidy requirement of £750,000 per year once agreement is reached appears ambitious. While a contract approach may give assurance as to the likely subsidy requirement year on year, once set the contract amount is unlikely to reduce significantly and subsidy arrangements with third parties can prove less controllable than a subsidy managed 'in house'.
- 2.4 The option of closing the Floral Pavilion is not recommended. Residents, theatre users and Elected Members have been clear that they value the theatre and wish it to be retained.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 In the UK, there are broadly two types of theatre:
- those that create their own productions (producing theatres) and
  - those that stage productions and performances created and toured by others (receiving theatres).
- In practice, some theatres combine these two approaches and most theatres also include a range of other activities, some generating additional income (e.g. ancillary trading activities, conferences and events) and some offering additional community engagement opportunities (e.g. education programmes, participatory activities).
- 3.2 For several decades there has been a shortage of drama and lyric (opera, musicals, dance) productions of quality, particularly for mid-scale theatres (under 1,000 seats). Costs have soared, regulations have proliferated, and subsidy has been cut. Receiving theatres have become mixed programme venues, relying increasingly on one-night stands of a wide range of music and entertainment, rather than longer runs of a single title.
- 3.3 The Floral Pavilion comprises an 800+ seat theatre, a foyer plaza, bar, and four areas for general hire. Reopening in December 2008 after a complete rebuild as part of the £60m Neptune Project, it replaced earlier buildings on the same site dating back to 1913.
- 3.4 The Floral Pavilion is essentially a mid-scale receiving theatre, reliant on work created elsewhere and offered through a range of commercial and subsidised production companies. This nationally toured work is complemented by locally generated amateur and community performances. The Floral Pavilion's facilities also offer opportunities for ancillary income generation (i.e. trading income additional to sale of tickets for performances) and community participation activities.

- 3.5 Since opening in December 2008 the Floral Pavilion has received a subsidy from the Council in order to cover its operating costs. The Floral Pavilion in 2018/19 received a budget subsidy of £899,300 per year, but reported an overspend, which including the subsidy was, £1,137,000. The budget subsidy of £899,300 includes £349,000 of fixed support charges and capital costs which would not be saved by an outsource/transfer.
- 3.6 The Council is facing unprecedented economic pressures which mean that it is being asked to deliver the same or better services within a reducing financial envelope. This can only be achieved by reviewing the way that we deliver services and by focussing our limited resources on its key priorities, statutory services and the things that really make a difference.
- 3.7 Cabinet on the 26<sup>th</sup> November considered several options for the Floral Pavilion and asked that these be considered further as a part of the 2019/20 Budget Options. The recommended option was to transfer the operation of the Floral Pavilion as a going concern on a long lease to a suitable alternative provider. This would see the Council retain ownership of the Floral Pavilion, but its operations run by an expert organisation. This option represents the greatest opportunity for long term savings while keeping the theatre open as an attraction in New Brighton and serving residents and visitors to the Wirral. The budget option to transfer the Floral Pavilion Theatre and Conference Centre to an experienced theatre operator on a long lease was accepted at Council on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The 2019/20 Budget option, to transfer the Floral Pavilion to an alternative specialist theatre provider to operate on a long lease, was expected to achieve an annual revenue saving of £550,000. This saving will now not be achieved.
- 4.2 The management at the theatre project the requirement for a subsidy to reduce through a mixture of improvement strategies for earned income, and cost reductions which have the potential to equal the savings arising from the offer received. This will require a detailed business case to be developed setting out how this will be achieved. But it is not thought that a '£0' subsidy would be achieved within the medium term.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report should the recommendations set out be accepted.

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

- 6.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report should the recommendations be accepted.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 All risks associated with the proposed long lease transfer have been identified and managed in line with the corporate risk management procedure as part of the delivery process.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 Pre-decision consultation has been undertaken in order to identify any relevant objections to proposal prior to the decision from Budget Council on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019. This included specific questions in relation to this proposal as a part of the budget consultation process.

8.2 A communications and engagement plan was put in place setting out when and how Members, residents, staff and Trade Unions would be consulted as this proposal develops.

8.3 A series of consultation activities were undertaken between June and September 2019 with stakeholders. This included briefing sessions and questionnaires with staff, trade unions, members, volunteers and ambassadors, customers, partners and suppliers. This was used to develop criteria that any future operator would need to provide to ensure the Floral Pavilion remains an important community asset.

8.4 Formal consultations commenced with Trade Unions with regular meetings scheduled following the Council decision in March 2019.

## **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 is attached

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2017/delivery>

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

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

Have no impact on emissions of green house gases

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## **APPENDICES**

Exempt Appendix 1 – Bid Submission - July 2019

Exempt Appendix 2 – Case Study Submission – October 2019

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cabinet: Review of Leisure, Libraries and Cultural Services – Floral Pavilion	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Environment Overview and Scrutiny: Budget Scrutiny Workshop	6 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Environment Overview and Scrutiny: Budget Scrutiny Workshop	16 <sup>th</sup> January 2019
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Budget Proposals	30 <sup>th</sup> January 2019
Cabinet: 2019/20 Budget Proposals Scrutiny Report and Council Budget 2019/20	18 <sup>th</sup> February 2019
Council: Council Budget 2019/20	4 <sup>th</sup> March 2019
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Future provision of the Floral Pavilion Theatre and Conference Centre Update report.	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2019

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## ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 MARCH 2020

<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>Flood Risk Management Annual Report</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>Mark Smith, Interim Director Highways &amp; Streetscene</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 and Flood Risk Regulations 2009 established Wirral Council as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). LLFAs are required to lead the strategic management of local flooding sources (surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses).

In April 2015 LLFAs also became statutory consultees on major planning applications for the management of surface water.

This report summarises the governance arrangements in place to oversee the LLFA Flood Risk Management activities and reports on key flood risk management activities in 2019. The Council will ensure Flood Risk Management and the work of the Wirral Flood & Water Management Partnership is effectively overseen by the new governance arrangements planned for introduction for the new municipal year.

