



## Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee

**Date:** Thursday, 20 January 2022  
**Time:** 6.00 p.m.  
**Venue:** Floral Pavilion

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## AGENDA

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION
2. APOLOGIES
3. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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.

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

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2022.

**5. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your question/statement by the deadline for submission.

**5.1 Public Questions**

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Monday 17 January 2022 to the Council's Monitoring Officer ([committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk)) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10.

**5.2 Statements and petitions**

Notice of representations to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Monday 17 January 2022 to the Council's Monitoring Officer ([committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk)) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 11.1.

Petitions may be presented to the Committee. The person presenting the petition will be allowed to address the meeting briefly (not exceeding one minute) to outline the aims of the petition. The Chair will refer the matter to another appropriate body of the Council within whose terms of reference it falls without discussion, unless a relevant item appears elsewhere on the Agenda. Please give notice of petitions to [committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk) in advance of the meeting.

**5.3 Questions by Members**

Questions by Members to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Orders 12.3 to 12.8.

**SECTION A - KEY AND OTHER DECISIONS**

**6. ROAD SAFETY WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE (Pages 9 - 32)**

Please note that the PDF file for this item may not be suitable to view for people with disabilities, users of assistive technology or mobile phone devices. Please contact [ts-trafficcoord@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:ts-trafficcoord@wirral.gov.uk) if you would like this document in an accessible format.

7. **WIRRAL ALLOTMENT PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY 2021-26 (Pages 33 - 112)**
8. **OPERATION EVALUATION – POLLINATOR PILOT (Pages 113 - 142)**
9. **TREE MANAGEMENT AND INSPECTION UPDATE (Pages 143 - 148)**

## **SECTION B - BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

10. **2022/23 BUDGET UPDATE (Pages 149 - 246)**

## **SECTION C - WORK PROGRAMME / OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

11. **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE (Pages 247 - 256)**

## **ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE Terms of Reference (Constitution section 3(b))**

### **5.1 Composition:**

Eleven (11) Members of the Council, subject to proportionality, which may be altered to accommodate the overall political balance calculation.

### **5.2 Terms of Reference**

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee has responsibility for parks and open spaces, highways management and infrastructure, coastal protection and flood defence and environment and waste matters. It is the Committee that leads on behalf of the Council in responding to and matters concerning the Climate Emergency.

The Committee is charged by full Council to undertake responsibility for the Council's role and functions:-

- (a) in co-ordinating the response to cross-cutting sustainability issues such as reducing carbon emissions, air quality issues, climate change response, improving resource efficiency and developing sustainable energy;
- (b) in relation to all highways matters and as highway authority, street authority, bridge authority, including but not limited to public open spaces, street furniture on the highway and open spaces or parts of open spaces immediately adjacent to the highway;
- (c) in relation to traffic management and transport and as traffic authority, including but not limited to public passenger transport

and the co-ordination of transport for service users, traffic orders and rights of way issues;

- (d) in relation to parking, including on and off-street parking and civil parking enforcement;
- (e) in respect of parks, open spaces, countryside management, allotments, playgrounds and cemeteries, including arboricultural, gardening and warden services;
- (f) in relation to the management of authorised and unauthorised sites and encampments, this to include all activities necessary or incidental to the Council's performance of its responsibilities in relation to Gypsies, Roma and Travellers;
- (g) in relation to waste and as waste collection authority, litter authority, including but not limited to dealing with litter, street cleansing, abandoned vehicles and dog fouling, and the Council's relationship with Merseyside Recycling & Waste Authority (MRWA) as the joint waste disposal authority;
- (h) as coast protection authority and lead local flood authority;
- (i) in respect of emergency planning and community resilience (infrastructure and contract services);
- (j) providing a view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management in relation to the Committee's functions; and
- (k) undertaking the development and implementation of policy in relation to the Committee's functions, incorporating the assessment of outcomes, review of effectiveness and formulation of recommendations to the Council, partners and other bodies, which shall include any decision relating to the above functions.

### 5.3 Methodology

- (a) **Enquiries and Policy Development** -The Committee may undertake enquiries and investigate the available options for future direction in policy development and may appoint advisors and assessors to assist them in this process. They may go on site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that they reasonably consider necessary to inform their deliberations.
- (b) **Overview and Scrutiny** - The Committee may scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken by the Authority in so far as they have a direct impact on the role or functions of the committee and the Committee can make recommendations to the relevant Committee on policies, budget and service delivery. Overview and scrutiny of the Council is an important part of the Committee's remit as part of a 'doing and reviewing' approach. Upon conclusion of a scrutiny exercise the Committee will produce a report containing recommendations for decision by the Policy and Resources Committee or other Committee as may be relevant. In doing so, the Committee shall have regard to the overview and scrutiny means of working set out at Part 4(4) of this Constitution.

- (c) **Stakeholders** - The Committee may invite stakeholders to address the committee on issues of local concern and/or answer questions in so far as it impacts directly or indirectly on the role of functions of the committee

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## ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Monday, 15 November 2021

Present: Councillor EA Grey (Chair)

Councillors	H Collinson	M Collins
	S Foulkes	S Mountney
	C O'Hagan	L Rowlands
	I Williams	C Cooke
	B Berry	A Brame

### 41 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed attendees and viewers to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was webcast and retained on the Council's website for two years.

### 42 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

### 43 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest. There were no declarations of interests.

Councillor Stephen Foulkes noted that he was a member of Planning Committee who had made the planning decision on the West Kirby flood alleviation sea wall (see Minute 47 below) but was approaching the decision at this Committee with an open mind.

### 44 MINUTES

**Resolved (by assent) –**

**That, subject to 'appreciate' in the resolution for the Love Wirral Strategy minute being amended to 'appreciation', the minutes of the meeting of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee held on 20 October 2021 be approved and adopted as a correct record.**

### 45 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

**Question 1 – Neil Smith [Read out by Chair]**

As the Chair of this meeting has declared a “climate emergency” why is Wirral Council:

- Still driving round on quad bikes spraying pavements and streets outside schools and people’s houses with Glyphosate?
- Providing/sponsoring community fireworks displays for certain areas on the Wirral?

Both of which seem hypocritical against your policy of a ‘climate emergency’ when it seems Wirral council picks and chooses to apply its rules when it suits.

**Answer – Cllr Liz Grey [Chair]**

First of all, I would like to thank Mr Smith for his question.

I would like to assure him that we are actively engaged in phasing out glyphosate as promised, and we are pursuing alternatives for weed control. This committee recently approved a short-term contract on the understanding that officers step up the pursuit of glyphosate alternatives and reducing usage further, and to make the case for future in house provision for weed control.

As for fireworks, I agree with you that we need to consider the environmental impacts of these and again, we have been working more closely with environmental agencies, such as Natural England, to ensure best practice here.

Thank you again for your question.

46 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

**Petition: Save West Kirby Promenade - Pursue Other Flood Alleviation options [Presented by Anthony Clark]**

Thank you for the opportunity to present this petition to ask councillors and Committee to save West Kirby Promenade and pursue other flood alleviation options. The full petition can be read at [www.change.org/savewestkirbypromenade](http://www.change.org/savewestkirbypromenade).

West Kirby Promenade is an iconic location and one of the jewels in the crown of the Wirral enjoyed by thousands of people every year. Many local residents believe proposals to create a 1.2 metre high concrete wall along the Promenade will be hugely detrimental. The 1.2 metre footway to the rear of the promenade is well below national standards and should be reconsidered against the Equalities Act. Users cannot pass and will be forced into the road, causing a very significant safety issue, perhaps that greater than the flood risk itself.

On item 7 of tonight’s agenda, you are asked to agree and delegate the decision to an officer to appoint a contractor to undertake £6 million worth of

work to deliver this scheme, starting as early as February next year. You are asked not to agree this.

Due to the high level of concerns locally and the sensitivities of this proposal, the final decision should be taken democratically and not delegated. The petition asks for the Council to pause and allow a much wider democratic debate. Do not be rushed by a 'buy it now or lose it' threat of funding from the Environment Agency. This is not the way to make decisions. There is a very real risk that costs will escalate, and is the £2.4 million of Wirral Borough Council allocation funding best spent on this right now? Does the investment of £2.4 million warrant the needs and risks today?

As Committee members, are you assured that this is the best option? Are you satisfied that you have seen other options to tackle flood alleviation on West Kirby Promenade and that they have been exhausted? Are you assured that over 5,000 tons of concrete is the best option for West Kirby Promenade? Is £6 million best value? And is this design solution really worth the sacrifice right now? Thank you Chair.

#### 47 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

There were no questions by Members.

#### 48 **ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS AND AWARD OF CONTRACTS - HIGHWAY SERVICES**

The Assistant Director for Highways and Infrastructure introduced this report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services which recommended acceptance of tenders and the award of term contracts for various highway services. The contracts were to run from December 2021 until November 2025, with one of the contracts running to March 2026. There were no extension provisions within the contracts. There were benefits in terms of movement toward the Council's net zero carbon emissions goals and community wealth and these would be monitored throughout the term of the contracts.

In answer to Members questions it was established that:

- There were bidders for all of the contacts although some were rejected as not compliant
- Bids were judged on a spit between quality, cost and social value, and the split was determined with advice from the Procurement officers

#### **RESOLVED: That**

- (1) **the tenders for the Wirral Highway A1.1, A1.2, A1.3, A1.4, A1.5 and A2 Term Service Contracts, December 2021 to November 2025, submitted to Wirral Council on 8 October 2021 be accepted;**

- (2) the tender for the Wirral Highway A3 Term Service Contract, December 2021 to March 2026, submitted to Wirral Council on 8 October 2021 be accepted;
- (3) the award of all seven contracts be approved, subject to contract and subject to expiry of the relevant standstill period without challenges, to the following suppliers:

<b>Contract Ref</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Successful supplier</b>
<b>A1.1</b>	<b>Surface Treatments (Surface Dressing)</b>	<b>Kiely Bros Ltd</b>
<b>A1.2</b>	<b>Surface Treatments (Microasphalt)</b>	<b>Kiely Bros Ltd</b>
<b>A1.3</b>	<b>Surface Treatments (Slurry Sealing Processes)</b>	<b>JPCS Ltd</b>
<b>A1.4</b>	<b>Surface Treatments (Carriageway Microasphalt Hand Applied Patching)</b>	<b>Colas Ltd</b>
<b>A1.5</b>	<b>Surface Treatments (Carriageway and Footway Retread Processes)</b>	<b>Colas Ltd</b>
<b>A2</b>	<b>Carriageway Structural Resurfacing (HRA/DBM/Plane and Inlay)</b>	<b>Hanson Contracting</b>
<b>A3</b>	<b>Civil and Highway Engineering Works (Traffic schemes, footway reconstruction and public rights of way)</b>	<b>Cambrianway Limited</b>

49 **WEST KIRBY FLOOD ALLEVIATION - AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION PHASE**

The Assistant Director for Highways and Infrastructure introduced this report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services which presented the West Kirby Flood Alleviation Scheme which had received Planning Approval on 2 November 2021. Planning and grant funding conditions required the main construction activity to be undertaken between April and October 2022, which did not fit in with the Committee's schedule of meetings, so delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services was required to award the advanced and construction phase works contracts.

Members debated the issue which established:

- The Environment Agency could provide additional funding if there were cost increases for materials beyond the contingency already within the project's budget
- There were to be public realm improvements as part of the works

- There would be a range of opinions but it was also likely to provide a focus for visits and a novelty value which should increase visitor numbers.

**Resolved – That**

- (1) **the proposed procurement process and strategy for the construction of the West Kirby Flood Alleviation Scheme set out at paragraph 3.7 of this report be approved; and**
- (2) **authority be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to award the advanced Engineering Construction Contract and also the main construction phase Engineering Construction Contract.**

50 **PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021**

The Director of Public Health presented her independent and statutory Annual Report requirement for 2020/2021. The Report described enduring health inequalities in Wirral, the immediate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on these differences in health outcomes and recommended actions to take to improve residents' health. Previous reports had led to action in the reduction of people smoking in the borough to levels below the national average; increased support for people who were feeling socially isolated plus significant activity across a range of partners to highlight and reduce the damage caused to our communities from alcohol abuse and gambling. The 2020/2021 Report seeks to direct action that we need to take to reduce the impact of health inequalities on our residents and improve health for everyone in the borough.

The Covid-19 pandemic had made health inequalities worse, highlighting the ten year difference in life expectancy between east and west Wirral. The Wirral was better than the English average in some such as green space and air quality but not in life expectancy and fuel poverty. The five recommendations in the report should result in delivery plans and partnership working with community groups and the NHS.

Members noted that morbidity was changing with people dying younger and there was no impetus for extra care housing on Wirral. They also noted other issues such as the health benefits of volunteering such as litter picking and obesity.

Members expressed their thanks to the Director and her team for the thorough and important report. Needs to be in our minds in all we do. Also like to add to include road safety as part of public health work in future.

Councillor Liz Grey proposed that road safety be explicitly added to future Health Annual Reports. This was seconded by Councillor Clair O'Hagan.

**Resolved –**

**That the recommendations detailed within the Public Health Annual Report be endorsed and road safety be added to future Annual Health Reports.**

51 **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE BUDGET REPORT**

The Senior Finance Business Partner presented this report which noted the feedback and outcomes from the Budget Workshops for this Committee which had taken place in August and September 2021. The workshops had enabled officer and Member liaison on proposed budget options, to facilitate discussion and allow direction to be obtained on further analysis required. The Policy and Resources Committee, in consultation with the respective Policy and Service Committees, had been charged by Council to formulate a draft Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and budget to recommend to the Council. The Budget Workshops considered whether the proposals included in the MTFP for the 2022/23 budget, and beyond, were to be taken forward or whether they were to be replaced by alternative proposals that the committees will recommend. No options had been rejected in the workshops.

Members noted that:

- The identified savings could be used as a baseline for the budget process
- More savings may be requested once the financial settlement from Government was known
- The report stated that there had been three workshops when there had been two, and some additional information requested at them could not yet be given.
- That future rewilding proposals would include consultation with local Members before implementation to address the emerging problem of encroachment onto residential areas
- No proposals had been either fully endorsed or rejected.

**Resolved (7 for, none against, 4 abstentions)**

**That the Budget Workshop feedback and outcomes, as detailed in appendix 1, being reported to Policy and Resources Committee for consideration, be agreed.**

52 **ECET QUARTER 2 MONITORING**

The Senior Finance Business Partner presented the report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services which set out the financial monitoring information for the Committee as at quarter 2 (Apr – Sep) of 2021-22. The Committee was accountable for ensuring that the Committee budgets remained within the relevant envelope and would take collective responsibility via the Policy and Resources Committee to ensure that the whole Council budget remained in balance at all times, by agreeing mitigating actions to bring the budget back in line, should a deficit be forecast. There had been variances from the forecast,

mainly due to parking charges not being implemented and increased demand for some services. Some capital schemes had been moved to this Committee too.

Members questioned the detail of the report and established that the car parking equipment had yet to be purchased and work was to commence consultation on some of the required Traffic Regulation Orders. This would involve comments from the consultation coming back to Committee before decision.

**Resolved - That**

- (1) the projected year-end revenue forecast position of £0.552m adverse, as reported at quarter 2 (Apr – Sep) of 2021-22 be noted.**
- (2). progress on the achievement of approved savings and the projected year end forecast position at quarter 2 (Apr – Sep) of 2021-22 be noted.**
- (3). the reserves allocated to the Committee for future one-off commitments be noted.**
- (4). the projected year-end capital forecast position of £2.036m favourable, as reported at quarter 2 (Apr – Sep) of 2021-22 be noted.**

**53 WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Members considered the proposed work programme for the remainder of the municipal year.

Members noted that some items had been deferred due to a by-election at the end of November 2021, and that the Active Travel Working Group could not find a date to meet in December. The Chair had asked that if any decisions were being made before their meeting, both Committees were to be briefed and informed. The Chair proposed an amendment to reflect this. This was seconded by Councillor Steve Foulkes.

**Resolved –**

**That this Committee note the work programme and the fact that the Active Travel Working Group is not meeting in December as planned we expect that any decisions about active travel that may need to be made before the Working Group can meet will be made jointly with this Committee and the Economy Regeneration and Development Committee in line with the arrangements made between the two Chairs agreed at Policy and Resources Committee on 30 June 2021.**

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## **ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, 20 January 2022**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>ROAD SAFETY WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report provides an update on progress made in planning, funding and implementing the recommendations of the Road Safety Working Group as requested by the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee on 7 September 2021.

The effective delivery of the recommendations agreed by the Road Safety Working Group contributes to the Wirral Plan 2021-26 themes of sustainable environment and safe and pleasant communities.

The services carried out will take place across all Wards.

This report does not involve a key decision.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is recommended to endorse the update on the recommendations of the Road Safety Working Group as set out as appendix A to this report.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

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

- 1.1 To ensure the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is updated on progress, planning, funding and implementation of the recommendations agreed by the Road Safety Working Group.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 As this report is for information no alternative options are recommended.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 On the 16 March 2021 the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee approved the recommendations from the Road Safety Working Group.
- 3.2 Road safety workshops were held with a cross-party group of Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee Members on 28 January 2021 and 11 February 2021 to update Members on the outcomes from Wirral's previous Road Safety Plan and to provide an early opportunity to shape the content of the next plans and road safety strategy. A number of key outputs from the workshops were identified and this report is brought to Committee to provide a further update on progress of these initiatives.
- 3.3 On the 7 September 2021 the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee requested officers to report back with an update on progress of the recommendations agreed by the Road Safety Working Group.
- 3.4 One of the key recommendations identified by the Road Safety Working Group was to adopt a Safe Systems/ Vision Zero approach to Road Safety. Merseyside Road Safety Partnership have produced a new Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy which was approved by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority on 26 November 2021. A copy of this document can be found in appendix B.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 It is anticipated that schemes and initiatives identified by the Road Safety Working Group are to be funded by the new City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) allocation for Wirral over 5 years from 2022 which is expected to be between £5m and £11m. There are no direct revenue implications associated with this report.

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council has statutory duties as defined by the Highways Act 1980, Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, Road Traffic Act 1988, Local Government Act and the Traffic Management Act 2004 to maintain, manage and improve the highway.

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

- 6.1 Existing staff resources will be used for the detailed investigation, design, supervision and delivery of these schemes, supplemented by external support where required.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 Failure to undertake the identified recommendations listed in appendix A could result in the Council not meeting its Statutory Duties as set out in the Highways Act 1980, Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, Road Traffic Act 1988, Local Government Act 2000 and the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 7.2 Failure to undertake the identified recommendations would also result in a failure to support the aspirations of the Road Safety Working Group and delivery of the priorities of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Transport Plan. Consequently, this could result in the loss or clawback of funding.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Wirral Council has a statutory consultation process that is required for the undertaking of work on the adopted highway which will require public consultation, objections to which would be considered under the Scheme of Delegation in the Council's Constitution or by the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee once a level of objections have been reached exceeding the current scheme of Delegation number.
- 8.2 Some of the identified schemes will be subject to the requirements of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process.
- 8.3 The initial statutory advertising process for the TRO proposals will require publication of notices at all sites affected by the proposals and in the press with an appropriate objection period. All Party Spokespersons and Ward Councillors will be informed.
- 8.4 Legal notices and maps of the areas affected by the TRO will be prepared as part of the consultation process.

## **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.
- 9.2 This report is concerned with updating Members on strategy and programmes, so there are no direct equality implications arising from this report and no impact assessment is included. Equalities considerations are built into the design and procurement processes for any work commissioned to deliver the road safety strategy, and any equality implications and impact statements will be considered at the appropriate stage.

## 10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The proposed recommendations set out in Appendix A of this report generally have environmental benefits. Many of the Local Journey and Network Management projects are aimed at improving access to the highway network which will help to support better air quality across the borough and also enable a greater number of journeys to be undertaken by sustainable modes, therefore reducing residents reliance on the private car and reducing carbon emissions. Other projects will improve environmental safety for highway users.

## 11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 It is considered that the recommendations listed under appendix A support the principles of community wealth building. As the recommendations move into the delivery phase, all opportunities to secure community wealth and social value e.g. through Council contracts will be explored.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix A – Update on Road Safety Workshop Group Recommendations

Appendix B – Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy - Please note that the PDF file below may not be suitable to view for people with disabilities, users of assistive technology or mobile phone devices. Please contact [ts-trafficcoord@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:ts-trafficcoord@wirral.gov.uk) if you would like this document in an accessible format.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Transport Plan  
<https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCRCA-TRANSPORT-PLAN.pdf>

DFT Road Safety Research Report no.108 ‘Contribution of Local Safety Schemes to Casualty Reduction’:  
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090417002224/http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/research/rsrr/theme5/rsrr108.pdf>

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee - Road Safety Programme Update	7 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee – Combined Authority Transport Plan (Integrated Transport Block) Programme 2021 / 22	16 <sup>th</sup> March 2021



## APPENDIX A – UPDATE ON ROAD SAFETY WORKSHOP GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

No.	Recommendation	Progress / Planning	Funding	Implementation
1	Link the road safety strategy into the Community Safety Strategy	Merseyside Road Safety Partnership have produced a new Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy which was approved by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority on 26/11/21. A copy of this document can be found in Appendix B. A Local Road Safety plan to be developed to compliment the regional strategy, including links to Community Safety Strategy and other key policies.	N/A	2022/23
2	Wirral Council to explicitly adopt a Safe Systems/ Vision Zero approach to Road Safety	Wirral Council's Local Road Safety Plan will align to the umbrella Liverpool City Region strategy (based on Safe Systems and Vision Zero).	N/A	2022/23
3	Wirral Council to adopt a short term aim of an average reduction in KSI	Quarterly KSI key performance management results to be reported to Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee. Refer to recommendations 1 and 2. Local Road Safety Plan to be agreed.	N/A	On-going
4	The working group requested that officers look at reducing speed limits on all main roads and ensure consistent speed limits, avoiding small sections with higher limits	Officers to review existing speed limits on all 'A', 'B' and strategic 'C' classified roads using existing specialist advisors and a list of schemes for implementation will be developed.	City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	2023/24 – 2024/25
5	The working group requests that 20mph zones are introduced in all areas that are predominantly residential, retail, or educational	Feasibility study into introduction of 20mph speed limit implementation on all non major residential roads including development of methodology commenced during December 2021 and is expected to be completed during March 2022. Traffic surveys to provisionally start January 2022. Phase 1 design and implementation to commence from April 2022 subject to Member approval.	Combined Authority Transport Plan / City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	2022/23 – 2024/25
6	Engage with other authorities that have	Engagement with neighbouring authorities and stakeholders including 20's Plenty For Us Campaign Group	Combined Authority Transport Plan / City	Apr 2022

	implemented 20mph zones and link in with organisations such as Sustrans and Living Streets to share best practice	to be completed as part of 20mph speed limit feasibility study. Officers have established links with Sustrans through involvement in developing Liveable Neighbourhoods.	Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	
7	Consistent use of speed limit signs and use of existing street furniture columns where available.	Review of speed limit signs and clutter to be considered as part of speed limit review study on all 'A', 'B' and strategic 'C'roads and widespread 20mph speed limit roll out.	Combined Authority Transport Plan / City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	2023/24 – 2024/25
8	Use physical speed reduction methods such as chicanes where compliance is poor and residents are in support of this	Physical speed reduction features to support widespread 20mph speed limits will be considered once traffic surveys have been undertaken during Jan - Mar 2022.	Combined Authority Transport Plan / City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	2022/23 – 2024/25
9	Deliver the School Streets programme Wirral Wide	Wirral's first School Street scheme went live at Greenleas Primary School, Wallasey on 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2021. Liscard Primary, Liscard and Christchurch Primary, Birkenhead schemes to go live by March 2022. Scheme development for Raeburn Primary, Rock Ferry Primary and Brackenwood Infants and Junior schools commenced November 2021 and early consultation will be undertaken before March 2022. A dedicated Active Travel officer started with the Council on 19 November 2021 and will support the delivery of the School Street projects alongside project managers.	DfT Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 / Combined Authority Transport Plan	2021/22 – 2022/23
10	Ensure adequate funding for Road Safety Educational type schemes as well as Road Safety Officer training	Restructure within the Road Safety Team to create a new Road Safety Strategy Manager post with responsibility for identifying funding streams in partnership with senior managers.	Existing revenue	Nov 2021
11	The Working Group requests that crash sites involving young people/cyclists and	All KSI sites are audited in connection with Merseyside Police. For any new major highway improvements the relevant road safety audit is undertaken. Wirra Council recently participated in the Department for Transport's consultation for the creation of a Road Collision	N/A	On-going

	all major junctions to be audited on bike and on foot	Investigation Branch (RCIB). Officers to discuss this recommendation further with the working group.		
12	Ensure all elected members have regular opportunities for road safety training, similar to the carbon literacy opportunities currently available.	All elected members were invited to observe the recent virtual Senior Road User sessions and will continue to be invited to future road safety sessions. In addition, all elected members were invited to attend a dedicated training session regarding LTN1/20 technical guidance for active travel which prioritises safety for users.	N/A	On-going
13	Guarantee ongoing interactive consultation/engagement with residents, campaigners and all elected members	The existing consultation process involves publication of notices in the press, display of notices on site, delivery of letters to properties affected, engagement with Ward Members, Party Spokespersons and various agencies / groups. As part of recent schemes including School Streets we have utilised the Council's Have Your Say portal and social media channels and we will continue to adopt this approach. The Active Travel Members working group has been established and will be meeting in January 2022. The existing Active Travel Forum will be relaunched in the Spring with a drive to increase membership and wider stakeholder engagement. The LCR also have established an Active Travel Forum which is open to all residents.	N/A	On-going
14	Agree a percentage reduction in KSIs and /or collisions/all casualties and have regular updates to committee using an agreed dashboard and standard national comparison data.	Refer to recommendations 1 and 2. Local Road Safety Plan to be agreed.	N/A	2022/23
15	Officers to work with schools to add signage to	This recommendation conflicts with recommendations by the working group to reduce street clutter. Initiatives such as School Streets, Liveable Neighbourhoods, Safer Routes	City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	On-going

	junctions where schoolchildren cross, in order to raise awareness among drivers that children are likely to be crossing	to School consider the wider area and journeys to / from schools.		
16	Seek all opportunities to secure additional funding and designate officer responsibility	Restructure within the Road Safety Team to create a new Road Safety Strategy Manager post with responsibility for identifying funding streams in partnership with senior managers. Officers working cross directorate to secure funding to support priorities as part of integrated approach to placemaking and regeneration.	Existing revenue	Nov 2021
17	Use all available highways and infrastructure spending with a view to improving road safety as an absolute priority	Officers will report to Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee in March 2022 with recommendations as part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement programme for 2022/23, and next 4 years indicative programme, together with evidence-based justification for recommended hierarchy.	City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	Mar 2022
18	Lobby Government for additional funding and any necessary powers needed to improve road safety	Officers can support Members with lobbying local changes. For national changes, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority provide opportunities for individual highway authorities to respond to consultations on changes to legislation relating to road safety and invite submissions to bid for specific funding. Council working as part of Mersey Dee Alliance and have submitted bids for funding as part of Fiscal Stimulus Package/Cross Border recovery deal which includes bid for additional funding for high quality active travel infrastructure.	N/A	On-going
19	Develop a pipeline of projects that can be brought forward for implementation when funding opportunities arise	Limited resources prevent development of preliminary scheme concepts and optioneering for future projects. We are exploring options to strengthen this area. Officers working cross directorate on this to secure additional funding from the Combined Authority and that pre-	City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	On-going

		development of schemes is recognised as a priority at the Combined Authority.		
20	Work with partners, including and especially Merseyside Police, on more and better enforcement of road safety	Road Safety Team work closely with partners in Merseyside Road Safety Partnership, identifying key locations for enforcement and through the Joint Agency Group (JAG) meetings. The Community Safety Strategy includes Road Safety as a key strand.	N/A	On-going
21	Work with Police Crime Commissioner in regard to item 20	PCC attends Merseyside Road Safety Partnership board and existing teams have established links.	N/A	On-going
22	Lobby for additional support from the Safer Roads Watch scheme	Road Safety staff resource has been allocated to develop this project. Resources have been purchased to see the effective role out and training of new volunteers.	Combined Authority Transport Plan / City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	2021/22
23	Deliver further on active travel networks and LTNs with improved consultation of local communities	Officers are currently working with Sustrans and local stakeholders, including schools and residents, to co-develop and design a Liveable Neighbourhood (incorporating a school neighbourhood cluster) in Bebington to develop a business case which could be used to secure future funding.	Sustrans	2022/23
24	Adequately fund our outreach and education activities, as a supplement to speed reduction, engineering for safer roads and better enforcement	Restructure within the Road Safety Team to create a new Road Safety Strategy Manager post with responsibility for identifying funding streams in partnership with senior managers.	Existing revenue	On-going
25	Continue to deliver engagement via our communications team regarding the data showing how walking and cycling benefit local businesses and the local high street.	Promotion of walking and cycling, including the promotion of improvements to infrastructure. Recent coverage includes School Streets, cycle training provision, Eastham cycle way, School Crossing Patrol recruitment etc.	N/A	On-going

26	Increase road safety information on existing council social media channels which already have engaged and large audiences	Continue to raise awareness of road safety on social media accounts. Including School Crossing Patrol recruitment, Safer Roads Watch, School Streets, Brake Road Safety Week, Mind Your Business Project for local employers. Campaigns are currently being developed for launch in 2022 based on behavioural science and casualty data.	N/A	On-going
27	All road safety comms and documents to avoid the use of “accidents” and use more blame neutral terms such as “crash” or “collision”	Officers have been briefed on this and are implementing.	N/A	On-going
28	All council policies and decisions to seek a reduction in car use	All staff requested to complete Climate Emergency training. Council policies to seek a reduction on car use have been incorporated into the Climate Emergency Action Plan with reports to the Environment , Climate Emergency and Transport Committee.	N/A	On-going
29	Promote active travel and awareness of the benefits to health, well-being, air quality, reduced GHG emissions, reduced noise pollution – as well as road safety	All staff requested to complete Climate Emergency training. The new Local Road Safety Plan for Wirral will incorporate safe, sustainable travel and link to local and national policies. Funding secured from the Combined Authority to deliver a behaviour change campaign which will commence in Spring 2022.	N/A	On-going
30	Align road safety with our Environment and Climate Emergency Action plan and well as the new LCR Road Safety Strategy	This action is underway. Refer to action 1 and 2.	N/A	On-going
31	Work with Public Health and Children’s Services especially schools to achieve road safety targets	Restructure within the Road Safety Team to create a new Road Safety Strategy Manager post with responsibility for developing links with colleagues.	Existing revenue	On-going
32	Fund the additional staff that will likely be required to	Restructure within the Road Safety Team to create a new Road Safety Strategy Manager post to oversee structure fit for purpose.	Existing revenue	On-going

	deliver these actions and save lives.			
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## Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy

### 1. Vision & Aims

Despite a reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured, the scale of the challenge ahead for the Liverpool City Region is significant. In an ever-evolving environment, a new approach to road safety is required.

Safe roads are critical to delivering the City Region vision for a modern, integrated transport system connecting people to employment, education and leisure that will support and grow the economy. It is important that our roads are as safe as possible, that users are appropriately informed on how to use them and that danger is reduced from those modes that pose the greatest danger (principally cars, vans, HGVs and motorcycles<sup>1</sup>). Our belief is that zero is the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries in the road traffic environment, placing the onus on all those responsible for the total road traffic system, and our strategic outcomes for road safety are:

A reduction in the number and severity of road traffic collisions working to a target of no collisions by 2040

Creating the conditions for more people to make safer journeys on foot or by bicycle, and enabling more children to walk or cycle to school

Contributing to improved air quality and reducing climate changing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

These outcomes will be achieved through evidence-based activity under the Vision Zero Safe Systems model (see section 5). The Merseyside Road Safety Partnership's (MRSP) activity has traditionally been a mix of engineering, enforcement and compliance activities and educational interventions, whilst also seeking to address perceptions of road safety, which can be a barrier to the uptake for sustainable and active forms of transport. New developments in technology and innovation will play a key part in delivering the outcomes in line with the principles of Vision Zero.

### 2. Introduction

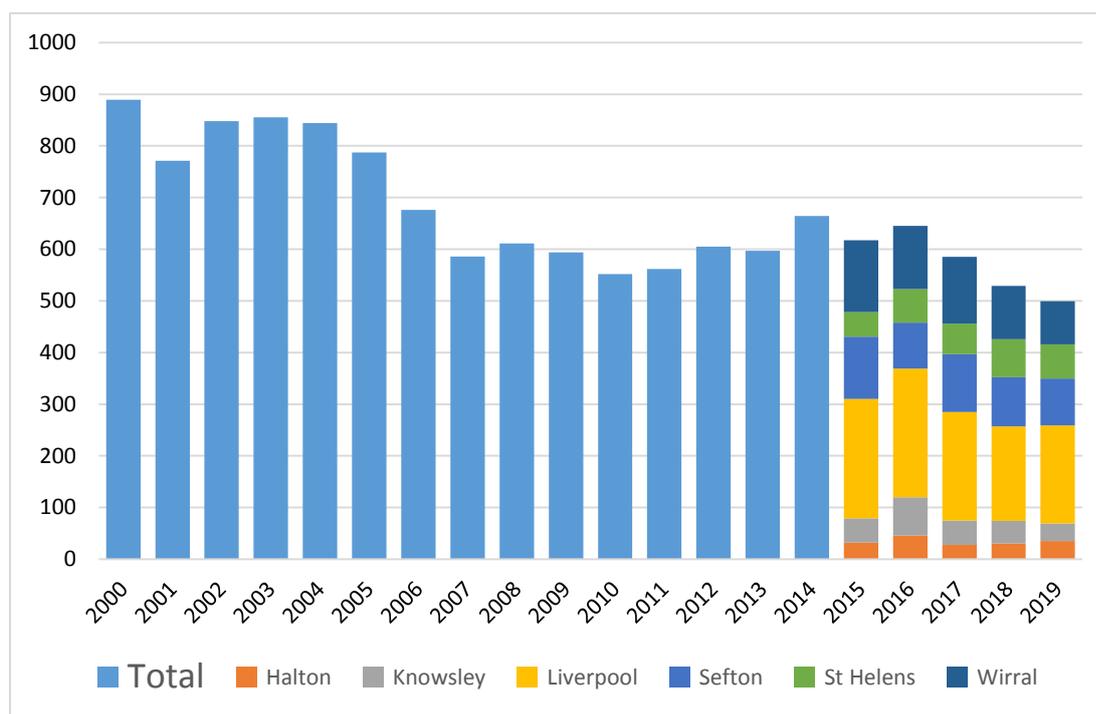
In 2017, the Liverpool City Region (LCR) developed a Road Safety Strategy to best serve the road users of the region. This strategy worked towards a target of fewer than 400 people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on the region's roads by 2020.

The strategy sought to identify work done by the LCR constituent partners and highlight bespoke initiatives funded by the Merseyside Road Safety Partnership (MRSP). Its overarching vision was '*No one killed or seriously injured on the roads of Merseyside*'

The effects of death or serious injury on the roads are devastating for our communities and the families and loved ones of those affected. This can be impactful on an emotional and financial level with long lasting consequences. To combat the rising number of KSIs on the roads, the Merseyside Road Safety Partnership was established in its current form in 2007 with consideration for all road users. Annual KSIs since 2000 are shown in figure 1.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/PACTS-What-kills-most-on-the-roads-Report-15.0.pdf>

Figure 1: Annual KSIs in the Liverpool City Region 2000 - 2019



## 2.1 Statutory Duty

Liverpool City Region local authorities have a statutory duty under section 39 of the 1988 Road Traffic Act to “take steps both to reduce and prevent accidents”. Other relevant legislation for Highway Authorities are Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (s 122), and the Traffic Management Act 2004 (s16). The Infrastructure Act 2015 requires “Highways England to manage the strategic road network in England to ensure the safety of people who use the network”. The Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004 requires fire and rescue authorities “to rescue people from road traffic accidents and protect people from serious harm from road accidents”, and the Health & Social Care Act 2012 requires local authorities in England to assess the current “and future health and social care needs of the local community (including road safety)”.

The Merseyside Road Safety Partnership work collectively to achieve these statutory duties. This is achieved through:

- Data analysis
- Engineering schemes
- Development of education initiatives, training & outreach programmes
- Collision investigation

In the context of seeking to enable far higher levels of walking, cycling and use of public transport, there is also a need to reduce road danger and to improve the levels of safety and perceptions of safety amongst all road users. This Strategy has been developed in the context of these duties and in accordance with both Department for Transport’s *Gear Change, a Bold Vision for Cycling and Walking*<sup>2</sup> which provides a focus on the role cycling and walking can play in our transport system,

<sup>2</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf)

and with the *Road Safety Statement*<sup>3</sup>. The latter promotes a vision for building a culture for lifetime road safety, focusing on both collision prevention and post collision response, and is divided into three areas – safer people, safer vehicles and safer roads. Under the umbrella of the Liverpool City Region, the MRSP aspires to support the delivery of that vision in building a culture of road safety and delivering roads that are safe for all users. It is acknowledged that the government is developing a new integrated road safety strategic framework, drawing on the Safe Systems approach, and will consider how to improve road safety, and the perception of road safety, for vulnerable road users.’ Accordingly, we will continue to review the Strategy in line with this being published.

### **3. The Merseyside Road Safety Partnership**

The MRSP is a collaboration of Merseyside Police, the Merseyside local authorities (Wirral, Knowsley, Sefton, Liverpool, and St. Helens), Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. This core partnership is supported by Highways England, North West Ambulance Service and the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Office.

Whilst Halton Borough Council is a constituent Local Authority of the Liverpool City Region, it is currently aligned with the Cheshire Road Safety Partnership, given its historic links with the county. As such, close working between the two road safety partnerships, in the context of the wider strategic framework, will ensure the interests of the whole LCR are met in delivering the aspirations of this Strategy. Statistical analysis throughout this strategy applies to the whole of the City Region and includes Halton (unless indicated otherwise).

The MRSP recognises that the detailed design of the road, the vehicle and driving behaviour, and the behaviour of other road users (e.g. people walking, cycling, running or riding a horse) must be tackled as a “total system” so that a mistake in the road traffic environment does not carry the death penalty. Our approach is an ethical and civilised response to the unacceptability of road death and serious injury. Intelligence gathered from collision data identifies areas of KSI density, and by using this information, enforcement can be directed using a combination of mobile and static enforcement across the Safer Roads Unit, Roads Policing Unit and Merseyside Police Special Constabulary. Civil enforcement is supplied, where appropriate, by the Local Authorities.

There is a substantial financial cost to society each time a casualty occurs as a result of road traffic collision. This includes emergency services provision, insurance and admin, human costs, as well as a range of other factors. The average cost of a fatal road casualty is £2m, as shown in figure 2, with a serious casualty costing £228k. In addition to the human suffering, these figures demonstrate how economically vital it is to reduce our road traffic casualties. Although KSI casualties within the LCR have seen significant reductions, over the course of 2019 it incurred costs in excess of £158m.

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<sup>3</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/817695/road-safety-statement-2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817695/road-safety-statement-2019.pdf)

Figure 2 – The cost to society of road accidents and collisions

Accident/casualty type	Cost per casualty	Cost per collision
Fatal	£2,029,237	£2,260,633
Serious	£228,029	£261,498
Slight	£17,579	£26,840
Average for all severities	£76,267	£105,156
Damage only		£2,425

Source: accident and casualty costs, produced by Department for Transport (2019).

We also recognise the health-related costs and dangers associated with low levels of active travel, and that there will be few collisions involving pedestrians or cyclists in places that those groups avoid due to perceptions of safety, such that additional data is needed, particularly on levels of active travel and on perceptions of road danger, to deliver on the commitments set out in this Strategy. It is anticipated that developments in mapping technology, and tracking movements, will be invaluable in this regard.

There are also wider considerations that must be reflected in shaping our road safety agenda, particularly with respect to air quality and in delivering the aspirations of the LCR to be net-zero carbon by 2040. The links between improved air quality and carbon reduction are very clear; an increase in the use of non-fossil fuels, and a resultant increase in walking and cycling, could result in safer roads for ALL road users, and a reduction in the number of KSIs. The links between deprivation and higher KSIs are also well documented<sup>4</sup>, particularly in relation to pedestrians and cyclists. To reduce the effect of deprivation on road injury without reducing the amount of walking that residents do, the key is to make walking and cycling safer, through measures to reduce traffic speed and volume, and by improving the environment for walking and cycling and through targeted education for drivers. There are clear synergies between our zero-KSI aspirations, and the active travel agenda.

#### **4. Funding and Delivery**

The Merseyside Police Safer Roads Unit provides the back-office function in support of mobile and static camera enforcement across Merseyside. Drivers captured by these cameras will, depending on eligibility, be selected to attend a diversionary course, pay a fine or attend court. Drivers who qualify or opt for a course instead of a fine pay a set sum to the course provider. This fee is then divided between the provider in order to cover the costs of course delivery, the administration of the back office function (the capturing and processing of the offences) and the remaining surplus is invested in improving road safety across Merseyside by providing funding to support small initiatives to improve road safety, from both community led and analytical resourcing perspectives.

It is important that the Partnership maximises all available funds, and that they are aligned to make our roads as safe as possible. The Liverpool City Region Devolution Deal means that freedoms and responsibilities for how funds are spent have passed to the control of the Liverpool City Region

<sup>4</sup> For example, Edwards P, Green J, Roberts I, Grundy C, and Lachowycz K (2006) Deprivation and Road Safety in London: A report to the London Road Safety Unit.

Combined Authority. From 2022/23, this will include a five-year, City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement for Liverpool City Region Combined Authority from a £4.2bn total fund.

Devolution allows the City Region freedom to allocate funds to locally identified priorities. Proposed schemes that have a clear strategic fit, deliver the best outcomes for the City Region, and generally offer high value for money, are more likely to be allocated funding. Additional factors such as traffic management implications, and the contribution the scheme will make to supporting improved access by walking & cycling, will also need to be highlighted. Other alternative sources of funding include Section 106 contributions from developers, or third-party funding from organisations such as Sustrans and the public health and wellbeing sector.

Whilst acknowledging that road safety will continue to be delivered within local budgets and to meet each partners' own corporate objectives and targets, a coordinated approach to partnership working is essential. With such a range of potential revenue funding sources, a coherent strategy is required to achieve the most equitable and efficient use of resources. Some income streams (e.g. from the diversionary courses) are not quantifiable in advance, and some activity may be better suited to a particular funding opportunity (most central government funding initiatives have quite specific criteria) and, therefore, a prioritised "pipeline" of partnership activity is being developed. This will join-up initiatives to create a programme of activity across the region and, therefore, gain economies of scale in terms of design and implementation.

## **5. Vision Zero**

All road users have the right to navigate our transport networks safely, with deaths and serious injuries on the road preventable and neither acceptable nor inevitable. And to meet the statutory requirements and to deliver our vision, our road safety policies must work as a cohesive whole; working in partnership and collaborating are therefore central to this strategy.

Our activities and actions have historically followed the traditional road safety 3 'E's of enforcement, education, engineering, supplemented by ongoing monitoring and evaluation, to ensure our work remains evidence-led. In this step-change strategy, the Safe Systems approach (described below) will be adopted and this will be further supplemented by reducing danger at source with measures to address those elements that pose the greatest danger to road users.

Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. The Safe Systems approach, supported by Vision Zero, views human life and health as paramount to all else and should be the first and foremost consideration when designing a road network. The principles underpinning the Safe Systems acknowledge that:

- People make mistakes which can lead to crashes; however, no one should die or be seriously injured on the road as a result of these mistakes.
- The human body has a limited physical ability to tolerate crash forces – any impact greater than 30km/h increases the risk of dying significantly.
- Road safety is a shared responsibility amongst everyone, including those that design, build, operate and use the road system.
- All parts of the road system must be strengthened in combination to multiply the protective effects and if one part fails, the others will still protect people.

Traditionally we have focused on reducing KSIs through defined thematic groups. These categories of road user are identified by analysis as being more vulnerable, whilst the Safe Systems approach focuses on reducing danger at source (e.g. through Low Traffic Neighbourhoods which removed

through traffic or reducing volumes of motor traffic). The core tenets, or pillars, of Safe Systems are shown in figure 3.

Figure 3 – the Safe Systems model



By ensuring the streets and roads of the City Region are attractive for all road users, we can encourage a shift in transportation modes and empower communities to navigate their area safely and confidently whilst reducing danger and therefore casualty rates. This approach offers co-benefits that fit with other important LCR policy objectives, such as a fundamental reform of our transport system so that it provides a genuine alternative to the car. Improving the environment for walking, cycling and public transport and thus reducing the reliance on private motorised journeys could reduce road casualties whilst simultaneously improving air quality, reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and improving public health as people become more active in their day-to-day activities.

With increased levels of cycling and walking because of the pandemic, the government’s active travel funding has allowed the LCR to install a range of pop-up infrastructure to facilitate safer walking and cycling. With funding from the Freshfield Foundation, the LCR is trialling “Liveable Neighbourhoods”, a project supported by Sustrans, creating high-quality public spaces that prioritise people over cars to encourage people to take more journeys on foot, bike or other active transport modes, reducing their carbon footprint and making them fitter and healthier. A Vision Zero strategy embraces this joint working between stakeholders in producing a transparent and accountable approach to road safety which has increased innovation and is fundamentally different to that which went before it.

The Safe Systems approach acknowledges that human error should not be seen as a primary cause of collisions. It looks to formulate a response with targeted interventions to work towards Vision Zero. The Safe Systems approach is central to the LCR and represents a shift away from the more traditional pathway of education, engineering, and enforcement, and represents a broad strategic approach to road safety.

With the declaration of a Climate Emergency by the City Region in 2019, and a net-zero carbon target of 2040, it is evident that additional support and promotion needs to be given to active modes of transport walking, cycling and public transport. In addition, we recognise that road safety cuts across a wide range of policy areas, which need to be viewed in terms of reducing exposure to road danger; for example, designing streets for people rather than traffic, and giving them the

opportunity and the freedom to enjoy public urban spaces as they see fit. Our default aspiration should be to create well-connected, high quality infrastructure even when this is challenging to deliver. And rather than planning spaces for cars, pedestrians, cyclists and buses in isolation, we should plan our roads holistically, balancing the needs of all potential users.

## **5.1 Safe Speeds**

The speed at which vehicles travel on our roads have a direct impact on the risk and safety of those who share the network. If a pedestrian is hit by a vehicle at 20mph, they are about five times less likely to be killed than if it were travelling at 30mph<sup>5</sup>

A reduction in speed is fundamental to reducing road danger and encourages the implementation of lower speeds appropriate to the geography of the road, supported by intelligent engineering and design. Whilst analysis identifies and frames the safer speeds work, it offers communities the opportunity to take ownership of their own area through information exchange and initiatives such as Safer Roads Watch, which promotes a safe environment in which communities can live, work, exercise and commute. It was established to forge working partnerships between Merseyside Police, Local Authorities, and communities to address road safety concerns in their areas. This is a collaborative scheme which will increase the opportunity for reactivity to community led intelligence and a sense of ownership to local issues.

Research<sup>6</sup> has shown that 20mph limits are generally well received, are most effective where traffic signs are accompanied by road markings, and more so where there are traffic calming features such as road narrowing or speed humps. It adds that consideration should also be given to encouraging LAs to work with the police, health, environment, urban planning, education, and the local community to deliver 20mph limits as part of an integrated approach to addressing transport, community, environment and health objectives, subject to available funding.

Community led intelligence provides the opportunity to shape enforcement in areas to prevent what could become a potential KSI hotspot. Community underpins the work of the partnership with a forward facing, targeted approach taken to addressing concerns within neighbourhoods and areas identified by those who live and travel there. This allows for greater interaction with road users and promotes the work of the Partnership in a localised, specific manner enabling a more cohesive approach to active travel.

Enforcement of these areas is led by Merseyside Police through a combined approach including Local Policing, Roads Policing Unit and the Safer Roads Unit using both static and mobile technology to provide enforcement activity. This can be implemented throughout the existing enforcement site structure and include the capacity to be reactive to emerging concerns.

20mph speed limits reduce speeds in urban areas. In conjunction with local communities, these areas will be sympathetic to existing street layouts whilst encouraging compliance through innovative engineering and design in conjunction with traditional enforcement. Through analysis and community interaction, we will look to identify areas which would benefit from further intervention.

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<sup>5</sup> Pedestrian Fatality Risk as a Function of Car Impact Speed <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19393804/>

<sup>6</sup> 20mph Research Study Process and Impact Evaluation Headline report [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/757307/20mph-headline-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/757307/20mph-headline-report.pdf)

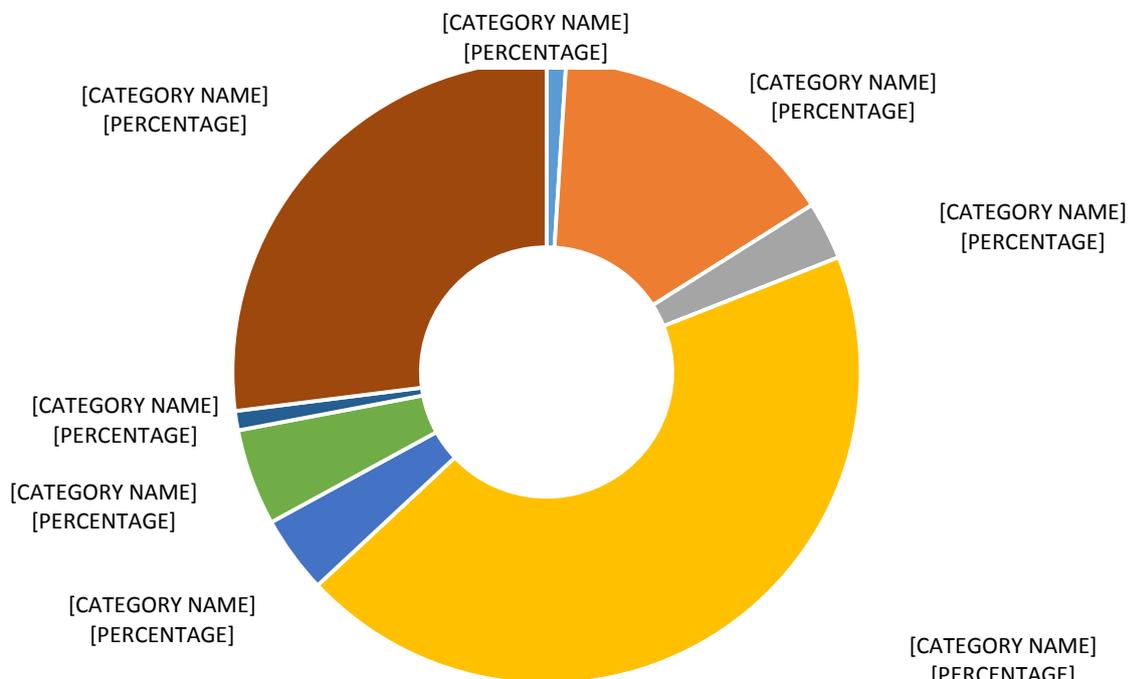
## 5.2 Safe Streets

This pillar seeks to reduce danger in areas where the likelihood of injury has been identified as higher than other locations. In-depth analysis of KSI data has identified that some road user groups are involved in a disproportionate number of road collisions and are more likely to be killed or seriously injured as a result. It is also the case that in built-up areas, those locations where people and vehicles interact most frequently (high streets and shopping parades, town centres and the city centre) are the places where casualties are most likely to occur and the need to reduce danger especially for those who are walking and cycling is most important. To combat this danger, the development of new infrastructure and changes to existing infrastructure must ensure that road danger is reduced.

Our analysis enables us to not only create accurate and informative resources for our road users, but it also aids in targeting the population groups who will benefit from these resources the most. The analytical mapping software used, allow us to combine Stats19 (road safety data collated by DfT) and socio-demographic data, to identify which road users have the highest casualty rate within a specific area, and subsequently identify where these vulnerable road users reside.

A continuous provision of police operations to an area of concern may not be possible and the road infrastructure may not accommodate a static or mobile camera site. Alternatively, we look to engineering projects based on data analysis to address these issues. Using the pillar of Safe Streets, this engineering work will be done with a clear commitment to road safety and in line with recognised best practice, and within the available budget. The depth of the analysis can identify areas such as junctions, roundabouts or crossroads which may be particularly problematic as detailed below in figure 4 and which could benefit from such measures.

Figure 4 – Collision Locations



Community engagement is also a significant contributor to the success of the Safe Streets pillar, and there is ongoing dialogue between our communities, the local authorities, and the Safer Roads Unit to ensure interventions are targeted at areas of concern.

As part of a move towards active travel, encouragement will be given to initiatives across the region including low traffic neighbourhoods and school streets. Creation of these zones, where through motor vehicle traffic has been removed or reduced – so only residents and a few deliveries and services have access – enable road users to experience a variety of transport methods, such as walking and cycling, in a safer, cleaner environment. Low traffic neighbourhoods not only reduce danger at source, research has shown that they are linked with dramatically reduced levels of road casualties on the roads within the neighbourhood and no increases in casualties on boundary and adjacent roads<sup>7</sup>

This pillar reflects the priorities set out in the LCR Local Journeys Strategy<sup>8</sup>, which provides the framework for the development of services and infrastructure that support sustainable shorter trips, highlighting how places must be designed for the safe movement of people, not traffic. As traffic levels have grown, this has led us to reserve more and more space for cars, but this makes spaces more difficult to navigate, and we need to give people the opportunity and freedom to enjoy urban public spaces, with new infrastructure built to standards that maximise integration, comfort and safety.

Road Safety was recognised as part of the government’s review of the highway code, which proposed a ‘Hierarchy of Road Users’, the aim of which is to ensure road users who can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger they may pose to others. It places pedestrians first, followed by cyclists, horse riders, motorcyclists, cars and taxis, vans and minibuses and large passenger vehicles or heavy goods vehicles. Its objective of the hierarchy is not to give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders in every situation, but rather to ensure a more mutually respectful and considerate culture of safe and effective road use that benefits all users.

The government have also recently consulted on ways to control the problems associated with pavement parking, drawing on a review whereby a third of people with visual impairments and almost half of wheelchair users were reluctant to go out because of antisocial pavement parking. The review also highlighted the problems faced by anyone with a baby buggy, or reliant on a mobility aid, such as a stick, walking frame, mobility scooter or wheelchair, who may be impeded or find the pavement impassable. The government’s aim is to make pavements accessible for everyone, as inconsiderate pavement parking leads to dangers for all road users. The Liverpool City Region has supported the option which would allow local authorities with civil parking enforcement powers to enforce against ‘unnecessary obstruction of the pavement’.

From December, local authorities will be able to enforce moving traffic offences, such as banned turns, box junctions and driving in formal cycle lanes. They will be expected to use these powers to improve connectivity, boost active travel, and increase air quality by reducing congestion, which in turn will make our roads safer and less congested for all road users.

### **5.3 Safe Vehicles**

The Safer Vehicles pillar seeks to reduce road danger by focusing on vehicles which present the greatest risk on our roads<sup>9</sup>. In recent decades, vehicle safety improvements have tended to reduce

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<sup>7</sup> The Impact of Introducing Low Traffic Neighbourhoods on Road Traffic Injuries - <https://findingspress.org/article/18330-the-impact-of-introducing-low-traffic-neighbourhoods-on-road-traffic-injuries>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCRCA\\_LCL\\_JRNYS\\_STRATEGY.pdf](https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCRCA_LCL_JRNYS_STRATEGY.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/PACTS-What-kills-most-on-the-roads-Report-12.0.pdf>

danger principally for those inside the vehicle. New technologies offer the opportunities to improve safety for those outside the vehicle too.

Research by UCL Centre for Transport Studies<sup>10</sup> shows that across Great Britain around 1 in 3 road deaths, 1 in 5 seriously injured and 1 in 4 casualties of all severities involve someone driving for work. The study estimates that 39% of killed pedestrians were hit by a working driver. The risk that working drivers face is also highlighted by the increase in the volume of Light Goods Vehicles in recent years. Whilst vans and lorries are the life blood of cities supplying, food and other goods for business, and without them our way of life wouldn't be possible, volumes of Light Commercial Vehicle traffic (vehicle kms) increased by more than three-quarter (76%) between 2001 and 2019 across the LCR<sup>11</sup>, with popularity for vans rising with the influx of new small businesses entering the market and the increased demand for online shopping deliveries.

There are ongoing schemes and initiatives across the LCR which seek to reinforce good practice within the prevalent users of our roads. There are established programmes of education for Taxi Driver input, and through Wirral Council's Mind Your Business scheme which works alongside businesses and their employees to manage road safety at work. This award-winning scheme features practical, theoretical and legal input and has been recognised at the National Transport Awards.

The Safe Vehicles pillar also focuses on technological innovation in respect of modern forms of urban, sustainable travel. The pandemic has brought a significant shift in the accessibility of goods and services with a much greater emphasis on home delivery. This has seen an increase in vehicles on the road within the business driving sector, who are looking towards automation and telematics to increase safety and identify vehicle activities. Telematics are also being introduced Merseyside Police as an emerging new technology.

Vehicle technology is also changing with the advent of the General Safety Regulations, which are likely to have significant impact on the safety features appearing on new vehicles in the next few years<sup>12</sup>. Most notable for the safety of those outside a vehicle are the introduction of Advanced Emergency Braking Systems and Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA). There are opportunities from ISA to hugely increase compliance levels with speed limits in built-up areas which makes setting the appropriate speed limit even more important to be able to gain the advantages this technology can offer.

The evaluation of the e-scooter trial within Liverpool will be invaluable in assessing the long-term viability of this specific type of vehicle in contribution to greener, cleaner and cheaper forms of movement through the LCR networks.

Within the LCR, there is a shared responsibility for vehicles used on the network. There will be ongoing educational programmes and communication campaigns to inform owners of the importance of vehicle maintenance, followed up with roadside checks and enforcement with partners Merseyside Police and DVSA. Analysis can identify both vehicles of influence in KSIs and other problematic behaviours, for example, a prevalence of drink and or drug driving in certain sectors and shape enforcement and educational opportunities around this.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/civil-environmental-geomatic-engineering/news/2020/dec/injury-risk-significantly-higher-when-driving-work>

<sup>11</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/road-traffic-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/road-traffic-statistics) - Table TRA8905b

<sup>12</sup> <https://trl.co.uk/projects/eu-general-safety-regulation>

#### **5.4 Safe Behaviour**

This pillar looks to tackle high risk behaviours, irrespective of mode, that can be attributable to road danger, starting with those that contribute to most collisions.

Dangerous behaviour can include a variety of differing “high-harm” offences including mobile phone usage, drink and drug driving, speeding, careless driving and driving an uninsured vehicle. The MRSP produce an annual calendar of campaigns and events designed to educate road users via social media or roadshows and reinforced with appropriate enforcement. The results of this enforcement are shared with the wider public to create an understanding of the nature and breadth of the behaviours tackled and the repercussions of taking part in such.

Safe Behaviour covers several groups of road user, for example, distraction via a mobile phone could include cyclists, motorcyclists, drivers and pedestrians. The aspiration for us is to tackle these behaviours, particularly those which contribute to significant collision numbers.

Safe Behaviour challenges both conscious and unconscious actions which serve as significant contributory factors in KSIs, and which suppress potential use of active forms of travel such as intimidating driving. It also recognises the impact of distracted pedestrians and other road users not paying attention to their surroundings. We aim to influence road user behaviour through education, training, communications, engineering and enforcement.

There are existing programmes of work across the LCR local authorities which challenge and inform road user behaviour to create a safer road space for all users. Schemes include School based education programmes, Driving Safer for Longer (aimed at Senior Road Users), Engage (Young Drivers) and Mind Your Business (driving for work). Through challenging knowledge gaps and targeting initiatives at reducing these numbers, with projects developed and delivered across the Partnership all residents in the LCR can benefit from the shared resources and initiatives.

We believe that well-designed networks for active travel promote a shared respect, ownership and place of safety on our networks. This creates a mutual understanding and appreciation of our roads and creates new social norms. Enforcement is key in areas where risky behaviour is identified whether it be through targeted activity (scheduled drink/drug driving operations) or reactive intelligence led activities (areas identified as high speeds/anti-social behaviour). The presence of enforcement activity acts as visible reassurance for residents and high-profile deterrence.

#### **5.5 Post crash response**

Looking into the circumstances and causation of each incident individually enables us to identify patterns. Whether this is drivers becoming unsighted when approaching a specific junction or pedestrians being injured whilst crossing from behind stationary vehicles, we can use the evidence available to implement innovative measures, ultimately reducing casualties incurred. Road signage, road paint, road furniture and even the maintenance of surrounding foliage in the area are all examples of techniques that have been used to make our roads a safer place. These are the types of causation factors which can be garnered from a thorough post collision investigation and used to prevent future repetition.

Besides the criminal investigations into a collision, there are learning outcomes which can be developed in order to prevent reoccurrence of incidents and to allow for a multi-agency approach in

respect of resolution and future interventions. Education, enforcement or engineering opportunities could be extracted and identified from a thorough and robust investigation.

Reflective evaluation and audit into investigations can ascertain if there are areas of best practice or where learning outcomes have been identified. This increased scrutiny of post collision response can include case reviews to evaluate performance in investigations alongside their subsequent criminal justice outcomes.

These foundations will ensure a robust and time sensitive response to best serve victims. Through working with organisations such as RoadPeace and Aftermath, the link between criminal investigation and victim support becomes seamless with justice, transparency and compassion at the forefront of working practice.

## **6. Conclusion:**

In general, road safety risk for LCR residents is slightly lower than national trends and considerable progress has been made to improve road safety through engineering measures as well as education, training and publicity initiatives to reduce the number and severity of crashes. However, across the City Region in 2019, 25 people were killed on the roads and a further 474 were seriously injured. The analysis of road safety data provides a good understanding of the patterns and trends of road safety, collisions and casualties. That analysis is utilised to identify 'at risk' groups and locations and drives the activity within the partnership action plan. It also assists in directing enforcement activity and engineering improvements.

In delivering this Strategy, there will be a step change in our approach to safer roads with a clear recognition that deaths and serious injuries on the road are preventable and that they are neither acceptable nor inevitable. We will reduce the number and severity of road traffic collisions, working to an overall Vision Zero target that by 2040 no one will be killed or seriously injured on the roads in the Liverpool City Region. We will adopt a safe systems approach where the local authorities and agencies within the Partnership identifies and establishes planned initiatives in line with the five pillars of Vision Zero along with the objectives set out in the Local Journeys Strategy to promote the use of sustainable travel choices for these shorter trips.

We recognise that some of the data to measure our progress are an area for development and in line with this will produce annual statistical reviews to map the transparent progress of the LCR in the pursuit of its Vision Zero objective. We will also produce an annual report of activity under the five pillars and collate plans from each LA with regard to their activity for safer speeds, safer streets, safer vehicle and safe behaviours. The police will also produce a plan of their activity and prosecutions in addition to partnership funded activities across Merseyside.



## **ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

**Monday, 15 November 2021**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>WIRRAL ALLOTMENT PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY 2021-26</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

Committee commissioned a review of allotment provision across Wirral as a part of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committees work programme in 2019/20. The findings and recommendations from the Scrutiny Review were the subject of a report to Committee on October 2020.

This report sets out the proposed Wirral Allotment Partnership Strategy (2021-26), provided as Appendix 1 to this report, which seeks to address the recommendations set out within the Scrutiny Review. The overall aim and purpose of the Wirral Allotment Partnership Strategy is to set out how allotments are to be maintained within the borough and where appropriate improve the quality, management, and promotion of Wirral Council's Allotment sites.

This Wirral Allotment Partnership Strategy reviews Wirral Council's Allotment provision with the overall intention of providing allotments throughout the borough, in the most cost-effective manner.

The Wirral Plan 2021-2026 sets out an ambition for all our residents to have a good quality of life and to ensure that levels of inequality are reduced.

The proposals within this report affect all wards.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is recommended to approve the Wirral Allotment Partnership Strategy 2021-26 .

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 The Wirral Allotments Partnership Strategy 2021-2026, Appendix 1, seeks to address and set out the Council's plans to reduce the waiting list and improve the allotment experience. These may be summarised under the following four main areas:
- Optimising current use of allotment sites;
  - Expanding appropriate allotment sites across the borough to provide more plots;
  - Developing communication with both allotment holders and those interested in renting a plot; and
  - Finding additional sources of funding where available.
- 1.2 Wirral's Allotments Partnership Strategy supports Wirral Councils Climate Emergency agenda through encouraging more food to be grown locally and promoting pollinators. The strategy will seek to address the issues arising where allotments may have become overgrown or run down and therefore struggle to keep tenants or attract new ones. This builds upon examples where once 'derelict' allotments such as Shakeshaft and Sumner Road Allotments have been turned around and are now fully tenanted. The strategy also seeks to increase the number of allotments available by creating additional sites across the borough but particularly in the Birkenhead area.
- 1.3 As part of the process of developing this revised and updated allotments strategy, it is important to recognise the council's overall wider community aspirations and overarching policies as well as emphasise any national context that is relevant to allotments. This is important as it adds value to the strategy, ensures national and corporate aims are linked to service delivery plans and ensures that funding is targeted to the relevant areas whilst desired outputs and results are achieved.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 This report provides a response and strategy to address the issues considered by a Task & Finish Scrutiny Review on the Allotment Provision on Wirral commissioned by the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee as a part of its annual work programme. It is open to this Committee to require amendments to the proposed strategy.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 As part of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee's annual work programme, a Task and Finish Scrutiny Review on the Allotment Provision on Wirral was established. The Review Panel was chaired by Councillor Tom Anderson. The Review Panel identified a number of issues relating to the current provision of Council allotments across the Borough, including the number of available plots, waiting lists and areas of particular pressure.
- 3.2 The key objectives set out at the start of the review were:

- to fully understand existing capacity within allotment provision across the Borough, and how it can be maximised and/or expanded at current sites to provide improved access for all Wirral residents;
- to engage with allotment users and representatives of current allotment societies to recognise issues currently faced and how these might be addressed; and
- to contribute to a series of recommendations to ensure the effective management and provision of allotment sites across Wirral.

The outcome of this review has informed the development of the Wirral Allotments Partnership Strategy 2021-2026.

- 3.3 There have been a number of studies undertaken which identify the clear benefits of maintaining an allotment for individuals. Such sites have a positive impact on the local area and natural environment with results detailing reductions in depression and anxiety, improved social functioning and even increased opportunities for vocational development, amongst other benefits. The health and wellbeing benefits of gardening within an allotment setting are well documented from improving activity levels through strength and cardiovascular activity, to allotment owners eating more home grown fruit and vegetables as well as the positive mental health benefits of being part of a likeminded community. Allotments provide safe and quality outdoor spaces for our residents to be active. The provision of allotments also promotes caring for the environment in which we live, protecting biodiversity and encouraging an increase in natural havens, ensuring its sustainability for the future.
- 3.4 The Allotment Management Policy Statement, contained within the Wirral Allotments Partnership Strategy, sets out Wirral Council's commitment to providing allotments which help achieve the following important aims:
- Enhance people's health and wellbeing;
  - Contribute to nature conservation and the sustainability of the environment;
  - Help increase people's pride in the places where they live; and
  - Achieve objectives in a cost-effective manner
- 3.5 Good health and wellbeing is key to these aims, including promoting active lifestyles, working with partners to improve positive mental health, and supporting more people with disabilities to live independent lives. This strategy is aligned to the emerging Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and its ambition to support our residents to make sport and physical activity part of everyone's everyday life. Developing the allotment offer in the borough is very much aligned to the Active People and Active Places and Open Spaces strand in the new strategy.
- 3.6 COVID-19 has highlighted a trend in growing your own food. At the start of the national 'Lockdown' empty shelves in supermarkets caused many people to recognise the UK's reliance on importing food. A report by the Institute for Sustainable Food at the University of Sheffield ("Grow your own food security? The hidden potential of urban horticulture") shows more people are starting or wanting to start to grow their own food. This is partly due to people spending more time at home, but the evidence also suggests this is a response to an increased awareness of the UK's reliance on the global food system. Urban horticulture will become an integral part of the recovery phase

- 3.7 This trend has been echoed across Wirral, with a significant increase in the level of interest in Wirral residents growing food produce sustainably and locally. Wirral has seen a greater interest in allotment gardening since the COVID-19 pandemic began, with 813 applications for an allotment plot being made between March 2020 and July 2020 during lockdown. Through the Environment and Climate Emergency Policy, the Council also wishes to support local food growth and production through the development of food growing skills for local people. To this end the Council is supporting a pilot scheme with a local organisation 'Earth Moves' to cultivate a section of Council owned land in Leasowe to grow food sustainably and invite local people to become involved and acquire food growing and cultivation skills. If successful, the pilot scheme in Leasowe will be rolled out in other parts of Wirral. The emphasis is on supporting people to gain the confidence and skills to grow their own food and on developing local sustainable food production.
- 3.8 The global COVID-19 pandemic has given the allotment team new challenges to face as they progress through the plans and improvement works to the allotment service. After the first national 'Lockdown' was announced in March 2020, the Allotment Services waived any allotment 'non-cultivation' inspections and notices for three months to protect the vulnerable people in our communities – ensuring those asked to self-isolate did not feel pressured to attend their allotment plot. It also took into consideration those working in the NHS or care sectors who may have less time during the pandemic to tend to their plot. Members of the public were still allowed to tend to their plots if they followed government guidance on social distancing. Inspections started up again in August 2020 with the relevant risk assessments in place

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Any future projects for allotments, in line with the Strategy, will be dependent upon Capital Bids. The Council has reviewed how Capital Bids are applied for and the capital sum will need to be repaid out of the revenue budget specific to the area of the Capital Bid, which could create additional pressures and challenges on budgets

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility under Section 23(1) of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 to provide a "sufficient number of allotments and shall let such allotments to persons resident in the borough, district or parish and desiring to take the same."
- 5.2 Wirral Council seeks to manage the borough's allotments and if possible, to increase the number of useable allotments where required. The Wirral Allotments Partnership Strategy 2021-2026 will also consider any additional or updated legislation, guidance, and strategies during the life of the strategy.

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

- 6.1 An increase in number or size of some allotment sites, will be the subject to capital bids. Although Section 106 agreements and grant funding will also be sought.

6.2 An increase in the number of allotment sites may also require increased administration, although the intention is to build upon the current IT solutions in place in order mitigate this.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 If insufficient increase in allotment provision is made, there may be an increase in complaints from customers on waiting lists.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 The Wirral Allotments Partnership Strategy has been created through the Scrutiny Review commissioned by the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee as a part of its work programme in 2019/20. The findings and recommendations from the Scrutiny Review were the subject of a report to Committee on October 2020.

8.2 In addition a working group with representatives of allotments site secretaries, allotments societies and allotment plot holders have also been involved and contributed to the development of the Wirral Allotment Partnership Strategy.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The Wirral Allotments Partnership Strategy 2021-2026 seeks to address any negative equality implications. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken, as a part of the development of the strategy, to identify both positive and negative implications which arise.

9.2 The Equality Impact Assessment is available via this link:  
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Allotments provide an important opportunity for local cultivation of food and associated learning and can thus play a useful role in our local response to the climate emergency. Through the Cool 2 strategy residents will be encouraged to grow their own food and the Council will facilitate this through the provision of allotment sites and access to advice and support.

10.2 Changing to a lower energy intensity diet e.g. consumption of local and seasonal food, is recognised as a way to limit our climate impacts as set out in the new climate strategy for Wirral, Cool 2  
<https://wirralenvironmentalnetwork.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2020/01/Cool2WirralClimateStrategyByCoolWirralPartnershipPDF.pdf>

10.3 Allotments provide an important opportunity for composting. Compost not only helps the allotments to grow and flourish, but it also contributes to a cleaner environment. It reduces the need for bonfires, cuts down on waste going to landfill and requires less manufactured and packaged products.

- 10.4 Wirral Council actively promotes composting and offer free “Get Composting!” workshops to beginners as well as a range of subsidised compost bins and food caddies. Visit [www.wirral.gov.uk/composting](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/composting) for more information.
- 10.5 Allotments enable plots to house bees, Beekeeping will not only lead to healthy and vibrant plants but ensure that bees continue to play their critical role in our ecosystem, Bee keeping can be a very positive activity, helping with pollination and providing honey. All plot holders are encouraged to grow suitable plants to support pollinators and exercise restraint in the use of pesticides.
- 10.6 Pollinators like bees play a key role in one out of every three bites of food we eat. Without them, many plants we rely on for food would die off, Bees are responsible for the production of many seeds, nuts, berries, and fruit, which serve as a vital food source for wild animals.
- 10.7 Bees play a part in every aspect of the ecosystem, they support the growth of trees, flowers, and other plants, which serve as food and shelters for creatures large and small, Bees contribute to complex, interconnected ecosystems that allow a diverse number of different species to co-exist. Wirral Council was recognised last year for its work in this area with a Bees’ Needs Champions Awards for the Meadow Restoration Project at Wirral Country Park.
- 10.8 Increasing the provision of allotments, bee keeping, and composting is recognized to contribute to a cleaner environment.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Wirral is facing stark economic, social and health inequalities. The Wirral Plan is committed to addressing this. With Community Wealth Building at its heart, the Wirral Plan sets out how to tackle this and makes a major contribution to improving the economic, social and health outcomes of the borough.
- 11.2. It is well documented that involvement with, and the provision of high-quality Allotments has a positive effect on individuals and communities. We will create opportunities to develop partnerships with the NHS, Wirral Public Health and appropriate charitable organisations such as Wirral Mind and Wirral Food Bank to develop a health agenda for allotments focussing on improving the health and wellbeing of the borough

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## APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Wirral Allotments Partnership Strategy 2021-26
- Appendix 2 - Useful Information for Wirral Allotment Plot Holders
- Appendix 3 - A Guide to the Allotments Processes: How it All Works
- Appendix 4 - The Tenancy Agreement
- Appendix 5 - The Site Secretaries Agreement

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Wirral Council Allotments Partnership Strategy & Improvement Plan 2015-2020
- Wirral Council Site Secretary Agreement 2015
- The King’s Fund ‘Gardens and Health; Implications for policy and practice’ publication 2016
- Allotment Provision Scrutiny Review Report
- Allotment Provision Scrutiny Review Scoping Document
- State of the Market Survey 2020 : Local Authority Allotment Services
- Wirral Council - Sports & Physical Activity Strategy briefing to the Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee, 23 November 2020.
- Wirral Council - Environment and Climate Emergency Policy (2021)
- Allotments Acts 1908, 1925 and 1950
- A Place to Grow (2010)
- Growing in the Community, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2009
- Wirral Council Plan 2021-2026

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee</b> Allotment Provision Scrutiny Review	<b>22 October 2020</b>
<b>Environment Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b> Allotment Provision in the Borough	<b>30 January 2020</b>

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## **WIRRAL COUNCIL**

# **ALLOTMENTS PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY & IMPROVEMENT PLANS 2021-2026**

**Wirral Council - Neighbourhoods Directorate**

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## **1. Introduction:**

1.1. This strategy and associated improvement plans aim to continue the progress of the Allotments Partnership Strategy 2015-2020 and provide clarity to all parties involved with allotments, including Councillors, Council Officers, Wirral's Allotment Site Secretaries, current and prospective plot holders and neighbours. It takes into account the challenges faced following the COVID19 pandemic and the plans for recovery. It also links to, and is supported by, Wirral's Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, 2014-2024.

1.2. In October 2020, the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee established a Subgroup which met to address a number of considerations. One of the key areas was to establish a Working Group, which has now met on a number of occasions to take forward the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee Subgroup, listed as follows, for the allotment service:

- Establish a cross-committee working group, in consultation with internal and external stakeholders including Wirral Allotment Society and Wirral Site Secretaries group.
- That the Wirral Site Secretary Agreement 2015 be amended to allow for increased autonomy and delegated decision-making relating to site management.
- Recategorize rental fees for new and existing plots.
- Increase existing provision of accessible plots across Wirral by 2025.
- Increase allotment provision across the Borough by 1000 plots by 2025.

The Subgroup felt that the establishment of the Working Group would be the appropriate forum for taking working issues forward and other than feedback to the Scrutiny Committee in general, the Working Group will now be the forum for meeting. The make-up of the Working Group will be flexible to reflect any issues being addressed at a particular meeting, with representatives of the allotment community being at the heart of this.

1.3. This Allotments Strategy is a joint agreement between Wirral Council, Wirral's Allotment Site Secretaries, the Allotment Tenants / Plot Holders and Allotment Site Societies all working together with a joint aim of providing clear strategic guidelines for the management, administration, promotion, development and funding of allotments across the Wirral Council Authority area. It aims to raise the profile of allotments and to optimise their use for existing and potential tenants, to suit the needs of all sections of the community, by welcoming and encouraging those from all age groups, backgrounds and mobility abilities.

1.4. As of July 2021; there are 46 Wirral Council Allotment sites, of which five are self-managed allotment sites on council land. Some sites have provision for half plots, and some have facilities adapted for use by people with disabilities. Some sites have community plots, school plots or animal plots. St James Allotment Site is currently being run by Wirral Environmental Network as a community nursery. A further self-managed allotment community food growing area has been created by Wirral Change at Bentinck Street, Birkenhead. It has faced challenges, compounded by COVID19, with cultivating and tenanting the site and the Council allotment team will work with Wirral Change to support its future development.

This will mean that a total of 46 sites are covered by this strategy.

1.5. There are a number of allotments on private land within the Wirral Peninsula, however, Wirral Council is not involved in either the maintenance or management of those sites and they are not covered by this strategy.

1.6. Wirral Council has prepared this document using national good practice guidance developed as part of the Allotments Regeneration Initiative (ARI) and in accordance with the recommendations on developing an allotment strategy provided by the Local Government Association's 'Growing in the Community, 2nd edition', available at:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/growing-community-second-edition>

1.7. To help achieve the objectives and actions set out in this strategy a review of progress will be carried out in 2023 with input from site secretaries, Wirral allotment societies and plot holders. The summary report of the review will be provided to these key stakeholders and other interested parties.

## **2. Wirral Council's Allotment Management Policy**

2.1. This **Allotment Management Policy Statement** sets out Wirral Council's commitment to providing allotments which help achieve the following important aims:

- Enhance people's health and wellbeing
- Contribute to nature conservation and the sustainability of the environment
- Help increase people's pride in the places where they live
- Achieve objectives in a cost effective manner

2.2. This commitment is reinforced within Wirral's draft 2025 Council Plan. In Wirral we want all our residents to have a good quality of life, ensuring levels of inequality are reduced. Good health and wellbeing is key to this, including promoting active lifestyles, working with partners to improve positive mental health and supporting more people with disabilities to live independent lives. It is also important to take care of the environment in which we live, protecting biodiversity and encouraging an increase in natural havens, ensuring its sustainability for the future.

2.3. We recognise our responsibilities under the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, whereby Local Authorities are required to provide a "sufficient number of allotments, and shall let such allotments to persons resident in the borough, district or parish and desiring to take the same."

ref: section 23(1) of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908

We commit to managing the borough's allotments, and seek if possible to increase the number of useable allotments where required, in accordance with the following legislation, guidance and strategies:

- Allotments Acts 1908, 1925 and 1950;
- A Place to Grow (2010) and Growing in the Community, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2009;
- Wirral Council Plan 2025.

This strategy will also take into account any additional or updated legislation, guidance and strategies.

2.4. To achieve our allotment commitments, we apply Wirral Council's Values and Behaviours in all aspects of our work.

We are customer focused:

- We listen to our customers and acknowledge what they tell us. We let them know we have heard them and take action.
- We are flexible, open, honest, and respectful with our residents and customers, and always look for ways to make it easier for them to do business with us.
- We view things from the customer's perspective and focus on what we can do to give them the best possible service.

We are accountable:

- We are leaders and take personal responsibility for our work. We act with integrity to be the best we can be.
- We take ownership and solve problems. If we don't know the answer, we don't stop until we have found the solution.
- We take pride in doing what we say we are going to do. We are trusted by our colleagues, Members and residents to do a great job.

We are professional:

- We treat everyone with respect. This includes our colleagues, residents and Members. We are courteous, punctual and communicate effectively to get the best results
- We provide a professional service that people in Wirral are proud of. We know how our role makes a difference and lead by example.
- We are positive, honest and value the contributions of others. We build positive and trusting relationships to work together to deliver the best possible service for colleagues, Members and residents.
- We acknowledge when we are asked something and answer quickly and clearly. We are clear about how we will provide the best possible service

We are ambitious:

- We aim high in everything we do. We do what we can and learn from experience to get the best for our colleagues, Members and residents.
- We will challenge, as well as support, each other to try new things and improve what we do. We continually look for better ways of doing things for our colleagues, Members and residents.
- We have high standards and expectations for ourselves, colleagues, Members and residents. We celebrate when we do well and recognise the achievements of others.

### **3. History and Legislation:**

- 3.1. The history of allotments dates back many hundreds of years, with evidence going back to Anglo-Saxon times. The system we recognise today has its roots in the Nineteenth Century, when land was given over to the labouring poor for the provision of food growing, mainly due to the rapid industrialisation of the country coupled with the absence of a welfare state.
- 3.2. In 1908 the Small Holdings and Allotments Act came into force, placing a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient allotments according to demand, but this did not gather pace until the end of the First World War when land was made available, primarily as a way of assisting returning service men under the Land Settlement Facilities Act 1919.
- 3.3. The rights of allotment holders were further strengthened through the Allotments Acts of 1922, but the most important change can be found in the Allotments Act of 1925 which established statutory allotments that local authorities could not sell off or convert without Ministerial consent, known as Section 8 Orders. This 1925 Act also required town-planning authorities to give special consideration to allotments when preparing their town planning, which as a consequence is now relevant to the Council's Unitary Development Plan and Local Development Framework.
- 3.4. Wirral Council has a statutory duty to provide allotments, which it recognises as an important asset. Within the complex network of legislation relating to allotment administration, governed by statute and case law, it is essential that as the allotment authority, the Council is aware of its duties and observes precedents that have been set. This is reflected in the proposals and action plans contained within this strategy. Further legislation created over the years affecting allotments is as follows:
  - 3.4.1 Small Holding and Allotment Act 1925: This made a number of improvements to the law mostly concerning small holdings.
  - 3.4.2 Allotment Act 1950: This strengthened the requirements on Councils to provide allotment gardens. Provisions relating to rents were also affected. This act included issues relating to notices to quit and compensation.
  - 3.4.3 Town and Country Planning Act 1971 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 have had considerable influence on the forward planning of allotments and are relevant to the Council's Unitary Development Plan and the emerging Local Development Framework as mentioned above.
  - 3.4.4 The Local Government Planning & Land Act 1980 and the Local Government & Planning (Amendment) Act 1981: This is all part of the consolidated planning legislation, which has further influences the forward planning of authorities.
- 3.5. The list of legislation is collectively known as the 'Allotment Acts' and will be

referred to as such in this strategy.

- 3.6. Plots are traditionally measured in rods an old Anglo-Saxon measurement, so called because it was the length of the rod used to control a team of eight oxen. Traditionally, a plot is approximately 10 rods or 250sq m in size or 10m x 25m. A half plot is approximately 5 rods or 125sq m in size. Wirral Allotments however, have always varied in size from site to site, and often plot to plot.
- 3.7. Allotments were subject to an extensive inquiry in 1998 by the House of Commons – Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee. The Select Committee’s Report ‘The Future of Allotments’ was the first major government study of allotments and leisure gardens since Professor Thorpe’s inquiry in 1969 and resulted in a number of conclusions and recommendations, all contained within the report.
- 3.8. Allotment sites are designated as statutory or temporary. Statutory sites are directly protected by the Allotment Acts but temporary sites are not. Statutory sites are those that have been acquired by the Council for the purpose of being allotment gardens whilst temporary sites have been acquired for other purposes and are used as allotments in the interim. Case law indicates that allotment sites that have been in existence for more than thirty years are deemed to be statutory, unless they were expressly created as a temporary facility.
- 3.9. Wirral owns three temporary allotment sites: Landican, Plymyard and Earlston. The remaining 43 of the allotment sites owned by Wirral Council are deemed to be statutory as they have been in existence for more than thirty years or have been established more recently as statutory allotment sites.

## **4. International and National Context:**

- 4.1. Allotment gardening is a pursuit that provides wide ranging benefits to local communities and the environment and can make a positive change to the quality of people's lives. In addition to the advantages of producing good quality, local, low cost, fresh food gardeners gain the benefits of healthy exercise that is active, socially inclusive and reflects the ideals of sustainability and well-being.
- 4.2. Across the country, allotments are available to all sections of the community including the old, young, disabled and people from ethnic communities. Allotments are a unique and valuable aspect of the local area contributing to the quality of the urban built environment and a range of local leisure provision. They also provide opportunities for wildlife and can contribute to the retention of traditional skills. Gardening is the single biggest leisure activity undertaken by the public in recent years with an increasing amount of attention has been shown to allotment gardening.
- 4.3. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted a trend in growing your own food. At the start of lockdown in March 2020, empty shelves in supermarkets caused many people to recognise the UK's reliance on importing food. A report by the Institute for Sustainable Food at the University of Sheffield ("Grow your own food security? The hidden potential of urban horticulture") shows more people are starting or wanting to start to grow their own food. This is partly due to people spending more time at home, but the evidence also suggests this is a response to an increased awareness of the UK's reliance on the global food system. Urban horticulture will become an integral part of the recovery phase.
- 4.4. Additionally, it has been recognised the importance of allotment gardening for mental health and well-being. A study by Dr Carly Wood and researchers at the Universities of Westminster and Essex, found that even a small amount of participation in allotment gardening can have significant benefits on health, resulting in improvements in both self-esteem and mood, via reductions in tension, depression, anger, and confusion. The study also found that the allotment gardeners had significantly lower BMI than those who did not participate in gardening. 68% of the non-gardening group were overweight or obese, compared with just 47% of the gardeners. The authors concluded that allotment gardening "could contribute to a greener and healthier economy focused on the prevention of ill-health. This preventative approach could result in substantial savings to the UK economy, particularly in the treatment of health conditions such as mental illness, obesity, cardiovascular disease and loneliness".
- 4.5. There is an International/European wide organisation which works to promote the benefits of allotment and leisure gardening: [www.jardins-familiaux.org](http://www.jardins-familiaux.org). At a national level, the National Allotment Society (NSALG) seeks to support allotment gardening throughout the UK. From 2002 to 2012 a nationwide Allotments Regeneration Initiative (ARI) programme, funded by government and a range of organisations, helped promote allotment gardening, provided guidance on a range of key allotment related issues, such as non-cultivation and waiting lists, and helped to halt and reverse the previous national decline in allotments (see website for further information: [ari.farmgarden.org.uk](http://ari.farmgarden.org.uk)). The resources developed by the

Allotments Regeneration Initiative are scheduled to be available from their archived website until late in 2015. Those interested in benefitting from the advice and good practice captured by the Allotments Regeneration Initiative are encouraged to make use of these resources while they are available. Advice and information is also available from the National Allotment Society website: [www.nsalg.org.uk](http://www.nsalg.org.uk).

- 4.6. 'Growing in the Community' 2nd Ed, (2009) and 'A Place to Grow' (2010), both produced by the Local Government Association, provide guidance for Local Authorities on a range of allotment issues. Good practice guidance has been taken into account in the development of Wirral's Allotment Strategy and updated procedures, as set out in the appendices.

## **5. Wirral Context:**

5.1. In Wirral, Allotment gardening has formed an important part of many local people's lives for generations. They played a key role during the war years and have continued to make a significant contribution within neighbourhoods and more widely. The distribution of Wirral's allotments reflects the history of allotment gardening provision, with more sites in the historically more built up areas to the east of the peninsula. Today, allotment gardening has an important role to play throughout the borough, helping people 'grow their own', take part in healthy pastimes and share allotment related advice and support. This has been clearly shown during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the Borough has seen a greater interest in allotment gardening, with applications for plots growing extensively during 2020 and early 2021. Wirral has a proud and independent tradition of allotment gardening. The important role of Site Secretary is carried out by allotment plot holders as volunteers, who in return for their services do not pay the annual fee for their plot. Each site secretary will play an integral role in assisting with the effective running of Wirral's allotment sites. In addition to the self-managed sites, a number of Wirral's allotment sites also have their own allotment site society, which helps plot holder members and can also assist the council in the overall care of the allotment site.

5.2. The annual Wirral Allotments Competition will restart in 2022, organised by its own voluntary committee. This competition has played an important role in promoting good allotment gardening.

5.3. The Wirral Allotment Society (formerly known as the Wirral Federation of Allotment Societies), is associated to the National Allotment Society, and helps promote allotment gardening in Wirral (see [www.wirralallotmentsociety.org.uk](http://www.wirralallotmentsociety.org.uk)).

5.4. This strategy also has links to and supports:

- Wirral Council's Cool2 Climate Change Strategy to tackle the climate change emergency. This strategy looks at ensuring we make wiser decisions to avoid adding to pollution indirectly. Food production, consumption and waste have a large impact on the climate. By encouraging more residents to take up allotment gardening, we will be encouraging sustainable food growth on a local scale.

More information about the strategy can be found here: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/climate-change-and-sustainability/consultation-new-cool-2-climate-change-strategy>

- Wirral Public Health Strategy.