Flood Risk Management supports the 'Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe' Pledge under the Environment item in the Wirral 2020 Plan and also supports the ambition of the Wirral Council Plan for 2025 by providing a cleaner, greener borough which defends and improves our environment. The Wirral Council Plan for 2025 also seeks to provide safe, pleasant and clean communities where people want to live and raise their families. Flood Risk Management also supports this ambition.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough

This is not a key decision.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the content of this report and endorse the action taken with respect to Flood Risk Management during 2019.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The role of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) is defined in the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010. This report sets out how the LLFA has met those obligations in 2019.

### 2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Wirral Council, as LLFA, has statutory obligations under the FWMA 2010. In order to comply with these obligations no other options are possible.

### 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The report to the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) in September 2018 (Minute 20 refers) obtained approval for revised Terms of Reference of the Wirral Flood and Water Management Partnership (WF&WMP) and appointment of three cross party working group representatives from the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee to the WF&WMP.

- 3.2 At the February 2019 meeting of the WF&WMP it was requested that an annual report be made to the Environment OSC on flood risk management activities. This report is in response to that request.

- 3.3 The FWMA sets out the statutory responsibilities of LLFAs in the management of flood risk from local sources (surface water, ground water, ordinary watercourses):

- Duty to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
- Duty to co-operate with other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs)
- Duty to investigate flooding incidents. Report and publish on Significant Flood Events
- Duty to establish, maintain and make publically available a register of Flood Risk Assets, and a record of information about those assets (*Note: the record is not publicly available*)
- Duty to undertake consenting activities on Ordinary Watercourses which may impact on flood risk
- Power to undertaken enforcement action on owners of ordinary watercourses where there is a flood risk
- Power to designate flood risk structures or features
- From April 2015, duty to provide consultation responses to major development proposals on the management of surface water.

### 3.4 FWMA Section 13: Co-operation with other Risk Management Authorities

Wirral Council, as LLFA, has put in place governance arrangements that fulfil the requirements of Section 13 of the FWMA. These are:

- Quarterly meetings of the Operational Flood Group attended by the RMAs of the Environment Agency, United Utilities, Welsh Water and Wirral Council Highway Authority.
  - In 2019 meetings were held in May, September and November.

- Biannual meeting of the Wirral Flood & Water Management Partnership which are attended by the RMAs of the Environment Agency, United Utilities, Welsh Water and Wirral Council Highway Authority in addition to other partners such as emergency services who have a flooding response role.
  - In 2019 meetings were held in February and July.

Additionally, at a regional and sub-regional level:

- Wirral Council is a member of the sub-regional Merseyside Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Partnership which meets quarterly at two levels; Tactical (officer) and Strategic (Councillor).
  - 100% attendance was recorded by Councillors at Strategic meetings and 75% by officers at Tactical meetings held in 2019.
- Merseyside representation is provided by Councillors on a rotational basis at the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC).
  - In 2019 Wirral Council attended two North West RFCC meetings, fulfilling 100% of their rotational representation.

### 3.5 FWMA Section 19: Investigate and Report Flood Events

Section 19 of the FWMA requires the LLFA, where it becomes aware, to investigate flooding incidents in its area and, where it deems necessary, report on the investigation into the flood incidents.

The Section 19 Investigation Policy, approved by Cabinet in April 2012, sets out the requirements for investigation and reporting. Reporting is only deemed necessary when one or more of the following criteria are met during a single event:

- Caused internal flooding to 8 or more residential properties/business premises within a kilometre square area;
- Flooded one or more items of critical infrastructure e.g., a pumping station, an emergency services station, electricity sub-station, hospital etc, or;
- Caused a transport link to be totally impassable for a significant period.
  - Category 1 highways (motorways) and rail links – 1 hour or more
  - Category 2 and 3a highways – 2 hours or more
  - Category 3b, 4a, 4b highways – 4 hours or more

In 2019 no flooding events occurred which triggered investigation and reporting under Section 19 of FWMA.

Table 1 below sets out the summary of flooding incidents recorded in 2019. This information is also reported to Merseyside FCERM Partnership and North West RFCC.

**Table 1:** Flooding Summary 2019

Location of Flooding	Number of Incidents
Internal Property	2
External Property	2
Highway	7

### 3.6 **FWMA Section 9: Local Flood Risk Management Strategy**

Wirral's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (FRMS) was reported to Cabinet for Approval in July 2016. A review of the LFRMS was due in July 2019 however the Environment Agency are due to publish a new National FRMS in early 2020. Revised guidance to produce new Local FRMSs is expected following this.

In order to ensure any new or revised Local FRMS for Wirral is consistent with the National FRMS and guidance, the review of Wirral's LFRMS will take place once the new National FRMS has been published and revised guidance has been issued.

An update will be provided at the next WF&WMP meeting.

### 3.7 **FWMA Section 21: Flood Risk Asset Register**

A register of assets which have the capacity to cause flood risk (same criteria as Section 19 investigations) through their failure has been created and is available for public viewing upon request.

In 2019 no requests were received to view the flood risk asset register.

### 3.8 **Land Drainage Act (as amended by FWMA): Ordinary Watercourse Regulation**

The Land Drainage Act 1991, as amended by the FWMA, gave powers to LLFAs to regulate activities on ordinary watercourses which may impact on flood risk. Prior to 2012 this work was undertaken by the Environment Agency.

This power broadly consists of two elements:

- The issuing of consents for any changes to ordinary watercourses that might obstruct or alter the flow of an ordinary watercourse;
- Enforcement powers to rectify unlawful and potentially damaging work to a watercourse. For example, where riparian owners, through lack of maintenance, have impeded the free flow of water.

In 2019, three applications for Ordinary Watercourse Consent were received. All three applications received consent under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act.

The LLFA has not yet had to take enforcement action against any riparian owner however pre-enforcement notices have been issued to 2 owners of ordinary watercourses in 2019. Both instances have been resolved voluntarily by the riparian owners and no further enforcement action has been necessary.

### 3.9 **FWMA Section 30 / Schedule 1: Designation of Flood Risk Features**

As LLFA Wirral Council has the power to formally designate a structure or feature which it believes may have an effect on flood or coastal erosion risk.

No structure or feature in Wirral has been designated since the introduction of the FWMA in 2010.

### 3.10 **Development Management Procedure Order 2015: Statutory Consultee Role**

Since April 2015 the LLFA has been a statutory consultee for major developments which have surface water implications, providing a consultation response to the Local Planning Authority. Responses are based on national policy and guidance

which set out that surface water flood risk should not be increased on site or off site as a result of development.