## **6. Wirral Allotments: The Future, Objectives, Realistic Aims and Aspirations:**

6.1. The overall future objective of Wirral Allotments Partnership Strategy is to help create and maintain a high standard of allotment provision for the benefit of Wirral residents by improving the infrastructure, facilities, security and quality of allotment sites and ensuring optimum use is made of existing allotment provision through reducing the number of vacant and ‘unusable’ plots. This will be achieved by effective partnership working between the Council’s Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team, allotment site secretaries, allotment site societies and individual plot holders, thus ensuring all sites are welcoming and accessible to all.

6.2. To achieve this objective, the following short and longer term aims have been selected. These aims have been selected to be realistic and achievable assuming all aforementioned and relevant parties work together in a reasonable and coherent manner.

6.3. Any new rules and regulations implemented will not be retrospectively enforced on historical situations (for example individuals have multiple tenancies will not be expected to relinquish any of their plots). However, they will still have to adhere to those that apply, and any other previous rules and regulations which are still applicable.

6.4. **Immediate and short-term aims:** Years 1 and 2 (2021-2022)

- Tender for an Allotment Computer system in 2022 when the contract for Colony is up for renewal, following Council procurement rules, and keep it up to date, including all relevant allotment documentation.
- To research the use of technology, such as ‘Plot-Box’ to provide accurate mapping of all allotment sites, including sizes of plots. If financially viable, tender for system to provide to scale site maps across all Council allotment sites.
- Review and update the allotment site improvement plans for each non self-managed site by 2022. This should include a section on ‘access for all’ where sites available near entrances should have appropriate access put in.
- Improve the signage to the main access points of each allotment site as required.
- After the success of the combi-lock trial at Fairview, Church Road, St Georges Way and Ilford Avenue allotment sites, roll out a programme of lock replacement across every participating site, alongside a communication schedule with site secretaries.
- Work with Wirral Change to support the development of Bentinck Street community food growing area and assist with finding long-term tenants.
- Amend the Wirral Site Secretary Agreement 2015, and if necessary individual Allotment Site Action Plans, to allow for increased autonomy and delegated

decision-making relating to site management; specifically relating to the issue of Plot Improvement Notices to expedite the Termination of Agreement process as much as possible so that the plot can be re-let quickly.

- Establish a working group, in consultation with internal and external stakeholders including Wirral Allotment Society, Wirral Site Secretaries group, and allotment plot holders in order to prioritise the increased provision of allotment plots and inform the updated Wirral Allotment Partnership Strategy.
- Research and consultation should be undertaken to look at current rental fees and, where reasonable, potential increases to non-concessionary rents for new plots with improved facilities and according to plot size - with the agreement that any additional income raised from rent payments be reinvested into increased allotment provision across the Borough.

#### 6.5. **Longer term aims:** 1 – 5 years. (2021-2026)

- After successful pilot schemes at Bebington Road, Shakeshaft, Sumner Road and Harris Allotments, continue to offer open days to people on waiting lists to see plots considered unusable.
- Locate suitable locations to develop environmental havens or 'rewilding areas' for insects and fauna, such as wildlife ponds and pollinator corridors, focussing on unlettable plots that do not receive any tenant interest during open days.
- Roll out the use of sufficient stopcocks across all water systems to ensure sections can be isolated in the result of a water burst. Additionally, monitor water usage across all sites on an annual basis and research whether other councils charge separately for water usage.
- Look for opportunities to develop partnerships with the NHS, Wirral Public Health and appropriate charitable organisations such as Wirral Mind and Wirral Food Bank to develop a health agenda for allotments focussing on improving the health of the borough.
- Encourage those sites who have been successful with applying for external funding for site improvements to educate and provide guidance to those unsure on how to proceed, allowing sites to learn from each other.
- Explore all opportunities to improve infrastructure and create raised beds to make allotment gardening more accessible for those with disabilities or mobility problems, increasing the existing provision of accessible plots across the Wirral by 2025. This includes engagement with organisations such as Wirral Evolutions to seek out vacant space and further utilisation of existing sites to increase the number of accessible plots.
- Increase allotment provision across the Borough by 1000 plots by 2025 through:
  - improved engagement with Planning Officers to ensure that Wirral's Local Plan protects existing allotment sites and actively encourages developers to provide opportunities for allotments and community food growing spaces

- within all major new developments.
- any Council-owned land and that managed by registered providers and local partners appropriate for allotment gardening, is identified and brought into use.
  - Section 106 agreements identified as suitable for allotment site creation or expansion are recognised and acted on.
  - a review of allotment plot sizes and creation of half plots and raised beds where possible.
  - Continue to pursue capital investment opportunities to support increased allotment provision.

6.6. **Other Aspirations:** to be actioned when suitable opportunities arise/funding becomes available:

- Work with the Cool2 Strategy team to assess suitable climate change resilience projects to improve one or more allotment sites, including:
  - Having 10 organic, chemical free allotment sites by 2025.
  - Continuing with and further promoting the environmentally friendly plot competition continuing.
  - Using allotment sites to help educate residents on environmentally friendly garden ideas, e.g. planting bee pollinators.
  - Using unlettable plots as havens for wildlife.
- Discuss with stakeholders and the new established working group the option of self-managed sites.
- Proposal to liaise with the Feeding Birkenhead Group regarding surplus fruit and vegetables produced by allotments, to be provided to Feeding Birkenhead.

## **7. List of Appendices**

- Useful Information for Wirral Allotment Plot Holders
- A Guide to the Allotments Processes: How it All Works
- The Tenancy Agreement
- The Site Secretaries Agreement

### **References**

'A case control study of health and well-being benefits of allotment gardening'; Carly J. Wood, Jules Pretty, Murray Griffin; Journal of Public Health; doi: 10.1093/pubmed/fdv146

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26515229/>

"Grow your own food security? The hidden potential of urban horticulture" Institute for Sustainable Food at the University of Sheffield

<https://www.countryside-jobs.com/article/2020-07-31-grow-your-own-food-security-the-hidden-potential-of-urban-horticulture>

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## **WIRRAL COUNCIL**

# **USEFUL INFORMATION FOR WIRRAL ALLOTMENT PLOT HOLDERS**

**Wirral Council - Neighbourhoods Directorate**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Wirral Council has 46 allotment sites and welcomes all members of the public who want to get involved in allotment gardening as it is a healthy, enjoyable and positive activity.

It is important that new tenants make contact with fellow plot holders and many plot holders will be happy to help and share tips, ideas and allotment produce.

Some sites are 'self-managed' which means the allotment plot holders have a lease from the council to manage the whole allotment site. Plot holders on a self-managed site, should contact the site's committee for any support or advice required.

If a plot is on a Council-managed site and a tenant requires further advice or support after reading this 'useful information' document, the Site Secretary, whose role it is to act as a link between the Council's nominated Parks and Countryside Officer for each site (usually the Local Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team Leader) and the plot holders (tenants) of the particular allotment site. Each site may also have an allotment society which can provide support; in which case the Site Secretary can provide the contact details for that site's allotment society. Additionally the details of a site's Allotments Society (where one exists) may also be found on the site noticeboards.

There are a range of different styles of allotment gardening. Some people want to grow as much fruit and vegetables as possible to reduce the cost of buying produce from supermarkets and other shops. Some people want to grow organically; other people want to use chemicals. Some people focus on growing prize winning produce. Some people want an allotment as a place to keep pigeons or livestock. Other people want to grow flowers or undertake wildlife gardening. Some people want their allotment to be a place where they can simply enjoy a little gardening, pottering outdoors. Within reason any of these activities can be appropriate on an allotment as long as the plot is classed as suitable for the type of activity (e.g. a horticultural or animal plot) and is generally tidy, well cultivated and does not cause a nuisance to other plot holders or neighbouring properties.

Free sources of information for new plot holders include:

- The Wirral Allotment Society, ([www.wirralallotmentsociety.org.uk](http://www.wirralallotmentsociety.org.uk)). The society aims to provide advice and support and is open to all plot holders.
- The National Allotment Society ([www.nsalg.org.uk](http://www.nsalg.org.uk)). This website includes a section for the less experienced allotment plot holder on what can be done on an allotment on a monthly basis, fruit and vegetable plant profiles and a section on differing growing methods.
- The Allotment Regeneration Initiative website includes a range of fact sheets on practical issues and a plot holders guide covering subjects of interest to plot holders (and people wanting to rent an allotment plot): <http://ari.farmgarden.org.uk/resources>

- It may also be useful to have a look at the courses available through Wirral's Lifelong and Family Learning Service: [www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/jobs-and-careers/lifelong-learning/full-course-list](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/jobs-and-careers/lifelong-learning/full-course-list)

## **GETTING STARTED**

Plot holders should:

- Take time to plan the layout of the plot for ease of use
- Develop a yearly plan of what will be grown
- Consider shade, ease of access, growing space, watering, etc.
- Create narrow planting beds to allow easy access to the soil
- Use crop rotation to keep soil healthy
- Manure the plot regularly to maintain soil fertility
- Use gloves and wash hands after handling manure
- When using fertilisers or pesticides, use according to manufacturer's instructions, and avoid excessive use to prevent contamination or damage of neighbouring plots
- Ensure that there are good paths which are kept clear of hazards and weeds
- Avoiding doing too much in one go but maintain steady and regular progress
- Enjoy their time on their plot
- Share tips, excess produce and ideas with other plot holders

### **Planning an Allotment**

To get off to a good start with an allotment a planned approach and a little determination is all that's needed. Before starting work on a plot, it is recommended that a plan be drawn up of what the tenant would like to grow and where it should go. Over time plot holders will develop more experience, so they should avoid worrying about changes over time. Any fencing placed around the plot should be a maximum of 1m high.

### **Drawing up a Plan**

When drawing up a plan, the following should be considered:

- Situation and light levels
- Ease of access for maintenance and watering
- Soil condition and drainage
- The space needed for plants to grow and flourish
- Permanent planting areas
- Permanent features such as paths, utilities, buildings, etc.

There are plenty of books and internet resources to help with planning a plot and guidance on the best conditions for different plants to flourish. It is also advised that plot holders could also talk to other allotment tenants or the allotment site's society. Planning ahead will help to organise growing to make the best use of the space available to the tenant throughout the year.

### **Remember**

Only work soil when it is in the right condition – if it sticks to boots it is too wet and will do more harm than good.

## **Paths and Access**

Paths (and communal paths) should be kept clear of vegetation and potential hazards such as tools and discarded rubbish. Maintaining good paths can also make it more difficult for some weeds to spread from one planting area to another. Paths should ideally be wide enough for a wheelbarrow (50cm is a good recommended width) and be as level and even as possible to avoid trip hazards. To manage weeds on paths plot holders may want to put down a weed barrier, such as weed matting, and cover with a durable surface such as wood chip. Materials such as slabs, if neatly laid, can also be appropriate. The plot number must be clearly displayed at the plot entrance or another visible location.

## **Planting Areas**

Planting beds can be any shape or size. Consideration should be given to access by means of paths to ensure that the middle of the planting area can be easily reached. A recommended width is 120cm (4 feet) to enable to reach into the middle from both sides. It is advised that weeds be removed entirely from the planting area and that the soil should be dug over. The prongs of a fork should eventually go easily into the bed to turn the soil, and it should be ensured that any larger stones or debris are removed so as not to impede plant growth. The edges of planting areas can be marked with wood or other suitable materials (avoid the use of wood with toxic preservatives such as creosote) to help prevent accidental walking on the area and compaction of the soil. A useful tip is to work off a plank to spread weight.

## **Raised Beds**

The height of the planting area should also be considered. For people with disabilities or back pain, raised beds can be more accessible. Raised beds are also useful if a plot has drainage or if the soil type on the ground is incorrect for a specific type of plant or crop, and additional soil needs to be taken to the plot to enable it to grow.

## **Greenhouses and Sheds**

Tenants may have one or more greenhouses or potting sheds on a plot as long as they do not dominate the plot, cause excessive shading of nearby plots or cause a nuisance to neighbouring properties. Responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of these structures rests with the plot holder. Structures which are not maintained to a sufficient standard must be removed and any waste materials must not be left on site.

## **Crop Rotation**

Crop rotation involves dividing crops into three groups based on their preferred growing conditions. Each group is planted in a separate bed and each year the groups are moved to a different bed. In this way no crop should return to the same piece of ground for three or four years. It is recommended that tenants use the crop rotation method to avoid the build-up of pests and diseases and to keep soil in good condition. More detailed information about how to do this can be found on the internet or in any good 'Grow Your Own' or other gardening books.

## **CULTIVATION:**

### **Where to Begin**

It is a requirement of the tenancy agreement that a plot must be kept in a good state of cultivation. If a tenant has no prior experience of gardening then it is advisable to learn whilst doing. There is lots of advice available from books and websites. Good starting crops are potatoes, peas, runner beans, French beans, salads, onions, beetroot, courgettes and squashes.

Tenants can also consider attending a vegetable growing course. Wirral Environmental Network runs gardening courses throughout the year at Falkland Road, Wallasey, CH44 8ER (Tel: 0151 639 2121): [www.wirralenvironmentalnetwork.org.uk](http://www.wirralenvironmentalnetwork.org.uk)).

New plot holders should make contact with other tenants or their allotment site's society. Advice is also available on [www.allotment-garden.org](http://www.allotment-garden.org), which includes practical month by month advice for allotment holders, or on the National Allotments Society's website ([www.nsalg.org.uk](http://www.nsalg.org.uk)).

### **Steps towards Cultivation**

After 3 months it is expected that sections of the plot are cleared and dug over. After 6 months it is expected that crops are in place and the plot substantially dug, or uncultivated areas covered with weed fabric. By the end of the first year of tenancy it is expected that the plot be in a good state of cultivation. If a tenant has issues achieving this, they should make contact with the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team.

## **COMPOSTING**

Compost is a natural, nutrient-rich, soil-like medium of decayed organic matter. It is a product of the natural breakdown of dead plants and other organic matter such as fruit and vegetable peelings. With time and a little bit of care and attention, this organic matter decomposes with the assistance of micro-organisms and earthworms to produce a valuable source of compost. This can improve and enrich the soil, helping to feed plants and to encourage them to grow strong and healthy.

- Compost will help to save money, improve soil, help to grow healthy, strong plants and look after the environment
- It is recommended that tenants compost as much green waste as is possible.
- Creating a leaf mulch will improve soil texture
- If composting perennial weeds ensure the roots/plants have been destroyed and seed heads removed first
- Do not compost any animal products or cooked food, as this may attract vermin and possibly harmful bacteria
- Always use gloves and wash hands after handling compost

Making compost is not hard. The easiest method is to purchase a compost bin specially designed for the purpose. Wirral Council actively promote composting and offer free “Get Composting!” workshops to beginners as well as a range of subsidised compost bins and food caddies. Visit [www.wirral.gov.uk/composting](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/composting) for more information. Plot holders may also build their own compost bins, by containing a heap using reclaimed timber and four wooden posts to create a bottomless box, and covering to retain moisture. Alternatively, all leftover organic matter can be heaped into a pile in the corner of the plot, however, this method looks less attractive, can suffer from a lack of firmness and can lose the heat generated internally unless covered. Digging or ‘turning’ compost occasionally will help to speed up the process.

### **Leaf Mulch**

Creating leaf mulch (leaf mould) is completely free and can help to improve soil texture, suppress weeds and reduce the need for watering. To create leaf mulch gather up autumn leaves (not evergreens and not from roads where they may contain contaminants or under hedges where wildlife may be hibernating) and place them in a big heap. By using four posts and some chicken wire it is possible to create an area that will contain the leaves but still allow air to circulate around them. It will take about two years for most leaves to breakdown fully but digging over occasionally with a fork will help to speed up the process. To use the mulch spread a thick layer on top of the soil around plants to suppress weeds (allowing worms to eventually pull it down into the soil) or dig it directly into the soil (with compost) to improve soil texture.

## **ORGANIC & NON-ORGANIC**

- Organic methods can benefit a plot, the environment and wildlife
- Tenants should focus on improving and maintaining soil fertility
- Companion planting can repel pests and encourage beneficial insects
- Expert advice can be sought from a local library or internet
- Minimise the use of pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers
- When using pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers, use according with the manufactures' instructions, wear appropriate protective clothing and avoid excessive use

### **Growing Organically**

Many people are moving towards a more organic approach to gardening. For some people this simply means not using slug pellets or other pesticides. Other people feel more strongly and will use only natural products and materials, buy only organic seed, and the whole idea becomes part of a wider lifestyle choice to live in harmony with nature. Wirral Council advises all allotment holders to try to minimise their use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, and encourages plot holders to consider more organic approaches for the benefit of local wildlife and the wider environment.

### **Expert Advice**

Courses on how to grow fruit and vegetables are available locally, for example at Ness Botanic Gardens. There is also plenty of useful advice available in books and on internet sites.

- Ness Botanic Gardens: [www.nessgardens.org.uk](http://www.nessgardens.org.uk)
- Royal Horticultural Society: [www.rhs.org.uk/growyourown](http://www.rhs.org.uk/growyourown)
- Garden Organic: [www.gardenorganic.co.uk](http://www.gardenorganic.co.uk)
- Federation of City Farms & Community Gardens: [www.farmgarden.org.uk/publications](http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/publications)

### **Regular Weeding**

To keep on top of weeds, a plot needs to be visited frequently, especially during the main growing season, and make weeding a regular task. Digging over the ground and removing roots is the only really effective organic way to remove weeds but other methods can help.

### **Mulches**

Examples of mulches are compost and leaf mould, all of which need to be applied in a layer 52mm to 75mm (2-3 inches) thick. Placed on top of the soil, surrounding plants or over weed matting, these will act as an effective weed suppressor.

### **Disposing Of Weeds**

Annual weeds can be composted (avoiding seed heads) but roots of perennial weeds will grow again if they are composted before they are killed. Perennial weeds can be soaked in water for 3 months before composting to overcome this problem. The

Internet or a good gardening book can help to identify common annual and perennial weeds. Vegetation should only be burnt (at the appropriate times) if absolutely necessary, please read the selection on 'Bonfires' first.

## **How to Weed Safely**

Plot holders should:

- Tackle weeding in stages
- Use appropriate, sharp and well-maintained tools
- Be aware of plant species that cause irritation or are poisonous
- Wear suitable clothing, including gloves and long sleeves
- Not use old carpet to suppress weeds – it is difficult to remove and can potentially leach hazardous chemicals into the soil
- Remember that vegetation which has grown out of control can hide hazards such as potholes, bricks, rubbish, glass, etc.
- Check for and remove any hazards hidden in the vegetation when strimming
- Use weed killers only when needed and always sparingly

Plot holders using herbicides or weed killers should follow the additional safety advice:

- Always keep products in their original containers
- Use only for the specific purpose indicated on the product label and follow instructions carefully
- Measure amounts carefully for maximum effectiveness and use only the amount required for that application
- Use personal protective clothing and gloves
- Wash hands after use and wash off any splashes immediately
- Store out of the reach of children and locked away securely
- Ensure that there is no contamination of neighbouring plots or local watercourses via airborne drift or improper disposal
- Contact waste management and recycling centre for disposal advice
- Check old products to see if they have been banned

## **Watering**

Plot holders are encouraged to use water sparingly, to both help the environment and save money. Water meters will be introduced to sites when appropriate to encourage responsible use of water.

The list below shows several ways in water can be saved on allotment plots:

- Water carefully, either in the cool of the morning or at night, making sure the water gets to the roots of the plant
- Grass should be allowed to grow longer in order for it to stay greener. If cutting is necessary, it is recommended that grass be cut to a minimum height of 2 inches
- Do not use sprinklers as in one hour they consume a considerable amount of water
- Use manure and compost to help retain soil moisture
- Mulch using a layer of tree bark, gravel and compost (minimum depth 3 inches / 7.5cm) onto the top of damp soil. This will provide protection from the sun and reduce moisture loss

- Use a watering can to monitor the amount of water given to each plant. Placing a finger over the spout of the can, to help direct the water to the roots
- Water in new plants thoroughly - but not too much afterwards. This will encourage a deep root system and get the most benefit from soil moisture
- Hoe regularly to remove weeds, as they will take precious water from the soil. This will also help to create a dust mulch
- Do not over water herbs - many come from hot climates so can endure long hot spells
- Spray and water regularly with a seaweed based fertiliser, it will help plants that are under stress
- Collect rainwater via guttering from the roof of a shed or greenhouse one is available
- Recycle water where possible, e.g. if washing plant pots, water can be re-used for the plants

## **LIVESTOCK, PIGEONS AND ANIMALS**

Written permission and a signed agreement are needed before keeping chickens and fowl, rabbits, bees or pigeons. Due to noise issues; cockerels are not allowed to be kept. Keeping other animals on an allotment is not allowed.

Wirral Council has the right to inspect livestock at any time and access to animal plots must be provided for inspections.

The plot holder is responsible for the care and welfare of animals on the plot and it is important that expert veterinary advice is obtained at an early stage in relation to both good husbandry and disease prevention. All animal and bird husbandry on a plot is covered by the Animal Welfare Act which makes it clear that the keeper is responsible for the feeding and care of the animals. The plot holder is also responsible for any nuisance, health risks or damage caused by livestock.

When inspecting plots with livestock or pigeons on them Wirral Council will consider the suitability of housing and the welfare of the animal/birds. When writing to Wirral Council for permission to keep livestock or pigeons, plot holders will be advised on what type of facilities and housing are acceptable.

### **Chickens and Rabbits**

Provided that 75% of the plot is used for growing vegetables and fruit, tenants are usually allowed to keep chickens (hens, no cockerels) and/or rabbits. There may be a local (site specific) restriction on the keeping of livestock on certain sites.

Failure to apply and register livestock or meet the minimum standards in these guidelines may result in the termination of allotment tenancies.

When keeping poultry on an allotment, plot holders must check on them daily, provide competent care and management and have the knowledge and skills to ensure the wellbeing of their animals. In addition, plot holders are also expected to keep them under proper control to avoid disturbance to others. It is strongly recommend that further detailed guidance is sought on keeping poultry.

Chickens should have **continuous and plentiful** access to;

- Cool, clean and fresh water. In the winter months any water supply on the site may be turned off so the tenant will need to make provision
- Provision of feed of a type appropriate to the age and species of animal, fed in sufficient quantities, and sufficiently frequently, to maintain them in good health and satisfy their nutritional needs
- Insoluble grit to aid digestion
- Foodstuffs should be stored such that it is kept clean, tidy and properly protected from rodents and other pests

In addition to effective containment, housing is also essential to ensure the welfare of birds and should allow the expression of natural behaviours. Although it is advised that plot holders make the housing as large and comfortable as possible, as a minimum, the accommodation will be expected to compromise of:

- A Henhouse must be a fully enclosed, waterproof shelter that provides protection from predators and be:
  - a Minimum size of 2 square feet (0.2m<sup>2</sup>) per chicken
  - a clean, dry bedding material to absorb moisture and odour (suitable choices are wood shavings or straw)
  - Warmth during the colder months and shade during the summer
  - Adequate ventilation but draught-free
  - Perches for sleeping, approximately 3-5cms wide with rounded corners to enable them to grip
  - Nest boxes for laying eggs
- Outdoor runs should provide the chicken(s) with plenty of space to dig, dust themselves and flap their wings and be a Minimum size of 4 square feet (0.4m<sup>2</sup>) per chicken
- The Henhouse and the outdoor run should be regularly maintained to a good, tidy standard and free from obvious faults that may cause injury

Tenants will be held responsible for ensuring that livestock is free from distress, pain, injury and disease. Appropriate preventative and/or veterinary treatment should be arranged by the tenant when necessary.

- In order to maintain healthy livestock and reduce odour problems, the run and henhouse should be cleaned a minimum of once a week or more frequently as necessary
- With respect to the above, the deep litter system is not acceptable on Wirral Council allotments
- Poultry kept on the same ground for more than a month will need regular worming
- Poultry need companionship and should be kept in groups of two or more

Provided that any kept chickens are happy, healthy birds they should not become a nuisance to others. It is important however to be aware of potential problems, such as dirty sites attracting vermin and causing smells.

**Please note that due to potential noise problems, Cockerels are not permitted on Wirral Allotments.**

### **Useful Contacts**

This handbook only provides some basic guidelines, and it is strongly recommend that further advice be sought. There are numerous organisations, books and internet sites which offer more detailed information on how to enjoy and care for chickens.

[www.poultryclub.org](http://www.poultryclub.org)

[www.domesticfowl.co.uk](http://www.domesticfowl.co.uk)

### **Pigeons**

Pigeon-keeping is only permitted at specially designated sites.

## **Keeping Livestock and Pigeons**

Keeping livestock or pigeons on a plot can be costly and tenants are responsible for the care, welfare, nuisance, health risks or damage caused. In order to keep chickens, fowl, rabbits or pigeons, plot holders must have:

- Knowledge, training or experience concerning physical/ behavioural needs, appropriate diet, recognising injury/disease and when vet assistance is needed, handling animals safely, carrying out daily hygiene tasks, etc.
- The ability, time and money to ensure welfare and care needs are met
- Approved and secure housing providing the right type of living environment
- Storage for food away from the plot or in a metal bin, to avoid attracting rats
- A good understanding of personal safety and hygiene
- Availability as a 24 hour emergency contact with site secretary
- Suitable insurance
- Support from neighbours
- Awareness of, and willingness to comply with, animal welfare regulations

Please be aware that legislation and policies with regards to livestock and pigeons are subject to change. Plot holders must comply with all current legislation and regulations. If there is an interest in keeping livestock or pigeons please contact the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team at an early stage to discuss current policy and any local restrictions that may apply. It should be noted that written permission is always needed.

## **KEEPING BEES**

### **Beekeeping**

Bee keeping can be a very positive activity, helping with pollination and providing honey. All plot holders are encouraged to grow suitable plants to support pollinators and exercise restraint in the use of pesticides.

To ensure the good welfare of the bees and avoid difficulties for neighbours, it is a requirement that plot holders who want to keep bees to attend a British Bee Keeping Association certificated course.

### **Consent**

Beekeepers are required to join a beekeeping association to obtain suitable liability and disease insurance.

Bees shall not be kept on any allotment until the tenant has received permission from the Wirral Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team. Applications should be submitting in writing enclosing a copy of their British Bee Keeping Association (BBKA) course certificate and details of their public liability insurance.

The Nominated Parks, Allotments and Countryside local team leader will then carry out an inspection of the site together with the tenant, site secretary and a representative of the British Bee Keeping Association with a view to permitting the application.

The tenant must ensure that other allotment holders, particularly those nearby, are in agreement with them keeping bees which will also help to reassure them that they will be safe.

### **Duty of Care**

Allotment beekeeping needs the co-operation of tenants to avoid problems. Keeping bees requires the tenant to attend a BBKA (British Bee Keeping Association) accredited basic examination course or similar and must hold a course certificate to confirm this.

Hives must be well placed with thought to avoid the bees flying towards paths, roads and where possible the entrance to the hive should be placed facing south east as this helps the bees to become active earlier in the day. Tenants must, where appropriate, provide screening around the hive ensuring that the entrance is open to aid and direct the bee's flight path.

Allotments with bee hives must place a suitable notice with the beekeepers name and contact details (phone numbers) in case of emergencies.

### **Insurance**

The tenant beekeeper must provide evidence of public liability insurance in respect of their beekeeping activities to the Nominated Officer.

## **Bee Hives**

Tenants can only keep two hives on their allotment, which may increase up to a maximum of 4 hives in the in the course of normal beekeeping season and must reduce to 2 hives for the winter.

## **Swarming**

Most honey bee colonies try to swarm; this is a crucial reproductive activity for honey bees. The tenant as beekeeper must inspect the bees regularly during the swarming season, which can be between April and September. The beekeeper should advise other tenants of the allotments about this procedure to ensure they are aware of any risk.

If the bees do swarm, tenants should be advised not to be unduly alarmed as the bees normally settle down after one hour or so and can be recaptured once they have settled. Honey bees are not additionally aggressive when they swarm and should not be confused with “killer bees” known as Africanised honey bees.

## **Water**

Bees need water in the flying season and it may need the co-operation of other allotment holders to temporarily cover over ponds to alter their flight path. Bees prefer old/dirty water and water carriers may be attracted to ponds or other water sources on the allotments.

## **Unattended Hives**

Beekeepers must not use allotments as storage space for equipment that does not contain bees. If a plot holder is away on holiday or unable to visit then they must ensure their bees are being looked after and inspected regularly in the swarming season. Plot holders must provide details of this person to the Nominated Officer.

## **Stings**

In general, bees will only sting if provoked or to defend their nest. The following can increase the risk of stings and should be avoided wherever possible:

- Bees do not like the smell of beer, gin etc., especially on people
- Leather clothing such as watchstraps or motorcycle ‘leathers’ upsets bees because of the animal smell
- Bees regard dark hairy clothing as a threat; it looks like a bear to them
- Many soaps, shampoos and clothing treated with fabric conditioner smell very like flowers and attract bees
- Bees sometimes regard sudden movements as a sign of aggression. To deal with a trouble-some bee, move slowly towards a hedge or tree. Eventually the bee will go away
- Bees can recognise flicker and can be attracted to a person’s eyes when they blink

## First Aid for stings

If a person is stung, they should:

- Move away from the area where the bees are, as the sting produces Pheromones (smells) that attracts other bees to sting
- Remove the sting by scraping it with a finger nail or a sharp object like a pen knife or hive tool
- If, when stung, the individual feels dizzy, they should seek medical advice
- Fainting or collapse, individuals will require first aid and an ambulance
- Remove rings if stung on the hand
- Children, if stung, should be observed for an hour for adverse effects

## Diseases

The tenant bee keeper must register all hives with National Bee Unit (go to [www.nationalbeeunit.com](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com) to register). If the tenant suspects the bees have a notifiable disease they must legally inform the government's National Bee Unit ([www.nationalbeeunit.com](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com)) and through them, the local Seasonal Bee Inspector/Regional Inspector.

## Withdrawal of Consent

The Council may withdraw the permission to keep bees, giving 14 days notice to remove the hives if:

- The tenant beekeeper contravenes any of the above conditions
- The tenant beekeeper contravenes any conditions within the Allotment Tenancy Agreement
- Substantiated information is received that requires a review of the arrangements
- A new allotment tenant takes a nearby plot then provides medical evidence that they are allergic to bee stings

## Further Information

- British Bee Keeping Association: [www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk)
- Liverpool Beekeepers: <http://www.liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk>
- Cheshire (inch Wirral) Beekeepers Association: [www.cheshire-bka.co.uk](http://www.cheshire-bka.co.uk)
- Beginners Bee Keeping: [www.beginningbeekeeping.com](http://www.beginningbeekeeping.com)
- Bee Keeping the Natural Way: [www.bee-keeping.co.uk](http://www.bee-keeping.co.uk)
- Bee Keeping Questions for Beginners; [www.beeginners.info](http://www.beeginners.info)
- The Informed Voice of British Bee Keeping: [www.Bee-craft.com/beekeeping](http://www.Bee-craft.com/beekeeping)
- National Bee Unit Website: [www.nationalbeeunit.com](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com)

Please be aware that legislation and policies with regards to beekeeping are subject to change and beekeepers must comply with all current legislation and regulations. If a plot holder would like to keep bees, it is advised that they contact the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team to discuss current policy and any local restrictions that may apply. It should be noted that written permission is always needed.

## **WILDLIFE**

### **Beneficial Wildlife**

Allotments provide a range of habitats for birds, small mammals, amphibians and insects to name but a few. Many animals are beneficial to gardeners as they prey on pests such as aphids, slugs and snails. As far as possible, tenants should look to share their allotments with local wildlife. Birds can be encouraged with nest boxes and feeders placed in trees. Small wildlife ponds will create a habitat for amphibians and insects. Hedges should be checked for nesting birds before being cut.

- Wildlife is often beneficial and should be encouraged
- Creating a small pond is acceptable and can encourage beneficial predators
- Good cultivation and keeping a tidy plot can avoid problems with unwelcome wildlife
- Only use commercial products (poisons, slug pellets, etc.) as a last resort
- Always follow instructions for use when using commercial products

### **Hedgehogs**

Hedgehogs are good friends for allotment plot holders as they eat snails, slugs and insects. If possible, hedgehogs should be made welcome on plots. For example, have a natural (but neat) log pile. These can be an attractive place for a hedgehog to nest or provide a gathering place for the slugs and beetles that hedgehogs like to eat. It is also advisable to avoid using slug pellets.

Sports or fruit netting should be removed when not in use to prevent hedgehogs becoming entangled, or getting injured. Holes should be covered over and bricks placed at the side of ponds to give hedgehogs a way to escape drowning. Hedgehogs should be checked for before using strimmers or mowers, particularly under hedges where animals may rest. Compost heaps should be checked for nesting hedgehogs before being forked over. Bonfires (if necessary) should be built as close to time of lighting as possible and should be checked thoroughly for hedgehogs before lighting.

Further information on hedgehogs is available at:

- British Hedgehog Preservation Society: [www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk](http://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk)
- RSPCA's website: [www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/inthewild](http://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/inthewild)

### **Badgers**

Badgers and their setts are protected by law. If it is suspected that someone has committed an offence under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, please call the RSPCA 24-hour Cruelty line on 0300 1234 999 - or contact the police.

### **Foxes**

Foxes do help keep down some pests but can cause some disruption to allotment plots. Any disruption can be minimized through good horticultural practice. Wirral Council does not allow or carry out the trapping or killing of foxes on its allotments. It is illegal to poison foxes. It is important not to feed foxes on allotments and action will be

taken if any plot holder is found to be either feeding or poisoning foxes on an allotment. Helpful information about foxes and associated gardening tips are available from the RSPCA's website:

[www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/inthewild/foxes](http://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/inthewild/foxes)

## **Grey Squirrels**

Grey squirrels can be a pest on allotments as they can dig up bulbs, take fruit, steal birds' eggs, gnaw tree bark and eat foliage. It is recommended that they are not fed.

## **Reporting Wildlife Deaths**

The government's Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme looks into the deaths of wildlife where pesticide poisoning may be involved.

Tenants should look out for:

- dead animals like rabbits cut open and staked out as bait
- several dead animals close together, such as rabbits
- animals that have died suddenly for no obvious reason, such as foxes
- eggs in unusual places, possibly with an ink mark

If an animal has been suspected to have been poisoned, or evidence is found of a pesticide that puts wildlife or pets at risk, contact should be made with the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme National Free Hotline on **0800 321 600**. Further information is available at:

[www.pesticides.gov.uk/guidance/industries/pesticides/topics/reducing-environmental-impact/wildlife](http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/guidance/industries/pesticides/topics/reducing-environmental-impact/wildlife)

## **Trees on Allotments**

Fruit trees or other small trees or shrubs can be grown on an allotment, within the bounds of reasonable parameters. For example, select dwarfing rootstock to avoid interfering with neighboring plots and avoid allocate a whole plot to densely spaced trees.

On Council-managed allotment sites, trees that are growing on the allotment site which are not within plots are usually the responsibility of the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team who will carry out a regular tree survey and carry out work to these trees if required for example for safety reasons, or to allow effective cultivation of plots.

## **Rubbish and Waste**

Allotments are not waste dumps, and it is against rules to bring rubbish on to the site. Plots should be kept as tidy and free of rubbish as possible. Old carpets are not accepted as a suitable form of mulching or covering for compost heaps and are not to be brought onto the allotment site. It is not appropriate for allotment sites to be used by commercial landscape gardeners (large or small) as sites for bulk composting of their green waste material from other locations. If any potentially hazardous material is spotted on a site, or anyone dumping material on the allotment site is seen, contact should be made with the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team immediately so that

it can be investigated and any necessary action taken. It is recommended that plot holders do not confront any individuals who are dumping waste on site.

## **Dogs**

Wirral Council understands that some plot holders may wish to take dogs with them to allotment sites for company. It is a requirement that dogs are kept on a lead when travelling around allotment sites.

Dogs must also be kept under control on plots, to ensure the safety of neighbouring plot holders and to avoid disturbing activities on neighbouring plots.

## **COMMUNITY PLOTS**

Wirral Borough Council is happy to work with organisations in the provision of Community plots (i.e. a plot which is worked by a number of different people from the local community or a local charitable organisation).

The tenancy agreement for a Community plot will be allocated to a named individual, for example the chair of an allotment site society, a site society, or the name of the nominated representative of a local group or organisation, whichever is the most relevant.

The plot will be subject to the same terms and conditions as a standard individual tenancy agreement, however, if required, changes to a standard tenancy agreement can be considered but will only be made with the prior written agreement of Wirral's Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team.

The Community Plot cannot be sub-let, nor can sections of the Community Plot be charged for without written agreement from the Council.

Keys to the allotment community plot will be issued by the Council in line with the standard arrangements for Council Allotments. In the event that any additional locks are required to control access to a community plot, a key must be given to the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team to ensure that the Council is able to gain access to the Community Plot at any time.

Community Plots remain the property of Wirral Council and must be cultivated in line with good practice.

## **CONCLUSION**

Allotment gardening is a positive pastime which can be very beneficial for the health of everyone who takes part. It can also be a great way for local people to help each other and support nature and the environment. The Parks, Allotment and Countryside Team commits to the Council's Corporate Vision that good health and an excellent quality of life should be within reach of all who live here.

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## **WIRRAL COUNCIL**

# **A GUIDE TO THE ALLOTMENT PROCESSES: HOW IT ALL WORKS**

**Wirral Council - Neighbourhoods Directorate**

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## **1 How to Become a Tenant:**

- 1.1** In order to become a tenant on one of Wirral's Allotment Sites, applicants must be over the age of 18, and a permanent resident of Wirral. Applications from members of the public who do not meet the stated criteria will not be accepted.
- 1.2** Applications can be made to become a tenant of an allotment site by completing the on-line application, available via the Wirral Council website.
- 1.3** There are separate waiting lists for each individual site, and an applicant may choose to join a maximum of two waiting lists for Wirral's allotment sites.

## **2 Waiting List:**

- 2.1** When an application is received the applicant's name is entered onto the Council's allotment administration database. The date listed for the applicant on the waiting list will be the date that the application was received by the Council. This determines an applicant's position on the waiting list.
- 2.2** Wirral Council will liaise with each Site Secretary to ensure that listings are accurate and are being adhered to in order to make sure that the integrity of the waiting lists are never compromised.
- 2.3** Once an applicant has been added to the waiting lists for their chosen site(s), if they wish to delete an application, and join the waiting list for a different site, the date that they joined the waiting list for the new site will determine their position in that site's waiting list, not the date of their original application.
- 2.4** In the interests of sustainability, we encourage applicants to apply to allotment sites within a 3-mile radius of their residence (where possible).

## **3 Allotment Allocation Process**

- 3.1** When a plot on any of the allotment sites becomes available, the Site Secretary will contact the Parks, Allotments & Countryside Team to inform them of who is vacating (please see Termination of Agreement).
- 3.2** The Parks Allotments & Countryside Technical Support Administrator will check the waiting list and make contact with the applicant at the top of the

list by email (or post if the applicant does not have an email address). This contact will be followed up by phone/in person by the site secretary to encourage the applicant to provide a speedy response to the offer of a plot. The site secretary will offer to show the applicant the plot if this is helpful.

- 3.3** All forms of communication with the applicant, be it by telephone, email or letter will clearly state that the offer will be withdrawn within 21 days of the offer being made if there is no response. The applicant will accept or decline the offer in writing to the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Technical Support Administrator. If after 21 days there has been no response from the applicant then the process will begin again with the next applicant on the waiting list.
- 3.4** Should an applicant refuse an offer of an allotment on 3 separate occasions, they will be removed from the allotment waiting list.
- 3.5** Once an applicant has become a tenant of one site, they may choose to remain in their current position on a second waiting list, if the second site is preferable to them. Should the second site become available, and they choose to accept that plot, they will relinquish their original plot and move to the second site. This is to ensure as many people as possible are able to take part in allotment gardening, and to ensure fairness that everyone is only allowed to hold tenancy on one plot, especially whilst the demand for allotments exceeds the supply of available plots.
- 3.6** Due to the current demand for plots, tenants that currently hold tenancies for more than one plot will not be offered additional plots. The new Allotments Partnership Strategy and Improvement plans will take into account historical situations, and will not be retrospectively enforced: tenants who currently hold multiple plots will not be asked to surrender any of their allotments.

## **4 The Agreement:**

- 4.1** Once an applicant has viewed the available plot and decided that they wish to accept, then a tenancy agreement will be completed.
- 4.2** The applicant will be sent two copies of the agreement which will state:
  - The applicant's personal details
  - The commencement date of the tenancy agreement
  - The terms and conditions of the agreement

- 4.3** The applicant will keep a copy of the agreement and send a signed copy back to the Parks, Allotments and Countryside team for their records.

## **5 Allocation of Key:**

- 5.1** Once the agreement has been received, Wirral Council will issue a key to the new tenant in order for them to gain access to their allotment site.
- 5.2** No tenant may enter the allotment until they are in possession of a key that has been officially issued by the Parks, Allotments and Countryside team.
- 5.3** A suitable returnable deposit may be required for the key. The purpose of the deposit will be to ensure keys are returned when plots are vacated.

## **6 Tenancy**

- 6.1** The tenant is required to regularly attend their plot and keep it in a cultivated or tidy state, depending on the time of year.
- 6.2** Wirral Council recognises that allotments are a family friendly activity, and friends and family are welcome assist in the work and cultivation of the plot alongside the tenant.
- 6.3** If members of family/friends are assisting with the plot when the tenant is not present (i.e. the tenants partner is also involved with the cultivation of the plot), they should be introduced to the site secretary prior to these visits.
- 6.4** The tenancy agreement is limited to the tenant only. Plots cannot be transferred or sub-let to family or friends (other than as set out in Paragraph 7.5). Breaches of this rule will result in a termination of tenancy.
- 6.5** If a tenant has found that a full plot is too much work, they may ask to have their plot size reduced to a half plot by contacting the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Local Team Leader responsible for their site, who will alter their records in the database and adjust their rent for the plot accordingly.
- 6.6** Tenants who move out of the Wirral Borough area will be required to surrender their allotment tenancy.

## **7 Inability to tend plot due to sickness or personal issues:**

- 7.1** In order to ensure that plots do not become overgrown because a tenant is unable to tend the plot due to sickness or personal issues, Wirral Council have developed a short term tenancy agreement.
- 7.2** The short term tenancy agreement allows the tenant to nominate one person (must be 18 years of age or over) to legally enter the tenants plot for an initial three months, which may be extended to 6 months should more time be required by the original plot tenant.
- 7.3** The person nominated will be expected to keep the plot free from weeds and continue good horticultural practice as far as is practical but will not be expected to cultivate to the levels required of the original tenant. The short term tenancy is not an offer of permanent tenancy and is non-negotiable.
- 7.4** Due to previous issues, to guarantee fair allocation of plots and to ensure as many people as possible in Wirral are able to benefit from allotment gardening, a plot tenancy will not be transferred to someone who has been helping a tenant on a plot as this could result in people 'jumping the queue'.
- 7.5** An exception will be made if a plot tenant dies (or becomes medically incapacitated on a long term or permanent basis). In this circumstance the plot holder's legal partner can be allocated the tenancy of the plot if they request it, as long as they do not already hold a plot tenancy in their own right and have advised the council previously that they are an active partner in the cultivation of the plot. Plots will not be transferred to the children of a deceased tenant.

## **8 The Enquiry / Complaints Process:**

- 8.1** Allotment enquiries and complaints may be made by plot holders, site secretaries, site society representatives, neighbours, other residents, Councillors and MPs.
- 8.2** Enquiries, service requests and complaints can be made via the Council's website ([www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)). Councillors should use CouncillorNet so that their enquiry is logged appropriately.
- 8.3** Responses to enquiries will be made by the most appropriate Parks, Allotments and Countryside Officer. In most cases, this will be the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Local Team Leader, responsible for the

Allotment site in question. The enquiry or complaint will be investigated as necessary (this may require contact with a plot holder or site secretary) and responses to the person who raised the enquiry will be made within fifteen working days (members of the public) or ten days (Councillors and MPs) in line with the Council's complaints procedure standards.

- 8.4** If the enquiry is not dealt with or answered to the satisfaction of the enquirer, they can raise a stage one complaint. The complaint will be investigated and a response given within the corporate timescale for responses to complaints (fifteen working days), or an explanation given as to why a full reply will take longer (for example if a complainant needs to be contacted to investigate the issue further and they are currently on holiday).
- 8.5** If the enquirer is not happy with the findings of a stage one complaint, they can escalate the complaint. The complaint will be investigated by a senior officer from the service (stage 2) and a response will be provided within fifteen working days.
- 8.6** If the enquirer is not happy with the findings provided at stage two, they can ask for the issue to be reviewed by a senior officer from a different department. In this case, a senior officer will be allocated to investigate and a response will be provided within fifteen working days. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may raise the matter of concern with the Local Authority Ombudsman.