Table 2 below sets out the number of consultations the LLFA has provided the Local Planning Authority with a substantive response to since 2015.

**Table 2: Major Development Consultations**

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Full Application	12	22	30	45	35
Outline Applications	4	5	4	7	4
Reserved Matters Applications	1	2	-	2	1
Pre-App Enquiries	-	-	-	11	13
Discharge of Conditions	1	1	4	4	11

## 4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 For the financial year 2019/20 Wirral Council received non-ringfenced funding for the Lead Local Flood Authority function of £333,092. Table 3 summarises funding received since 2016/17, including funding for 2020/21.

**Table 3: Funding administered from Government for undertaking LLFA duties**

	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
Lead Local Flood Authorities	153,420	156,323	159,361	162,169	164,812
<i>Element rolled-in from 2013-14</i>	122,872	125,205	127,644	129,796	131,911
<i>Element rolled-in from 2016-17</i>	30,548	31,118	31,717	32,373	32,901
Sustainable Drainage Systems	9,379	9,074	8,754	8,754	8,896
<b>Total</b>	<b>316,219</b>	<b>321,720</b>	<b>327,476</b>	<b>333,092</b>	<b>338,520</b>

## 5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The role of the Lead Local Flood Authority as set out in this report is defined in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the Land Drainage Act 1991 as amended by the FWMA 2010.

## 6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.

## 7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The role of the Lead Local Flood Authority is to manage the risks associated from local sources of flooding such as surface water, groundwater and from ordinary watercourses.

7.2 This report sets out above the work undertaken by the LLFA in 2019 in managing those risks.

## 8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 There are no implications with regard to engagement or consultation arising from this report.

## 9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equality implications arising at this time.

## 10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Flood risk is linked directly to climate change. Flooding is a consequence of a changing climate and surface water flooding in particular is directly related to changing weather patterns. Higher intensity shorter duration rainfall events have the capacity to overwhelm existing drainage systems and cause surface water flooding.

10.2 The role of the LLFA, particularly through the planning process is to ensure that climate change is a key consideration for developers when sustainable surface water drainage systems are designed.

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## APPENDICES

None.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Flood and Water Management Partnership (WF&WMP) Terms of Reference.

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	20 September 2018



**Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Thursday, 12 March 2020**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>2019/20 Quarter 3 Wirral Plan Performance</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Director of Delivery</b>

**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 2018/19 Quarter 3 (October - December 2019) performance report for the Wirral Plan pledges under the remit of Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Relevant Wirral Plan 20/20 pledge(s) are:

- Leisure and culture opportunities for all
- Wirral residents live healthier lives
- Community services are joined up and accessible
- Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents
- Wirral’s neighbourhoods are safe
- Attractive Local Environment for Wirral residents

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 Environment 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 Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee have the opportunity to scrutinise the performance of the Council and partners in relation to delivering the Wirral Plan.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

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

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Wirral Plan is an outcome-focussed, partnership plan which has 18 supporting strategies that set out how each of the 20 pledges will be delivered. For 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. 2019/20 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:
- Leisure and culture opportunities for all – Alan Evans

- Wirral residents live healthier lives – Julie Webster
- Community services are joined up and accessible – Julie Webster
- Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents – Graham Hodkinson
- Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe – Mark Camborne
- Attractive Local Environment for Wirral residents – Mike Cockburn

#### **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 The Environment Theme of the Wirral Plan and the Pledges within it including Attractive Local Environment are based on developing and delivering plans that improve the environment for Wirral residents. The performance report provides information on key areas where environment and climate related outcomes are delivered.

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

- Reduce emissions of CO2

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Wirral Plan Environment 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)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	30 November 2017
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	28 March 2018
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	5 July 2018
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	20 September 2018
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	29 November 2018
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	13 March 2019
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2 July 2019
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	24 September 2019
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	28 November 2019

# Appendix 1

## Wirral Plan Environment Theme 2019-20 Quarter 3 Reports



## Leisure and cultural opportunities for all

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

It's great news that Landican Cemetery achieved the Green Flag for the first time this year, recognising the staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to maintain the high standards demanded by the Green Flag Award. This brings Wirral's total to 27 up from 26 last year and we now have more Green Flags than any other local authority in the whole of the North of England.

Birkenhead Park's application for World Heritage Site status is progressing well following the International Council on Monuments and Sites meeting in October.

A total of 475 young people were engaged in the National Citizens Service programme and 80 young people engaged with the Pathfinders project which focused workshops on knife crime, serious crime and the Cells Project who's primary aim is to educate youngsters about how crime effects all it touches, acting as a deterrent & also a conduit to positive progression.

The Macmillan project is now in its final year of funding which ends April 2020. The project is exceeding expectations and targets. Within the first year of the project was targeted to support 250 people affected by cancer on the Wirral but has in fact managed to support over 700 in the first year and achieved its 2-year target within 8 months. The project has also been shortlisted for a National Macmillan Excellence award.

### Culture Strategy

Wirral's Borough of Culture has been a phenomenal year, celebrating an abundance of local talent and creativity and also bringing in fantastic, internationally - renowned artists to showcase Wirral locally, regionally, nationally and on a global scale in some cases.

In Quarter 3 we saw a series of events as part of our Constellations theme bringing our year as Borough of Culture to a close. Joanie Lemercier's incredible light show at West Kirby, Luke Jerram's Museum of the Moon at Birkenhead Town Hall and River of Light fireworks by Illuminos at New Brighton. These events have provided people with opportunities to participate in world-class arts and perhaps inspired future generations of artists.

I am really proud of all that we have achieved across 2019 and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Culture and Visitor Economy Team, the wider Council workforce as well as our amazing volunteers and the Wirral creative community for their incredible involvement in the year and our key strategic partners, stakeholders and funders coming together to ensure the year has been such a success.

During our year we have encouraged others to explore the importance of arts, culture and creativity in our lives. Both Wirral's Public Health Annual Report and Wirral's Youth Parliament focused on Culture, both recognising the huge physical and mental health benefits that participating in the arts can bring to people of all ages. It is essential now that we take away the feedback we have received and build this into a strong legacy plan for our borough to ensure that culture and arts are recognised for their importance and that more opportunities are created and are accessible to all.

As we look forward to delivering our council plan priorities we will continue to build on our successes and evaluations in 2019 to work with local creatives across 2020 and beyond to deliver another exciting, innovative and dynamic arts and culture programme and work closely with our regeneration teams and our key partners to help shape the future of development plans across Wirral – in particular around our exciting creative economy work . Keep an eye out for details of our 2020 programme which will be launched in February.

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 events in Wirral's parks, beaches and open spaces	Quarterly Higher is better	300 (2014-15)		378 (Q4 2018-19)	170 (Q1 2019-20)	371 (Q2 2019-20)	414 (Q3 2019-20)			Better	43 events were held in Wirral's Parks, Beaches and Open Spaces in Q3 2019-20, which is 13 more than during the same quarter last year (30). 414 events have now been held this year, 87 more than the 327 at this point last year.
Increase the number of people who regularly use the borough's parks and open spaces	Annual Higher is better	67% (Oct 2015)		66% (2018-19)						n/a	The percentage of Wirral Residents who say they use the borough's parks and green spaces at least once a month decreased slightly from 67% reported in the previous survey in 2016 but not enough to be deemed as statistically significant.
Percentage of physically active adults	Annual Higher is better		England: 66.3% (2017-18) North West: 64.7% (2017-18)	67.5% (2016-17)					62.1% (2017-18)	Worse	The percentage of physically active adults has worsened since last year from 67.5% (2017-17) to 62.1% (2017-18). This indicator has replaced "Adult (14+) Participation in sport (at least once per week)". A new indicator was required as the source data for the superseded physical activity indicators has been discontinued.

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 (See Key)	Comment
Increase the number of national quality awards for Wirral's parks, coastal sites and open spaces: Green Flags	Annual Higher is better	22 (2015-16)		32 (2018-19)					33 (2019-20)	Better	Wirral has now received 33 national quality awards, 1 more than the start of the year and 11 more than the start of the plan. These include 27 Green Flag Awards, Country Park Accreditation for Wirral Country Park, 2 Charters for the Bereaved – Silver Award for Burials, Gold Award for Cremations at Landican and the APSE (Association of Public Sector Excellence) Best Service Team for Cemeteries and Crematorium, and a Best Performer Award for Parks, Open Spaces and Horticulture at the 2018 National APSE Awards.
Utilisation of outdoor space for exercise / health reasons	Annual Higher is better	20.7% (2013-14)	England: 17.9% (Mar 15-Feb 16) North West: 17.5% (Mar 15-Feb 16)	23.4% (Mar 15-Feb 16)						n/a	Utilisation of outdoor space for exercise / health reasons continues to improve on the baseline figure from the start of the plan and is also performing considerably better than North West and nationally despite decreasing since the previous period.  It's worth noting that there is a time lag for this data which comes from the Public Health Outcomes Framework. The data released in quarter 1 was for March 2015 to February 2016. Also, the data comes from a relatively small sample size (less than 100) which may not give an accurate representation of overall activity in Wirral. This measure should therefore be viewed alongside other data for an overall picture of progress.
Increase the number of residents who say they regularly volunteer / support community groups in Wirral	Annual Higher is better	26% (Oct 2015)		24% (Dec 2017)						n/a	The percentage of Wirral Residents who say they volunteer at least once a month has decreased from 26% reported in the previous survey in 2016. The volunteering includes having given unpaid help either by taking part in or supporting any group, club or organisation (e.g. helping to run an activity/event, coaching, counselling, raising money, admin help).

## Wirral residents live healthier lives

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

The number of people helped to lose weight has increased by 39 people in Q3 2019-20 (1535) compared to 1496 helped in the same period last year. It's clear to note that an increase in the number of people eating healthily in Wirral should reduce the prevalence of excess weight and obesity which is a key contributor to premature mortality and avoidable ill health.

Smoking prevalence in adults has seen a huge improvement (12% in 2018) from the start of the plan (17.2%). Wirral has improved faster than both the North West and rest of England. Focus this year continues to target smoking in pregnancy with Wirral University Teaching Hospital's (WUTH) High Risk Midwife now delivering smoking cessation advice at the time of scan and enhanced training in smoking cessation is being delivered as a rolling programme by ABL (Wirral Stop Smoking Service) to all midwives. WUTH also procedures in consultation with maternity staff which outlines the need for all women to have Carbon Monoxide monitoring at every antenatal appointment, with 24 women helped to stop smoking within this reporting period.

Excess weight in adults has improved to 62.5% in 2017-18 from 63.3% in 2016-17. Local providers are using national campaigns for example, Change4Life and Start4Life for 0-19 service and adult weight management services.

The development and commitment to the Local Government Declaration on Healthy Weight for Wirral continues to progress, with three workshops held in November and December 2019, engaging local stakeholders in collaborative discussions about healthy weight. A full report will be presented at the May Healthier Lives meeting.

Mobilisation of kiosks offering free blood pressure checks at community settings to support C&M Happy Hearts initiative is proving a success. This is part of the effectiveness of the "Raising public awareness & increasing personal responsibility" strand of the Wirral Blood Pressure Action Plan, with 256 people having used the kiosk within a 2 month period.

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
Admission episodes for alcohol related conditions	Annual Lower is better	853.0 (2013-14)	England: 632.0 (2017-18) North West: 700.0 (2017-18)	859.0 (2017-18)						n/a	There is a 12 month time lag on validated data being released. This data from the Public Health Outcomes Framework relates to 2017-18.  Performance has improved year on year since 2015-16 (901). Wirral's Alcohol Strategy sets out an action plan for continuing to reduce alcohol consumption to improve public health outcomes.
Smoking prevalence in adults (age 18 and over) in Wirral	Annual Lower is better	17.2% (2014)	England: 14.4% (2018) North West: 14.7% (2018)	15.9% (2017)					12.0% (2018)	Better	Smoking prevalence in adults improved to 12% in 2018, reducing from 15.9% in 2017 and from 17.2% at the start of the plan. The improvement in Wirral from 2017 to 2018 is better than both the North West and National benchmarks and smoking prevalence in Wirral (12%) is now lower (better) than both across the North West (14.7%) and England (14.4%).
Excess weight in adults	Annual Lower is better	66.2% (2012-14)	England: 62.0% (2017-18) North West: 64.3% (2017-18)	63.3% (2016-17)					62.5% (2017-18)	Better	Excess weight in adults has improved to 63.3% in 2017-18 from 63.3% in 2016-17. The latest figure is slightly above the start of the plan (66.2%) but is reducing (improving) despite the North West (64.3%) and National (62%) benchmarks both increasing (worsening).