## **9 Investigation/Audit Process:**

- 9.1** If an enquiry/complaint requires an investigation then the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team will ensure that they clarify the facts through interviews, which will be documented.
- 9.2** When the investigation has been completed and findings discussed with all parties involved then relevant actions will be identified, communicated and monitored within the timescales that have been agreed.

## **10 Inspection Process:**

- 10.1** There will be two strands of monitoring:
- Inspections of plots that are not being maintained in line with required standards
  - 6 monthly/yearly overall inspections of each site

- 10.2** Any plot that, at any time, is identified to not be being maintained in line with required standards (both horticultural and animal plots) will be subject to monitoring visits and appropriate follow up actions.
- 10.3** A six monthly inspection of every allotment site classified as a 'Council-managed' Wirral Council asset, will take place to monitor whether required standards are being maintained. This inspection will be carried out by a member of staff from the Parks, Allotments and Countryside team (for example, the Local Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team Leader). The site secretary and a nominated representative of the site's allotment society (where one exists) will be invited to take part in the inspection. Any necessary follow up actions will be identified, agreed and implemented.
- 10.4** An annual inspection of self-managed allotment sites, listed as Wirral Council assets, will also take place. This will be undertaken by a member of staff from the Parks, Allotments and Countryside team and a nominated representative of the self-managed allotment group. The inspection will include checking whether the terms of the lease are being followed. Any necessary follow up actions will be identified, agreed and implemented, in accordance with the terms of the lease agreement.

## **11 Improvement Notices/Action Planning:**

- 11.1** If a tenant allows their plot to fall below the required standard and is deemed not to be adhering to the tenancy requirements, they will receive an improvement notice, known as a "Dirty Plot Notice", which will clearly state the work that needs to be addressed and the timescales that will be permitted for this to be completed. The timescale for improvements to be made will be 28 days.
- 11.2** If a tenant receives two improvement notices within a two year period they will receive a warning notice (which will be called a 'yellow card' notice). If a tenant receives a third improvement notice within a two year period they will receive a final warning (which will be called a 'red card' notice).
- 11.3** Any further failure to maintain the required standards within a 2 year period will result in the termination of the plot holder's tenancy agreement. If the plot is not left in a satisfactory condition, the Council will carry out the necessary work to return the plot to a satisfactory condition (taking into account the state it was in when the tenant took on the plot). The vacating plot holder will be billed the cost of this remedial work.

## **12 Financial Processes:**

- 12.1** The Parks Allotments and Countryside team will identify through the financial year which allotment site maintenance issues have required the most attention. A summary of Wirral's allotment related income and expenditure will be provided on an annual basis to both site secretaries and the Wirral Allotment Society.
- 12.2** With financial implications likely to impact upon the yearly budget for allotments it will be imperative to ensure that forecasting is applied so that a schedule of required works can be drawn up and prioritised based on the issues of the previous six/twelve months.
- 12.3** If a plot is not left in a satisfactory condition when a tenant vacates, the Council will carry out the necessary work to return the plot to a satisfactory. The vacating plot holder will be billed the cost of this remedial work, taking into account the state it was in when the tenant took on the plot.

## **13 Site Secretaries, Meetings and the Chair of the Secretaries Group:**

- 13.1** The role of site secretary is an important voluntary role which helps ensure the smooth running of each allotment site.
- 13.2** Site secretaries are required to adhere to the rules and regulations of the tenancy and site secretary agreements.
- 13.3** Subject to satisfactory performance of the role, each August/September site secretaries will be asked to confirm whether they wish to continue in this voluntary role for the coming allotment year (October to September). If they do not wish to continue in the role, they will revert to being a plot holder, required to pay the annual fee for their allotment.
- 13.4** Where a vacancy arises, appointments to the role will be made following an advert for the role being placed at the Allotment site requiring a new site secretary. Interested plot holders will be asked to put their name forward to the Parks Allotments & Countryside Team. Interviews based on the requirements of a site secretary, will be held by a member of the Parks Allotments and Countryside Team with input from the Chair of the Site Secretaries. The most suitable candidate will be appointed.

- 13.5** The Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team will invite all site secretaries of non-self-managed allotment sites to a quarterly meeting (to be held in the following quarters: January/March, April/June, July/September and October/December) regarding issues related to their role as site secretaries. The meeting will be chaired by the Chair of the site secretaries group. A site secretary who is unable to attend may ask a fellow plot holder from their site to attend the meeting as an observer to feedback any main points from the meeting to the site secretary. Any observers at site secretary meetings are not, however, in a position to speak on behalf of the site secretary or vote on any issue. Site secretaries of self-managed sites may also attend but are not eligible to vote on any issues.
- 13.6** A note of the site secretary meetings will be taken (a site secretary may volunteer to draft the note), this will be forwarded to the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team for finalising and will then be circulated to all site secretaries, including the site secretaries of self-managed sites in case it is of interest/use.
- 13.7** An attendance record of those site secretaries attending will be taken. If a site secretary fails to attend 3 of the site secretary quarterly meetings in a row, it will be taken as evidence that they no longer wish to/are not able to undertake the voluntary role of site secretary and an advert will be placed on site inviting plot holders to express interest in applying for the role. This process is necessary due to the importance of the site secretary role within the effective functioning of Wirral's non-self-managed allotment sites.
- 13.8** The role of Chair of the Allotment Site Secretaries group is a voluntary position, the purpose of which is to assist the council in the running of site secretary meetings. The post will be held for 3 years. The election of the Chair of the Site Secretaries Group for the period November 2017 to October 2020 will take place in October 2017, all site secretaries of non-self-managed sites may stand for election. Site secretaries wishing to stand for election will be asked to nominate themselves to the Parks and Allotments Team in September 2017. The election will be by secret ballot, using forms provided by the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team to those site secretaries present at the autumn meeting of Site Secretaries. Only those site secretaries that attend the autumn meeting may vote. The votes will be counted by the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team and the result of the election will be announced at that autumn meeting. The elected chair of the Site Secretaries Group will commence their term in office from the end of that meeting.

## **14 Wirral Council Partnership**

- 14.1** Wirral Council recognises the importance of allotments and the contribution to health it provides, as well as being an enjoyable and positive activity, and intends to work to promote the positive relationship between the Council and its managed and self-managed sites.
- 14.2** To help this, the Council will work with site secretaries who fulfil an important role on a voluntary basis, which helps to support the Council with the management of their particular sites by being a first point of contact and helping the Council promote the use of allotments for tenants and the wider allotment community.
- 14.3** The Council will also encourage and the establishment of Allotment site societies and work with them to promote the betterment of their allotment site, recognising the positive contribution they can make through fund raising and practical self-help such as organising work parties.
- 14.4** To prevent a conflict of interest and recognise that individual plot holders may not wish to be a member of an allotment society, the role of site secretary and allotment site associations should remain separate (i.e. a site secretary role and the chair of an allotment site society must be held by different people).

## **15 The Wirral Allotments Competition:**

- 15.1** The annual allotments competition plays an important role in the allotment year in Wirral because it provides plot holders with an opportunity to showcase their work and encourages friendly competition. It also encourages everyone to help care for and maintain the allotment sites in line with good standards of horticulture and allotment upkeep.
- 15.2** The judging criteria will be made available to all plot holders and site societies. The date of the final judging week will be advertised on all site noticeboards.
- 15.3** There will be a number of awards for individual plot holders and for allotment sites. All Wirral council allotment sites will be visited during the assessment period (June/July) and awards will be presented at the Allotment Competition awards annual event. Sponsorship of the competition prizes and of the awards evening will be encouraged.

- 15.4** Each year, two local judges, drawn from the allotment community, will carry out the final judging; they will be accompanied by a member of the Council's Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team. Any member of the Wirral allotment community wishing to be considered as a judge for the following year should make their interest known to the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Senior Manager in December each year. Judges will be selected in January each year.
- 15.5** The annual allotment awards event will be run by the allotments community in partnership with the Council's Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team, offers of support and assistance from members of Wirral's allotment community will be encouraged. The Mayor of Wirral will be invited to present the awards.

## **16 Insurance and Liability:**

- 16.1** Plot holders may wish to take out insurance as they are entirely responsible for their allotment plots and any liabilities relating to them.
- 16.2** The infrastructure of non-self-managed allotment sites, such as boundary fences and paths is the council's responsibility and will be inspected, maintained or improved by an officer from the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team in liaison with the site secretary and representative of the allotment site's society (if one exists). If allotment holders volunteer their time to assist Wirral's Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team in its upkeep, then liability arising from such approved activity, can be covered by the Council's Liability policy, as long as the work is carried out with the approval of the nominated officer, namely the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Local Team Leader responsible for the allotment site in question.
- 16.3** Considerations that apply to 'Parks Friends Groups' are also relevant to allotment plot holders and societies. For example, allotment site volunteer work needs to be planned with and sanctioned by the relevant council officer (the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Local Team Leader) and the Council's volunteer registration process can be applied. Please note that no cover is available from the Council if an allotment site's society is a registered charity, and in these cases an allotment site society should arrange insurance cover for their activities.

## **17 Equality and Diversity:**

- 17.1** Wirral Council's Parks, Allotments and Countryside team are committed to ensuring equal access to the allotments' service and understand the diversity of our communities. We seek to respond appropriately to the differing needs of all of our tenants and applicants.

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**WIRRAL COUNCIL**  
**ALLOTMENT TENANCY AGREEMENT**

**Wirral Council - Neighbourhoods Directorate**

# **AN AGREEMENT**

Made between WIRRAL COUNCIL (hereinafter called 'the Council') and the person whose name and address appears within 'Schedule 1' (hereinafter called 'the Tenant').

## **IT IS AGREED as follows:**

The Council shall let and the Tenant shall take an on-going tenancy, which can be terminated by either the Council or the Tenant as stated within this agreement. This tenancy is non-transferable and is let only to the named Tenant within 'Schedule 1'.

The Tenant agrees to observe and adhere to the terms and conditions as stated within this tenancy agreement.

The Council, reserves the right to make amendments to this agreement at any stage of its existence and when this happens, all Tenants will receive notification of the changes, which will be recorded by obtaining the Tenants signature.

<b>Signed on behalf of the Council</b>	
<b>Signed</b>	

<b>Signature of Tenant</b>	
<b>Signed</b>	

<b>Signed In The Presence Of</b>	
<b>Print Name of Witness</b>	

<b>Signature of Witness</b>	
<b>Signed</b>	

<b>Address of Witness</b>	
<b>House Number/Name</b>	
<b>Address Line 1</b>	
<b>Address Line 2</b>	
<b>Address Line 3</b>	
<b>Postcode</b>	

<b>Date of Signing</b>	
<b>Please Enter Date</b>	

**SCHEDULE 1**

<b>THE TENANT</b>	
<b>Print Name of Tenant</b>	
<b>ADDRESS OF TENANT</b>	
<b>House Number/Name</b>	
<b>Address Line 1</b>	
<b>Address Line 2</b>	
<b>Address Line 3</b>	
<b>Postcode</b>	
<b>OTHER (IF APPLICABLE)</b>	
<b>Telephone Number</b>	
<b>E- Mail</b>	

**SCHEDULE 2**

<b>THE PLOT</b>	
<b>Site Location</b>	
<b>Plot Number</b>	
<b>Commencement Date of Tenancy</b>	

A person shall not be eligible for a tenancy if they are not a resident of Wirral or a Council taxpayer of Wirral Council

**PROOF OF ABOVE STATEMENT (Any of the documents below will suffice) (Please Tick)**

<b>Latest Council Tax</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Latest Utility Bill</b> (Water / Gas / Electricity)	<input type="checkbox"/>

A person shall not be eligible for a tenancy if they are under the age of 18

**PROOF OF ABOVE STATEMENT IF PROOF IS REQUIRED (Any of the documents below will suffice) (Please Tick)**

<b>Birth Certificate</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Passport</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Other Document</b> Stating Date of Birth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Please State Document</b>

A person shall not be eligible who have been dispossessed of a plot because of disregard to ANY of the terms and conditions stated within this agreement.

**PLEASE CONFIRM THAT TENANT HAS SIGNED THE DECLARATION FORM**

<b>Date Declaration Signed</b>	
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### **SCHEDULE 3**

Schedule three states the terms and conditions that a Tenant must adhere to in order to be allocated and retain an allotment, until such time as either the Council or the Tenant terminate this agreement.

#### **TERMS & CONDITIONS**

##### **1 Access**

- 1.1 Under no circumstances must a Tenant deny access to a Council Officer in a bid to stop them from undertaking their duties.
- 1.2 The Council reserve the right to deny access to any person(s) that are not a Tenant or have been removed from the applicable site due to breaching any of the terms and conditions as stated within this agreement.
- 1.3 Communal access paths on the applicable site must on no occasion become obstructed. Tenants must, keep communal paths clear from debris, waste and any overhanging vegetation.
- 1.4 All vehicles that have access to the applicable site must on no occasion block access to any other vehicles/Tenants/Council Officers.
- 1.5 Tenants must clearly display their plot number at the entrance to their plot.

##### **2 Allotment Fees**

- 2.1 All allotment rental charges must be paid annually in advance on the first day of October.
- 2.2 Non-payment of rental charges will result in termination of the Tenancy Agreement.
- 2.3 The Council shall be able to increase the annual rent for a plot and will inform tenants of this in writing.

##### **3 Animals**

- 3.1 Tenants must not keep any animals, livestock or insects of any kind on the plot, without the written permission of the Council.
- 3.2 Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times when travelling through an allotment site.
- 3.3 Dogs may be let off the lead on the owner's plot only, and must be kept under control and within the confines of that plot at all times.
- 3.4 Any dog fouling must be immediately picked up and disposed of off site.

#### **4 Anti-Social Behaviour**

- 4.1 Tenants must not show any form of anti-social behaviour such as physical violence, threats, vandalism, abusive language or intimidating behaviour to any other Tenants, Council Officers or neighbouring communities adjacent to the allotment site.

#### **5 Complaints**

- 5.1 Complaints by tenants shall in the first instance be made to their Site Secretary. If they cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, they shall be submitted to the local Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team Leader.

#### **6 Asbestos**

- 6.1 If there are any doubts whether a material is asbestos related, tenants should contact the Local Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team Leader who will arrange for a specialist to confirm and if it is will arrange for its removal.

#### **7 Bee-Keeping**

- 7.1 Bees must not be kept near residential property.
- 7.2 Written permission must be obtained from Wirral Council.
- 7.3 All applications for bee-keeping must be accompanied by a copy of the applicant's certificate from the Bee Keeping Association.
- 7.4 Tenants within close proximity to the plot holder (tenant) requesting to keep bees will be written to in order to ensure they have no objection.
- 7.5 If tenants with bees are not able to attend the site and request a person to attend in the meantime (such as holidays / sickness) then Wirral Council must be informed of the name of the person and receive a copy of their certificate from the Bee Keeping Association.
- 7.6 Bees must be checked daily, you must provide competent care and management.
- 7.7 Wirral Council have the right to gain access and inspect the plot at any time.

#### **8 Bonfires**

- 8.1 Bonfires must only be started when absolutely essential.

- 8.2 Tenants must respect neighbours rights to not have smoke from fires drifting across their properties.
- 8.3 If a complaint is received then the fire must be immediately extinguished.
- 8.4 If a Council Officer Investigation identifies that fires are being created without good reason they will issue a warning to the relevant Tenant(s).
- 8.5 If after warning fires are not reduced then the Tenant will have their tenancy terminated.
- 8.6 Accelerants such as petrol, oil or paraffin must never be used.
- 8.7 The Council under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 are obliged to take formal legal action if they are satisfied that a nuisance due to smoke exists or is likely to occur or recur in its area.
- 8.8 It is an offence under the Highways (Amendment) Act 1986 to light a fire and allow smoke to drift across a road.
- 8.9 All Tenants must follow the rules and regulations of setting bonfires within the document 'Other Useful Information.'

## **9 Children (U18s)**

- 9.1 Children may come onto the site to participate in allotment gardening.
- 9.2 Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.
- 9.3 Tenants will be liable for any damage caused to other tenant's plots caused by an unsupervised child.
- 9.4 Tenants will be responsible for any accidents that may occur on site to a child who is in their care.

## **10 Cockerels**

- 10.1 Due to noise issues, no cockerels are allowed on the site at any time.

## **11 Composting**

- 11.1 All green waste shall be composted on the Tenant's own plot.

## **12 Confidentiality**

- 12.1 Tenants/Site Secretaries must not interfere within any site meetings that have been arranged by the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team with other Tenants or Site Secretaries.
- 12.2 See Site Secretary Terms and Conditions.

### **13 Drugs**

- 13.1 Tenants must not attempt to cultivate any illegal substances on or within their plot or any unoccupied plots.
- 13.2 Tenants must not use their plot for storage of any illegal substances.

### **14 Equality and Diversity**

- 14.1 No Tenant, Council Officer, volunteer or neighbouring residents will be subjected to sexist, racist, xenophobic or homophobic remarks
- 14.2 No Tenant, Council Officer, volunteer or neighbouring residents will be subjected to any form of discrimination, victimisation or harassment

### **15 Health and Safety**

- 15.1 It is the responsibility of all Tenants to ensure that they maintain a healthy and safe environment by following the guidelines within the document 'Other Useful Information.'
- 15.2 Chemicals must be stored within their original packaging/containers and stored as per the manufacturer's instructions.

### **16 Hedges**

- 16.1 Maintenance of hedges is the responsibility of the tenant.
- 16.2 It is an offence to disturb nesting birds.
- 16.3 You may not remove hedges without written permission from Wirral Council.

### **17 Maintenance**

- 17.1 Plots may be used for growing fruit and vegetables, keeping livestock, growing flowers or as a garden.
- 17.2 Plots must not be used for any trade or business or for any unlawful or illegal purpose.
- 17.3 Plots must be kept clean, fertile and free from spreading weeds, with at least 75% of the plot in a good state of good cultivation.
- 17.4 Plots not kept to the appropriate standard will be subject to an Improvement Notice. Failure to maintain a plot in good order will lead to the termination of the tenancy.
- 17.5 If there are fruit bushes or trees growing on the plot then the area around them must be maintained and not allowed to become overgrown.

- 17.6 Tenants must allow the Council to inspect the plot whenever it wishes to verify the required standards are maintained (See also 1.1).
- 17.7 Tenants are responsible for maintaining the roadway adjacent to the plot and access either side of the plot in a tidy and weed free condition.
- 17.8 Tenants are responsible for maintaining structures on their plot (See also 26).

## **18 Pesticides**

- 18.1 The use of pesticides should be kept to a minimum.

## **19 Prohibited Use of Plot**

- 19.1 A Tenant's Plot/Structures must not be used to cultivate any illegal or lesser graded drug.
- 19.2 A Tenant's plot/structures must not be used as a storage site for anything other than can be associated with the official plot usage.
- 19.3 A Tenant's plot/structures must not be used as a camping site or be used for sleeping or living accommodation for any person/s including the Tenant.

## **20 Pigeons**

- 20.1 Only plots specifically designated as animal plots may be used to house pigeons.
- 20.2 Pigeons must be checked daily, the tenant must provide competent care and management.
- 20.3 Any RSPCA reports that stipulate poor management or cruelty will result in an immediate termination of agreement and the appropriate ban will be implemented to ensure the responsible person is not given a further opportunity to have an animal plot on a Wirral Council allotment site.
- 20.4 Wirral Council has the right to gain access and inspect the plot at any time.

## **21 Poultry**

- 21.1 Tenants must have written permission from Wirral Council to keep poultry, unless the plot is specifically classed as an animal plot only and registered as such on the Wirral Council allotment database.
- 21.2 Poultry must be checked daily, the tenant must provide competent care and management.

- 21.3 Any RSPCA reports that stipulate poor management or cruelty will result in an immediate termination of agreement and the appropriate ban will be implemented to ensure the responsible person is not given a further opportunity to have an animal plot on a Wirral Council allotment site.
- 21.4 Wirral Council have the right to gain access and inspect the plot at any time.

## **22 Rubbish**

- 22.1 Tenants must not bring rubbish onto the allotment site.
- 22.2 All waste matter must be removed from the plot and then removed immediately from the site.
- 22.3 Tenants are responsible for keeping ditches adjacent to the plot clear and free from rubbish.
- 22.4 If a Tenant refuses to remove rubbish from their plot they will be in breach of their tenancy. If the Council have to resort to arranging for the rubbish to be removed then holder of the plot will become liable for the cost of having the rubbish removed.
- 22.5 Tenants must not at any time use other tenant's plots to discard their rubbish.
- 22.6 Waste matter must not be left on the plot, thrown over fences or into ditches.

## **23 Security**

- 23.1 Once the agreement has been received, Wirral Council will issue a key to the new tenant in order for them to gain access to their allotment site.
- 23.2 No tenant may enter the allotment until they are in possession of a key that has been officially issued by the Parks, Allotments and Countryside team.
- 23.3 A suitable returnable deposit may be required for the key. The purpose of the deposit will be to ensure keys are returned when plots are vacated.
- 23.4 Tenants must on no occasion issue their key to any other tenant or non-tenant
- 23.5 Tenants must not have a key copied.
- 23.6 If a tenant loses their key they must report this immediately to the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team.

- 23.7 If a tenant loses their key and then finds it after receiving a replacement they must immediately inform the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team and return the key. Tenants must use their best endeavours to help protect the allotment site.
- 23.8 Including avoiding causing damage to gates, fences, hedges or notice boards situated on the site.
- 23.9 All security incidents must be reported to the Local Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team Leader.
- 23.10 At no point must any barbed or razor wire be used anywhere on any allotment site. If any person(s) are injured as a result of such materials then the person who placed the items on site will become solely liable for any injuries that are received due to these materials being present.
- 23.11 All items of personal property brought onto the site by the tenant will remain their liability should they be damaged or stolen.
- 23.12 It is each tenant's responsibility to close and lock the gate after they enter and when they leave. Any tenant found breaching this rule will immediately receive a warning and the tenancy will be terminated if this continues to occur.
- 23.13 Tenants are not allowed to stay overnight on the allotment site.

## **24 Selling**

- 24.1 Tenants must not attempt to sell their plots – the tenancy agreement is not land ownership.

## **25 Skips**

- 25.1 Wirral Council will not be responsible for the provision of skips required by a plot holder for their gardening-related activities.

## **26 Structures**

- 26.1 One or more greenhouses, sheds or polytunnels may be erected on a plot, providing they do not dominate the plot and do not cause a disturbance to neighbouring plots.
- 26.2 All structures on the plot must be kept in a good and safe state of maintenance and repair.
- 26.3 No advertising board or sign must be displayed on any plot or within any other part of the site.

## **27 Sub Letting**

- 27.1 Tenants must not at any stage sub-let their plot

## **28 III Health Representation**

- 28.1 If a Tenant is suffering from illness which prevents them from tending to their plot, then the Tenant may nominate a representative from their family or a friend (but not another Tenant) to take over their plot. Any such representative must be named by the plot holder. Such representation does not constitute a transfer of the plot.
- 28.2 Any representative must sign a 'Three Month Tenancy Agreement', which transfers short term maintenance commitments to the representative. In exceptional circumstances, the temporary tenancy agreement may be extended to six months.

## **29 Termination of Agreement (Tenant no longer wants an allotment)**

- 29.1 Tenants may give notice that they wish to relinquish their plot at a Wirral Council allotment by stating in writing the date that they wish this to take place (A minimum of 4 weeks' notice to be given).
- 29.2 Additionally – tenants who are moving out of the Wirral Borough Council postcode area must relinquish their plots prior to leaving (A minimum of 4 weeks' notice to be given).
- 29.3 If a Tenant wishes to relinquish their plot they must ensure that the plot is clean, tidy, weed free, in a good state of cultivation and fertility.
- 29.4 A member of the Parks, Allotments and Countryside team will, when notice is given, carry out an inspection of the plot with the Tenant in attendance and issue any necessary action plan to the Tenant stating any non-compliance and any additional work needed to be completed prior to the date of termination.
- 29.5 A member of the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team will carry out a final inspection of the plot at termination with the Tenant in attendance in order to confirm that any action plan has been complied with.
- 29.6 Exceptions will be made to tenants who took on particularly overgrown plots and were unable to fully clear and utilise them prior to the termination of their tenancy.

## **30 Termination of Agreement (Death of Tenant)**

- 30.1 In the event of a Tenant dying Wirral Council should be contacted by the tenant's family so that they can be made aware of such circumstances.
- 30.2 The Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team will make suitable arrangements with a family member after a suitable and agreed period of time to carry out an inspection with a family member in attendance.

- 30.3 The Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team will use their discretion to agree any ongoing maintenance of the plot for which the family member will sign a 'Three Month Tenancy Agreement'.
- 30.4 The Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team have the discretion to waive all such actions when dealing with the death of a Tenant if they believe that this may cause unnecessary grief to family members.
- 30.5 The tenancy of an allotment can only be transferred to the deceased tenant's legal partner. Plots will not be transferred to children, other family or friends.

### **31 Termination of Agreement (Wirral Council)**

- 31.1 Wirral Council will terminate the Tenancy Agreement if there is any continual non-compliance of the Tenancy Agreement or with immediate effect if there is any issue that is classed within the agreement of having a zero tolerance. (All issues of non-compliance will be investigated prior to decisions being finalised).
- 31.2 Wirral Council reserve the right to terminate the Tenancy Agreement at any stage throughout the agreed Tenancy and will do this in writing explaining the reasons for termination.

### **32 Trees**

- 32.1 No trees may be removed without the written permission from Wirral Council.
- 32.2 The removal of large trees on a plot must be carried out by a qualified professional.
- 32.3 Any Council-owned trees on allotment sites may be pruned with the permission of Wirral Council's Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team.

### **33 Vehicles**

- 33.1 All vehicles that have access to the allotment site must on no occasion block access to any other vehicles/Tenants/Council Officers.
- 33.2 No vehicles must be left on any allotment site overnight.

### **34 Water Usage**

- 34.1 Mains water or hosepipes must not be left unattended.
- 34.2 Water must not be wasted and sprinklers must not be used.
- 34.3 Persistent misuse or non-compliance with good practice around the use of mains water will lead to termination of the tenancy.

- 34.4 Tenants digging ponds, wells or ground level storage pits for water shall fence them off adequately.
- 34.5 All drought orders must be adhered to.

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**WIRRAL COUNCIL**  
**SITE SECRETARY AGREEMENT**

**Wirral Council - Neighbourhoods Directorate**

## **AN AGREEMENT**

Made between WIRRAL COUNCIL (hereinafter called 'the Council') and the person whose name appears within 'Site Secretaries Name' (hereinafter called 'the Site Secretary').

### **IT IS AGREED as follows:**

That the role of the Site Secretary is to, act as a supporting link between the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team and the tenants of the applicable allotment site.

That the Site Secretary will adhere to the instructions issued by the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team and follow the set guidelines for Site Secretaries.

That failure to comply with the guidelines will result in the withdrawal of the role of Site Secretary and a new Site Secretary will be chosen.

The Council, reserves the right to make amendments to this agreement at any stage of its existence. When this happens, all Site Secretaries will receive notification of the changes in writing detailing any of these changes within the terms and conditions.

In undertaking the voluntary role as Site Secretary, the appointed person will not be required to pay their allotment fee for the duration of their voluntary service in the role.

## **TERMS & CONDITIONS**

### **1 Appointment**

- 1.1 Subject to satisfactory performance of the role, each August/September, site secretaries will be asked to confirm whether they wish to continue in this voluntary role for the coming year.
- 1.2 Should the site secretary not wish to continue their role, they will revert to being a plot holder, and will be required to pay their annual fee for an allotment plot.

### **2 Access**

- 2.1 Site Secretaries must not deny access to any Council Official who is there in the capacity to carry out their duties.
- 2.2 Site Secretaries must not deny access to any Tenant who has a legal right to be there.
- 2.3 Site Secretaries must not at any stage participate within any campaign or attempt to illegally block access to an allotment site.

### **3 Action Plans**

- 2.4 The Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team will communicate their requirements via an allotment site action plan, which will be agreed and monitored to ensure that the correct processes are adhered to in respect of any issues.
- 2.5 Site Secretaries must adhere to the action plans and failure to do so may result in the removal from post and a new Site Secretary chosen.

### **3 Inspection**

- 3.1 The Site Secretary has a supportive role, ensuring standards are being maintained and can raise concerns if any plot, at any time, is not being maintained within required standards (both horticultural and animal plots) and can request inspection of a plot by the appropriate Parks, Allotments and Countryside Officer.

### **4 Allocation of Allotment Plots**

- 4.1 Site Secretaries must under no circumstances attempt to let or allocate plots without adhering to the application process.

### **5 Anti – Social Behaviour**

- 5.1 Site Secretaries will report any anti-social behaviour immediately to the Local Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team Leader stating the date, time, names of those involved (if known) a brief description and the duration of the behaviour.
- 5.2 Site Secretaries must not at any stage be part of or condone any anti-social behaviour to either Tenants, members of the public, residents or Wirral Council Officers.

### **6 Confidentiality**

- 6.1 Site Secretaries must ensure that any individual's personal details contained within any files held are kept strictly confidential and secure, and he/she must not discuss any personal details or issues relating to any Tenant other than with the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team.
- 6.2 Site Secretaries must not become involved in meetings between a Tenant and a member of the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team unless they are deemed to have a role specific to the discussion.

### **7 Equality and Diversity**

- 7.1 Site Secretaries must ensure that there is a zero tolerance to sexist, racist, xenophobic or homophobic remarks.

- 7.2 Site Secretaries must ensure that there is a zero tolerance to discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- 7.3 Site Secretaries will report any issue relating to 7.1 and 7.2 immediately to the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team stating the date, time, names of those involved (if known) a brief description and the duration of the behaviour.
- 7.4 Site Secretaries must ensure that any statements relating to Equality and Diversity are not removed.

## **8 Health and Safety**

- 8.1 Site Secretaries must ensure that all Tenants follow the appropriate health and safety rules stated within the Tenancy Agreement.

## **9 Letters & Posters**

- 9.1 Site Secretaries must not issue letters to any Tenant or resident, all official letters will be issued by Wirral Council.
- 9.2 Site Secretaries will from time to time be requested by the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team to put information and posters onto the site's notice board. This is part of the role and must be carried out within requested time scales.
- 9.3 If a Site Secretary is asked by the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team to distribute letters to all tenants, the Site Secretary will ensure that all Tenants sign and date the 'Receipt of Information' form that will be issued by the Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team.

## **10 Meetings**

- 10.1 Site Secretaries must ensure that they are able to attend 75% of the Site Secretary Meetings organised by the Parks, Countryside and Allotments Team in any one year. If a Site Secretary fails to attend three of the Site Secretary quarterly meetings in a row, it will be taken as evidence that they are no longer able/wish to undertake the voluntary role of Site Secretary.
- 10.2 If a Site Secretary is unable to attend a meeting, they must nominate a suitable member of the allotment site to attend the meeting as an observer to feed back any of the main points to the Site Secretary.
- 10.3 Observers at allotment meetings may not speak on behalf of the Site Secretary for their site or vote on any issue.

## **11 Site Rules and Regulations**

- 11.1 Site Secretaries must ensure that all Tenants, (including themselves as tenants), follow the rules and regulations stated within the Tenancy Agreement and the Tenants Handbook.

- 11.2 Site Secretaries must not introduce or condone any variation from the terms and conditions stated within the Tenancy Agreement and 'Other Useful Information' documents.

**SITE SECRETARY DECLARATION**

I agree to adhere to the terms and conditions within this agreement that will allow me to act as a volunteer Allotments Site Secretary the guidance of Wirral Council's Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team and understand that failure to comply will result in my removal of the role of Site Secretary.

<b>Name of Allotment Site</b>	
<b>Print Name of Site Secretary</b>	
<b>Signature of Site Secretary</b>	
<b>Date of Signature</b>	

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## ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Monday, 15 November 2021

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>OPERATION EVALUATION – POLLINATOR PILOT</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

Committee approved the Council's Environment & Climate Emergency Policy in March 2021 since then officers have been putting arrangements in place and taking action, to progress the Policy's objectives and commitments.

The report focuses on providing an operational evaluation of the Pollinator Plan, which supports the Council's biodiversity commitment within the policy, 'Transforming our Open Spaces and Enhancing Biodiversity'. Including the current position with the development of the Council's pollinator plan for roadside verges and parks green spaces and the new approach to grounds maintenance, a blend of reduced grass cutting and cessation of maintenance regimes which has been implemented during 2021-2022.

The report seeks to highlight some of the lessons learnt from this year's implementation, which may be used to further develop the Council's Pollinator Plan.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is recommended to: -

1. note and comment on the contents of the report which will be used to develop the Council's Pollinator Plan to be presented to Committee for approval at a future meeting.
2. agree to a workshop for Members, as a part of the development of the Council's Pollinator Plan, to agree future pollinator and cessation sites.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

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

- 1.1 The Council recognises the importance of the natural environment and the role that it can play in tackling climate change. This Committee participated in the development of the Environment & Climate Emergency Policy and set the commitments the Council should make in response to the Council's 2019 declaration of an environment and climate emergency. When approving the Environment and Climate Emergency Policy, Committee confirmed that they regard protecting the environment and promoting biodiversity are key aspects of the new policy.
- 1.2 Insect pollinator species have experienced national declines, in part due to the loss and fragmentation of habitat space. The Council is developing a Pollinator Plan to increase the wildlife value of roadside verges, parks, and open spaces, to provide food, shelter, and nesting sites for pollinator species in addition to supporting a wider range of wildlife including plants, mammals, and birds.
- 1.3 Wirral Council has had success in promoting pollinators being recognised last year for its work in this area with a Bees' Needs Champions Awards for the Meadow Restoration Project at Wirral Country Park. Bees play a part in every aspect of the ecosystem, they support the growth of trees, flowers, and other plants, which serve as food and shelters for creatures large and small, Bees contribute to complex, interconnected ecosystems that allow a diverse number of different species to co-exist.
- 1.4 A number of initiatives were implemented for 2021 including: -
- Rewilding (cessation of maintenance) on several amenity greenspaces and highway grass verges.
  - A reduction in the frequency of grass maintenance on all general grass areas in parks and public open spaces, including 'No Mow May'.
  - The designation of some highway verges as Pollinator sites, with a management plan to promote wildflower growth.
- These initiatives are intended to reduce the amount of disturbance to habitats which promote pollinators, provide opportunities for amenity greenspaces to be used in different ways to support re-wilding and reduce the cost of maintaining these areas.
- 1.5 The report seeks to highlight some of the lessons learnt from this year's implementation, which may be used to further develop the Council's Pollinator Plan.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 This report provides Committee with an operational evaluation of the Pollinator Plan, a part of the response to increasing biodiversity in the recently approved Environment & Climate Emergency Policy. The Council has declared an environment and climate emergency, recognising the urgent need for action to address and plan for the changes to the environment and climate. Therefore, the alternative of not making the necessary environment and biodiversity interventions would not address the Council's declared emergency.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Council has been developing a Pollinator Plan for some time with Parks & Countryside Services implementing an initial action plan in 2018, to review established mowing regimes and consider adopting the practices of 'Plantlife's Road Verge and Wildlife Management Guidelines.'
- 3.2 In 2019, Council resolved to develop the Pollinators Plan through a series of pilot sites across the borough. The 2 initial pilot sites identified were grass verges at the corner of Plymyard Avenue and Eastham Rake.
- 3.3 In Spring 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic and full lockdown resulted in a delay in starting the grass cutting season of approximately 8 weeks. This meant that the grass across the borough had been allowed to grow much longer than in previous years, which in turn enabled certain native wildflowers to grow and prosper in the unmaintained verges. This unexpected outcome of the lockdown generated a lot of positive public feedback, people wanted to see an expansion of rewilded areas to enhance wildlife and supported a reduction in grass cutting. As a result, people were encouraged to send in requests for locations to be considered for inclusion in an expanded number of sites for reduced maintenance.

#### **Pollinator Sites**

- 3.4 Officers have collated feedback from residents and working alongside partners (including Wirral Wildlife Trust) a list of 59 potential pollinator friendly verges were identified for establishing this year, a list of these is provided in Appendix C. The grass verges that have been designated at Pollinator sites are left to grow and had signs installed to inform residents of their purpose. These areas receive a mown edge border of 1.5m cut and/or pathways to maintain access and sightlines. Initial observations of the pollinator sites suggest that they have become established and have proven popular with the public. However ongoing work is needed to promote the purpose of the pollinator sites and further public awareness campaigns are planned. Of the 59 pollinator areas proposed 18 were removed from the scheme as follows: -
- 11 areas were removed as the verge was too narrow and was therefore not suitable for re-wilding.
  - 4 areas were removed because they were not owned by the Council
  - 1 was removed as unsuitable being the central reservation in a busy carriageway
  - 1 was removed as it was reported as causing a dangerous sight line issue on several occasions.
  - 1 was removed as there were no grass verges
- Full details of areas removed from the scheme are included in Appendix C.
- 3.5 Parks and Countryside Services are continuing to identify and promote suitable pollinator sites in parks and open spaces across Wirral with Officers exploring how they can further work with residents, councillors, and partners such as Friends of Parks Groups and Wirral Wildlife Trust. Since launching the Pollinator Scheme a further 15 areas have been submitted as pollinator sites, these are listed in the table below.

**Table 1: New Submissions for inclusion in the Pollinator Scheme**

Road name	Area
Selkirk Avenue	Eastham
Union Street-Darlington Street	Egremont
Liscard Crescent/Monk Road	Liscard
Liscard Crescent/Mill Road	Liscard
Marlowe Road/Torrington Road	Liscard
Highcroft Avenue	Bebington
Mount Wood Road	Prenton
Price Street	Birkenhead
Upton Bypass	Upton
Latham Way	Spital
Hoole Road	Woodchurch
Stanton Road	Bebington
Dock Road, East Float Quay	Seacombe
Woodside Road	Irby
Oakland Vale (Seacombe Promenade)	New Brighton

- 3.6 5 areas have also been identified through the verge's rewilding scheme, detailed in the table below.

**Table 2: Pollinator Sites from other schemes**

Name	Previous scheme
Frankby Road	Rewilding verges replacement for Bromsgrove Road
Willow Park	Rewilding verges
Greasby Road/Frankby Road	Rewilding verges replacement for Hambledon Drive
Kingfisher Estate	Rewilding verges
Birkenhead Road (Goose Green)	Rewilding verges

- 3.7 Continued engagement with Friends Groups, residents and elected members will form a part of the development of the plan. The Pollinator Plan will be reviewed through its five-year lifespan.
- 3.8 The need to be able to quantify the increase in pollinators over the course of the plan is recognised. A baseline and method of evaluation is required. Voluntary Groups could assist the Council in establishing and monitoring progress in this area.

### **Reduced maintenance and 'No Mow May'**

- 3.9 From April 2021 proposals to reduce the frequency of grass maintenance from 13 cuts per year to 10 cuts per year on all general grass areas in parks and public open spaces were accepted by Council. Key areas where growth would be inappropriate continued to be maintained as normal. This included, sports pitches, bowling greens, play areas and ornamental grass.

- 3.10 As a part of this reduced maintenance throughout the month of May, the council took part in 'No Mow May', a national campaign led by Plantlife. This involved stopping mowing in general grass areas in parks to help our bees, butterflies, and wildlife from the end of April 2021. In Wirral pathways were cut through larger grass areas to provide walking routes, and borders were cut surrounding existing pathways. Signs were erected at each site to inform Wirral residents and users of parks of the benefits of leaving areas to grow during this period. Sport pitches, bowling greens, churchyards, cemeteries, play areas, outdoor gyms, and formal areas (for example, Hamilton Square) were not affected and were maintained as normal.
- 3.11 The responses received from residents, regarding the 'No Mow May' initiative has been largely positive. However, learning points from this pilot would be that signage for 'No Mow May' could be improved with taller, more robust signs being used. Also, to note is that this year grass cutting ceased from the start of May and did not recommence until mid-June, which did create several enquiries. It is therefore proposed to cease cutting from later April to recommence cutting at the start of June.

#### **Rewilding (Cessation of maintenance):**

- 3.12 The proposals for the Rewilding (cessation of maintenance) of amenity greenspaces and highway verges recognised that this was a significant change for residents. The Council put forward a list of amenity greenspaces and highway verges for rewilding. Residents and ward members that wanted maintenance to continue were invited to suggest alternative areas, of similar size and within the same ward, that could be swapped for those identified to allow for maintenance to continue. Rewilding areas could also be identified as potential land for tree planting schemes, allotments plots, pollinator site or could be maintained by community groups or residents for the local community to enjoy. The approach and costs of wild flower planting to support converting areas to pollinator sites are currently being investigated.

#### **Amenity greenspace rewilding**

- 3.13 A total of 41 amenity greenspaces were listed as rewilding sites, a list of which is provided in Appendix A. Of the 41 amenity greenspaces listed 7 were removed from the scheme as follows: -
- 5 amenity greenspaces were replaced by alternative areas, of similar size and in the same Ward as follows: -
    - Greasby Road amenity greenspace – replaced by a large roadside verge on Arrowebrook Road
    - Hanover Close amenity greenspace – replaced by space in Bidston Court and Tollemache Rec
    - Shorefields Field – replaced by space at Green Lane Field
    - The Grange – replaced by space at Cross Lane Playing Field
    - Flynn's Piece – replaced by space at Cross Lane Playing Field
  - 1 amenity greenspace, Captain's Pit, has been adopted by residents who have come forward to carry out maintenance.
  - 1 amenity greenspace, Martin Close greenspace, was identified as not being in Council ownership and was therefore removed from this scheme.
- Of the remaining amenity greenspaces listed 10 greenspaces required amendments to be made to the initial proposal, these amendments are detailed in Appendix A but

may be summarised as mowing the edges 3 amenity greenspaces, edge mowing and cutting pathways in a further 2 amenity greenspaces and reducing maintenance in 5 areas with other substitute locations being identified.

- 3.14 Through this exercise several areas of amenity greenspace have been identified for potential inclusion in the Tree Planting scheme. These include: -
- Broadway greenspace
  - Ballantyne Drive greenspace
  - Bentham Close greenspace
  - Boundary Road greenspace
  - Hargrave Avenue greenspace
  - Lennox Lane greenspace
  - Limekiln Lane greenspace
  - Shorefields Field

### **Highway verge rewilding**

- 3.15 A further 85 grass verges were also identified, a list of which is provided in Appendix B, for rewilding. Of the 85 grass verges listed 14 were removed from the scheme as follows: -
- 6 grass verges were replaced by alternative areas, of similar size and in the same Ward as follows: -
    - Mereheath – replaced by an area on Moreton Common
    - Kings Parade Estate – replaced by an area on A554 (Bayswater Road through to B&Q Roundabout
    - Harrow Close – replaced by Bayswater Drive
    - Salacre Crescent – replaced by an area on Upton Bypass
    - Davenham Avenue – replaced by an area on Junction 3
    - Shavington Avenue – replaced by an area on Junction 3
  - 5 grass verges were designated as pollinator sites, as follows: -
    - Bromsgrove Road – replaced by Frankby Road as a pollinator site
    - Hambledon Drive – replaced by Greasby Road / Frankby Road as a pollinator site
    - Willow Park – now designated as a pollinator site
    - Kingfisher Estate – now designated as a pollinator site
    - Birkenhead Road (Goose Green) – now designated as a pollinator site
  - The grass verge area on Stevenson Drive has been adopted by residents, with perimeter maintenance being undertaken by the Council.
  - Thorns Drive Roundabouts were removed from this scheme as roundabouts should not be included in this scheme.
  - Fairview Road verges were identified through the scheme as being owned by Magenta and were therefore removed from the scheme.
- 3.16 Overall, the amount of amenity greenspace and highway verges where rewilding was proposed has been achieved, working closely with residents and elected members to modify, and put forward alternatives as appropriate. It should be noted that the Parks and Countryside service are still receiving enquiries regarding rewilding site and are working with elected members and residents' groups to resolve these. Therefore, the sites outlined above may be subject to further amendment.

- 3.17 Learning points from re-wilding of amenity greenspace and grass verges would include better and earlier communication with elected members and residents regarding the sites proposed in order that alternative options could be considered earlier. Equally better communication of rewilding sites may reduce the number of enquiries received, with some residents being unaware that a specific site had been included and causing some confusion especially with regards to the 'No Mow May' national initiative. A further learning point would be that the selection of sites requires more rigour with some sites being put forward that were not appropriate or owned by the Council.
- 3.18 The rewilding initiative has been a significant change both for residents and for staff. Staff have previously been judged on the neatness of amenity greenspace and grass verges and in line with these expectations have had a rigorous routine for grass cutting. In rewilding these areas concerns have been raised by experienced staff around the council's ability to 'get onto' these spaces in future, to use these spaces for such things as pollinator sites or for tree planting. Therefore, amenity greenspaces and highway verges that have been selected as rewilding sites will receive one cut in the autumn to control growth. Cutting once in autumn would have less impact on the insects and wildlife the Council is seeking to encourage than at other times and allow for any future alternative uses for the space to be implemented more easily.
- 3.19 Most negative enquiries have been received from residents where the grass verge immediately outside residents' houses have been selected for rewilding. Going forward the recommendation would be to avoid selecting sites immediately outside residents' houses.

### **Lessons Learnt**

- 3.20 Several important lessons have been learnt from this year's initiatives which will be incorporated into the future delivery of the Pollinator Plan. These are outlined below:-

#### **Site Selection**

- Earlier communication with elected members and residents regarding the sites proposed in order that alternative options could be considered prior to implementation.
- The selection of sites requires more rigour to ensure that the sites put forward are appropriate and owned by the Council.
- It is recommended that the selection of grass verge sites for rewilding avoid selecting sites immediately outside residents' houses.

#### **Communication**

- Clearer communication of rewilding sites may reduce the number of enquiries received. Some residents were unaware that a specific site had been included, with some confusing rewilding with the 'No Mow May' national initiative.
- Develop an approach for the community to be consulted and engaged in process of selecting sites for a particular scheme, which builds upon the active involvement from elected members.
- Signage was introduced into areas to raise awareness of 'No Mow May' and 'Rewilding' areas. In some areas signage was removed and in others

it has become obscured. A learning point would be that signage made from robust, recycled material and fixed to taller stakes.

#### **Maintenance**

- In relation to 'No Mow May', grass cutting should cease in mid to late April and recommence from the 1<sup>st</sup> of June.

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- The need to be able to quantify the increase in pollinators over the course of the plan is recognised. A baseline and method of evaluation is required. Voluntary Groups could assist the Council in establishing and monitoring progress in this area.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Two budget proposals were linked to these activities for 2021/22, these were: -
- NE11 - Reduction in grass cutting and maintenance of roadside verges and all Parks and Open Spaces
  - NE18 - Amenity space and grass verge maintenance cessation (rewilding)
- 4.2 The total savings to be achieved was stated as £350,000 for 2021/22. This was to be achieved through the deletion of several posts (both permanent and seasonal) from grass cutting operations and was in addition to savings to be realised through the recent Parks & Countryside Restructure. To date £326,175 has been achieved against the target of £350,000.
- 4.3 To implement this budget option, an initial capital investment of £100k was agreed to upgrade the machinery to handle longer grass, which would be in line with business-as-usual asset replacement expenditure, every 10 years. Parks Managers are currently identifying the machinery to be purchased including flail mowers rather than cylinder mowers.

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to keep roadside verges cut to a reasonable height to maintain sightlines for road users.

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

- 6.1 The Council's biodiversity commitments do have resource implications and will require changing work practices, new skills and competencies for the workforce and investment in new machinery to address these. It is also essential that the Council delivers an effective public awareness campaign to ensure that residents understand the changes that are occurring to their local environment and how they can contribute and get involved. Community participation in the initiatives and campaigns that will drive biodiversity is essential. All the actions involved in promoting biodiversity require public involvement and ownership to succeed.

### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 There is a risk that too long grass will hinder sightlines for vehicles along the road network. This risk is mitigated against by careful site selection and by cutting edge borders surrounding long grass.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The reduction in grass cutting and rewilding of specific amenity greenspaces and highway verges was included in the budget consultation for the 2021/22 budget, undertaken between November 2020 and January 2021. There was support for these options from residents when balanced against other reductions in services.
- 8.2 The Council website detailed the reduced maintenance, including 'No Mow May' scheme and rewilding in order to inform residents of these initiatives, a link to which is provided below: -  
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/environmental-problems/street-care-and-cleaning/grass-cutting-and-ground-maintenance#rewilding%20areas%20and%20roads%20list>  
Through this web page residents were able to raise issues with the sites selected. In addition, elected members have been very active in putting forward alternative areas for consideration.
- 8.3 The Pollinator Scheme was also published on the Council's webpages: -  
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/environmental-problems/street-care-and-cleaning/pollinators-and-wildflower-sites>  
Through this webpage residents were invited to put forward additional areas as pollinator sites.
- 8.4 All the schemes were featured in Wirral View to raise awareness amongst residents. While the Council encourages residents to use its CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system to log enquiries and elected members are asked to use the Members Portal, often enquiries are received via e-mail. While the service will continue to encourage residents and elected members to use these systems it is difficult to provide a definitive number for the enquiries received for these schemes and sites. However, those rewilding areas that received the most significant number of enquiries have been identified. This information has been included within the lists provided in Appendix A and B for the rewilding sites.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The report provides the Committee with an operational evaluation of the Pollinator Plan and on progress with biodiversity actions. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken, as a part of the budget options for 2021/22, and details the potential positive and negative impacts arising. Through working closely with residents and elected members Wirral Council has been able to mitigate many of the negative impacts. This has been achieved by swapping rewilding areas, for a similar size area of land within the same Ward or developing mown walkways and edge mowing as required. Wirral Council has also worked with residents who wish to maintain amenity greenspace themselves.
- 9.2 The Equality Impact Assessment is available via this link:  
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The Council's commitment to promoting biodiversity will have a positive impact on the environment, there are tangible carbon offset and sequestration benefits from the delivery of strategies such as the Pollinator Plan.
- 10.2 Since the 1930's the UK has lost 97% of its ancient wildflower meadows. Roadside verges in the UK support around 700 species of wildflowers. Wildflowers provide a vital habitat for many bees, butterflies, birds, bats, and bugs. Not only do flowering plants provide nectar and pollen for declining pollinators species (especially bees), but wildflowers also provide an important food source and refuge for many insects. For instance, Dandelions are in the top five of road verge wildflower species that support the highest number of invertebrates, supporting 107 species.
- 10.3 By promoting wildflowers on Wirral's roadside verges and green spaces the Council can provide a valuable habitat for these plant species, which in turn helps all wildlife from the bottom to the top of food chain.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Wirral is facing stark economic, social and health inequalities. The Wirral Plan is committed to addressing this. With Community Wealth Building at its heart, the Wirral Plan sets out how to tackle this and makes a major contribution to improving the economic, social and health outcomes of the borough.
- 11.2 Objective 2 of the Community Wealth Building Strategy 2020-2025 is to Create a Generative Economy. Which is '*An economy with a built-in tendency to be to be socially fair and ecologically stable.*' The Pollinator Plan will increase the wildlife value of roadside verges, parks, and open spaces, to provide food, shelter, and nesting sites for pollinator species in addition to supporting a wider range of wildlife including plants, mammals, and birds. The increase in biodiversity will contribute to the ecological stability and the social and environmental wellbeing of Wirral.

### **REPORT AUTHOR:**

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### **APPENDICES**

- Appendix A – Amenity Greenspace Rewilding Sites
- Appendix B – Highway Verge Rewilding Sites
- Appendix C – Pollinator Sites

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Plantlife “The good verge guide: a different approach to managing our waysides and verges” (2016)

Buglife “Road Verges and their potential for pollinators: A review of costs, benefits and management options” (2019)

Wirral Council’s Environment and Climate Emergency Policy (2021)

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Environment, Climate Emergency &amp; Transport Committee</b> Progress update on Biodiversity actions	<b>14<sup>th</sup> June 2021</b>
<b>Environment, Climate Emergency &amp; Transport Committee</b> Environment & Climate Emergency Policy	<b>16<sup>th</sup> March 2021</b>
<b>Environment Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b> Update of Pollinators Action Plan	<b>28<sup>th</sup> November 2019</b>
<b>Full Council</b> Notice of Motion on Pollinators	<b>15<sup>th</sup> July 2019</b>

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## Appendix A: Amenity Greenspace Rewilding Sites

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Broadway greenspace	West Wirral Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline. Possible allotment space.	1		
Grange Farm Crescent greenspace	West Wirral Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	2		
Greasby Road greenspace	West Wirral Area	Removed from Scheme, space identified on large roadside verge - Arrowebrook Road.	3		Yes
Greenbank Road greenspace	West Wirral Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	4		
Madeley Drive greenspace	West Wirral Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	5		
Martin Close greenspace	West Wirral Area	During the pilot Martin Close Greenspace identified as not being owned by the Council, removed from scheme.	6		Yes
Roman Road	West Wirral Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	7		
Ballantyne Drive greenspace	Birkenhead Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline. Possible Tree Planting Scheme.	8		
Bentham Close greenspace	Birkenhead Area	Agreed to cut 50% of the greenspace, space in Victoria Park identified to offset. Possible Tree Planting Scheme	9	Yes	
Boundary Road	Birkenhead Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline. Possible Tree Planting Scheme.	10		
Delta Road East	Birkenhead Area	Edges Mown	11		
Fender Valley footpath	Birkenhead Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	12		

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Hanover Close	Birkenhead Area	Removed from scheme, space in Bidston Court and Tollemache Rec identified to offset.	13	Yes	Yes
Hargrave Avenue greenspace	Birkenhead Area	Agreed to cut 50% of the greenspace, space in Mersey Park identified to offset. Possible Tree Planting Scheme	14	Yes	
Hoylake Road greenspace	Birkenhead Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	15	Yes	
Lennox Lane greenspace	Birkenhead Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline. Possible Tree Planting Scheme.	16	Yes	
Lower Flaybrick Road	Birkenhead Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	17		
Rivington Avenue greenspace	Birkenhead Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	18	Yes	
The Little Arno	Birkenhead Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	19		
Atherton Street/Portland Street greenspace	Wallasey Area	Edges Mown	20	Yes	
Berwick Close greenspace	Wallasey Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	21		
Captain's Pit	Wallasey Area	Removed from Scheme, Residents have asked to maintain this area.	22		Yes
Derby Pool greenspace	Wallasey Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	23		
Flynn's Piece	Wallasey Area	Removed from Scheme, space in Cross Lane Playing Fields identified to offset.	24		Yes
Limekiln Lane	Wallasey Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline. Possible Tree Planting Scheme.	25		

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Moreton Linear Park	Wallasey Area	Agreed to 4 cuts per year in specific areas. Replacement area identified in Jenny's Wood to compensate.	26		
Sandon Promenade greenspace	Wallasey Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	27		
St Hilary Gardens	Wallasey Area	Edges Mown	28		
The Cliff	Wallasey Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	29		
The Grange	Wallasey Area	Removed from Scheme, space in Cross Lane Playing Fields identified to offset.	30	Yes	Yes
The Red Noses	Wallasey Area	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	31		
Bradmoor Field	South Wirral	Edges Mown and pathway cut through	32	Yes	
Bromborough Cycleway	South Wirral	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	33		
Heygarth Road greenspace	South Wirral	Edges Mown and pathway cut through	34	Yes	
Onslow Road	South Wirral	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	35	Yes	
Poulton Recreation Ground	South Wirral	Annual cut by local farmer, pathway cut through site and around pond and ½ hectare cut for amenity greenspace. Propose Tree Planting Scheme (2 hectares)	36	Yes	
Prospect Hill	South Wirral	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	37		

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Shorefields Field	South Wirral	Grass is now cut on regular cycle - Swapped maintenance for Green Lane Field. Possible Tree Planting Scheme.	38	Yes	Yes
Shorefields	South Wirral	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	39		
The Hollows	South Wirral	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	40		
Wirral Gardens	South Wirral	Grass cutting has resumed (reduced frequency of grass cutting in other areas to compensate) - In discussion with Councillors/residents over creating a Friends Group to maintain rose beds.	41	Yes	

## Appendix B: Highway Verge Rewilding Sites

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Eastham Rake	Eastham	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	1		
Plymyard Avenue/Dearnford Avenue	Eastham	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	2		
Langfield Grove	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	3		
Brome Way	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	4	Yes	
Poulton Road	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	5		
Colmore Avenue (adj. no. 20)	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	6		
Henley Close	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	7		
Inley Road	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	8	Yes	
Fulbrook Close	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	9		
Weymoor Close	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	10	Yes	
Stevenson Drive	Bebington	Residents have adopted the area, including the pool, perimeter maintenance taking place.	11		Yes
Donne Avenue	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	12		

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Clatterbridge Road (Old)	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	13		
Oval Sports Centre Entrance	Bebington	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	14		
Broadheath Avenue/Devisdale Grove	Bidston	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	15		
Statham Road	Bidston	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	16		
Ridgeview Road/Westway	Noctorum	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	17		
Ridgeview Road	Noctorum	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	18		
Cross Hey Avenue	Noctorum	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	19		
Avelon Close	Noctorum	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	20	Yes	
Farndon Way	Noctorum	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	21	Yes	
Kelsall Close	Prenton	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	22		
Tabley Close Rear Footpath Area	Prenton	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	23		
Davenham Close	Prenton	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	24	Yes	
Holm Lane to Tarporley Close Footpath	Prenton	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	25		

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Church Road Gardens	Birkenhead	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	26		
Holt Hill	Tranmere	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	27		
Pasture Road Bank	Wallasey	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	28		
Mereheath	Moreton	Agreed with Cllr Leech to leave more area on Moreton Common to compensate for Mereheath	29		Yes
St Nicholas Road	Wallasey	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	30		
Kings Parade Estate	Wallasey	Agreed with Cllr Lewis to leave grass uncut on A554 from Bayswater Road through to B&Q roundabout	31		Yes
Harrow Close	Wallasey	Agreed with Cllr Lewis to leave Bayswater Drive uncut to compensate for Harrow Close.	32		Yes
Massey Park	Wallasey	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	33	Yes	
Tobin Street	Wallasey	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	34		
Riverview Road	Wallasey	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	35		
Church Street / Liscard Road	Wallasey	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	36		

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Scots Field Roverside Walkway	Wallasey	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	37		
Greenacres Estate (Thorns Drive)	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	38	Yes	
Thorns Drive Roundabouts	Frankby	Roundabouts are not suitable for rewilding, removed from pilot.	39		Yes
Summerstrees Avenue	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	40		
The Scythes / Hambledon Drive	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	41		
Bromsgrove Road	Frankby	Agreed with Cllr Anderson to remove this area from the scheme and include Frankby Road wider verges as a pollinator site to compensate	42		Yes
Chippenham Avenue	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	43		
Bromsgrove / Stourport / Droitwich Footpath	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	44		
Frankby Road / Bromsgrove Road Footpath	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	45		
Willow Park	Frankby	Removed from this scheme and designated as a Pollinator Site	46		Yes

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Hambledon Drive	Frankby	Agreed with Cllr Anderson to continue to mow from next year and include Greasby Road/Frankby Road wider verges to compensate as a pollinator site to compensate	47	Yes	Yes
Frankby Road (Opp The Cat)	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	48		
Locker Park	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	49		
Ashdale Park	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	50		
Frankby Close	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	51	Yes	
Grange Farm Crescent	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	52	Yes	
Hilbre View	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	53	Yes	
Shaws Drive	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	54		
Carrhouse Lane	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	55	Yes	
Cambrian Road	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	56	Yes	
Birchfield	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	57	Yes	

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Girttall Road / Cowley Close	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	58		
Headington Road / Littlemore Close	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	59		
Kingfisher Estate	Frankby	Removed from rewilding scheme as identified as a suitable pollinator site.	60		Yes
Oak Close	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	61		
Broster Avenue	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	62		
Gilwell Avenue	Frankby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	63		
Melford Drive	Prenton	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	64		
Melford Drive	Prenton	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	65		
Durley Drive	Prenton	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	66		
Denning Drive	Irby	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	67		
Egremont Promenade	Wallasey	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	68	Yes	
Magazine Promenade	Wallasey	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	69		

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Meols Parade by Pumping Station	Meols	Amended cutting regime to cut a border and pathways through the site	70		
Meols Parade / Dovepoint Road Corner	Meols	Amended cutting regime to cut a border and pathways through the site	71		
Meols Parade	Meols	Amended cutting regime to cut a border and pathways through the site	72		
Hoylake Baths	Meols	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	73		
Birkenhead Road (Goose Green)	Meols	Removed from this scheme and designated as a Pollinator Site	74		Yes
Telegraph Road (Thurstaston Road Corner)	Heswall	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	75	Yes	
Telegraph Road	Heswall	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	76		
Salacre Crescent	Upton	Agreed with Cllr Robinson to remove this area from the scheme and include areas on Upton Bypass to compensate	77		Yes
Davenham Avenue	Noctorum	Agreed with Cllr Kelly and Cllr Brame to introduce a new cutting schedule - leave some areas on junction 3 uncut to compensate	78		Yes

Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	Most Enquiries	No longer a rewilding site
Shavington Avenue	Noctorum	Agreed with Cllr Kelly and Cllr Brame to introduce a new cutting schedule - leave some areas on junction 3 uncut to compensate	79		Yes
Fairview Road	Prenton	During the pilot Fairview Road identified as Magenta's land, removed from scheme	80		Yes
New Chester Road (Thornburn Close)	Rock Ferry	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	81		
Mayfields North	New Ferry	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	82		
Napier Road	New Ferry	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	83		
The Esplanade	New Ferry	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	84		
Price Street	Birkenhead	Maintenance as per scheme outline.	85		

## Appendix C: Pollinator Sites

Road Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	No longer a pollinator site
Church Rd	Bebington	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	1	
Lever Causeway	Bebington	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	2	
Parkfield Rd	Bebington	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	3	Yes
Dock Road South W- (inland-)side	Bromborough	During the pilot land identified as not being owned by the Council, removed from scheme.	4	Yes
Dock Road South, E side, semi-circle by Mersey Wharf sign only	Bromborough	During the pilot land identified as not being owned by the Council, removed from scheme.	5	Yes
Riverbank Rd from N end going east	Bromborough	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	6	Yes
Riverbank Rd going S from bend	Bromborough	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	7	Yes
Thornton Common Rd / Clatterbridge Rd Roundabout	Clatterbridge	Summer flowers, mow in March, leave unmown till September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	8	
Old Clatterbridge Rd by field, opposite Dutton Drive	Clatterbridge	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June. Do not cut ditch flora.	9	
Old Clatterbridge Rd by Dutton Drive	Clatterbridge	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	10	
Noctorum Way	Cloughton	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	11	
Mill Park Drive, Thornleigh Ave to Stretton Close	Eastham	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	12	
Stretton Close	Eastham	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	13	
Stoke Close	Eastham	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	14	

Road Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	No longer a pollinator site
Lowfields Ave	Eastham	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	15	
Wingate Rd	Eastham	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	16	
Bettisfield Ave / Bronington Ave	Eastham	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	17	Yes
Hillary Rd	Eastham	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	18	Yes
Plymyard Ave / Eastham Rake	Eastham	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	19	
Kelsall Ave / Helsby Rd	Eastham	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	20	
Mere Park Road, Malmesbury Close, Bromsgrove Road, Willow Park POS	Greasby	Summer flowers, mow in March, leave unmown till September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	21	
Farr Hall Rd / Delavor Rd	Heswall	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	22	
Oldfield Lane	Greasby	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	23	
Hoyle Rd	Hoylake	Summer flowers, mow in March if needed, leave unmown till September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	24	
Heathbank	Irby	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	25	
Thingwall Rd	Irby	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	26	
Mill Hill Rd	Irby	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	27	
Loomsway	Irby	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	28	Yes

Road Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	No longer a pollinator site
School Lane	Meols	Summer flowers, mow in March, leave unmown till September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	29	
Dovepoint Rd	Meols	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	30	Yes
Forest Rd	Meols	Summer and spring flowers, leave unmown till August/September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	31	
Roman Rd (S + N ends)	Meols	Summer and spring flowers, leave unmown till August/September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	32	
Meols Parade	Meols	Summer and spring flowers, leave unmown till August/September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	33	
Forest Rd / Birkenhead Rd	Meols	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	34	
Birkenhead Rd north verge	Meols	Summer and spring flowers, leave unmown till August/September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	35	
Birkenhead Rd south verge	Meols	Summer flowers, mow in March, leave unmown till September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	36	
Guffitts Rake	Meols	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	37	Yes
Guffitts Close	Meols	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	38	
Deneshey Rd	Meols	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	39	
Town Meadow Lane, opposite shops	Moreton	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	40	

Road Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	No longer a pollinator site
Flaxhill	Moreton	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	41	
Stanley Rd	New Ferry	During the pilot land identified as not being owned by the Council, removed from scheme.	42	Yes
Howson / Gothic / Ionic St	Rock Ferry	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July.	43	
Old Chester Rd / Highfield South	Rock Ferry	Not suitable central reservation in busy carriageway	44	Yes
Sandpiper Close	Saughall Massie	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	45	
Landican Lane	Thingwall	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	46	
Arrowe Park Rd	Upton	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	47	Yes
Walby Close	Woodchurch	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	48	
Royden Rd	Upton	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	49	
King Street	Wallasey	During the pilot the panel junction with Rudgrave Square identified as not being owned by the Council, removed from scheme.	50	Yes
Sea Rd	Wallasey	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	51	Yes
Mereworth	Caldy	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	52	
Column Rd near Caldly roundabout	West Kirby	Verges too narrow, not suitable for wilding verge	53	Yes
Scafell Close	Eastham	Hay-meadow regime, no spring cut, mow after mid-July, remove cuttings if possible.	54	

Road Name	Area	Approach followed	Number	No longer a pollinator site
Woodchurch Estate	Upton	Spring flowers, no spring cut, mow only after mid-June.	55	
Bracken lane / Mount Rd	Storeton	Removed from the scheme, reported as causing a dangerous sight line issue on several occasions during 2021	56	Yes
Stanley Rd / New Chester Rd		Summer flowers, mow in March, leave unmown till September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	57	
Dereham Avenue	Upton	No grass verges in Dereham Avenue, removed from scheme	58	Yes
Norwich drive	Upton	Summer flowers, mow in March, leave unmown till September, remove cuttings, or cut up small.	59	

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## ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

15 NOVEMBER 2021

<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>TREE MANAGEMENT AND INSPECTION UPDATE</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides Committee with an update and is not a key decision.

In April 2021 a new arboriculture maintenance contract started with Man Coed VM Ltd. This report focuses on the performance of the first six months of this contract.

### RECOMMENDATION

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is recommended to: -

1. Note and comment on the contents of the report on the progress being made against the Council's biodiversity commitments.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council recognises the importance of efficient and effective arboriculture maintenance to maintain a safe, healthy, taxonomically diverse, and attractive tree population across the whole of the Council's estate for the betterment of all.

A well performing arboriculture maintenance service is also essential in supporting the long-term objectives of The Council's Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy.

Other options considered could be ceasing any proactive tree risk management and maintenance operations. This option obviously carries an unacceptable high risk of another serious or fatal incident occurring caused by falling branches or windthrown trees and as such is not recommended.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In January of 2021 (three months before the start of the arboriculture maintenance contract) the tree survey and inspection function were internalised with the recruitment of two full time tree surveyors, whose duties would be to carry out the cyclical inspection of all the Council's tree stock across the whole of its estate. Most of the tree maintenance works comes from these cyclical inspections, with the remainder generated by the two tree officers responding to enquiries. There is some cyclical work, but this is mainly the re-pollarding programme of mature London Plane, Lime and Norway Maple planted adjacent to the highway.

From the start of the contract to the end of September a total number of **1751** individual items of arboriculture maintenance have been specified and ordered with the supplier.

The completion dates of such work are dependent on risk, with the trees posing the higher risk requiring the works to mitigate or reduce the risk carried out much sooner. One of the performance indicators for this contract is the percentage of works carried out within the designated period, the target for this KPI is set at 90%.

Below is the performance for this KP over the first six months of the contract along with the expenditure on both budget lines.

KPI	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Carry out tree works within the specified time frame	96%	94%	85%	79%	64%	85%
Monthly Parks Spend	14,934.38	31,660.81	19,837.85	19,643.30	9,562.14	18,663.91
Monthly highways spend	10,152.92	17,829.39	13,598.82	7,521.63	21,500.20	11,571.16

It was noted that performance dropped off during high summer, this was discussed with the supplier during the contract meetings and was attributed to a spike in works ordered in July and seasonal pressure. The supplier has provided assurances that they are currently recruiting additional staff.

This autumn has seen the first of our Giant Polypore sweeps. This is a root rot fungus which attacks old beech trees and leaves them dangerously unstable. The fungi are only visible for a few weeks of the year in later summer / early autumn.

Our inventory holds records of 650 mature or veteran beech trees. All these have been checked for Giant Polypore. 12 have been found to have it and as there is likely to be significant and destabilising root rot present, they have been scheduled for removal. The largest of these was dismantled with a crane and weighed in at 16 tonnes.

During all surveys Ash trees will be assessed with regards to the four stages of Ash Die back. We remove the trees at the beginning of stage four when a significant windthrow risk exists.

This staged assessment will allow for a sweep of all Ash with stage 3 of the disease to be carried out during each July when the symptoms of this disease are at their clearest to assess.

There are three-tiers of supplier / contract management meeting in operation. I fortnightly operational meeting with contract supervisors, a monthly tactical meeting with contract managers and a six-monthly strategic meeting with heads of service and directors.

It is in during the strategic meetings that matters such as adherence to method statements are discussed along with any other supplier relationship management matters.

Each month a random selection of completed LA codes are inspected. These post completion inspections are managed through I-Auditor and assessed if the LA has been completed in full, if the site has been left clean and tidy after the works and to check if any damage has occurred.

Any failures are raised with the supplier at the next monthly tactical meeting.

In late spring / early autumn of this year the Council employed a dedicated Landscape Manager to deliver the ambitious planting aims of the tree strategy. Therefore, the substantial afforestation programme should be considered as not only mitigation but net gain planting and as such every tree removed on public and highway safety grounds is being replaced many times over with new planting. This may not necessarily be on the same site, but overall, the stem count across the borough is rising year on year considerably.

The initial survey visits to all public green space have now been completed and therefore it is expected that subsequent inspections will result in far fewer removals as all the legacy urgent tree removals have now been completed, with most maintenance works being cyclical or proactive pruning.

The tree team has reached out to all Wirral schools to offer support and guidance in managing the risk from trees on their sites, this includes technical support on precuring tree inspections and reviewing their current surveying practices.

### **3.0 STORM ARWEN UPDATE**

Since this report was written storm Arwen hit Wirral with a magnitude comparable to the great storm of 1986, this has resulted in over 600 trees being windthrown and significantly storm damaged. The emergency procedures were stressed tested but held. The initial emergency clear up was carried out by four work crews from Mancoed, with additional resources from the park's teams.

Many high-quality timber trees were windthrown and uprooted, including around 100 mature oaks, tens of maples, beech and some walnut. We are keen to ensure that this windfall isn't left to decay on site or just used as firewood or biomass fuel therefore the team is in the process of arranging timber merchants and sawmills to provide offers for this timber (subject to procurement rules).

It has been estimated that the clear up will take until late February to complete. As many tonnes of timber require extraction from our parks and greenspaces heavy machinery will be needed which due to current ground conditions will have some cosmetic implications. Reinstatement works will be carried out in late spring once ground conditions improve.

The cost of the clear up is not yet known, however it is expected to be in the region of £100-120,000 and as such will have an impact on budgets. This cost may be offset by timber sales but at the time of writing no offers have yet been received (site meetings with timber merchants booked in for January).

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The annual budgets for tree maintenance are:

- Highways - £222,100
- Parks £140,000

From the first six months of the contract, it is forecast that the annual expenditure will be:

- Highways – £164,342
- Parks - £228,598

The £58,000 underspend on highway tree maintenance was expected as the street tree inspections are carried out on a two-year cycle, with 2021 being a non-survey year. The 2022 survey is scheduled to begin in January 2022; therefore, it is forecast that there will be additional expenditure next year as maintenance works are identified.

The forecasted overspend on parks trees of around £88,000 was expected. The budget shortfall will be paid from the reserve which was allocated for tree risk management just after the Arrowe Park fatality. It is estimated that this reserve will be exhausted by April 2023, therefore alternative funding will be required from the 2023/24 financial year to ensure continuity of service.

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council has a clear duty of care under both civil and criminal law for the health and safety of those on or near Council land and has potential liabilities arising from the falling of a tree or

branches, therefore sufficient tree risk management and maintenance is essential in adhering to those duties.

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

The tree team consists of five members of staff, 2 tree surveyors, 2 tree officers and 1 team leader / risk management coordinator. All team members use a license for the inventory system and the 2 surveyors, and 2 tree officers use a tablet for accessing the inventory in the field to log inspections and order maintenance works.

Specialist hardware used by the team for tree inspection and surveying includes arborsonic decay detection apparatus and three GNSS (high accuracy GPS) receivers.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

There are serious public safety risks from falling branches, collapsing and windthrown trees, therefore effective tree maintenance is vital to mitigate and reduce the risks of a tree related incident from occurring.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION**

Twice yearly a customer satisfaction survey is carried out (one in September at the end of the summer season and again in April at the end of the winter season). The questions asked in the survey are as follows:

Please rate your experience during the works by our supplier:

1. I was not inconvenienced by the work
2. The workers were always polite and courteous.
3. The site was left tidy during and after work.
4. The quality of the work was to an acceptable standard.
5. Do you have any further feedback to provide on Tree Maintenance in Wirral?

The results of the survey were positive with only minor issues raised by customers. The survey will be developed further over the next year to take on board more aspects of service including prior notice of work.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

The report provides Committee with an update on progress of the arboriculture maintenance service provision and therefore an equality impact assessment has not been undertaken. However, the Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy was subject to an equality impact assessment prior to launch and the Pollinators Plan will be assessed in preparation for approval.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

The Giant Polypore sweep coincides with a plan to aid in carbon reduction and to be self-sufficient as a Council in timber by setting up our own sawmill to plank any quality timber we had to remove on safety and stability grounds.

Currently our waste timber is recycled in our supplier's biomass facility to renewable energy. This still obviously releases carbon when the timber is burnt, therefore planking, and milling the timber to be reused prevents this carbon from being released into the atmosphere,

The business case is in the final stages of production to fund the investment in portable planking and milling machinery (Wood-Mizer and Alaskan portable sawmills), potentially to be funded out of the climate emergency budget.

By the end of the year, it is estimated that we will have 30 tonnes of beech and oak seasoning and waiting to be processed into usable boards and planks in our depot.

Customers for the products such as social enterprises and other departments are currently being considered.

We have calculated that each mature tree we reuse as timber products prevent 2-3 tonnes of carbon being released into the atmosphere.

## 11.0 SOCIAL WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

The many benefits which trees accrue for a population are now universally acknowledged and celebrated. Wirral's trees are fundamentally important to the wellbeing and quality of life for the good people of Wirral; therefore, a healthy, safe and well-maintained tree stock can only reinforce this betterment and guarantee continuity of tree cover for the future.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Mike Anders  
Tree Risk Manager  
Email address: [michaelanders@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:michaelanders@wirral.gov.uk);

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Council Tree Maintenance Contract Volume 2 (Services Information)  
Wirral Council's Environment and Climate Emergency Policy (2021)  
Wirral's Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Policy (2020)

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee Acceptance of Tender and Award of Contract Report - Arboriculture Maintenance Contract	February 2021



## ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 20 January 2022

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>2022/23 BUDGET UPDATE</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

The report provides for consideration of the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee in respect of the 2022/23 Budget Update. The associated Report of the Director of Resources to the Policy and Resources Committee is attached at appendix 1.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is recommended to:

- 1) note and comment on the 2022/23 draft budget proposals.
- 2) authorise the relevant director with portfolio to take the necessary action to consult on any proposals that require additional consultation and take necessary action to deliver the resulting service changes in consultation with the Chair and Group Spokesperson or reporting to the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee as the Director considers appropriate.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity for the Policy and Services Committees to provide feedback on the budget proposals for the Policy and Resources Committee to take into consideration in recommending a legal budget to Full Council at its meeting of 28 February 2022.

### 2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Other options have been considered as reported in the Policy and Resources Committee and appended report.

### 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on Monday, 17 January 2021 will receive a report from the Director of Resources providing an updated position on the draft budget for 2022/23 and related statutory consultation. That report and associated appendices are appended to this report.

- 3.2 The budget proposals associated to Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee are detailed within section 3 of this report.

- 3.3 **PROPOSAL:** Highways Operational Services - Income exploration

**More about this option:** This proposal will explore the commercial opportunities and internal promotion of the various services available through Highway Operational Services in order to create additional income generation. It will also seek to further expand other departmental work requests within the council from Assets, Education, Parks & Countryside, and third party works currently undertaken for service partners such as NHS and Wirral Older People's Parliament.

**Income:** £30k

- 3.4 **PROPOSAL:** Standardisation of Residents Parking Permits

**More about this option:** This proposal will look to standardise charges for residents parking permits for existing and new residents parking schemes to cover all operational running costs including the council's set-up, maintenance, administration, and enforcement costs for existing and new schemes.

**Income:** £110k

- 3.5 **PROPOSAL:** Fleet Efficiencies in Transport - Going Green

**More about this option:** This budget saving option is to appoint an independent expert to undertake a no-cost 'Green Fleet Review'. This review will examine the existing fleet in terms of vehicle choice, fuel economy and recommend mileage reduction strategies.

**Saving:** £20k

3.6 **PROPOSAL:** Capitalisation of Highways Salaries

**More about this option:** All highways and transport approved schemes for 2021/22 are funded from the Combined Authority allocation for Integrated Transport Block (ITB), which is £1.15m. It is anticipated that the new City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement allocation for Wirral over 5 years from 2022 will be between £5m and £11m. Revenue savings can be achieved by increasing capital recharges – that is staff time spent on individual schemes.

**Saving:** £15k

3.7 **PROPOSAL:** Highway's Maintenance Contracts

**More about this option:** This proposal will see a reduction in the highway lining and the street furniture budgets. This will include seating, guard rails, signs, and bollards.

**Saving:** £25k

3.8 **PROPOSAL:** Streetlighting Service Savings

**More about this option:** Due to the introduction of the new LED lanterns programme savings can be made through ceasing night-time lighting inspections. In addition, the capital investment for illuminated signage has enabled us to replace all the illuminated bollards with reflective surfaces, therefore savings can also be made within the illuminated signage budget.

**Saving:** £50k

3.9 **PROPOSAL:** Car Park Maintenance - 1 Year Budget Reduction

**More about this option:** This proposal will see a revenue saving from the car parks maintenance budget for 1 year only. A budget will remain for essential safety repairs to potholes etc.

**Saving:** £50k

3.10 **PROPOSAL:** Transport Efficiencies

**More about this option:** This proposal will include a review of the in-house fleet, such as the outsourcing of the tyre fitting supply, repair, and fitting

service. A management restructure is also planned in order to realign the service and create workforce efficiencies.

**Saving:** £70k

3.11 **PROPOSAL:** Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport Review

**More about this option:** This proposal focuses on the outsourcing of the in-house SEN adult transport service. Savings are based on the average cost of the current external provision compared to in-house provision, plus outsourcing of tyre supply, repair, and fitting service.

**Saving:** £0 in 22-23 then £118k in 23-24

3.12 **PROPOSAL:** Eco and Forest School Income

**More about this option:** The council provides a well-established and highly regarded Eco Schools programme and has been developing a Forest Schools initiative. Such provision is currently offered to schools free of charge. This proposal sets out an opportunity to implement a charge for parts of these programmes.

**Income:** £20k

3.13 **PROPOSAL:** Tree Management Team Commercial Offer

**More about this option:** The primary purpose and function of the Tree Risk and Inspection Team is to inspect and manage the council's tree stock (both highways and parkland) and mitigate any risk associated. However, there is some capacity within the inspection team to conduct tree inspections and provide management advice for partnering organisations and other landowners.

**Income:** £25k income

3.14 **PROPOSAL:** Income Increase on Allotments

**More about this option:** This option would seek to increase the income received from allotments by increasing the annual fees charged to allotment holders.

**Income:** £50k

3.15 **PROPOSAL:** Increase in Charges for Waste and Environmental Services

**More about this option:** This proposal would see an increase in charges (income) for a range of services provided by Waste and Environmental Services (including garden waste collection service subscription, skip permits, collection of bulky items, collection of waste and recycling from schools and

cost to supply a new wheelie bin), as well as freezing the litter bin budget for one year and annual contract efficiency savings.

**Income:** £462k

3.16 **PROPOSAL:** Removal of Vacancies in Environmental and Waste Team

**More about this option:** This option seeks to approve a post for early voluntary retirement (EVR) from the Waste and Environmental Services Team, plus not filling of existing or new vacancies.

**Saving:** £100k

3.17 **PROPOSAL:** Suspension of Climate Emergency Initiatives

**More about this option:** This saving proposal would see the suspension of the budget for climate emergency action plan projects, for the period of one year. External funding will be sought to continue environmental projects where available.

**Saving:** £250k

3.18 **PROPOSAL:** Remodelling of Street Cleansing, Plus Special Events

**More about this option:** This option would see the removal of the additional community permanent presence street cleansing service in some areas of the borough, as well as the removal of the budget for cleansing of special events e.g., River of Light, Cycling Tour of Britain, Giants etc. Removing this budget would result in cleansing costs for special events being charged out to promoters/organisers.

**Saving:** £214k

3.19 **PROPOSAL:** Cease Overtime Budget in Parks

**More about this option:** This Savings option would review the use of the additional hours budget, given the reduced maintenance and cessation of green spaces.

**Saving:** £15k

3.20 **PROPOSAL:** Re-Design Parks Service Reducing Maintenance and Service Costs

**More about this option:** This option will focus on service reduction and maintenance in parks. It will include the cessation of public firework displays, a reduction in maintenance cuts from 10 to 8 per annum, ceasing maintenance in open spaces including up to 10-15 local parks, and ceasing maintenance of 50% of the remaining parks. Local parks which also have play areas, football pitches or bowling greens etc have been excluded from this list.

**Saving:** £655k

3.21 **PROPOSAL:** Income Strategy - Cemeteries and Crematorium Service

**More about this option:** This option would provide increase choice for bereaved families with regards to burials and memorials and offer corporate sponsorship opportunities within Wirral's Cemeteries and Crematorium grounds for funeral directors.

**Income:** £53k income

3.22 **PROPOSAL:** 50% Reduction in School Crossing Patrol Service

**More about this option:** The service has 80 established sites but traditionally carries a number of vacancies due to difficulties in recruiting to the role. This option will require the permanent deletion of the 18 vacant sites plus the closing of at least a further 25 sites to be achieved by reprioritising of sites into highest risk areas / highest number of peds crossing.

**Saving:** £100k (22/23) £40k (23/24)

3.23 **PROPOSAL:** Deletion of Vacant Posts

**More about this option:** There are a number of vacant posts across the Neighbourhoods Directorate. This option would see these posts deleted to achieve the savings.

**Saving:** £302k

3.34 **PROPOSAL:** Reduction in The Budget for Office Related Expenditure Page

**More about this option:** This proposal is made up of a reduction in Neighbourhoods budgeted expenditure for office related expenses such as printing and paper services, lighting, electricity, heating, etc.

**Saving:** £23k

3.35 **PROPOSAL:** Review of the Neighbourhood Services Directorate

**More about this option:** A fundamental review of the Neighbourhood Directorate will take place in order to drive efficiencies and realign service. This will be achieved through an EVR process that will commence in early January. Statutory services within this Directorate will not be affected by the review.

**Saving:** £360k

4.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 This report is to ensure that a fully balanced legal budget can be recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee to Full Council at its meeting of 28 February 2022.

## **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

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

6.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **1.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 As detailed in the appended report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Report to Policy and Resources Committee, 17 January 2022  
Appendix 2 Detailed Draft 2022-23 Budget Position  
Appendix 3 Briefing Note: Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23  
Appendix 4 2022/23 Budget Setting Proposals Pack  
Appendix 5 Full Budget Consultation report

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Pressure and Growth Business Cases  
Savings and Income Business Cases  
DLUHC External Assurance Reports

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

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

<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>	<b>17 March 2021</b>
<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>	<b>25 October 2021</b>
<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>	<b>01 December 2021</b>
<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>	<b>17 January 2022</b>

## **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Monday, 17 January 2022**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>2022/23 BUDGET UPDATE</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES (S151 OFFICER)</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report is part of the Council's formal budget process, as set out in the constitution and in accordance with the legal requirements to set a balanced and sustainable budget for 2022/23.

The Policy and Resources Committee on 25 October 2021 agreed to ask for the views of residents, businesses, and all those with a stake in the future of Wirral, about what council services matter to them most to help develop the budget plan. This consultation ran from 2 to 28 November 2021 and the outcomes are provided in this report.

At the Committee on 25 October 2021, and in line with the external assurance review recommendations to provide sensitivity analysis, three potential budget scenarios were presented as to what the budget gap could be for 2022/23. The rationale for the three scenarios was to present assumptions based on known information at the time in advance of the draft Local Government Finance Settlement being published and in advance of the compilation of proposals for pressures and growth items and savings and income for the 2022/23 budget.

The Draft Local Government Finance Settlement was published on 16 December 2021 and budget proposals have been developed in response to the previously outlined budget gap.

This report provides an updated position on the draft budget for 2022/23 and related statutory consultation. The final budget proposals will be presented to Policy & Resources Committee on 15 February 22 for recommendation to full Council.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to:

- (i) Note the outcome of the draft Local Government Financial Settlement for 2022/23, in advance of the final Settlement which is due later in January 2022;
- (ii) Recognise, the extent of the Council's financial challenge and structural deficit, which needs to be eliminated;

(iii) Note the savings and income proposals that could address the 2022/23 budget gap;

(iv) Note the outcome of the November 2021 consultation;

(v) Consult on the draft budget for 2022-23, under section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The scale of the financial challenge that the Council faces cannot be overstated. The Council has a structural deficit and this has been recognised in a request to DLUHC for the application of a capitalisation directive. The short-term support afforded by government in the form of a capitalisation directive does not extend beyond 2021/22, emphasising the need for focus and agility in balancing the Council's financial position.
- 1.2 The offer for capitalisation for the current financial year was subject to an external assurance review. The review focussed on the Council's financial position and on its ability, including the strength of its governance arrangements, to deliver its plans for medium-term sustainability. This process reinforces the requirement for an in-depth review of functions to enable considered and robust proposals to be made to Council in February 2022 for the 2022/23 budget.
- 1.3 Implementing proposals will require difficult decisions to ensure that a balanced budget can be presented. Regular Member engagement on the process is essential for effective budget formulation.
- 1.4 One component of the external assurance review recommendations set out the need to develop a financial recovery plan. Policy & Resources Committee approved the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) at its meeting of 1 December 2021, which confirmed key principles the Council would follow in respect of its financial planning. The MTFS provides a robust, consistent, and sustainable approach to establishing and maintaining a stable and prudent financial basis on which the Council's services are to be delivered.
- 1.5 In order to fulfil the aims of the MTFS, it is imperative that proposals for budget options are evidence based and achievable. In order to ensure that this is the case, rigorous review has been undertaken through:
  - Directorate Management Teams (DMT)
  - Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
  - internal finance assurance review
  - external review via the engagement of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and
  - Council Committees
- 1.6 This process of review and challenge is ongoing, to ensure that final proposals made to Policy & Resources Committee in February, for budget recommendation, are fully scrutinised and fit and proper in terms of readiness for decision-making. Contained within this report are all current proposals for consideration prior to the need to make decisions on how the budget for 2022/23 should be formulated.
- 1.7 Setting out potential budget proposals in this report ensures statutory consultation can be carried out in advance of setting the 2022/23 annual budget.
- 1.8 The information in this report also provides the opportunity for the Policy and Services Committees at their meetings in January 2022 to provide feedback on the

budget proposals for the Policy and Resources Committee to take into consideration in recommending a legal budget to Full Council at its meeting of 28 February 2022.

- 1.9 As part of the budget setting process, the Policy and Resources Committee is able to take into consideration the outcome of the November 2021 consultation with residents, businesses, and all those with a stake in the future of Wirral, about what council services matter to them most to help develop the budget plan.
- 1.10 This report ensures that the Policy and Resources Committee is provided with timely information on the latest budget position and the matters that affect the budget gap inclusive of outline proposals to address it.

## **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 The setting of a legal budget is a statutory requirement and therefore no other options have been considered.

## **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 At the Policy and Resources Committee on 25 October three scenarios were presented as the potential budget gap for 2022/23. Members will be aware that the budget gap is an ever-moving target due to a number of factors:
- Ongoing Government announcements of funding, including specifically at this time of year, the Chancellor's Autumn Statement
  - The continued scrutiny of growth and pressures to ensure values are evidenced based with no optimism bias
  - Addition of new pressures that continue to materialise as further local and national evidence comes to light
  - The continued further development of budget proposals
- 3.2 As a result, the budget scenarios presented in October have changed and with the publication of the draft Local Government Financial Settlement on 16 December 2021, the three scenarios have been consolidated into one, more robust, position. This position however is subject to further change ahead of formal budget setting activity.