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 (See Key)	Comment
Smoking status at time of delivery	Annual Lower is better	13.9% (2014-15)	England: 10.8% (2017-18) North of England: 13.4% (2017-18)	13.5% (2017-18)					13.9% (2018-19)	Worse	Smoking at time of delivery has worsened from 13.5% in 2017-18 to 13.9% in 2018-19 and is higher than the Northwest and National Average.
Number of smokers helped to stop smoking	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)		3,009 (2018-19)	742 (Q1 2019-20)	1470 (Q2 2019-20)				Worse	Our commissioned service helped 1 less people engage in the process of stopping smoking in Q2 2019-20 (1470) when compared to same period last year (1471). There is a 6 week follow up period which delays the provision of this data therefore the data is reported a quarter behind.
Number of smokers still quit at 4 weeks	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)		1,523 (2018-19)	342 (Q1 2019-20)	703 (Q2 2019-20)				Worse	15 less people have continued to stop smoking 4 weeks after deciding to quit by Q2 2019-20 (703) when compared to the same period last year (718). There is a 6 week follow up period which delays the provision of this data therefore the data is reported a quarter behind.
Number of pregnant women helped to stop smoking	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)		53 (2018-19)	12 (Q1 2019-20)	24 (Q2 2019-20)				Worse	24 pregnant women were helped to stop smoking by Q2 2019-20. This is 5 less than the 29 helped in the same period last year. There is a week follow up period which delays the provision of this data therefore the data is reported a quarter behind.
Number of people helped to lose weight	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)		2,044 (2018-19)	419 (Q1 2019-20)	981 (Q2 2019-20)	1535 (Q3 2019-20)			Better	39 more people were helped to lose weight by Q3 2019-20 (1535) compared to 1496 helped in the same period last year. An increase in the number of people eating healthily in Wirral should reduce the prevalence of excess weight and obesity which is a key contributor to premature mortality and avoidable ill health.
Successful completion of drug treatment - opiate users	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)	England: 6.7% (Jul 18 - Jun 19)	5.7% (Apr 18 - Mar 19)	5.7% (Apr 18 - Mar 19)	5.9% (Jul 18 - Jun 19)				Better	5.9% of opiate users successfully completed their drug treatment from April 2018 to March 2019 compared with 5.7% from April 2018 to March 2019 and 6.1% during the same period last year. The National Average for July 2018 - June 2019 was 6.7%.  The Q3 figures are unavailable at time of reporting due to the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System being down.
Successful completion of drug treatment - non-opiate users	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)	England: 37.8% (Jun 18 - Jul 19)	58.4% (Apr 18 - Mar 19)	58.4% (Apr 18 - Mar 19)	54.0% (Jul 18 - Jun 19)				Worse	54% of non-opiate users successfully completed their drug treatment from July 2018 - June 2019, down from 58.4% from April 2018 to March 2019 and 59% from the same period last year. Wirral is performing much better than the National average (37.1%).  The Q3 figures are unavailable at time of reporting due to the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System being down.
Successful completion of alcohol treatment	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)	England: 39.0% (Jul 18 - Jun 19)	39.1% (Apr 18 - Mar 19)	39.1% (Apr 18 - Mar 19)	39.4% (Jul 18 - Jun 19)				Better	39.4% of people successfully completed their alcohol treatment from July 2018 to June 2019. This is an improvement from both 39.1% from April 2018 to March 2019 and 38.3% from the same period last year. Wirral is performing better than the National average (38.97%).  The Q3 figures are unavailable at time of reporting due to the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System being down.

## Community services are joined up and accessible

**Overview from Lead Cabinet Member**

Wirral Together continues to progress with the development of the priority deals for health and well-being, environment, economy and children and families.

This quarter we have increased volunteering through online portal sign-ups. Wirral Partnership have developed working relationships with the following to promote volunteering to their services users; Spider Project, Elevate EBP, Wirral Change, Wirral Mencap, Pluss, Involve Northwest, Sale Sharks, CAP Jobs, YouthFed, Households into Work, Cheshire & Wirral Partnership, etc.

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 residents who say they regularly volunteer / support community groups in Wirral	Annual Higher is better	26% (Nov 2015)		24% (Dec 2017)						n/a	

## Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents has three key indicators to achieve in the Wirral Plan as follows:

- 3,500 new homes will be built (reported annually). The cumulative figure to end of 2018/19 has been confirmed as 2550. During quarters 1 - 3 of 2019/20 a further 197 new conformed affordable homes have been built which gives an overall new homes figure of 2,747 to the end of quarter 3 (this does not take into account any new market homes completed as this information is only available annually);

- Bring 1,250 empty properties back into use (reported quarterly). The cumulative total to the end of quarter 3 of 2019/20 is 1382.

- Improve 2,250 private sector properties (reported annually). The cumulative figure to end of 2018/19 is 2,220.

Supporting Measures: The above indicators also have a number of supporting measures in place. Two of these measures are reported annually however two are reported on a quarterly basis:

- The number of home adaptations completed is above target for quarter 3 at 2208 measures (quarter 2 target was 1914);

- 313 preventions were achieved for the quarter (no targets have been set due to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018. This has introduced new processes and procedures and requires the length of time to work with clients increased to 56 days (double previous requirements)).

Key Priorities: Progress has been made regarding key priorities during quarter two of 2019/20 and the detailed actions which support them. The following is an overview of these key priorities.

Priority 1: Building more homes in Wirral to meet our economic growth ambitions: All five actions under this priority are green including:

- Quarter 3 saw the completion of 52 affordable homes, bringing the cumulative total to 567 (which include 291 Help to Buy units which is a government funded scheme aimed at helping first time buyers and home movers buy homes). It is expected that activity will continue to accelerate between now and the end of this Homes England

funding programme, as Registered Provider can continue to bid for funding from the programme for new schemes identified for delivery. A total of 506 homes which consist of affordable rent, shared ownership and rent to buy units are currently under construction and there are a further 524 units of this type programmed to commence during the remainder of 2019/20.