### 2022/23 Budget Position

3.3 The 2022/23 budget position is currently as follows:

	Budget Position Reported in MTFS 1 Dec 21	Revised Budget Position	Change
	£m	£m	£m
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>-317.94</b>	<b>-330.57</b>	<b>-12.63</b>
Initial Budget Requirement for 2022-23	329.40	329.40	0.00
Total one off savings from 2021-22	7.51	7.51	0.00
Total one off pressures from 2021-22	-14.06	-14.06	0.00
Total known pressures	31.64	27.45	-4.19
<b>Initial Budget Gap</b>	<b>36.55</b>	<b>19.73</b>	<b>-16.81</b>
Total savings options	-11.34	-20.31	-8.97
<b>Revised Budget Gap</b>	<b>25.21</b>	<b>-0.58</b>	<b>-25.79</b>

3.4 A more detailed analysis of this table can be found in Appendix 1.

3.5 In October 2021, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced information regarding the Spending Review in his Autumn Statement. The details of this have been provided in the Local Government Funding Settlement, received on 16 December 2021 and a summary briefing note is included in Appendix 2. It should be noted that the settlement is provisional at this stage and is open to consultation until the 13th January 2022. Following the closure of the consultation period the settlement is subject to Parliamentary approval, and as such the financial position outlined above is subject to change.

3.6 At the Policy and Resources Committee on 1 December, agreement was given to identify further budget proposals via a process of providing Directorate budget envelopes, after the original budget process, agreed in March 2021, failed to generate the level of savings required.

3.7 In November 2021, the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) published the two external assurance reports indicating areas the Council should give specific focus to. In response to the recommendations made in the assurance reports a peer-based improvement panel will convene in January when the information provided as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process will be reviewed.

3.8 The current set of budget proposals for the 2022/23 budget are included in Appendix 3.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 This report is part of a programme of activity to ensure that a fully balanced, legal budget can be recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee to Full Council at its meeting of 28 February 2022.

4.2 The programme to develop a robust budget position, which this paper forms part of, will support the Council in ensuring that CIPFA's Financial Management Code (FM Code) is complied with, in particular in relation to Section 4 of the FM Code – The Annual Budget.

4.3 The FM Code requires the Council to demonstrate that the processes they have in place satisfy the principles of good financial management, based on the following six principles:

- Organisational Leadership – demonstrating a clear strategic direction based on a vision in which financial management is embedded into organisation culture.
- Accountability – based on Medium-Term Financial Planning, that derives the annual budget process supported by effective risk management, quality supporting data and whole life costs.
- Financial management - undertaken with transparency at its core using consistent, meaningful and understandable data, reported frequently with evidence of periodic officer actions and elected member decision making.
- Professional standards - Adherence to professional standards is promoted by the leadership team and is evidenced.
- Assurance - sources of assurance are recognised as an effective tool mainstreamed into financial management, including political scrutiny and the results of external audit, internal audit and inspection.
- Sustainability - The long-term sustainability of local services is at the heart of all financial management processes and is evidenced by prudent use of public resources.

4.4 Delivering financial sustainability is vitally important for the Council. The Capitalisation directive requirements reinforce the need to develop a revised approach to sustainable service delivery resource planning. This is reflective of comments made by Grant Thornton, the Council's external auditor, who noted as part of their value for money review during the audit of the 2019/20 accounts, "We note that the capitalisation directive will only provide support to the Council for 2020/21 and 2021/22. As such, the Council needs to ensure that it delivers against its revised MTFs. It will need to put in place clear plans to reduce its future recurring service expenditure and move to a balanced revenue position that does not rely on reserves".

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Council must set the budget in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and approval of a balanced budget each year is a

statutory responsibility of the Council and, therefore, of this Committee in preparing that budget.

- 5.2 The provisions of section 25, Local Government Act 2003 require that, when the Council is making the calculation of its budget requirement, it must have regard to the report of the chief finance (s.151) officer as to the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. In doing so, Members must satisfy themselves that sufficient mechanisms are in place to ensure both that savings are delivered and that new expenditure is contained within the available resources. Accordingly, proposals put forward as part of the budget process will have identified the realistic measures and mechanisms to produce the desired outcomes.
- 5.3 Consultation has taken place in respect of the priorities and views of the public in formulating the draft budget, as set out in this report.
- 5.4 Once the Committee has agreed a draft budget, which is the purpose of this report, there is then a requirement under section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to conduct specific consultation with persons or bodies appearing to it to be representative of non-domestic ratepayers about the authority's proposals for expenditure (including capital expenditure) in the forthcoming financial year. The information required to be shared as part of the consultation is set out in the Non-Domestic Ratepayers (Consultation) Regulations 1992. This includes the authority's current estimates of the total of its revenue expenditure and the total of its expenditure for capital purposes for the forthcoming financial year (the draft budget).
- 5.5 It must be borne in mind that this is consultation on the budget proposals, not on the decision to take whatever decision is implied by the adoption of that budget.
- 5.6 The report sets out the relevant considerations for Members to consider during their deliberations and Members are reminded of the need to ignore irrelevant considerations. Members have a duty to seek to ensure that the Council acts lawfully and, where a service is provided pursuant to a statutory duty, it would not be lawful to fail to discharge it properly or abandon it, and where there is discretion as to how it is to be discharged, that discretion should be exercised reasonably. Members must not come to a decision which no reasonable authority could come to; balancing the nature, quality and level of services which they consider should be provided, against the costs of providing such services.
- 5.7 There is a particular requirement to take into consideration the Council's fiduciary duty and the public sector equality duty in coming to a decision.
- 5.8 Members are also individually reminded that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applies to the Council meeting on the budget and therefore arguably to the formulation of the Budget. Members who are two months or more in arrears with their Council Tax must declare this to the meeting and must not vote on budget recommendations, as to do otherwise can be a criminal offence.

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

- 6.1 The implications for staffing, ICT and Assets will be included within the individual savings proposals currently being developed by Directors and will be addressed when these are brought forward for approval.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 The Council's ability to maintain a balanced budget is dependent on a proactive approach due to estimated figures being provided in the calculation for the budget, albeit the best estimates available at the time, plus any amount of internal and external factors that could impact on the budget position in year. Examples of which are new legislation, increased demand, loss of income, increased funding, decreased funding, inability to recruit to posts, ongoing impact of the pandemic, etc.
- 7.2 A robust monitoring and management process for the budget is in place. If at any time during the year an adverse position is forecast, remedial action must be agreed and implemented immediately to ensure the budget can be brought back to balanced position.
- 7.3 Failure to achieve a balanced budget would lead to the Section 151 Officer issuing a Section 114 notice and potential ministerial intervention under Section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999.
- 7.4 Funding and demand assumptions in particular can change as more information becomes available. As such, the Medium-Term Finance Plan (MTFP) is regularly reviewed and updated as part of routine financial management.
- 7.5 Under the system of retained Business Rates, Authorities benefit from a share of any increased revenues but are liable for at least a share of any falls in income (subject to safety net triggers) and any non-collection. This includes reductions arising from appeals relating to past years which partially fall on the Authority. These risks are mitigated through a combination of the operation of the Collection Fund, General Fund Balances and a Business Rates Equalisation Reserve.
- 7.6 A balanced MTFP is fundamental in demonstrating robust and secure financial management. Delivering a balanced position requires continual review and revision of plans to allow alternative financial proposals to be developed and embedded in plans as situations change. A delay in agreeing these may put the timetable for setting the 2022/23 budget at risk and may result in a balanced budget not being identified in time for the deadline of 11 March 2022.
- 7.7 Assumptions have been made in the current budget outlook for income and funding from business rates and council tax and social care grants as the main sources of funding. If there is an adverse change to these assumptions as a result of the final funding settlement, additional savings proposals or reduced expenditure would need to be identified as soon as possible to ensure a balanced five-year MTFP.
- 7.8 Sections 25 to 29 of the Local Government Act 2003 impose duties on the Council in relation to how it sets and monitors its budget. These provisions require the Council to make prudent allowance for the risk and uncertainties in its budget and regularly

monitor its finances during the year. The legislation leaves discretion to the Council about the allowances to be made and action to be taken.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/ CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Initial consultation has taken place to ask for the views of residents, businesses, and all those with a stake in the future of Wirral, about what council services and priorities matter to them most to help develop the 2022-23 budget. This process ran from 2 to 28 November 2021. The full report of the outcome to the consultation is included within Appendix 4.
- 8.2 Statutory budget consultation will commence subject to agreement by the Committee. This will take place in January 2022 and feedback will be taken into consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee when recommending a budget to Full Council at its meeting of 28 February 2022.
- 8.3 All Policy and Services Committees will have an opportunity to debate the draft 2022/23 budget publicly at the January 2022 Committees and feedback will be taken into consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee when recommending a budget to Full Council at its meeting of 28 February 2022.
- 8.4 The Council has engaged regularly with trade unions about the Council's financial position and response to the external assurance reports. This will continue throughout the budget setting process.
- 8.5 For budget proposals that may result in reductions to the workforce, the Council will consult with trade unions and relevant staff groups as required and in accordance with section 188(1A) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act (TULRCA) 1992.
- 8.6 The Council is committed to mitigating the impact on staff as far as possible and will take all steps possible to avoid any compulsory redundancies in accordance with policies and procedures.

## **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.
- 9.2 The equality implications will be included within the individual savings proposals currently being developed and will be addressed when these are brought forward for approval. Equality implications will be part of the decision-making process.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The environment and climate implications will be considered within the individual savings proposals currently being developed and will be addressed when these are brought forward for approval.

## 11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The community wealth implications will be considered within the individual savings proposals currently being developed. The budget proposals under consideration will take account of related matters across headings such as the following:

- Progressive Procurement and Social Value How we commission and procure goods and services. Encouraging contractors to deliver more benefits for the local area, such as good jobs, apprenticeship, training & skills opportunities, real living wage, minimising their environmental impact, and greater wellbeing.
- More local & community ownership of the economy Supporting more cooperatives and community businesses. Enabling greater opportunities for local businesses. Building on the experience of partnership working with voluntary, community and faith groups during the pandemic to further develop this sector.
- Decent and Fair Employment Paying all employees a fair and reasonable wage.
- Making wealth work for local places

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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Detailed Draft 2022-23 Budget Position

Appendix 2: Briefing Note: Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23

Appendix 3: 2022/23 Budget Setting Proposals Pack

Appendix 4: Full Budget Consultation report

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Pressure and Growth Business Cases

Savings and Income Business Cases

DLUHC External Assurance Reports

CIPFA's Financial Management Code

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	17 March 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	25 October 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	30 November 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	01 December 2021

## APPENDIX 1: Detailed Draft 2022-23 Budget Position

	Budget Position Reported in MTFS 1 Dec 21 £m	Revised Budget Position £m	Change £m
<b>FUNDING</b>			
<b>Business Rates</b>			
Business Rates base	-72.30	-72.30	0.00
Inflation	-1.16	-1.16	0.00
Properties	-0.14	-0.14	0.00
Section 31 Grant	-11.67	-11.67	0.00
Top up Grant	-34.30	-35.05	-0.75
BCF	-18.80	-19.24	-0.44
<b>Council Tax</b>			
Council Tax Base	-156.70	-156.70	0.00
Additional Properties	-0.57	-0.57	0.00
Inflation	-3.15	-3.15	0.00
Adult Social Care Precept	-1.58	-1.58	0.00
<b>Other</b>			
Collection Fund (surplus) / deficit	4.04	4.04	0.00
Local Council Tax Support Grant	-2.56	-2.56	0.00
NI reimbursement Grant	-1.44	0.00	1.44
New Homes Bonus	-0.07	-0.44	-0.37
Social Care Grant	-14.60	-19.77	-5.17
Lower Tier Funding	0.00	-0.51	-0.51
Capital Receipts	-2.93	-2.93	0.00
Capitalisation Directive	0.00	0.00	0.00
2022/23 Services Grant	0.00	-5.62	-5.62
Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund	0.00	-1.22	-1.22
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>-317.94</b>	<b>-330.57</b>	<b>-12.63</b>

	Budget Position Reported in MTFS 1 Dec 21 £m	Revised Budget Position £m	Change £m
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
<b>INITIAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT FOR 2022/23</b>	<b>329.40</b>	<b>329.40</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Removal of one-off items from 21/22:</b>			
Total one off savings from 21/22	7.51	7.51	0.00
Total one off pressures from 21/22	-14.06	-14.06	0.00
<b>REVISED BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>4.91</b>	<b>-7.72</b>	<b>-12.63</b>
<b>ADD KNOWN PRESSURES/ GROWTH</b>	<b>31.64</b>	<b>27.45</b>	<b>-4.19</b>
<b>REVISED BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>36.55</b>	<b>19.73</b>	<b>-16.81</b>
<b>DEDUCT PROPOSED SAVINGS</b>			
Adult Care & Health	-4.00	-3.89	0.11
Children, Young People & Education	-1.89	-3.15	-1.27
Neighbourhoods	-0.77	-6.28	-5.51
Regeneration & Place	-0.08	-1.93	-1.85
Resources	-1.10	-4.23	-3.13
Law & Governance	-0.20	-0.73	-0.53
Corporate	-3.31	-0.11	3.20
<b>Total Proposed Savings</b>	<b>-11.34</b>	<b>-20.31</b>	<b>-8.97</b>
<b>REVISED BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>25.21</b>	<b>-0.58</b>	<b>-25.79</b>

## **APPENDIX 2: Briefing Note: Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23**

### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This briefing note outlines the government's announcement and subsequent publications on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021 concerning the Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23 and gives an analysis on the impact on Wirral Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), although as noted below all data is provisional at this stage.

### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021 the government announced The Spending Review, which set out the Government's spending plans for each government department for the next three financial years, including local government and its agenda on "levelling up".

Following this, on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021 the Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23 was announced, with impacts on Core Spending Power for 2022/23, Social Care Grant allocations as well as other grant details. The settlement was for a single year only, to give the government time to work with the sector and assess how it will share out resources fairly in future years.

At the same time, a consultation related to the settlement proposals was launched, which runs for 4 weeks and concludes on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

### **3.0 LOCAL GOVERNMENT HEADLINES**

#### **3.1 Core Spending Power**

Core Spending Power is a measure of the resources available to local authorities to fund service delivery. It sets out the money that has been made available to local authorities (assuming full Council Tax increase) through the Local Government Finance Settlement.

The headline announcement was that an additional £3.5 billion of funding would be "made available" to councils, representing a 4% real terms increase. This includes an additional £1.5 billion of the £1.6 billion announced grant funding and the first of the promised support from Department of Health to support Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care.

It was again undertaken that no Council would suffer a cash terms cut in core spending power. The main sources of the funding are:

<b>ENGLAND</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>Provisional 2022-23</b>	<b>Change 22-23</b>	<b>Change 22-23</b>
	<b>£ million</b>	<b>£ million</b>	<b>£ million</b>	<b>%</b>
Settlement Funding Assessment	14,809.7	14,882.2	72.5	{
Compensation for under-indexing the business rates multiplier	650.0	1,025.1	375.1	{ 2.9
Council Tax Requirement excluding parish precepts	30,326.9	31,728.5	1,401.6	4.6
Improved Better Care Fund	2,077.0	2,139.8	62.8	3.0
New Homes Bonus	622.3	554.5	-67.8	-10.9
Rural Services Delivery Grant	85.0	85.0	0	0
Social Care Grant <sup>2</sup>	1,710.0	2,346.4	636.4	37.2
2022/23 Services Grant	0	822.0	822.0	0
Market sustainability and Fair Cost of Care	0	162.0	162.0	0
Lower Tiers Services Grant	111.0	111.0	0	0
<b>Core Spending Power</b>	<b>50,391.9</b>	<b>53,856.5</b>	<b>3,464.6</b>	<b>6.9</b>

### 3.2 Council Tax

The Council Tax proposals set out in the Spending Review 2021 in October were confirmed as part of the settlement. The proposal for core Council Tax in 2022/23 is therefore to continue a referendum cap of up to 2%.

There is also the flexibility to add up to a further 1% adult social care precept for authorities providing adult social care services. This can be enhanced by up to 3% of the permitted Social Care Precept increase from 2021-22 where not already utilised.

A £5 flexibility is proposed for district councils, a £10 flexibility is proposed for Police and Crime Commissioners and a flexibility of £5 for the 8 lowest charging fire and rescue authorities. No referendum limit is proposed for Mayoral Combined Authorities in 2022-23 and Government has deferred its decision to impose a referendum limit on Town and Parish Councils.

### 3.3 Improved Better Care Fund

Improved Better Care fund grows by 3% for all upper tier councils.

### 3.4 Social Care Grant

Social Care Grant will increase by £636m from £1,710m to £2,364m in 2022/23. The basis for allocating the additional £636m is as follows:

- £556 million is based on existing formula i.e., distributed using the adult social care relative needs formula.
- £80 million is to equalise the different abilities of councils to raise social care precept.

### 3.5 Lower Tier Services Grant

Introduced in 2021/22, the Lower Tier Services Grant was assumed to be one-off funding for the current financial year only. However, it has been retained for

2022/23 and remains unchanged in cash terms at £111m, although the distribution to Local Authorities has been recalculated.

### **3.6 New Homes Bonus**

The government has decided to maintain the current approach to the NHB payments in 2022/23. There will be no legacy (i.e., second) payment for 2021-22 years' NHB meaning 2022-23 payment therefore consists of 2019-20 legacy and 2022-23 estimate, resulting in a 10.9% reduction in the overall grant.

### **3.7 2022/23 Services Grant**

A new 2022/23 Services Grant was announced giving Local Authorities £822m nationally. This grant is explicitly noted as a one-off grant and will in future likely contribute towards transition funding in the future as the government intended to take steps towards the introduction of Fair Funding in later years.

### **3.8 Public Health Grant**

Information on the Public Health grant is not yet available and is expected in the new year.

### **3.8 Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund**

To further support the government's proposals for making specific funding available for social care services, along with Better Care Fund and Social Care Grant, the Department for Health and Social Care's Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund is included within Core Spending Power in 2022/23.

Totalling £162m nationally, this fund is to support Local Authorities prepare their markets for reform and move towards paying providers a fair cost of care and is to be allocated using the government's existing Adult Social Care Relative Need Formula, in line with the Social Care Grant.

## **4.0 WIRRAL COUNCIL IMPACT**

### **4.1 Council Tax**

The confirmation of the 2% core referendum principal means an increase in Council Tax income of approximately £3.1m as reported as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) at Policy & Resources Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

Similarly, a 1% Council Tax precept for Adult Social Care would generate an additional £1.6m as reported within the MTFS. Both these figures are subject to confirmation of the Council Tax Base figure for 2022/23, which is due to be reported to Policy and Resources in January 2022.

### **4.2 Social Care Grant**

Provisional allocations of the ringfenced Social Care Grant indicate that Wirral will receive £19.8m in 2022/23, which is an increase of £5.2m compared with the 2021/22 budget and the 2022/23 assumption in the MTFS reported to Policy & Resources. Based upon this allocation, the resources have been proportioned across Adults and Children's Services to limit the requirement to make additional savings in those statutory services.

#### 4.3 **Lower Tier Services Grant**

It had previously been assumed that the Lower Tier Services grant was for one year only in 2021/22. However, confirmation of its continuation in 2022/23 means a £0.5m improvement compared with MTFs assumptions.

#### 4.4 **New Homes Bonus**

It had previously been assumed that the New Homes Bonus grant was coming to an end with just a legacy payment of £0.074m due in 2022/23. However, the government has decided to maintain the current approach to the NHB payments in 2022/23. Provisional allocations indicate Wirral will receive £0.4m in 2022/23, an increase of £0.36m against previous assumptions.

#### 4.5 **2022/23 Services Grant**

Provisional allocations indicate Wirral will receive £5.6m from this new grant, which was not included in previous assumptions as a standalone grant. However, as well as providing funding to all tiers of local government in recognition of the vital services, including social care, delivered at every level of local government, this grant includes funding for local government costs for the increase in employer National Insurance Contributions which Wirral had previously assumed would be received as a separate grant of £1.4m, meaning the provisional allocation is £4.2m better off against previous assumptions.

#### 4.6 **Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund**

Early indications are that Wirral will receive approximately £1.2m for this funding, although any detailed conditions and allocation tables are not expected until early in 2022. This has been allocated to Adult Social Services, pending additional guidance and implications.

#### 4.7 **Business Rates**

The settlement confirmed that the 100% Business Rates Retention pilot that Wirral participates in alongside Liverpool City Region authorities will continue in 2022/23. Although this was already assumed in the MTFs, this is positive news as Wirral benefits by approximately £7m per year as a result of participating in the pilot.

The latest assumptions were that the Business Rates Top-up would remain unchanged from 2021/22 at £53.1m. However, the provisional settlement indicates this will increase to £54.3m, an improvement of £1.2m.

4.8 Included within this increase is a 3% BCF increase of £0.44m to support integrated working across Adults, Children's, Public Health and NHS.

#### 4.9 **Dedicated Schools Grant**

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations were also published by the Department for Education (DfE) on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021. Although this is ringfenced education funding and therefore has no impact on the MTFs, Wirral's indicative allocation for 2022/23 is £313.5m, a £10.9m (3.6%) increase from the current 2021/22 estimate.

- 4.10 In total, the provisional impact on the Wirral MTFS is an improvement of £12.6m. The following table summarises the impact of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement on Wirral Council's MTFS:

	2021/22 Budget £m	2022/23		
		MTFS assumption (P&R 01/12/21) £m	Provisional settlement £m	MTFS Impact £m
Business Rates Top-Up	-53.10	-53.10	-54.29	-1.19
SC NI levy reimbursement	0.00	-1.44	0.00	-1.44
New Homes Bonus	-0.20	-0.07	-0.44	-0.36
Social Care Grant	-14.60	-14.60	-19.77	-5.17
Lower Tier Funding	-0.50	0.00	-0.51	-0.51
2022/23 Services Grant	0.00	0.00	-5.62	-5.62
Market Sustainability & Fair Cost of Care Fund	0.00	0.00	-1.22	-1.22
<b>Total provisional 2022/23 MTFS impact</b>				<b>-12.62</b>

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 While the settlement brought positive news for Wirral as well as the Local Government sector in general, the data outlined in this briefing note should be treated with caution.
- 5.2 Firstly the settlement is provisional at this stage, and as noted is open to consultation until the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Following the closure of the consultation period the settlement is subject to Parliament approve, and as such the data outlined above is subject to change.
- 5.3 Guidance on Business Rates for 2022/23 is still to be released. The estimated income generated from Business Rates for 2022/23, as well as the related Section 31 Grants for qualifying reliefs, will be analysed in detail in conjunction with the guidance when available. Such estimates have a deadline for completion and submission to Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022, and as such the impact of Business Rates income on the MTFS is not yet clear.
- 5.4 Similarly, the estimate of the Collection Fund position will impact the 2022/23 budget. This is a statutory process and is based on the latest data available on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and therefore this will not be known until late January.
- 5.5 Finally, while the provisional settlement brings positive news for Wirral Council it is important to remember that, despite the three-year Spending Review period, the government have only impacted a single -year settlement. While the additional resources for 2022/23 are welcomed, they only provide limited and short-term stability while creating uncertainty for longer term financial planning.

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# **2022/2023 BUDGET SETTING Proposals Pack**



## Children's Services

Wirral's Children's Services are focussed on breaking the cycle of poor outcomes and encouraging and enabling families to bring up children in safe, happy, and secure environments. Its functions include:

- Assessment and Intervention
- Children's Business Support
- Early Childhood Services
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Fostering, Adoption and Placement Commissioning
- Integrated Front Door
- Modernisation
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
- Performance Improvement
- Permanence
- Safeguarding QA and Practice Improvement
- SEND and Inclusion
- Schools Improvement
- Youth Service

### **PROPOSAL:** Reduction of Historic Teachers Pensions Costs

**More about this option:** The council is responsible for the costs of additional benefits awarded to teachers upon early retirement outside of the terms of the Teachers' Pension Scheme. This is a legacy financial commitment where the cost is reducing over time and can be achieved through a simple budget reduction.

**Saving: £200k**

### **PROPOSAL:** Alternative Accommodation Provision for Children Looked After

**More about this option:** In order to reduce costs associated with external accommodation providers, the council plans to partner with a Community Interest Company to open four children's homes for up to 16 young people over the next 2 years. Provision will include short-breaks, therapeutic provision for children and young people with learning disability/autism and mental health difficulties and expanding in-house provision at Willowtree for young people with disabilities. A registered housing provider will also be commissioned to offer care leaver accommodation.

**Saving: £1m**

**PROPOSAL:** Utilisation of Demand Reserve

**More about this option:** This proposal is focused on service demand. A long-term saving will involve an alternative delivery model based on the Department for Education's Family Safeguarding model. In the meantime, COVID funding will deliver the savings until the permanent model is in place.

**Saving: £467k**

**PROPOSAL:** Children's Services redesign and posts deletion/closure

**More about this option:** This proposal will look to achieve efficiencies within the Directorate through removal of vacant posts, redeployment, and service realignment.

**Saving: £294k**

**PROPOSAL:** Reduction in Adoption Orders.

**More about this option:** Wirral had a disproportionately high number of adoption orders in 2017/18 and 2018/19. This has impacted on the budget which funds the service via the Regional Adoption Agency. The funding formula for the regional adoption agency is currently based on the average number of adoption orders for the previous four years. As these adoption order numbers pass out of the formula calculation over the next two years, Wirral's contribution to the regional adoption agency will reduce.

**Saving: 2022/23: £50k 2023/24: £150k**

**PROPOSAL:** Reduction in the Number of Looked After Children

**More about this option:** In recent years, the overall children looked after (CLA) numbers in Wirral were higher than statistical neighbours. The numbers coming into care presently are more in line with neighbours. The cohort of children who joined during the earlier period are likely to remain in care until age 18, but as these pre-2019 children reach 18 we anticipate our CLA spending will reduce annually.

**Saving: £564k (22/23)**

**PROPOSAL:** Review of Youth Offending Service

**More about this option:** This proposal includes the removal of a post from the Youth Offending Service structure which is no longer required.

Wirral's Youth Justice Service produces an Annual Strategic Plan which is approved by the Youth Justice Management Board and Council. The plan sets out the priorities and action for future delivery. It is anticipated that the service can continue to meet its statutory responsibilities and prevention approach without the additional post.

**Saving: £25k**

**PROPOSAL:** Special Educational Needs (SEND) Transport Review

**More about this option:** This option will include a service redesign which will look to reduce costs in home to school transport for children with SEND. The review will include changes to timings and routes, multiple drop offs, vehicle sharing and eligibility post 16.

**Saving: £150k**

**PROPOSAL:** Increase Funding for Placements from Health Clinical Commissioning Group and SEND

**More about this option:** Social Care currently contributes the majority of funding (90%) towards residential placements whilst education contribute 4.45% and health 5.27% (as of April 2021). This proposal is seeking a more equal distribution of funding which will help secure this saving.

**Saving: £200k**

**PROPOSAL:** Redesign of Youth Offer

**More about this option:** This proposal will seek to achieve savings through a review of current budgets and resource. It will include withdrawal of £150k from the Hive (in addition to the £200k withdrawn last year 2020/21), the removal of £108k from the Youth Service budget and deletion of one post from the Youth Service.

In 22/23 the Hive will continue to receive a £100k contribution from local developers.

**Saving: £200k**

## Regeneration

This Directorate is leading Wirral Council on its hugely ambitious regeneration of the borough, and plays a significant role in promoting housing supply, providing wider place-based regeneration and local growth, and supporting cohesive communities. Its functions include:

- Assets and Facilities Management
- Culture strategy and Visitor Economy
- Development Management and Building Control
- Housing, Supported housing and homelessness services
- Major Planning and projects including Wirral Growth Company
- Inward investment
- Regeneration
- Strategic Transport

### **PROPOSAL:** Capitalisation of Regeneration Staff Salaries

**More about this option:** Capitalisation of salaries will ensure the delivery of the council's regeneration and economic growth programme, which is recognised as a once in a generation opportunity to address decline in Birkenhead and other areas across Wirral.

**Saving: £1.4m**

### **PROPOSAL:** Cease Financial Contributions for the Provision of Community Alarms and Response Calls

**More about this option:** It is proposed the council will cease the grant funding contribution to current eligible customers for the community alarm/response services charges. Notice will be given to the providers of this funding being withdrawn in line with current funding regime and agreement notice period. Registered providers will then each undertake their own review of the service provided to see how this would be managed with their residents.

**Saving: £200k (22-23) £100k (23/24)**

### **PROPOSAL:** Reconfiguration of Commissioned Homeless Accommodation

**More about this option:** The homeless accommodation scheme in its current configuration is not fully meeting the demands being seen coming through the council's housing options system. In partnership with service providers, we will look to reconfigure the service, adjusting parameters, including age restrictions, in order to meet demand and cater for wider client groups. Changes would result in the service having the ability to apply for intensive housing management eligible costs, thereby releasing the expenditure the council currently provides as part of a commissioned service.

**Saving: £115k (22/23) £37k (23/24)**

**PROPOSAL:** The Closure of Nine Public Conveniences

**More about this option:** Due to increasing maintenance costs, this proposal will see the closure of public conveniences, located mainly in coastal areas, with sites including Harrison Drive, New Brighton; Moreton Common; Moreton Cross; West Kirby Marine Lake; West Kirby Concourse (outside); Parade Gardens, Hoylake; Meols Parade; New Ferry and Thornton Hough.

**Saving: £143k**

**PROPOSAL:** Corporate Buildings – Holding Costs

**More about this option:** Following changes in working arrangements due to the Covid pandemic, a number of council owned buildings are currently not in use, and it is proposed that a further review of them is undertaken, with savings anticipated from reduced utility costs, cleaning, materials etc.

**Saving: £50k**

## Law and Governance

The core business of this department is to provide corporate and operational legal advice, assistance and support to the authority and its members, as well as responsibility for the co-ordination and efficient management of the decision-making processes of the Council. Its functions include:

- Civic Services
- Committee Services
- Coroners
- Electoral
- Legal Services
- Licensing
- Registrars
- Scrutiny

### **PROPOSAL:** Removal of Individual Member Budgets

**More about this option:** In order to set a balanced budget for the 2021/22 budget year, the council had agreed to limit the budget to £1,000 per member with a view to the budget being reintroduced for 2022/23. However, given the current budget savings requirement that the council must meet to set a balanced budget, it is proposed that this budget now be removed altogether.

**Saving: £250k**

### **PROPOSAL:** Reduction in the Number of Committees

**More about this option:** The current re-design of the council's committee structure will be accompanied by a re-design of the staffing requirement to support the number of meetings, members, and officers in the decision-making process.

**Saving: £150k**

### **PROPOSAL:** Capitalise Salaries

**More about this option:** This proposal will include a change to re-direct qualifying legal services salaries away from the council's central budget to specific capital projects, which will enable a saving on net revenue costs.

This type of expenditure is not considered to be a council overhead but a direct cost necessary to achieve a project or programme of projects.

**Saving: £200k**

**PROPOSAL:** Whole Council Elections

**More about this option:** the council is currently undertaking a statutory consultation on changing the electoral cycle to whole council elections as of 2023. Over a 4-year period, the cost of running Local Authority elections is £1,024,200. The costs of running whole council elections, with the provision of funding for the event of by-elections, would be £520,000 over the same 4-year period

**Saving: £125k**

## Corporate Office

The role of the Corporate Office is to ensure that Wirral Council is a high-performing, well-managed, strategic organisation. The office stands as a key interface between the Chief executive, Senior Leadership Team, Leader of the Council, Members and Key Stakeholders. Its functions include:

- Business Support
- Communications
- Customer Feedback and Members Enquires
- Quality and Organisational Effectiveness
- Strategy, Policy and Partnerships

**PROPOSAL:** Service Re-design

**More about this option:** The Corporate Office will be redesigned to include the centralisation of corporate resources and more integrated and flexible teams. This work will be delivered over 18 months. The first phase of this will be achieved through the deletion of two vacancies across the Policy and Communications Teams and a reduction in the marketing budget. Phase two will be developed during 2022/23 and will align with the Change Programme service re-design schedule to explore opportunities for centralised corporate services.

**Saving: £110k**

## Adult Care and Health

The Department provides or secures the majority of care and support services through adult social care, which is part of the wider health and social care system. Its functions include:

- Care standards
- Commissioning Older People and Mental Health and Disability Services
- Public Health
- Strategic Commissioning
- Wirral Intelligence Service

**PROPOSAL:** Demand mitigation – Technology and Care Package Review

**More about this option:** This proposal is an increased efficiency requirement for 2022/23 against the community care budget based on a range of case reviews, demand management approaches and care provider market shaping.

**Saving: £3.89m**

## Resources

The Resources department includes all the professional services needed for the efficient running and sound financial management of Wirral Council. Its functions include:

- Debt recovery and income
- Finance and Investment
- Health and Safety
- Human Resources
- ICT Strategy and Delivery
- Merseyside Pension Fund
- Organisational change
- Organisational Development and Design
- Procurement and Commercial Management
- Programme Office
- Revenues and Benefits and Council Tax

### **PROPOSAL:** One Stop Shop Establishment Review

**More about this option:** The One Stop Shop (OSS) Network has reduced in line with a reduction in visitors to OSS outlets. Savings are achieved by the removal of vacant posts which are no longer required.

**Saving: £99k**

### **PROPOSAL:** Review of Treasury Activity

**More about this option:** Debt management and investment opportunities cover a wide range of activities undertaken within Treasury Activity. This proposal will look at investment opportunities, including social and green investment aims. Additionally, there is also potential for new revenue streams from alternative investments. Both will be balanced against risk and current income targets.

**Saving: £500k**

### **PROPOSAL:** Revenues & Benefits Review and Restructure

**More about this option:** This proposal includes a full review to examine every aspect of the service and its processes, looking to streamline as much as possible and removing wasteful/bureaucratic tasks from the service. This process includes the expansion and introduction of new automated processes.

The savings will be realised by a mixture of removing vacant posts from the existing structure which can be released from the review, together with streamlining management structures and a limited offer of early voluntary retirement.

**Saving: £750k**

**PROPOSAL:** Reduction of Strategic Change Revenue Budget

**More about this option:** Partial funding of business change can be supported through flexible use of capital receipts for transformation, and this can therefore release revenue budget whilst enabling the service to deliver major business change to the council.

**Saving: £650k**

**PROPOSAL:** Restructure of Procurement and Commercial Teams

**More about this option:** Following an in-year staffing restructure that saw a central team of commercial officers restructured, this proposal seeks to remove the remaining budget for the team. Additional roles supporting income generation are in place within the relevant Directorates.

**Saving: £230k**

**PROPOSAL:** Review of Finance Team Structure

**More about this option:** This saving proposal, of reducing resources within the Finance function, is presented in recognition of the changes being put forward elsewhere in the council that will impact on the support services required.

**Saving: £50k**

**PROPOSAL:** Cease Business Rates Contribution

**More about this option:** It is proposed that the annual contribution to reserves to guard against successful appeals of business rates is halted.

**Saving: £696k**

**PROPOSAL:** Modernisation of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Service

**More about this option:** In order to improve the councils digital offer, Microsoft are being engaged to support a Digital Transformation programme. As part of this programme the ICT services will be modernised which will see processes digitalised and automated. This will enable savings to be made across ICT.

**Saving: £50k**

**PROPOSAL:** Review of Business Support Unit

**More about this option:** With the move to working from home, less stationery is being purchased and there is less of a requirement to provide courier services. Savings will therefore be made within the Business Support Unit in lines with these changes in working patterns.

**Saving: £20k**

**PROPOSAL:** Review of Internal Audit – Income and Efficiencies

**More about this option:** In addition to staff efficiencies the department will increase the selling of services to third parties, which will include new customers that have already been secured.

**Saving: £80k**

**PROPOSAL:** Reduction of Learning & Development Budget

**More about this option:** This one-year temporary saving can be made as a result of the introduction of a new Learning Experience Platform, reduction in face-to-face delivery and optimising the apprenticeship levy. In addition to this the council have increased income which will be paid in 2022/23 tax year from the government apprenticeship start incentive payments which can be utilised to support learning and development.

**Saving: £100k**

**PROPOSAL:** Investment Statutory Override Pressure Removal

**More about this option:** Councils had been granted a time limited special exemption on the way they account for financial investments. If this exemption was not in place, this would present a pressure for the council of an estimated £1m.

This had previously been included as a pressure as the time limit was about to expire. However, the time period has now been extended meaning that the pressure can be removed from 2022/23.

**Saving: £1m**

## Neighbourhoods

The Neighbourhood's department is made up of the everyday functions that are key to the wellbeing of local areas and local people. The department includes a wide and varied range of universal, front-line services, such as:

- Assisted Travel
- Climate change
- Community Safety
- Customer Services
- Emergency Planning
- Environmental Health
- Highways Design and Maintenance
- Highways, Traffic and Road Safety
- Leisure
- Libraries
- Street Scene
- Major events
- Network Management
- One stop shops
- Parks and Countryside
- Road Safety
- Trading Standards
- Traffic Management
- Waste and Environment

### **PROPOSAL:** Review of Leisure Service

**More about this option:** This proposal includes a full-service review of the council's Leisure Services Division to consider all elements delivered and focus on removal of unnecessary cost and duplication, improved commissioning, and a lean target operating model.

It is likely that there will be staffing implications as a consequence of the review, the totality of which cannot be identified at the present time. Any reduction in staffing numbers would be attempted to be achieved through EVR/VS, redeployment and/or retraining.

**Saving: £178k**

### **PROPOSAL:** Highways Operational Services - Income exploration

**More about this option:** This proposal will explore the commercial opportunities and internal promotion of the various services available through Highway Operational Services in order to create additional income generation. It will also seek to further expand other departmental work requests within the council from Assets, Education, Parks & Countryside,

and third party works currently undertaken for service partners such as NHS and Wirral Older People's Parliament.

**Income: £30k**

**PROPOSAL:** Closure of Europa Fun/Leisure Pool & Enhanced Gym Offer

**More about this option:** This proposal includes the closure of the Leisure Pool ('Fun' Pool) at Europa Pools (wave machine, swimming pool features, flumes, etc). The option does not include the closure of the centre nor competition swimming pool which would continue to remain open. The service would also seek to repurpose the Leisure Pool, using the space to create a larger indoor gym offer and therefore increased income.

**Saving: £246k Plus £20k increased income from Gym offer**

**PROPOSAL:** Increased Catering Across all Leisure Sites

**More about this option:** This saving proposal would see an increase in income generation at the Sail Loft site through maximisation of customer numbers and sales. Further income could be generated through expansion of the service at different sites across the borough.

**Income: £60k**

**PROPOSAL:** Outdoor Water Sports Offer at West Kirby Marine Lake

**More about this option:** This budget option is an income generation scheme that would utilise the Marine Lake for new outdoor activities. These activities have become popular during the pandemic as people have sought alternatives to indoor activities whilst restrictions were in place.

Additionally, there will be more opportunities for residents to become involved in new sports activities, as well as having the potential to attract additional customers at the Sail Loft site

**Income: £15k**

**PROPOSAL:** Catering Pod at Leasowe Leisure Centre for Football Traffic

**More about this option:** This proposal will look to establish an outdoor catering offer (catering pod) at Leasowe Leisure Centre. An extension of the council's expanded in-house catering offer, the unit will primarily serve the high footfall football league traffic during the months of September – May. There is also scope to expand operation by re-locating the unit during the remaining months of the year.

**Income: £21k**

**PROPOSAL:** Permanent Closure and Demolition of Woodchurch Leisure Centre

**More about this option:** This option is for the closure of Woodchurch Leisure Centre. Due to the condition of the site, its low usage levels comparable with other sites, the required level of investment and the subsidy it carries, is proposed that the centre is then demolished to make way for a growth in outdoor leisure provision. The site adjacent to the Leisure Centre will see the construction of a new 3G Artificial Grass playing pitch and accompanying pavilion during the 2022-23 financial year.

**Saving: £402k**

**PROPOSAL:** Temporary Closure and Remodelling of Bidston Tennis Centre

**More about this option:** The option would see the closure of the Tennis Centre (indoors) in Bidston for a 12-month period whilst a facility upgrade takes place at the site within the core of the building. It has been identified by an independent leisure consultant that the facility mix within the building does not complement local need or local demographic. Consequently, a redesigned centre will meet the needs of the local population and provide additional income. The new development would take out 3 indoor tennis courts and replace with extensive soft play and gymnastics offer. A second new 3G AstroTurf pitch would also be built within the outside grounds of the site in a funding partnership between the Football Foundation and the Council with further income potential.

**Saving: £114k**

**PROPOSAL:** Review of Golf Offer

**More about this option:** This proposal will seek to generate savings through the closure of the two lowest income generating 18-hole golf courses, two leisure based recreational New Brighton sites and introduction of a new pricing/membership model for municipal golf. Brackenwood and Hoylake golf courses will close, along with Wallasey Beach and Kings Parade leisure sites. The two remaining golf courses will still provide a sufficient 'golf offer' to the residents of Wirral whilst substantially reducing the financial subsidy to the authority.

**Saving: £328k**

**PROPOSAL:** Exercise on Referral Programme

**More about this option:** Wirral's Leisure Services Team has a pool of qualified professionals who will be commissioned by health partners to provide patients with an opportunity to engage in a structured programme of physical activity or exercise by working with a qualified exercise professional to provide a positive introduction to being active.

**Income: £100k**

**PROPOSAL:** Reprovision of the Library Service

**More about this option:** This saving is associated with the development of a new operating model in libraries which will consolidate and realign the current libraries estate and resources to provide a comprehensive and efficient service for all who wish to use it. The new operating model will retain four central libraries and four community libraries, as well as Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) only provision co-located in community assets. The home reader service will remain for residents who cannot access a traditional library, as will the council's digital library and online offer. In addition, the service will invest in a Mobile Library with a 3000-book capacity to ensure hard to reach communities have access to a library service. The saving will be achieved through library closures, service realignment and a staffing restructure.

Full details of the new Libraries Operating Model will be available from 10<sup>th</sup> January via: <http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=956&MId=9051>

**Saving: £814k**

**PROPOSAL:** Floral Pavilion – New Operating Model

**More about this option:** This option would reduce the operational budget for the Floral Pavilion Theatre and Conference Centre, whilst increasing the amount of income generated by the venue. The venue does attract a subsidy however this has diminished in recent years due to improved management and this trend of working towards a leaner operating model with greater income potential is expected to continue.

**Saving: £350k - £400k**

**PROPOSAL:** Standardisation of Residents Parking Permits

**More about this option:** This proposal will look to standardise charges for residents parking permits for existing and new residents parking schemes to cover all operational running costs including the council's set-up, maintenance, administration, and enforcement costs for existing and new schemes.

**Income: £110k**

**PROPOSAL:** Fleet Efficiencies in Transport - Going Green

**More about this option:** This budget saving option is to appoint an independent expert to undertake a no-cost 'Green Fleet Review'. This review will examine the existing fleet in terms of vehicle choice, fuel economy and recommend mileage reduction strategies.

**Saving: £20k**

**PROPOSAL:** Capitalisation of Highways Salaries

**More about this option:** All highways and transport approved schemes for 2021/22 are funded from the Combined Authority allocation for Integrated Transport Block (ITB), which is £1.15m. It is anticipated that the new City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement allocation for Wirral over 5 years from 2022 will be between £5m and £11m.

Revenue savings can be achieved by increasing capital recharges – that is staff time spent on individual schemes.

**Saving: £15k**

**PROPOSAL:** Highway's Maintenance Contracts

**More about this option:** This proposal will see a reduction in the highway lining and the street furniture budgets. This will include seating, guard rails, signs, and bollards.

**Saving: £25k**

**PROPOSAL:** Streetlighting Service Savings

**More about this option:** Due to the introduction of the new LED lanterns programme savings can be made through ceasing night-time lighting inspections. In addition, the capital investment for illuminated signage has enabled us to replace all the illuminated bollards with reflective surfaces, therefore savings can also be made within the illuminated signage budget.

**Saving: £50k**

**PROPOSAL:** Car Park Maintenance - 1 Year Budget Reduction

**More about this option:** This proposal will see a revenue saving from the car parks maintenance budget for 1 year only. A budget will remain for essential safety repairs to potholes etc.

**Saving: £50k**

**PROPOSAL:** Transport Efficiencies

**More about this option:** This proposal will include a review of the in-house fleet, such as the outsourcing of the tyre fitting supply, repair, and fitting service. A management restructure is also planned in order to realign the service and create workforce efficiencies.

**Saving: £70k**

**PROPOSAL:** Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport Review

**More about this option:** This proposal focuses on the outsourcing of the in-house SEN adult transport service. Savings are based on the average cost of the current external provision compared to in-house provision, plus outsourcing of tyre supply, repair, and fitting service.

**Saving: £0 in 22-23 then £118k in 23-24**

**PROPOSAL:** Eco and Forest School Income

**More about this option:** The council provides a well-established and highly regarded Eco Schools programme and has been developing a Forest Schools initiative. Such provision is currently offered to schools free of charge. This proposal sets out an opportunity to implement a charge for parts of these programmes.

**Income: £20k**

**PROPOSAL:** Tree Management Team Commercial Offer

**More about this option:** The primary purpose and function of the Tree Risk and Inspection Team is to inspect and manage the council's tree stock (both highways and parkland) and mitigate any risk associated. However, there is some capacity within the inspection team to conduct tree inspections and provide management advice for partnering organisations and other landowners.

**Income: £25k income**

**PROPOSAL:** Market Rental for Park Café

**More about this option:** This option will seek to increase the income received from rents, specifically for the rent of a café at Royden Park by a commercial operator.

**Income: £10k**

**PROPOSAL:** Income Increase on Allotments

**More about this option:** This option would seek to increase the income received from allotments by increasing the annual fees charged to allotment holders.

**Income: £50k**

**PROPOSAL:** Increase in Charges for Waste and Environmental Services

**More about this option:** This proposal would see an increase in charges (income) for a range of services provided by Waste and Environmental Services (including garden waste collection service subscription, skip permits, collection of bulky items, collection of waste and recycling from schools and cost to supply a new wheelie bin), as well as freezing the litter bin budget for one year and annual contract efficiency savings.

**Income: £462k**

**PROPOSAL:** Removal of Vacancies in Environmental and Waste Team

**More about this option:** This option seeks to approve a post for early voluntary retirement (EVR) from the Waste and Environmental Services Team, plus not filling of existing or new vacancies.

**Saving: £100k**

**PROPOSAL:** Suspension of Climate Emergency Initiatives

**More about this option:** This saving proposal would see the suspension of the budget for climate emergency action plan projects, for the period of one year. External funding will be sought to continue environmental projects where available.

**Saving: £250k**

**PROPOSAL:** Remodelling of Street Cleansing, Plus Special Events

**More about this option:** This option would see the removal of the additional community permanent presence street cleansing service in some areas of the borough, as well as the removal of the budget for cleansing of special events e.g., River of Light, Cycling Tour of Britain, Giants etc. Removing this budget would result in cleansing costs for special events being charged out to promoters/organisers.

**Saving: £214k**

**PROPOSAL:** Cease Overtime Budget in Parks

**More about this option:** This Savings option would review the use of the additional hours budget, given the reduced maintenance and cessation of green spaces.

**Saving: £15k**

**PROPOSAL:** Re-Design Parks Service Reducing Maintenance and Service Costs

**More about this option:** This option will focus on service reduction and maintenance in parks. It will include the cessation of public firework displays, a reduction in maintenance cuts from 10 to 8 per annum, ceasing maintenance in open spaces including up to 10-15 local parks, and ceasing maintenance of 50% of the remaining parks. Local parks which also have play areas, football pitches or bowling greens etc have been excluded from this list.

**Saving: £655k**

**PROPOSAL:** Income Strategy - Cemeteries and Crematorium Service

**More about this option:** This option would provide increase choice for bereaved families with regards to burials and memorials and offer corporate sponsorship opportunities within Wirral's Cemeteries and Crematorium grounds for funeral directors.

**Income: £53k income**

**PROPOSAL:** Review of Anti-Social Behaviour Team

**More about this option:** This option will involve an alternative service delivery model and reduction of one post. The Team will continue to prioritise the statutory functions and consider the impact on the Community Safety Strategy.

**Saving: £50k**

**PROPOSAL:** Review Engagement Officer Secondment

**More about this option:** This proposal will seek agreement to not backfill an Engagement Officer for one year secondment to Regeneration.

**Saving: £35k**

**PROPOSAL:** Reduction in Community Patrol Service

**More about this option:** This option would see a redesign of the Community Patrol Service to an Out of Hours / High Demand service only (the CCTV and Control Room Function will remain 24/7, 365).

**Saving: £150k**

**PROPOSAL:** 50% Reduction in School Crossing Patrol Service

**More about this option:** The service has 80 established sites but traditionally carries a number of vacancies due to difficulties in recruiting to the role. This option will require the permanent deletion of the 18 vacant sites plus the closing of at least a further 25 sites to be achieved by reprioritising of sites into highest risk areas / highest number of peds crossing.

**Saving: £100k (22/23) £40k (23/24)**

**PROPOSAL:** Cessation of Constituency Team and Remodelling of Section

**More about this option:** This saving presents the deletion of the Constituency Team and Redeployment of officers where possible. The saving will be achieved through associated staffing reductions.

**Saving: £346k**

**PROPOSAL:** Introduction of an Overnight Camper Van Parking Charge in New Brighton

**More about this option:** This option will focus on income generation from introducing an overnight parking charge for leisure vehicles (motorhomes / campervans) on the coastal areas of New Brighton.

There is currently no charge for overnight parking. New Brighton has seen regeneration and an increase in tourism in recent years. The proposal will help to manage overnight parking in this area which has also seen a significant growth particularly since the start of the pandemic.

**Income: £35k**

**PROPOSAL:** Deletion of Vacant Posts

**More about this option:** There are a number of vacant posts across the Neighbourhoods Directorate. This option would see these posts deleted to achieve the savings.

**Saving: £302k**

**PROPOSAL:** Reduction in The Budget for Office Related Expenditure

**More about this option:** This proposal is made up of a reduction in Neighbourhoods budgeted expenditure for office related expenses such as printing and paper services, lighting, electricity, heating, etc.

**Saving: £23k**

**PROPOSAL:** Review of the Neighbourhood Services Directorate

**More about this option:** A fundamental review of the Neighbourhood Directorate will take place in order to drive efficiencies and realign service. This will be achieved through an EVR process that will commence in early January.

Statutory services within this Directorate will not be affected by the review.

**Saving: £360k**

# Have your say

## Wirral Council Budget 2022-23 Public Consultation Report



Consultation: 2 November 2021 – 28 November 2021

Report: 6 December 2021

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# 1.0 Executive Summary

Wirral Council continues to face financial challenges as it moves ahead with setting a budget for 2022-23. The authority faces a potential maximum budget gap of around £30m between funding (from council tax, fees, and grants) and the cost of providing services at the current level.

**The council must therefore plan to make any necessary savings in order to deliver a legal balanced budget.**

At Policy and Resources committee on 25 October 2021 a stakeholder consultation programme was agreed. The objectives of the public consultation were to:

- Achieve a proportionate balance of responses which accurately reflects stakeholder make up
- Ensure external coverage is balanced in tone and content, with inaccuracies challenged
- Ensure residents and stakeholders understand the scale of the budget challenge, and feel able to contribute their views
- Provide an engagement plan that will:
- Allow residents to contribute strategically about what's important to them and their community
- Address the difficult budget choices/decisions that must be taken.

Through the consultation people were asked to tell us what their priorities are, what council services matter most to them, and where they believe the Council should be focusing its efforts to help develop the budget plan. The results of the consultation are provided in this report.

# 1.1 Key Findings

## 1.1.1 The Questionnaire

A total of 534 survey responses were received, 530 online responses and 4 paper copies. These responses have been amalgamated and are reported on as a whole.

- **Parks and Open Spaces** and **Children’s Services** were highlighted as being among the top 3 for both most valued services (Q1) and most important services to invest more resources in (Q2).
- Q1. The services that were most frequently placed as being most valued were:
  1. Children’s Services (46.1% of respondents)
  2. Parks and Open Spaces (42.5%)
  3. Adult Social care (40.0%)
- Q2. The services that were most frequently placed as most important to invest more resources in were:
  1. Parks & Open Spaces (39.2%)
  2. Museums (39.0%)
  3. Children’s Services (36.3%)
- Q3. **Safe and Pleasant Communities** was the priority most frequently placed as most important, by 46.2% of respondents.
  - Within the **Safe and Pleasant Communities** priority, working with partner agencies to reduce crime and tackle anti-social behaviour was the action was most frequently placed as most important, by 53.3% of respondents.
  - Within the **Sustainable Environment** priority, the protection of our local environment action was most frequently placed as most important, by 41.8% of respondents.
  - Within the **Brighter Futures** priority, ensuring our children and young people have equal access to education opportunities was the action was most frequently placed as most important, by 47.0% of respondents.
  - Within the **Inclusive Economy** priority, supporting local businesses and job creation was the action was most frequently placed as most important, by 47.0% of respondents.

- Within the **Active and Healthy Lives** priority, working collaboratively with our partner agencies to improve mental wellbeing was the action was most frequently placed as most important, by 34.6% of respondents.
- Suggestions and Ideas that appeared in-common on both the free text section of the questionnaire (Q4) and the ideas board were:
  - The council should have fewer consultants (32 comments/23 ideas).
  - The council should have fewer councillors (29 comments /38 ideas).

See below for a full summary of the free text responses to Question 4.

See section 1.1.2 for a full summary of the ideas board.

Q4. Respondents were invited to outline suggestions as to how the council could make additional savings or generate income.

- The most common themes that suggestions fell in to were:
  - Council workforce (136 people).
  - Council operation (54).
  - Suggestions for chargeable services (51).
- Overall the top specific suggestions were:
  - The council should have fewer consultants (32).
  - The council should have fewer councillors (29).
  - Reduce salaries within the council (26).

### 1.1.2 The Ideas Board

- 112 contributions were made to the ideas board by 78 participants. Contributions could be in the form of an idea (x80) or a comment on an idea (x32) and participants were able to make more than one submission.
- The most common themes that ideas fell in to were:
  - Council's operation and structure (score of 71).
  - Ideas relating to maintenance (57).
  - Ideas relating to golf courses (42).
- The most popular and 'liked' specific ideas were:

- The council should have fewer councillors (38).
- Hoylake Beach should be maintained (24).
- The council should use fewer consultants (23).

### **1.1.3 Demographics**

- Most of the respondents (87.9%) classed themselves as local residents.
- The most represented Wirral Ward is Hoylake and Meols (11.3%), the least represented Wirral Ward was Bromborough (0.2%).
- Most Wirral respondents were in Decile 1 or decile 6 of the IMD (13.7% each), where decile 1 is the most deprived, and decile 10 is the least deprived.
- 59.3% of respondents were male; 36.4% were female.
- The most represented age group was 65–74-year-olds (24.7%).
- The least represented age group was 16–27-year-olds (0.8%).
- 93.4% of respondents were of white British ethnicity.
- 2.7% were of a non-white or 'other' ethnicity.
- 81.6% of respondents were heterosexual.

## 2.0 Methodology

Through the budget consultation people were asked to tell us what their priorities are, what council services matter most to them, and where they believe the Council should be focusing its efforts to help develop the budget plan.

Following the consultation, the feedback will be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee on 17 January 2022, where further budget consideration will be made. Full Council will have the final say on the authority's budget for the next year.

The consultation was carried out between 2 November – 28 November 2021. The approach used was an online public consultation through the 'Have your say' consultation portal at [www.haveyoursay.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.haveyoursay.wirral.gov.uk) with a page dedicated to the Budget Consultation. A Budget Booklet, a Financial Strategy Document and an Easy Read Version of the consultation were published on the portal and available for download to provide key information about the consultation.

Two online tools were provided for residents to engage with:

- An online questionnaire – to respond to specific questions about budget proposals.
- An ideas board – for residents to post 'ideas' about the council budget.

Respondents were also able to request paper copies of the survey, including an easy read version, or submit additional comments via a dedicated email address, which was published on the 'Have your say' website alongside the online tool.

### 2.1 Questionnaire

The consultation questionnaire was developed on the themes of the Wirral Plan and enabled stakeholders to record their feedback and opinions on how the council budget could be allocated, and savings made according to their priorities and what matters to them most. To enable further understanding, and in-depth analysis, respondents were invited to provide free-text comments to expand on their ideas or concerns.

Following closure of the consultation, the responses to each of the direct questions were collated and the responses included in this report. For the free-text comment question, a text coding approach was used based on the reoccurring themes. This data was then collated and summarised in the report. Free text results are provided as a count, rather than as percentages. This is because one comment or idea may cover multiple themes, therefore there are considerably more themes than contributions. Percentages derived from this as a denominator are non-sensical and confusing so have been omitted

Four paper questionnaires were submitted. These responses were examined, and the points raised incorporated into the online questionnaire results to ensure the views were represented in the final analysis.

## **2.2 Ideas Board**

The Ideas Board function was set up to allow respondents to submit their own ideas about the budget, these could be voted for ('liked') and commented on by other members of the public.

Ideas and comments were reviewed and categorised into themes. Those categories of ideas that were most prevalent and/or most 'liked' have been identified and highlighted.

Ideas Board results are provided as a score, rather than as percentages. This is because one comment or idea may cover multiple themes, therefore there are considerably more themes than contributions. Percentages derived from this as a denominator are non-sensical and confusing so have been omitted.

## **2.3 Staff Feedback**

In addition to direct Manager/ Departmental Management Team communications, a specific area was set up on the council's new Intranet Platform. This included channels for questions, feedback, and ideas, as well as links to the Have Your Say platform. Regular staff briefings, member engagement, 'Exec view' messages and specific sessions for our harder to reach staff were also undertaken. All responses were reviewed and summarised for reporting.

## **2.5 Analysis of Respondents**

Respondents to the online tools were provided with the option to provide demographic information about themselves. It must be noted that this is an option and that not all respondents included this information. This data allows the demographic results to be included in this report to enable analysis of the scope of responses and representation from different demographic groups.

## **2.6 Interpretation of Results**

In terms of the results, it is important to note that:

- The public consultation is not representative of the overall population but provides information on the opinion of those residents who engaged.
- For specific tools where percentages do not add up to 100, this may be due to rounding, or the question is multi-coded. All free-text questions and ideas that offered respondents the option to provide written feedback could have covered multiple

themes. Therefore, with free-text responses being categorised using a coding system, some comments will be multi-coded and therefore add up to more than 100 percent.

The Policy and Resources Committee requested that the engagement should aim to ‘Achieve a proportionate balance of responses which accurately reflects stakeholder make up’. To achieve responses from a representative sample of the Wirral population would require a range of targeted engagement to ensure the correct sample size, and coverage of response from the correct population demographics. Consultations designed to achieve this are often run in a range of stages based on analysis of the responses throughout the process and often use a range of engagement techniques such as contacting residents using a call centre. The time frame allowed to run this consultation did not allow this to be achieved. As noted above this consultation provides information on the opinion of residents who engaged.

## **2.7 Communication**

A major social and digital media sub campaign was also carried out, which included regular messaging, targeted demographical and geographical communications, resident e-newsletters, and regular theme specific stories, linking with the narrative, and urging residents and stakeholders to take part in the consultation.

Through partnership agreements, we worked closely with Wirral Globe, Metro, and more local digital news channels. A mix of printed adverts and advertorials were placed to encourage participation, as well as digital click-through links and targeted news stories.

# 3.0 Results

## 3.1 Questionnaire Results

The questionnaire was responded to by 534 people, with 530 through the online portal and 4 paper copies submitted. No questions were mandatory so respondents could choose which questions to respond to.

Due to the size of data tables, the main tables for each of the closed questions are contained in [Appendix 1](#).

# Council Services

## Q1. Which Council Services do you value the most?

“We believe the services the council provides are all important. In planning for how we fund and deliver these services, we want to know more about which council services(s) you value the most”.

Please tell us how important these services are to you on a scale of 1-5 (1 being very important and 5 being of no importance at all).

The services that were most frequently placed as being most valued were:

1. Children’s Services (46.1% of respondents)
2. Parks and Open Spaces (42.5%)
3. Adult Social care (40.0%)

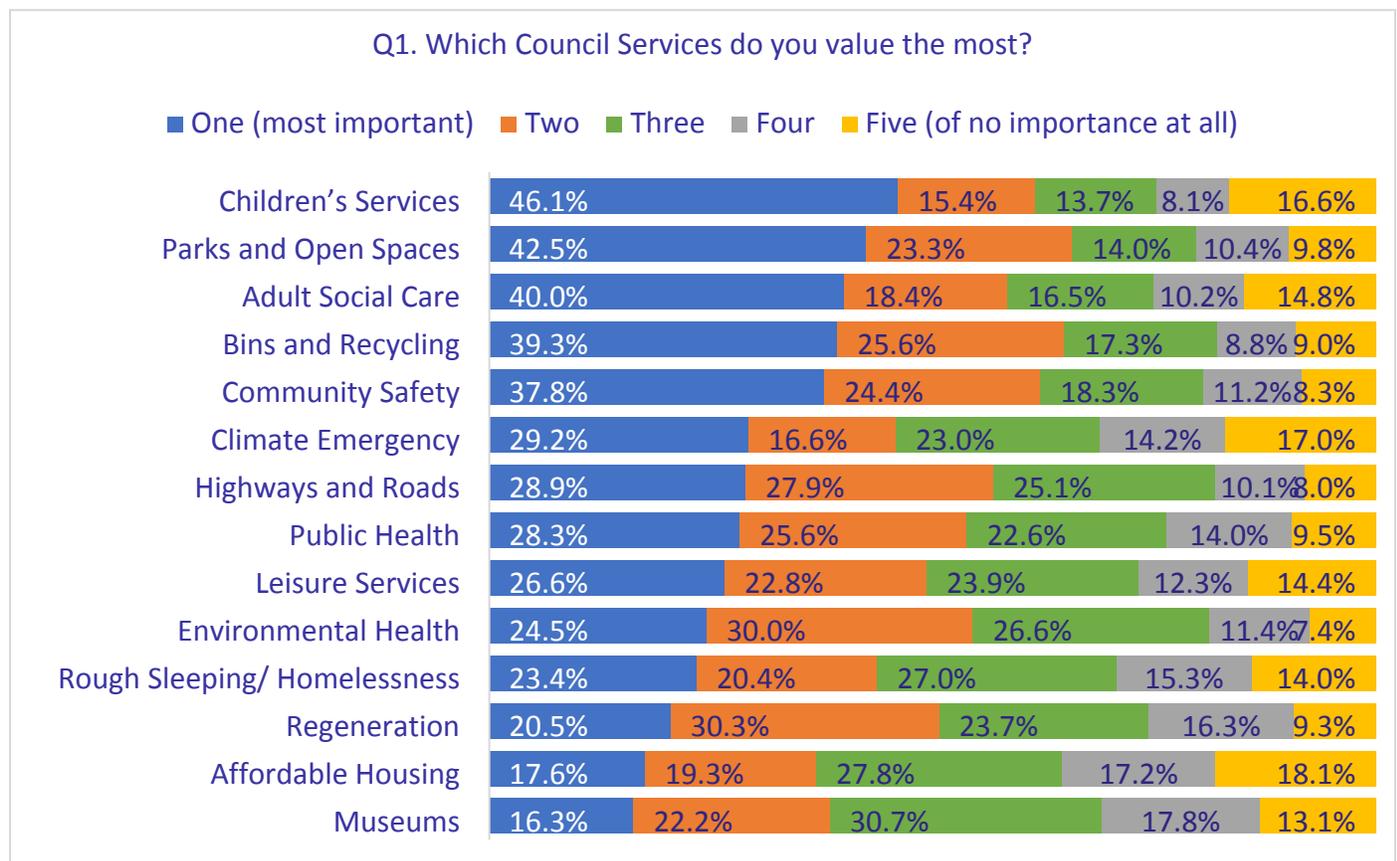


Figure 1: Chart showing which Council Services respondents value the most

Those services most frequently placed as least valued were:

4. Affordable Housing (18.1%)
5. Climate Emergency (17.0%)
6. Children’s Services (16.6%)

**Q2. Tell us which services you believe the council needs to invest more resources into.**

The services that were most frequently placed as most important to invest more resources in were:

1. Parks & Open Spaces (39.2%)
2. Museums (39.0%)
3. Children’s Services (36.3%)

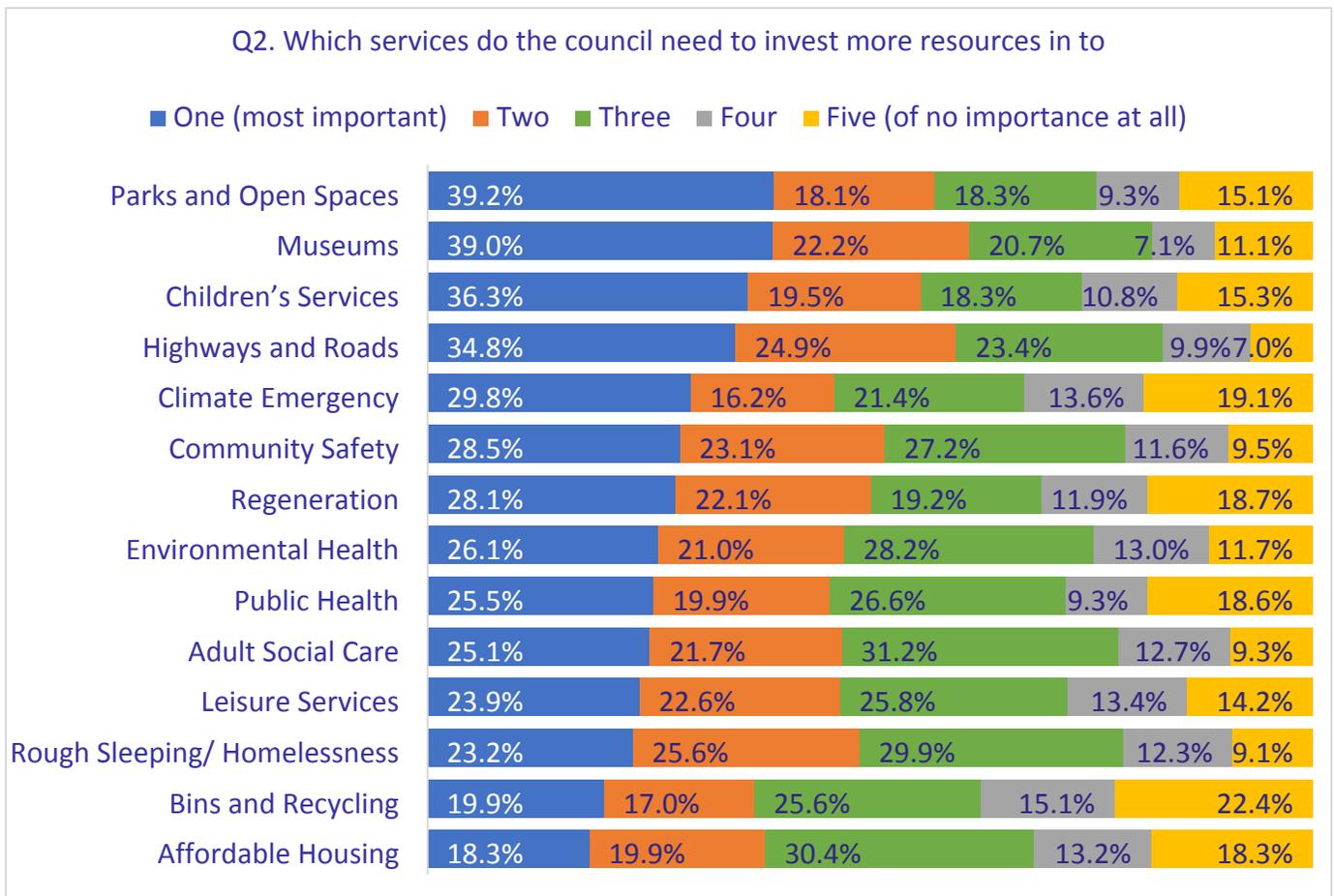


Figure 2: Chart showing which services respondents feel that the council needs to invest more resources into

Those services that were most frequently placed as of no importance at all to invest more resources in were:

1. Bins and Recycling (22.4%)
2. Climate Emergency (19.1%)

## The Wirral Plan and the council budget

### Q3. Please tell us how important these priorities are to you on a scale of 1-5.

Safe and Pleasant Communities was the priority most frequently placed as most important, by 46.2% of respondents.

Active and Healthy Lives (31.8%), Brighter Futures (31.4%) and a Sustainable Environment (31.3%) were all similarly placed in importance.

A Sustainable Environment was the priority most frequently placed as of no importance at all (13.1%).

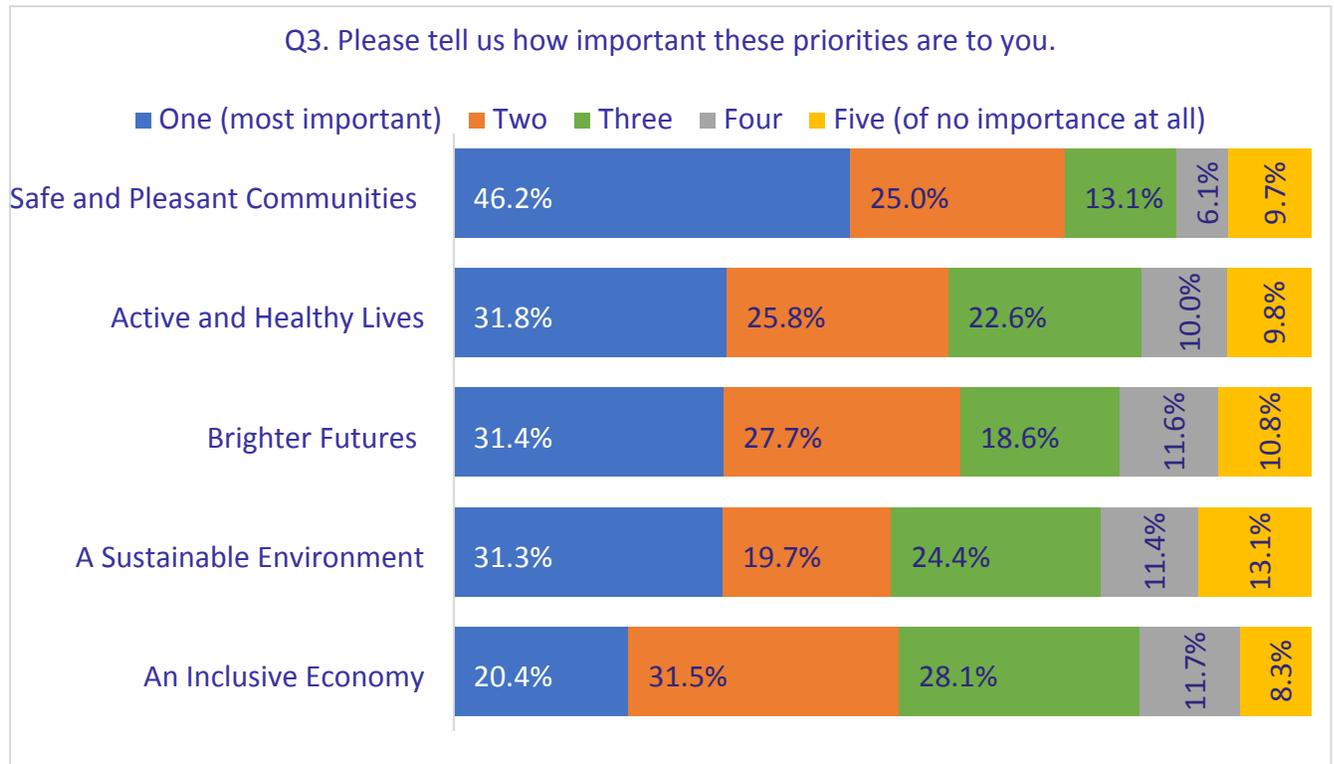


Figure 3: Chart showing how important these priorities are to respondents

#### Q4. Sustainable Environment: How important are these actions?

Within the Sustainable Environment priority, the protection of our local environment action was most frequently placed as most important, by 41.8% of respondents.

The continue to respond to the climate emergency action was most frequently placed as of 'no importance at all' (14.9%).

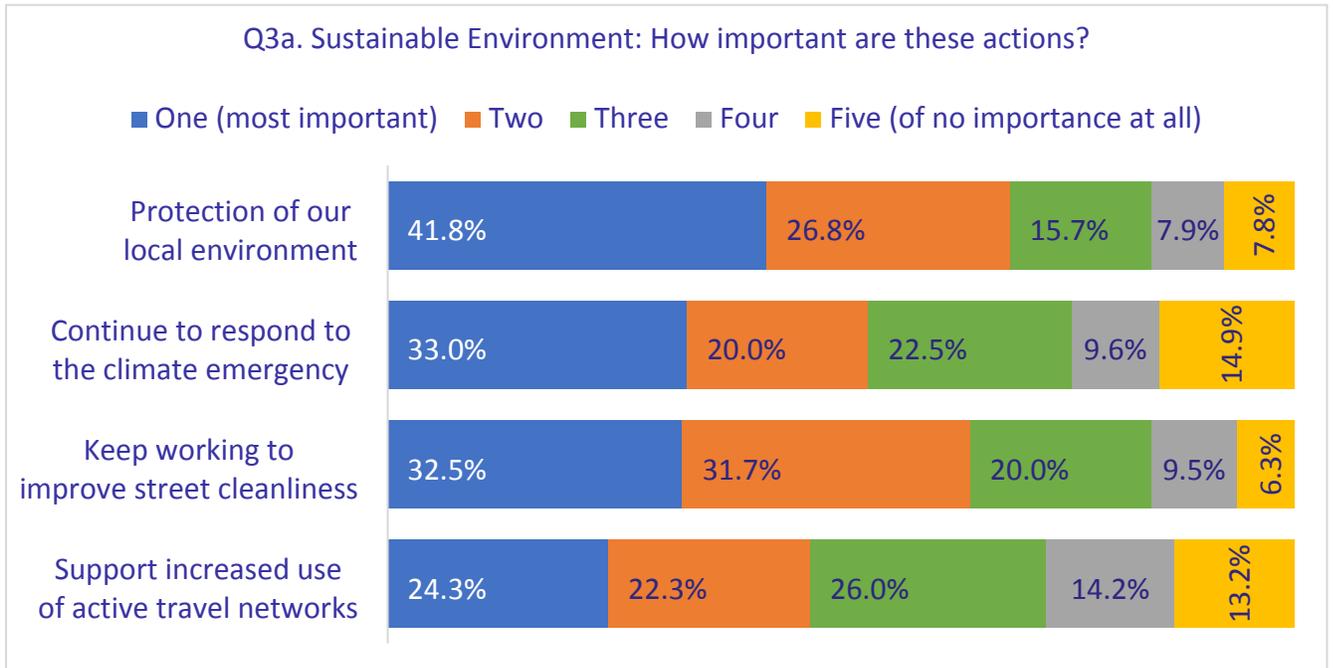


Figure 4: Chart showing how important the Sustainable Environment actions are to respondents

**Q5. Brighter futures: How important are these actions?**

Within the Brighter Futures priority, ensuring our children and young people have equal access to education opportunities was the action was most frequently placed as most important, by 47.0% of respondents. This was also the action most frequently placed as being of ‘no importance at all’.

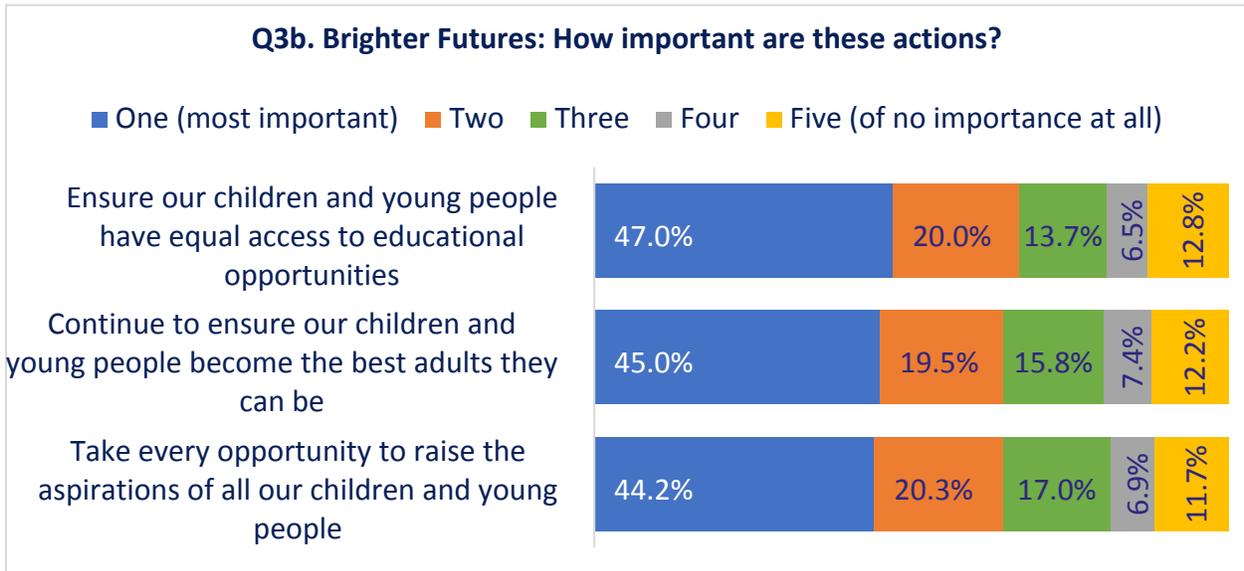


Figure 5: Chart showing how important the Brighter Futures actions are to respondents

**Q6. Inclusive Economy: How important are these actions?**

Within the Inclusive Economy priority, supporting local businesses and job creation was the action was most frequently placed as most important, by 47.0% of respondents.

Developing quality, affordable, sustainable homes was most frequently placed as of 'no importance at all' (13.7%).

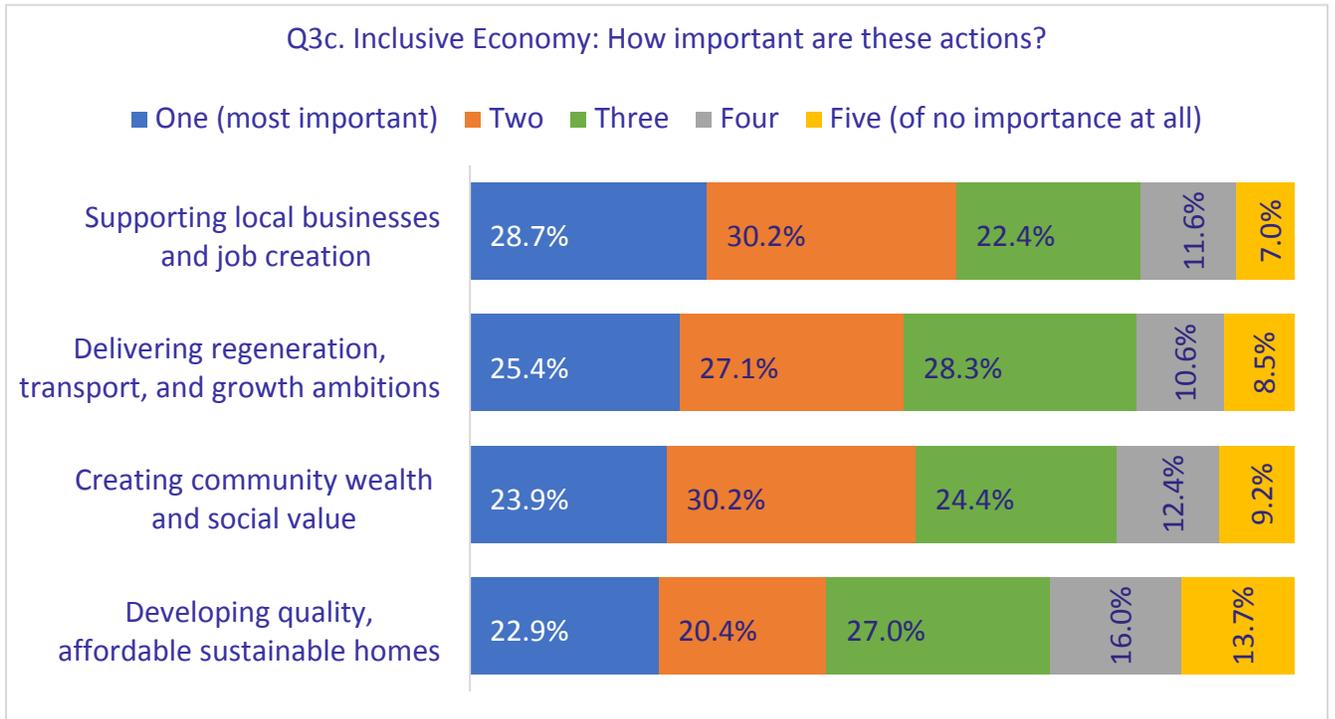


Figure 6: Chart showing how important the Inclusive Economy actions are to respondents

**Q7. Safe and Pleasant Community: How important are these actions?**

Within the Safe and Pleasant Community priority, working with partner agencies to reduce crime and tackle anti-social behaviour was the action was most frequently placed as most important, by 53.3% of respondents.

Tackling rough sleeping and homelessness was most frequently placed as of ‘no importance at all’ (13.7%).

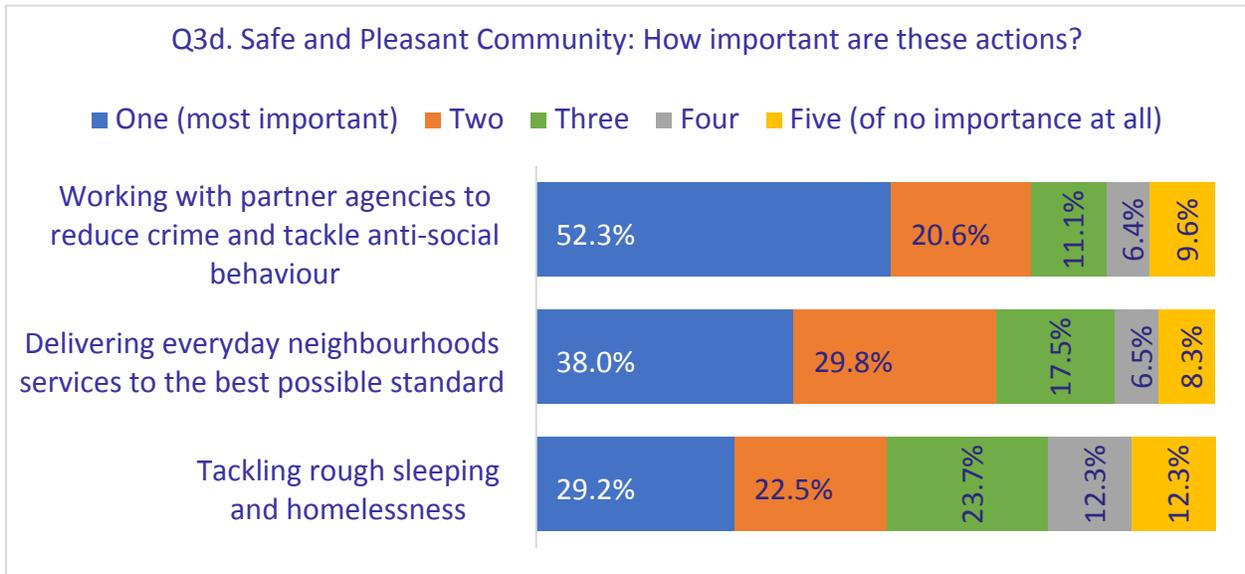


Figure 7: Chart showing how important the Safe and Pleasant Community actions are to respondents

### Q8. Active and Healthy Lives: How important are these actions?

Within the Active and Healthy Lives priority, working collaboratively with our partner agencies to improve mental wellbeing was the action was most frequently placed as most important, by 34.6% of respondents. This action was also most frequently placed as of 'no importance at all' (11.8%).

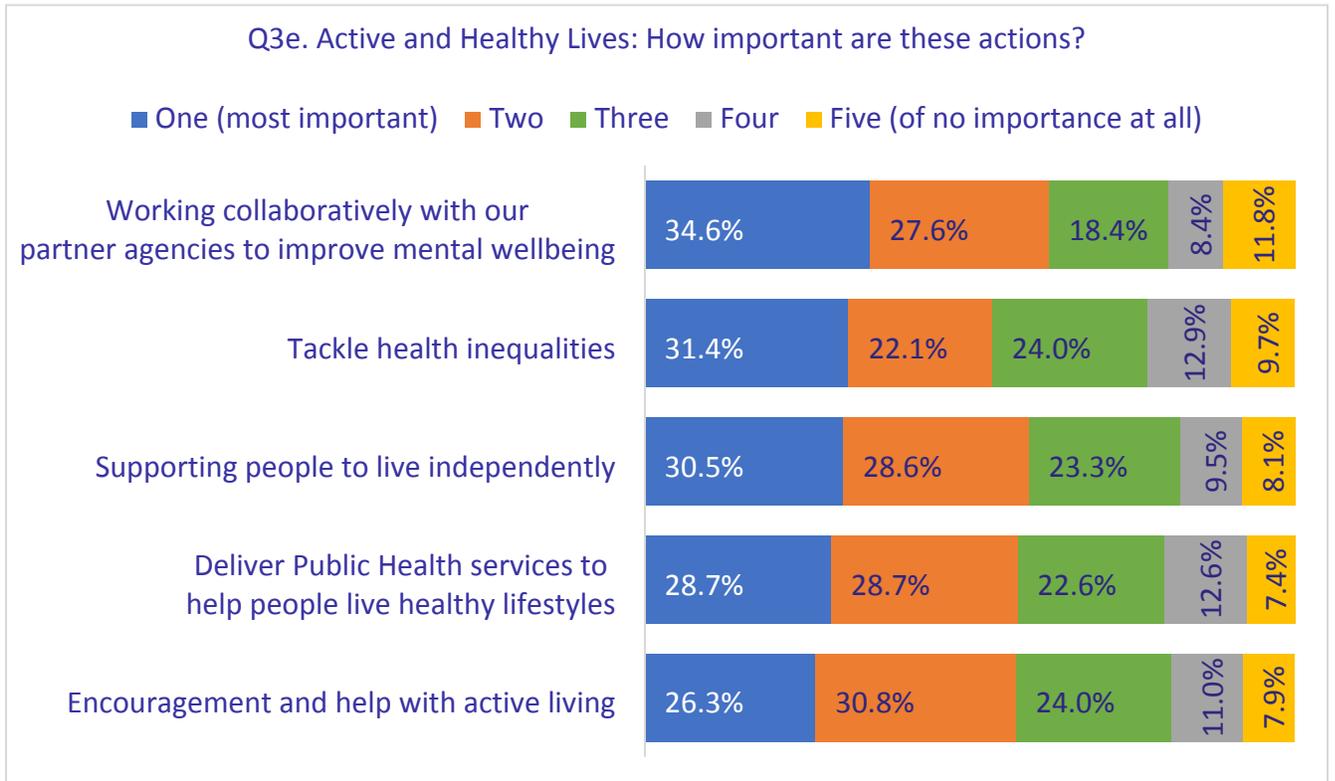


Figure 8: Chart showing how important the Active and Healthy Lives actions are to respondents

**Q9. Please outline any suggestions you may have for how the council can make additional savings or potential sources of income.**

The most common themes that suggestions fell in to were:

1. Council workforce (136).
2. Council operation (54).
3. Suggestions for chargeable services (51).

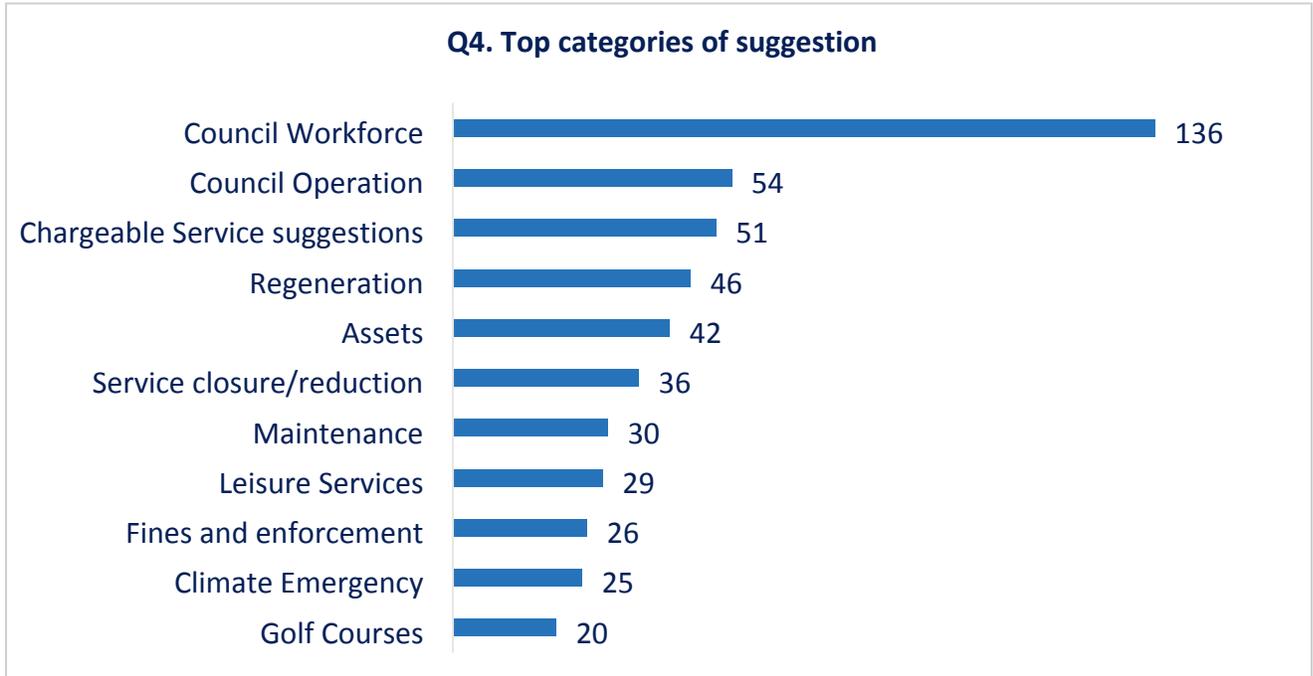


Figure 9: Top categories of suggestions

Main Category	Count
Council Workforce	136
Council Operation	54
Chargeable Service suggestions	51
Regeneration	46
Assets	42
Service closure/reduction	36
Maintenance	30
Leisure Services	29
Fines and enforcement	26
Climate Emergency	25
Golf Courses	20

Table 1: Top categories of suggestion.