- Regulation 18 Local Plan to be reported to Cabinet and Council on 13th January 2020 and if approved, public consultation will commence on 27th January 2020. The final version of the Plan is anticipated to be completed in July 2020 and then will be submitted for independent examination in November 2020.

Priority 2: Improving the quality of Wirral's housing offer for our residents

All five actions under this priority are green, including:

- In quarter 3, the Council and Energy Projects Plus (EPP) worked together to promote the Warm Home Discount to around 6,000 households on low income in areas of high fuel poverty via a mailshot. As well as promoting the availability of the £140 discount off electricity bills, energy efficiency advice was provided to those households that telephoned EPP's Save Energy Advice Line in response to the letter. 1,268 calls were handled, resulting in 859 successful applications for the Warm Home Discount, saving households a total of £120,260. 202 calls were enquiries about other energy-related issues, ranging from requests for assistance for boilers to billing issues.

- Cabinet agreed on 22nd July 2019 to consult on re-designating a scheme in the four areas which were introduced in 2015 as well as extending into two further areas. Consultation began on 5th August and ended on 14th October. Detailed analysis of the consultation responses is underway and the outcome of this used to inform the future of the proposed scheme with a view to present back to Cabinet in February 2020.

- New enforcement powers (Civil Penalties and Rent Repayment Orders) are in place following Cabinet approval of Housing Enforcement Policy Statement and policies on 22nd July 2019. First successful Rent Repayment Order (RRO) confirmed in Q2 which will result in an income of £988. Other RROs are ongoing, potentially generating in excess of £10,000.

Priority 3: Meeting the needs of our most vulnerable people to enable them to live independently

Of the seven actions under this priority, all but one are green, indicating they are on target to be delivered on time, including:

- The Homelessness Review has been completed. A draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has been produced which will be published for consultation between 7th and 29th January 2020. The finalised strategy is to be presented at Cabinet on 23rd March 2020 for approval.

- Liverpool City Region Housing First Test and Learn pilot commenced 1st July 2019 and represents a significant change to how homelessness is responded to. So far, 23 referrals have been made to Housing First from the Wirral area. The December 2019 update provided by the Combined Authority confirmed that of these 23 referrals: 3 people have been housed; 1 person has submitted a property application and is awaiting an offer of accommodation; 5 people are engaged with support and were being actively assisted to submit a property application; 3 people are involved with other support services but receive regular encouragement to engage with the Housing First Service. Of the remaining 11 clients referred into the service, 10 were assessed as not being eligible or unsuitable for Housing First Service; and unfortunately one client died. The current service is now at capacity however a process of recruiting a further 16 officers to respond to the level of demand is underway and we are working closely with the Combined authority to determine how future referrals will be made into the service.

- An action plan for Wirral has been developed which responds to Liverpool City region Action Plan, Controlling Migration Fund priorities and local priorities in Wirral for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Vulnerable Migrants. A small grants programme targeting two of the key themes (Employment and Social Bridges and bonds) within the action plan was opened in September 2019 for organisations to bid for up to two years funding for projects which responded to the appropriate themes identified. A total of eight projects have now been commissioned to respond to these themes. Refugee Action were successful in their bid for funding under the Employment theme and Wirral Multicultural Organisation, Wirral Change, The Callister Trust, Bee Wirral and The Reader were successful in their bid for funding under the Social Bridges and Bonds theme.

One action under this priority is indicated amber (off track but action being taken to deliver on time) which is the action to work with Registered and private companies to deliver 300 additional Extra Care homes:

- The action to work with Registered Providers and private companies to deliver 300 additional Extra care homes has also been identified as amber. Six schemes are either completed or currently onsite, providing a total of 179 units of extra care by the end of 2019/20. The remaining three identified schemes (total of 257 units) are currently at detailed design stage or have been or are due to be submitted for a planning decision and should be fully completed (subject to planning approval) by the end of 2021/22. We will therefore be delivering over the original target of 300 units however timescales will not be met due to the impact of the significant delay on the Government decision regarding funding for Extra Care schemes as part of its review of funding for supported housing schemes.

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
3,500 new homes will be built by 2020	Annual Higher is better	(n/a)		2,550 (2018-19)						n/a	
Improve 2,250 private sector properties	Annual Higher is better	(n/a)		2,220 (2016-19)						n/a	
Bring 1,250 empty properties back into use	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)		1,252 (Dec 2015-Mar 2019)	Green Actual: 1,249 Target: 1,186 (2019-20 Q1)	Green Actual: 1,315 Target: 1,207 (2019-20 Q2)	Blue Actual: 1,382 Target: 1,228 (2019-20 Q3)			Better	Q3 target exceeded in Q1. Cumulative target as of the end of Q3 now exceeds overall target of 1250 (achieved 1382).

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 (See Key)	Comment
Complete compliance inspections for all homes requiring a license	Annual Higher is better	(n/a)		1,009 (2015-19)						n/a	
An increase in the percentage of people over 50 living in appropriate housing, that meets their needs	Annual Higher is better	52.3% (Oct 2015)		52.3% (2018-19)						n/a	
Number of home adaptations completed	Quarterly Higher is better	2,257 (2014-15)		2,732 (Apr 2018 - Mar 2019)	Blue Actual: 702 Target: 638 (Apr-Jun 2019-20)	Blue Actual: 1,403 Target: 1,276 (Apr-Sep 2019-20)	Blue Actual: 2,208 Target: 1,914 (Apr-Dec 2019-20)			Better	Achieved 805 for Q3 which makes the cumulative 2208 which is above the target for the quarter of 1914
Reduce homelessness through prevention	Quarterly Higher is better	707 (2014-15)		1,154 (Apr 2018 - Mar 2019)	Blue Actual: 328 (Apr-Jun 2019-20)	Blue Actual: 664 (Apr-Sep 2019-20)	Blue Actual: 977 (Apr-Dec 2019-20)			Better	Achieved 313 in Q3 which makes a total of 977 preventions achieved to date. This year's data will inform future target setting.

## Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

As we move into the final quarter of the Wirral Plan it is encouraging that reports of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) continue to fall. This endorses the 'Safer Wirral Hub' approach which serves to coordinate and focus those organisations that have an influence upon crime levels, along with the traditional statutory agencies and more importantly the communities themselves.

Recorded crime is lower than last year. We have seen reductions in most crime types, including vehicle crime, burglary, criminal damage and stalking/harassment. Violence that causes an injury has remained steady. Only violence without injury has increased.

Merseyside has established a Violent Crime Reduction Unit and Wirral has representatives embedded within. We are also developing our own Violent Crime Reduction strategy working with partner agencies on activities and programmes to prevent children falling into the world of violent crime.

Safer Wirral Hub ran a StaySafe operation on 30th November as part of Op Banger for Mischief Night with officers from the ASB team, youth outreach and community patrol working alongside local community police officers / PCSO's to engage young people.

Wirral Together Arson Awareness Days were held during October in Eastham and November in Woodchurch. 66 Home Fire safety checks were carried out, 209 properties were leafleted. Police spoke to residents and provided reassurance to the community over on-going ASB which has involved the Youth Hub.

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
Reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) to Merseyside Police	Quarterly Lower is better	11,837 (2014-15)		6,029 (2018-19)	1,409 (Apr-Jun 2019)	2,852 (Apr-Sept 2019)	4,194 (Apr-Dec 2019)			Better	Reported anti-social behaviour has decreased by 743 (15%) compared to the same period last year. There were 592 anti-social use of motorcycles / scramblers incidents, a decrease of 227 (27.7%) incidents.
Proportion of residents who state they feel safe when outside in their local area (daytime)	Annual Higher is better	88% (Oct 2015)		90% (2017)						n/a	Date for next survey to be announced.
Proportion of residents who state they feel safe when outside in their local area (After Dark)	Annual Higher is better	55% (Oct 2015)		51% (2017)						n/a	Date for next survey to be announced.
Number of crimes recorded by the police	Quarterly Lower is better	19,061 (2014-15)	Ranking within 15 Most Similar Community Safety Partnership Groups: 3 (Jan-Dec 2019)	25,510 (2018-19)	6,109 (2019-20 Q1)	12,707 (Apr-Sept 2019)	18,713 (Apr-Dec 2019)			Better	Recorded crime fell by 738 crimes (3.7%) compared to the same period last year. Burglary, Vehicle Crime and Criminal Damage all reduced. Violence without injury increased.
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 (See Key)	Comment
First-time entrants to the youth justice system (10-17 year olds) as a rate per 100,000 of the local general population)	Quarterly Lower is better	380 (Apr 2014 - Mar 2015)	Merseyside YOT (Police Crime Commissioner area): 324 (Apr 2017-Mar 2018)		265 (2019-20 Q1)					Worse	An update to Re-offending statistics from the previous YOT Data Summary is not included in this report as the Ministry of Justice(MoJ) has cancelled the latest publication whilst Police National Computer (PNC) updates are carried out. An update to FTE statistics from the previous YDS has not been included as the MoJ did not include this data in the Criminal Justice Statistics (year ending June 2019) whilst PNC updates are carried out. It is anticipated that data will resume from next quarter.
Violence that causes an injury to an individual victim (not including homicide) recorded by the Police	Quarterly Lower is better	1,982 (2014-15)	Ranking within 15 Most Similar Community Safety Partnership Groups: 5 (Jan-Dec 2019)	2,825 (2018-19)	728 (2019-20 Q1)	1,464 (Apr-Sept 2019)	2,178 (Apr-Dec 2019)			Worse	Violence that causes an injury increased by 3 crimes (0.1%) compared to the same period last year..
Percentage of Youth Re-Offending (age 10-17 years)	Quarterly Lower is better	51.4% (Jul 2012-Jun 2013)	England: 41.6% (Oct 2015- Sep 2016) Merseyside YOT (Police Crime Commissioner area): 46.2% (Oct 2015- Sep 2016)		40.5% (Jul 2016 - Jun 2017)	40.8% (Oct 2016 - Sep 2017)				Worse	An update to Re-offending statistics from the previous YOT Data Summary is not included in this report as the Ministry of Justice(MoJ) has cancelled the latest publication whilst Police National Computer (PNC) updates are carried out. An update to FTE statistics from the previous YDS has not been included as the MoJ did not include this data in the Criminal Justice Statistics (year ending June 2019) whilst PNC updates are carried out. It is anticipated that data will resume from next quarter.

## Attractive local environment for Wirral residents

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

During this third quarter, we have consolidated the Climate Emergency Plan and work has begun on delivering the actions. We are now going into the final quarter for delivery of the Wirral Plan and Attractive Local Environment Pledge, therefore it's important that we review and reflect on the outcomes of the past five years and see signs of behaviour change in terms of the way residents act within their local environment and people taking more responsibility.

During the final quarter we will focus on:

- Delivering the LWYL volunteer training package.
- Expanding the Tikspac boards.

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
Maintain local environmental quality (LEQ) via the street cleansing of litter, detritus, graffiti. (Main Gateways and Retail Areas)	Quarterly Higher is better	97.5% (2014-15)		98.4% (2018-19)	Blue Actual: 98.8% Target: 93.5% (2019-20 Q1)	Blue Actual: 97.8% Target: 93.5% (2019-20 Q2)	Blue Actual: 98.9% Target: 93.5% (2019-20 Q3)			Better	Street cleansing performance has improved again, following the work that was carried out between the Council and the contractor to make improvements.
Achieve 50% kerbside recycling of domestic waste by 2020.	Quarterly Higher is better	36.30% (2014-15)		32.50% (2018-19 YE)	Amber Actual: 35.20% Target: 36.00% (2019-20 Q1)	Amber Actual: 35.50% Target: 36.50% (2019-20 Q2)				Better	Reported a quarter behind due to data availability and reporting to Waste Data Flow. The recycling rate in Qtr 2 was higher than the same quarter last year (33.5%). Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority has been running the Recycle Right campaign since late 2018 and this has been promoted by Wirral Council. The campaign aims to improve knowledge of what can and can't be put into the recycling bins in Merseyside. This, in conjunction with rising national and global awareness of waste, is starting to lead to positive changes and increases in recycling. Garden Waste composting was also up compared to last year - likely due to the weather being more favourable for growing.
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 (See Key)	Comment
Reduce the overall collected general waste (non-recycling) per household	Quarterly Lower is better	502.15 (2014-15)		538.33 (YE 2018-19)	136.73 (2018-19 Q1)	135.70 (2019-20 Q2)				Better	The total residual (non-recycled) waste per household was higher this quarter, compared with the same period last year, however the cumulative is still lower than the same point last year. This may be due to increased publicity regarding waste free shopping, single use plastics and packaging.
Increase level of school recycling	Annual Higher is better	35.00% (2014-15)		49.00% (2018-19)						Better	Reported annually. Year end 2018-19 slightly higher than the previous year; 49% school recycling compared 48% previously..
Increase the number of garden waste subscribers	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)		39,966 (2018-19)	34,523 (Apr-June 2019)	38,924 (Apr-Sept 2019)	39,296 (Apr-Dec 2019)			Worse	Three more subscribers compared with the same point last year. A £20 subscription offer was launched on the 13th Dec and this led to an increase in the number of subscribers in December.
Using targeted communications, increase kerbside (green and grey bin) recycling rate for the ten lowest performing rounds to at least 25%	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)		21.36% (2018-19)	21.42% (2019-20 Q1)	28.95% (2019-20 Q2)				Better	Reported a quarter behind due to data availability. The recycling rate in the worst performing rounds continues to increase, following the introduction of the Recycle Right communication campaign. Summer is usually the highest quarter for recycling.

### Report Key

Trend - Performance is shown as Better, Same or Worse compared with the last reporting period except for: Increase the number of events in Wirral's parks, beaches and open spaces, Number of smokers helped to stop smoking, Number of smokers still quit at 4 weeks, Number of pregnant women helped to stop smoking, Number of people helped to lose weight, Bring 1,250 empty properties brought back into use, Reduce homelessness through prevention, Reports of ASB to Merseyside Police, Number of crimes recorded by the police, Violence that causes an injury to an individual victim (not including homicide) recorded by the Police, Kerbside Recycling, Littering FPN, Dog Fouling FPN, Household Waste and Garden Waste and recycling lowest performing rounds, which are compared with same period the previous year.

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

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)

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**Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Environment Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee Work Programme Update Report</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Head of Intelligence (Statutory Scrutiny Officer)</b>

**REPORT SUMMARY**

The Environment 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, in particular the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges which are within the remit of the Committee.

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

**RECOMMENDATION/S**

Members are requested to approve the proposed Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2019/20 municipal year.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure members of the Environment 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 specific Wirral Plan pledges and associated strategies of particular relevance to the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee are:

Pledge	Strategies
Leisure and cultural opportunities for all	Wirral's Leisure Strategy Wirral's Culture Strategy
Wirral residents live healthier lives	Wirral's Residents Live Healthier Lives Strategy
Community services are joined up and accessible	Wirral Together Strategy (in development)
Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents	Housing Strategy
Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe	Ensuring Wirral's Neighbourhoods are Safe Strategy
Attractive local environment for Wirral residents	Managing our Waste Strategy Loving our Environment 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:

<b>Principles for Prioritisation</b>	
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
- Standing panels (where deemed necessary)

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

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

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 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS**

##### **4.3 Key Regeneration Project Workshop**

In February 2020, the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee undertook a pre-decision scrutiny on key regeneration projects including Birkenhead Market, Birkenhead Commercial District and the Wirral Growth Company Partnership. Due to the cross-cutting nature of this review, Members of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee were invited to attend. A report detailing the recommendations arising from this workshop is due to be presented to the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee in March 2020.

##### **4.4 Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review**

A Task & Finish group was established in 2019 to review the Council's draft Tree Strategy, with Members taking part in a number of evidence sessions in order to understand the challenges around tree management. The Panel's final report can be found elsewhere on this agenda.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications.

#### **6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no legal implications.

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

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

#### **8.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

8.1 A key risk identified is the implication of failure to deliver the annual work programme before the close of the 2019/20 municipal year. To mitigate this, a robust transitional plan will be arranged to ensure that key work programme items are highlighted and assigned as necessary within the new governance arrangements.

#### **9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

9.1 Relevant stakeholders are consulted where appropriate as part of delivery of the Committee's annual work programme.

#### **10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

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

#### **11.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of greenhouse gases.

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## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1:** Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Flood Risk Management Annual Report  
Climate Emergency Action Plan  
2019/20 Q3 Financial Monitoring Report  
2019/20 Q3 Wirral Plan Performance Report  
Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review Report

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Environment Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019</b>
<b>Environment Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> September 2019</b>
<b>Environment Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> November 2019</b>
<b>Environment Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup> January 2020</b>

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## ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

### PROPOSED AGENDA – Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Item	Format	Lead Departmental Officer
Minutes from Environment OSC (30 <sup>th</sup> January)	Minutes	
2019/20 Q3 Financial Monitoring Report	Report	Finance Business Partner
Hoylake Beach Maintenance Options	Report	Colin Clayton
Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review	Report	Scrutiny Officer
Climate Emergency Action Plan & Cool 2 Climate Strategy	Report	Mike Cockburn
Floral Pavilion Update		Colin Clayton
Flood Risk Management Annual Report	Report	Mark Smith
2019/20 Q3 Wirral Plan Performance	Report	David Armstrong
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme Update	Report – Standing Item	Scrutiny Officer
<b>Deadline for cleared reports: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020</b>		

### STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

Item	Format	Lead Departmental Officer
2019/20 Quarterly Financial Monitoring Report	Report	Peter Molyneux
2019/20 Wirral Plan Performance Monitoring	Report	David Armstrong/Nicola Butterworth
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme Update	Report	Scrutiny Officer

### FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Format	Proposed Timescale	Lead Departmental Officer
Smokefree Strategy Update	Report	2020/21	Julie Webster

Marine Lake Management – Progress Update	Report	2020/21	Colin Clayton
Homelessness Update	Report	2020/21	Lisa Newman
Property Pool Plus Housing Allocations Policy	Report	2020/21	Lisa Newman

## **WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead Departmental Officer</b>
Transformation Programme	TBC	As and when	Tim Games
Public Health Impact of 5G (Lead Committee – Adult Care and Health OSC)	All Member Workshop	2020/21	Julie Webster
Wirral Flood and Water Management Partnership	Meeting	TBC	Mark Smith

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