Overall the top specific suggestions:

1. The council should have fewer consultants (32).
2. The council should have fewer councillors (29).
3. Reduce salaries within the council (26).



Figure 10: Top suggestions

Category	Subcategory	Total
Council Workforce	Fewer consultants	32
Council Workforce	Fewer councillors	29
Council Workforce	Reduce salaries within council	26
Assets	Sell council buildings	22
Regeneration	Cease existing projects - no new projects	21
Chargeable Services	Parking charges - support	16
Chargeable Services	Parking charges - oppose	14
Maintenance	Hoylake Beach - Rake/clean up	14

Table 2: Top suggestions



Below is a summary of those suggestions that were put forward more than 10 times.

1. **The council should employ fewer consultants (32).** Council workforce.

32 people put this forward as a suggestion. It is felt that the functions carried out by consultants should be carried out in-house, and that a workforce should be recruited that have the necessary skills.

2. **Reduce the number of Councillors serving Wirral (29).** Council workforce

29 people put forward this suggestion. Most commonly, people suggested that there should be only 1 or 2 councillors per ward, and that expenses paid should be reduced.

3. **Reduce salaries paid (26).** Council workforce

26 people put forward this suggestion. It is felt that salaries, particularly amongst upper management should be reduced or capped.

4. **Sell council-owned buildings (22).** Assets

22 people put forward this suggestion as a way of potentially generating revenue and saving costs in maintaining older buildings. There were 4 counter suggestions, where people were against selling off buildings, particularly the town halls.

5. **Curtail regeneration projects and do not embark on new ones (21)** Regeneration

21 people suggested that the various regeneration projects do not represent value for money and often do not reach fruition. It is felt that money should be spent on essential services and/or where there will be an immediate impact. 7 of the suggestions specifically mentioned that regeneration in Birkenhead in particular should cease.

6. **Parking charges - for (16) and against (14)** Chargeable services

Parking charges divided opinion amongst the suggestions.

16 people suggested that parking charges should be retained, or introduced, in order to increase revenue and/or deter car use. Some suggest all car parking should be charged, others that specific types should be chargeable such as on-street parking, parking at retail parks, workplace parking and non-resident parking.

There were 14 counter suggestions to this, suggesting that to charge for parking at smaller town and village high streets would have a detrimental effect on the businesses there, result in closures, and encourage people to out of town retail parks instead. It is also highlighted that removing parking charges at beauty spots would encourage people to be active and improve health and wellbeing.

## 7. **Hoylake Beach - Rake/clean-up (14) Maintenance**

14 people suggested that maintenance resume at Hoylake beach, and that it be returned to an 'amenity beach. The prevalent feeling in regard to this is that beach is no longer usable for leisure and recreation by the community, nor is an attraction to visitors. It is felt this will have a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing and the local economy. In addition, it is thought that the unmaintained beach will attract vermin.

## 3.2 Ideas Board Results

Ideas were examined and sorted into categories and given a 'score' based on the frequency that the idea was put forward and how many likes they received. Counter comments have been taken into account, and where someone disagrees with an idea, or submits an opposing idea, the score was adjusted (reduced) accordingly.

The score was calculated by adding the number of submissions and number of combined likes and subtracting the number of counter comments.

Where one individual has made multiple submissions saying the same thing, these are combined to one submission per category discussed. Any 'likes' accrued across the submissions are combined and retained.

The most popular type of ideas were those relating to the

1. Council's operation and structure (score of 71).
2. Ideas relating to maintenance (57).
3. Ideas relating to golf courses (42).

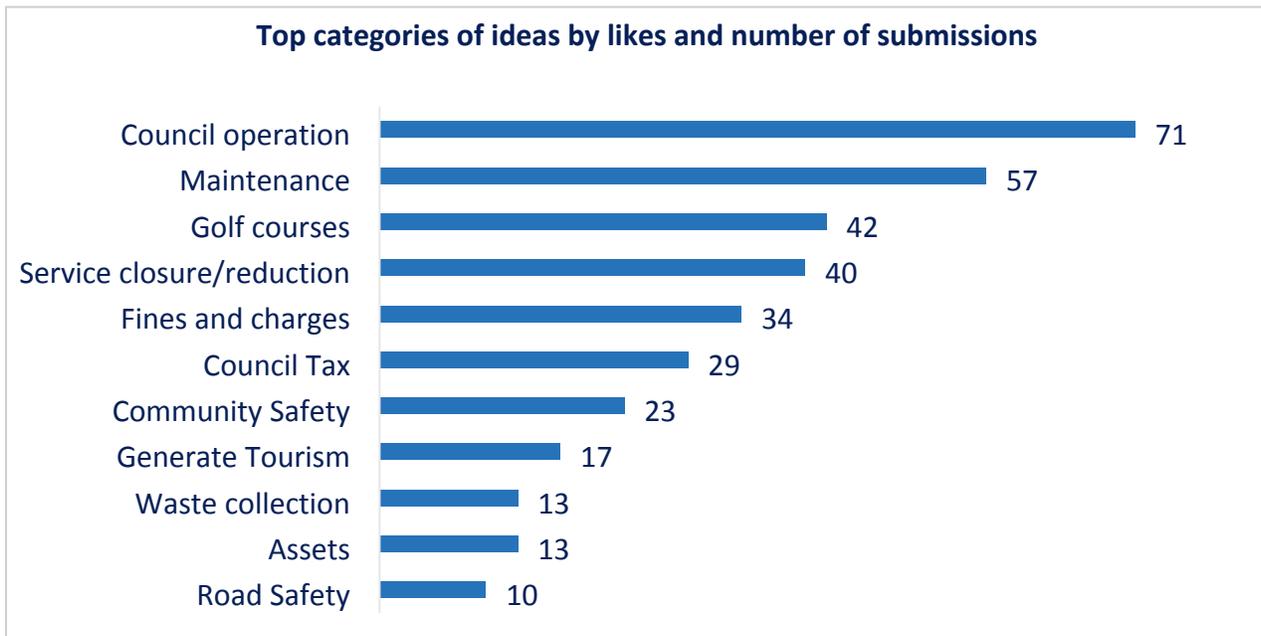


Figure 11: Top idea categories

Category	Sum of Likes	Submissions	Total approval
Council operation	58	13	71
Maintenance	41	16	57
Golf courses	24	18	42
Service closure/reduction	26	14	40
Fines and charges	24	10	34
Council Tax	21	8	29
Community Safety	17	6	23
Generate Tourism	15	2	17
Waste collection	11	2	13
Assets	9	4	13
Road Safety	8	2	10

Table 3: Top idea categories – score matrix

The most popular and ‘liked’ specific ideas were:

1. The council should have fewer councillors (38).
2. Hoylake Beach should be maintained (24).
3. The council should use fewer consultants (23).

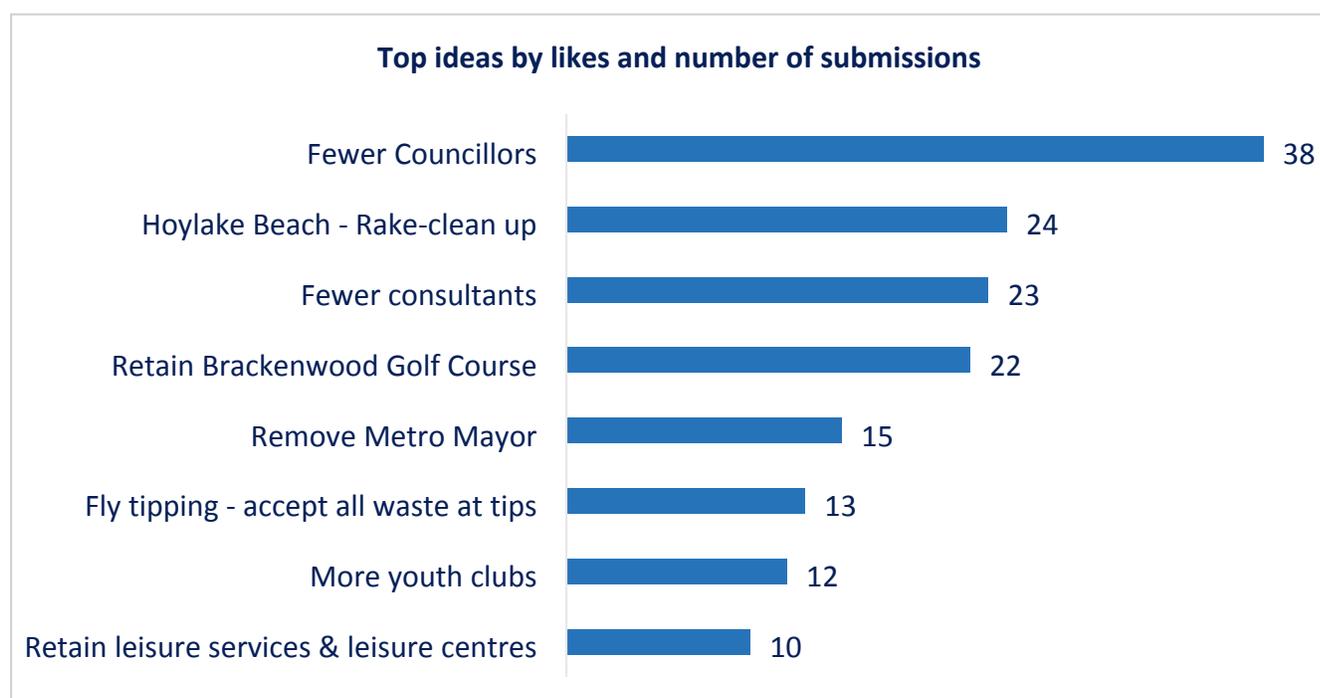


Figure 12: Top individual ideas

Row Labels	Sum of Likes	Submissions	Counter Comment	Total approval
Fewer Councillors	33	5		38
Hoylake Beach - Rake-clean up	25	7	8	24
Fewer consultants	20	3		23
Retain Brackenwood Golf Course	17	5		22
Remove Metro Mayor	14	2	1	15
Fly tipping - accept all waste tips	11	2		13
More youth clubs	10	2		12
Retain leisure services & leisure centres	7	3		10

Table 4: Top individual ideas – score matrix

Below is a summary of those ideas that achieved a frequency and popularity score of more than 10:

1. **Reduce the number of Councillors serving Wirral (38).** Council Operation and Structure

Five people put forward submissions mentioning this as an idea, which between them garnered 33 ‘likes’. Most commonly, people suggested that there should be only 1 councillor per ward, not 3.

One of these submissions was the joint most popular idea on the ideas board and received 14 ‘likes’:

**Reduce the number of Wirral Councillors**

I feel we could cut the number of councillors in each ward. Pensby, Thingwall & Irby has 3. Totally unnecessary. Whilst ward councillors do not receive a salary they do receive allowances, are loaned computer equipment when required. Every little helps.

Share    

1 Comment

14 

2. **Resume maintenance of Hoylake Beach (24)** Maintenance

Seven people put forward submissions relating to this, which between them garnered 25 ‘likes’. There were also contrary opinions about this (8), that the beach should be returned to nature, which have been taken into account in the final scoring.

The feeling is that beach is no longer usable for leisure and recreation by the community, nor is an attraction to visitors. It is felt this will have a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing and the local economy.

The counter argument is that it would be environmentally beneficial to see the beach returned to nature and would attract wildlife and thus wildlife enthusiasts. It saves maintenance costs and stabilises the sand.

### 3. **Council to employ fewer consultants (23)** Council Operation and Structure

Three ideas to this effect were submitted, which garnered 23 'likes'. The prevalent feeling is that consultants were expensive and unnecessary. It is felt that the work should be carried out in-house and staff employed who could carry out the roles currently outsourced.

### 4. **Retain Brackenwood Golf Course (22)** Golf

Five people submitted ideas and comments to this effect, which were 'liked' by 17 people.

Brackenwood Golf Course is predominantly mentioned in terms of courses that should be retained, Hoylake golf course and the plans for an Arrowe Park golf resort were mentioned as those that could be sold or scrapped.

### 5. **Remove metro mayor charge from council tax (15)** Council Tax

Two people submitted ideas or comments to this effect, garnering 14 likes. It is felt that this function does not benefit Wirral.

One of these submissions was the joint most popular idea on the ideas board and received 14 'likes':

**Scrap metro mayor tax from council tax.**

It's a pointless greedy tax, that does not benefit Wirral

Share    

2 Comments

14 

There was a counter comment to this submission which stated that a metro mayor afforded the ability to make regional decisions independent of Westminster, and that funding was attached to role.

### 6. **Reduce fly tipping by accepting all waste at tips and making kerbside collections cheaper (13)** Waste Collection

Two people submitted ideas or comments to this effect, garnering 11 likes.

By accepting all types of waste, and commercial waste at Wirral recycling centres fly-tipping would be greatly reduced or eliminated thus saving the cost of clearance. Similarly, if kerb-side bulk waste collection services were cheaper, this would lead to a reduction in fly tipping.

#### **7. More youth clubs (12)** Community safety and crime prevention

Two people submitted ideas or comments to this effect, garnering 10 likes.

It is noted that there is little for young people to do, and this can lead to anti-social behaviour born of boredom. The Hive in Birkenhead is highlighted as being a success and it is suggested that specifically West Kirby youth club should re-open.

#### **8. Retain services and leisure centres (10)** Health & wellbeing

Three people submitted ideas or comments to this effect, garnering 7 likes.

The benefits of sport and leisure on physical and mental health are highlighted as particularly important following COVID-19 restrictions. It is specifically queried as to why Woodchurch Leisure Centre is not open.

## **3.3 Staff Engagement**

There were five staff responses fed back through the channel set up within the Council. The key areas in the feedback included:

### **Ideas for cost savings:**

- Income generation in services such as cemeteries and crematorium.
- Reduce spending on buildings by reducing the Councils assets or bringing more services together to share buildings.
- Reducing the number of inappropriate jobs created in some parts of the Council. Inappropriate jobs relate to those established without consultation, ring fenced to certain individuals, lack of job evaluation and manager level pay with no management responsibility.
- To have a more inclusive curriculum and education system with support within schools and colleges utilising learning bases so a lot of money doesn't have to be spent on alternative curriculum for young people.
- Utilising the services that already exist including third sector to support instead of creating new services.
- Utilising tourists' spots to bring money in.

- Having more courses and educational opportunities in the Wirral so people don't have to travel out or move away.

**What the Council priorities should be:**

- Vulnerable Adults and Children
- Front line services e.g., bins, streetlighting, schools, social services.
- Use of the intelligence we have.
- Valuing and utilising the skills of the experienced staff we have.
- Senior management listening to ideas from staff not just once a year at budget time.
- Investing in young people, more opportunities and youth workers in the communities where young people are.

# 4.0 Demographics and Site Traffic

## 4.1 Demographics

Registration was required to engage in the online Budget Consultation. The registration form included questions regarding demographics including gender, age group, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, however not all questions in the registration form were compulsory and respondents could choose to select ‘prefer not to say’ or skip the question. The demographics results are summarised below.

Most of the respondents (87.9%) classed themselves as local residents.



Figure 13: Who are you registering as?

Are you registering as:	Count	%
A local resident	494	87.9%
An employee of Wirral Council	32	5.7%
A member of a voluntary or community organisation	21	3.7%
A local Business	7	1.2%
Other	6	1.1%
An elected Member of Wirral Council	2	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 5: Who are you registered as?

The most represented Wirral Ward is Hoylake and Meols (11.3%), the least represented Wirral Ward was Bromborough (0.2%). Most Wirral respondents were in Decile 1 or decile 6 of the IMD (13.7% each), where decile 1 is the most deprived, and decile 10 is the least deprived.

Parts of Seacombe and Bidston and St. James were most represented in decile 1. Parts of Hoylake and Meols ward was most represented in decile 6.

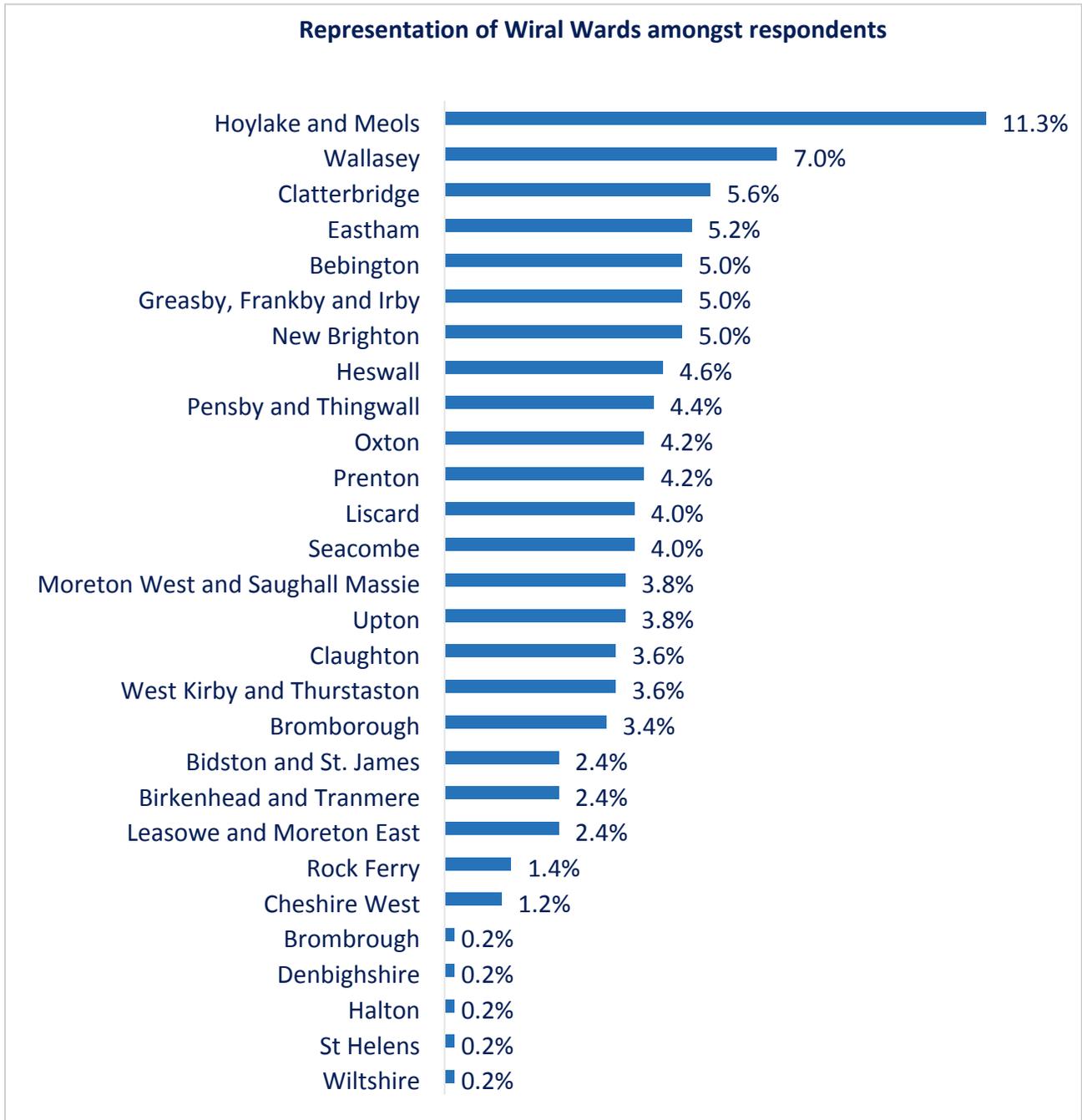


Chart 1: Respondent location by ward

Ward Name	Count	%
Hoylake and Meols	57	11.3%
Wallasey	35	7.0%
Clatterbridge	28	5.6%
Eastham	26	5.2%
Bebington	25	5.0%
Greasby, Frankby and Irby	25	5.0%
New Brighton	25	5.0%
Heswall	23	4.6%
Pensby and Thingwall	22	4.4%
Oxton	21	4.2%
Prenton	21	4.2%
Liscard	20	4.0%
Seacombe	20	4.0%
Moreton West and Saughall Massie	19	3.8%
Upton	19	3.8%
Claughton	18	3.6%
West Kirby and Thurstaston	18	3.6%
Bromborough	17	3.4%
Bidston and St. James	12	2.4%
Birkenhead and Tranmere	12	2.4%
Leasowe and Moreton East	12	2.4%
Rock Ferry	7	1.4%
Cheshire West	6	1.2%
Bromborough	1	0.2%
Denbighshire	1	0.2%
Halton	1	0.2%
St Helens	1	0.2%
Wiltshire	1	0.2%
Uncategorised	10	2.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Table 6: Respondent location by ward.*

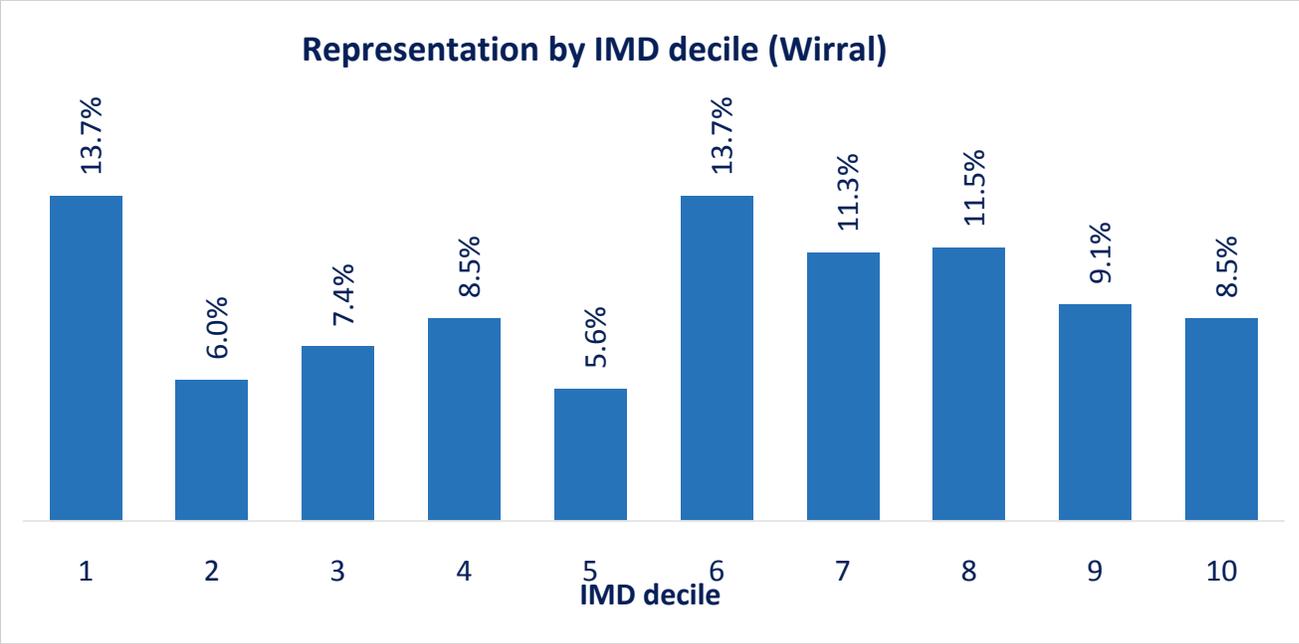


Figure 14: Representation by IMD decile

IMD Decile	Count	%
1	69	13.7%
2	30	6.0%
3	37	7.4%
4	43	8.5%
5	28	5.6%
6	69	13.7%
7	57	11.3%
8	58	11.5%
9	46	9.1%
10	43	8.5%
Outside Wirral	10	2.0%
Unavailable	13	2.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 7: Representation by IMD decile

The gender of respondents was 59.3% male, 36.4% female, with 3.5% preferring not to say and 0.8% preferring their own term.

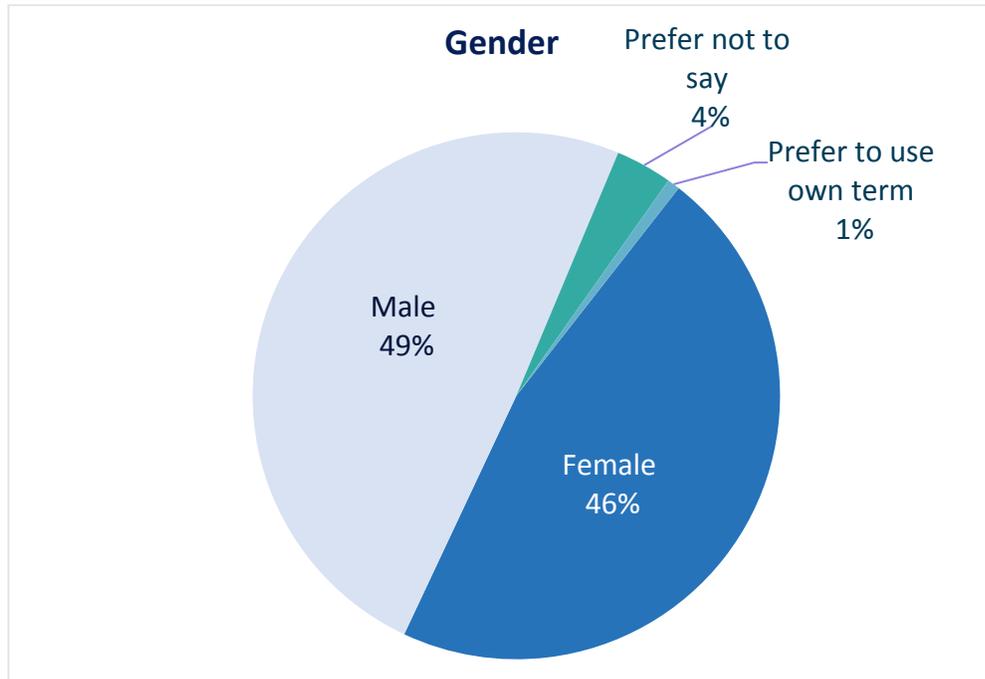


Chart 2: Gender of respondents

The age group profile is illustrated with the most common age groups were 65-74 years (24.7%), followed by 55-64 years (23.1%) and 45-54 years (20.4%). The least represented groups were 16-24 years (0.8%) and over 75s (7.6%).

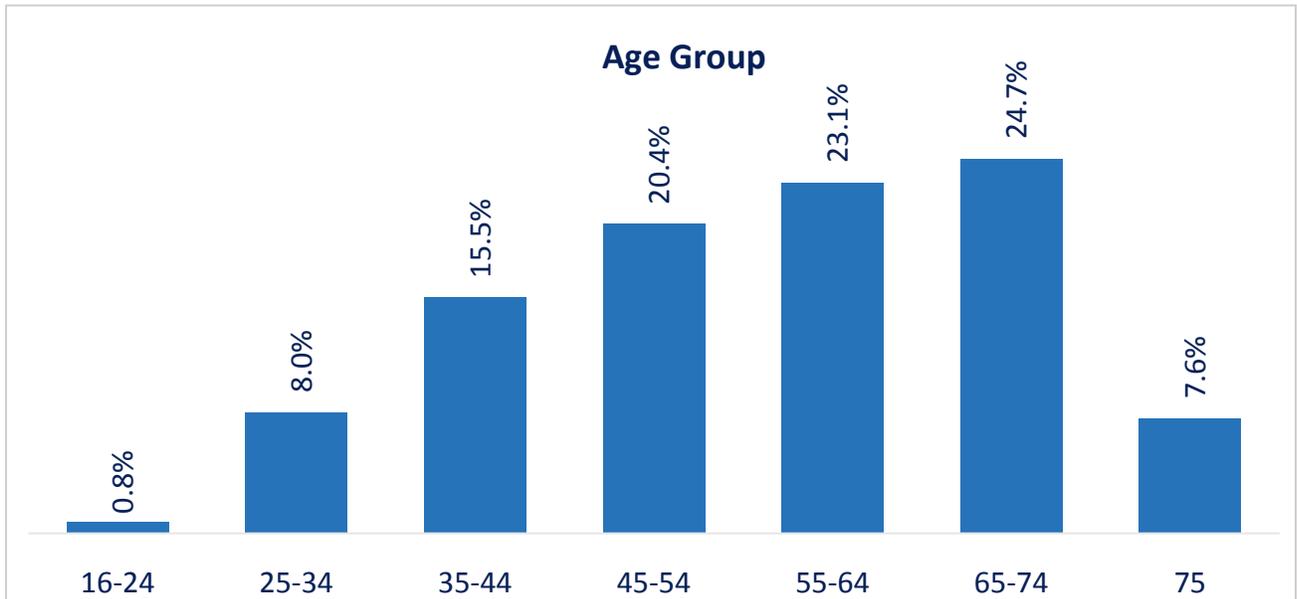


Chart 3: Age group of respondents

93.4% of respondents were white British, with only 14 (2.7%) respondents were of a non-white or other ethnicity.

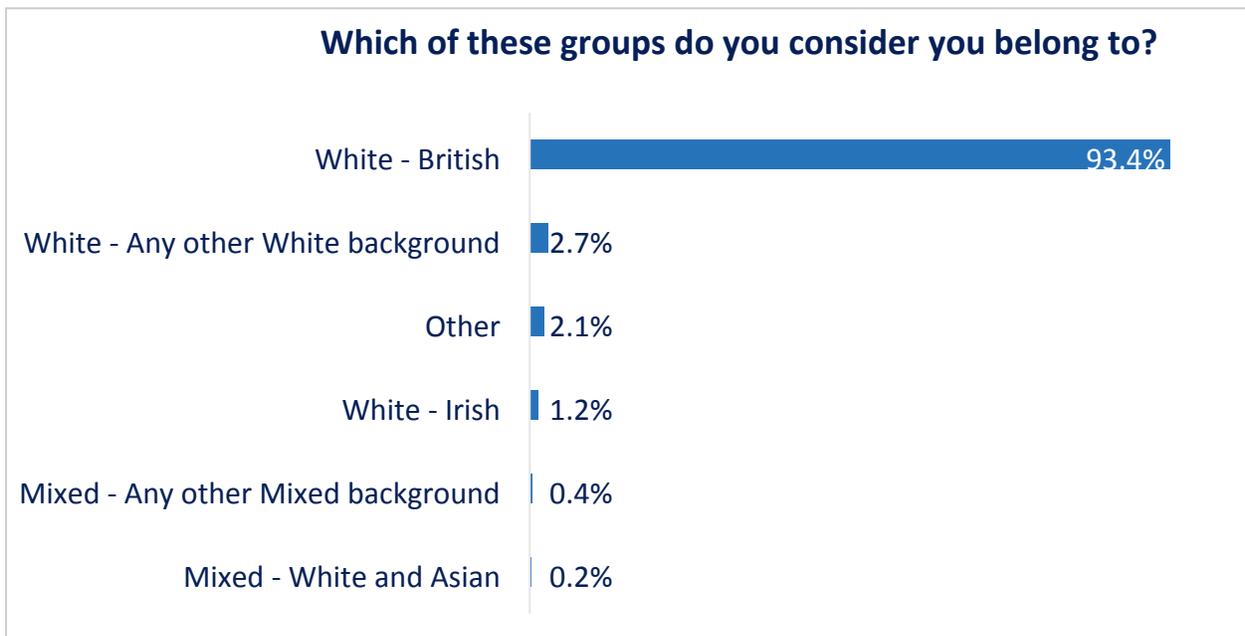


Chart 4: Ethnicity of respondents

81.6% of respondents were heterosexual, 3.6% were gay/ lesbian, 1.4% bisexual and 13.5% preferred not to say.



Chart 30: Sexual orientation of respondents

## 4.2 Have your say - Site Traffic

Reviewing the site activity, visits, and how people visit the site can be useful to evaluate if people are aware of the site, as well as to ensure engagement activities are deployed effectively, and to a wide range of different people – enhancing public engagement in the future.

Site registration allows us to confirm the number of engaged participants through the completion of the questionnaire or ideas board; 530 people completed the survey and 78 people contributed 112 ideas to the board.

2,710 visited the Budget Consultation page of the Have Your Say site, of these 182 downloaded a document, 530 people completed the survey and 78 people contributed 112 ideas to the board.

These figures cannot be viewed as definitive as they are based on site tracking through ‘cookies’ and there are a number of factors that can impact on this. These include that cookies may be disabled or deleted, individuals may access the site multiple times through different devices or different browsers. However, the figures can be used to gauge how much interest has been generated in individual projects through the rate of engaged participants.

The route that people access the site is known as the traffic source. The ‘Have your say’ portal allows analysis to be carried out on traffic source, and if they lead to engagement in the site tools such as the questionnaire. This analysis allows a greater understanding of which communication and promotional tools to use to optimise engagement.

For this project a range of traffic sources have been reviewed and summarised in the table below. Most visits to the site were direct visits (2,006 visits) where people have either pasted or typed the URL in to their browser; these generated high rate of engagement with 32.5% of visits resulting in completion of the survey and/or ideas board.

Compared to this, whilst social media accounted for the second highest volume of traffic (1,120 visits) it generated the lowest rate of engagement - 11.8%.

TRAFFIC CHANNEL	AWARE VISITS	INFORMED VISITS (%)	ENGAGED VISITS (%)
DIRECT	2,006	70.0%	32.5%
SOCIAL MEDIA	1,120	61.3%	11.8%
EMAIL	199	63.3%	15.6%
SEARCH ENGINE	135	57.0%	19.3%
REFERRALS	67	67.2%	14.9%
.GOV SITES	9	66.7%	33.3%

Table 8: Site traffic sources

# Appendix 1: Data Tables

Q1 Which council services do you value the most? data table

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
<b>Adult Social Care</b>				
One	209	4	213	40.0%
Two	98		98	18.4%
Three	88		88	16.5%
Four	54		54	10.2%
Five	79		79	14.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Children's Service</b>				
One	242	3	245	46.1%
Two	82		82	15.4%
Three	72	1	73	13.7%
Four	43		43	8.1%
Five	88		88	16.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Bins and Recycling</b>				
One	207	2	209	39.3%
Two	134	2	136	25.6%
Three	92		92	17.3%
Four	47		47	8.8%
Five	48		48	9.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Affordable Housing</b>				
One	90	3	93	17.6%
Two	101	1	102	19.3%
Three	147		147	27.8%
Four	91		91	17.2%
Five	96		96	18.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Highways and Roads</b>				
One	152		152	28.9%
Two	144	3	147	27.9%
Three	131	1	132	25.1%
Four	53		53	10.1%
Five	42		42	8.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Climate Emergency</b>				
One	154	1	155	29.2%

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
Two	87	1	88	16.6%
Three	120	2	122	23.0%
Four	75		75	14.2%
Five	90		90	17.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Community Safety (Including Antisocial Behaviour)</b>				
One	197	3	200	37.8%
Two	128	1	129	24.4%
Three	97		97	18.3%
Four	59		59	11.2%
Five	44		44	8.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Rough Sleeping and Homelessness</b>				
One	122	2	124	23.4%
Two	107	1	108	20.4%
Three	142	1	143	27.0%
Four	81		81	15.3%
Five	74		74	14.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Regeneration (Including Economic Growth and Job Creation)</b>				
One	108		108	20.5%
Two	158	2	160	30.3%
Three	124	1	125	23.7%
Four	86		86	16.3%
Five	48	1	49	9.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Public Health (Including addressing Health Inequalities)</b>				
One	146	3	149	28.3%
Two	134	1	135	25.6%
Three	119		119	22.6%
Four	74		74	14.0%
Five	50		50	9.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Environmental Health</b>				
One	128	1	129	24.5%
Two	155	3	158	30.0%
Three	140		140	26.6%
Four	60		60	11.4%
Five	39		39	7.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Leisure Services (Including Leisure Centres and Golf Courses)</b>				

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
One	139	1	140	26.6%
Two	118	2	120	22.8%
Three	126		126	23.9%
Four	65		65	12.3%
Five	75	1	76	14.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Museums</b>				
One	85	1	86	16.3%
Two	116	1	117	22.2%
Three	161	1	162	30.7%
Four	94		94	17.8%
Five	68	1	69	13.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Parks and Open Spaces</b>				
One	223	2	225	42.5%
Two	122	1	123	23.3%
Three	74		74	14.0%
Four	55		55	10.4%
Five	51	1	52	9.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Q2 Which Services do the council need to invest more resources in data table

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
<b>Adult Social Care (including Domestic Abuse, Safeguarding and Independent Living)</b>				
One	141	4	145	36.3%
Two	78		78	19.5%
Three	73		73	18.3%
Four	43		43	10.8%
Five	61		61	15.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Children's Services (Including Education, Safeguarding, Early Help and SEND)</b>				
One	153	3	156	39.2%
Two	72		72	18.1%
Three	72	1	73	18.3%
Four	37		37	9.3%
Five	60		60	15.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Bins and Recycling</b>				
One	93	2	95	25.1%
Two	80	2	82	21.7%

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
Three	118		118	31.2%
Four	48		48	12.7%
Five	35		35	9.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Affordable Housing</b>				
One	72	2	74	19.9%
Two	62	1	63	17.0%
Three	94	1	95	25.6%
Four	56		56	15.1%
Five	83		83	22.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Highways and Roads (Including Streetlights, Parking and Street Cleaning)</b>				
One	108	3	111	28.5%
Two	89	1	90	23.1%
Three	106		106	27.2%
Four	45		45	11.6%
Five	37		37	9.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Climate Emergency</b>				
One	113	1	114	29.8%
Two	61	1	62	16.2%
Three	80	2	82	21.4%
Four	52		52	13.6%
Five	73		73	19.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Community Safety (Including Antisocial Behaviour)</b>				
One	131	3	134	34.8%
Two	95	1	96	24.9%
Three	90		90	23.4%
Four	38		38	9.9%
Five	27		27	7.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Rough Sleeping and Homelessness</b>				
One	93	3	96	25.5%
Two	75		75	19.9%
Three	99	1	100	26.6%
Four	35		35	9.3%
Five	70		70	18.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Regeneration (Including Economic Growth and Job Creation)</b>				
One	91		91	23.9%

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
Two	84	2	86	22.6%
Three	97	1	98	25.8%
Four	51		51	13.4%
Five	53	1	54	14.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Public Health (Including addressing Health Inequalities)</b>				
One	95	3	98	26.1%
Two	78	1	79	21.0%
Three	106		106	28.2%
Four	49		49	13.0%
Five	44		44	11.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Environmental Health</b>				
One	86	1	87	23.2%
Two	93	3	96	25.6%
Three	112		112	29.9%
Four	46		46	12.3%
Five	34		34	9.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Leisure Services (Including Leisure Centres and Golf Courses)</b>				
One	107	1	108	28.1%
Two	83	2	85	22.1%
Three	74		74	19.2%
Four	46		46	11.9%
Five	71	1	72	18.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Museums</b>				
One	67	1	68	18.3%
Two	72	2	74	19.9%
Three	113		113	30.4%
Four	49		49	13.2%
Five	67	1	68	18.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Parks and Open Spaces</b>				
One	153	2	155	39.0%
Two	87	1	88	22.2%
Three	82		82	20.7%
Four	28		28	7.1%
Five	43	1	44	11.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Q3 How important are these priorities? - data table

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
<b>A Sustainable Environment – e.g., tackling climate crisis</b>				
One	165	2	167	31.3%
Two	104	1	105	19.7%
Three	129	1	130	24.4%
Four	61		61	11.4%
Five	70		70	13.1%
Total	529	4	533	100.0%
<b>Brighter Futures – e.g., helping children and families</b>				
One	163	3	166	31.4%
Two	146		146	27.7%
Three	97	1	98	18.6%
Four	61		61	11.6%
Five	57		57	10.8%
Total	524	4	528	100.0%
<b>An Inclusive Economy – e.g., supporting jobs and businesses</b>				
One	106	2	108	20.4%
Two	165	2	167	31.5%
Three	149		149	28.1%
Four	62		62	11.7%
Five	44		44	8.3%
Total	526	4	530	100.0%
<b>Safe and Pleasant Communities – e.g., being safe where we live</b>				
One	241	3	244	46.2%
Two	131	1	132	25.0%
Three	69		69	13.1%
Four	32		32	6.1%
Five	51		51	9.7%
Total	524	4	528	100.0%
<b>Active and Healthy Lives – e.g., helping people live independently</b>				
One	166	3	169	31.8%
Two	136	1	137	25.8%
Three	120		120	22.6%
Four	53		53	10.0%
Five	52		52	9.8%
Total	527	4	531	100.0%

#### Q4 Sustainable Environment data table

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
<b>Continue to respond to the climate emergency</b>				
One	174	1	175	33.0%
Two	105	1	106	20.0%
Three	118	1	119	22.5%
Four	51		51	9.6%
Five	79		79	14.9%
Total	527	3	530	100.0%
<b>Protection of our local environment</b>				
One	220	1	221	41.8%
Two	140	2	142	26.8%
Three	83		83	15.7%
Four	42		42	7.9%
Five	41		41	7.8%
Total	526	3	529	100.0%
<b>Keep working to improve street cleanliness</b>				
One	169	2	171	32.5%
Two	166	1	167	31.7%
Three	105		105	20.0%
Four	50		50	9.5%
Five	33		33	6.3%
Total	523	3	526	100.0%
<b>Support increased use of active travel (walking and cycling) networks</b>				
One	128	1	129	24.3%
Two	117	1	118	22.3%
Three	137	1	138	26.0%
Four	75		75	14.2%
Five	70		70	13.2%
Total	527	3	530	100.0%

### Q5 Stronger & brighter futures data table

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
<b>Continue to ensure our children and young people become the best adults they can be</b>				
One	235	1	236	45.0%
Two	101	1	102	19.5%
Three	82	1	83	15.8%
Four	39		39	7.4%
Five	64		64	12.2%
Total	521	3	524	100.0%
<b>Ensure our children and young people have equal access to educational opportunities</b>				
One	245	2	247	47.0%
Two	104	1	105	20.0%
Three	72		72	13.7%
Four	34		34	6.5%
Five	67		67	12.8%
Total	522	3	525	100.0%
<b>Take every opportunity to raise the aspirations of all our children and young people</b>				
One	229	2	231	44.2%
Two	105	1	106	20.3%
Three	89		89	17.0%
Four	36		36	6.9%
Five	61		61	11.7%
Total	520	3	523	100.0%

## Q6 Inclusive Economy data table

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
<b>Creating community wealth and social value</b>				
One	124	1	125	23.9%
Two	156	2	158	30.2%
Three	128		128	24.4%
Four	65		65	12.4%
Five	48		48	9.2%
Total	521	3	524	100.0%
<b>Supporting local businesses and job creation</b>				
One	150	1	151	28.7%
Two	157	2	159	30.2%
Three	118		118	22.4%
Four	61		61	11.6%
Five	37		37	7.0%
Total	523	3	526	100.0%
<b>Developing quality, affordable sustainable homes</b>				
One	118	2	120	22.9%
Two	106	1	107	20.4%
Three	142		142	27.0%
Four	84		84	16.0%
Five	72		72	13.7%
Total	522	3	525	100.0%
<b>Delivering regeneration, transport, and growth ambitions</b>				
One	133	1	134	25.4%
Two	141	2	143	27.1%
Three	149		149	28.3%
Four	56		56	10.6%
Five	45		45	8.5%
Total	524	3	527	100.0%

### Q7 Safe & Pleasant Communities data table

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
<b>Working with partner agencies to reduce crime and tackle anti-social behaviour</b>				
One	275	2	277	52.3%
Two	108	1	109	20.6%
Three	59		59	11.1%
Four	34		34	6.4%
Five	51		51	9.6%
Total	527	3	530	100.0%
<b>Tackling rough sleeping and homelessness</b>				
One	152	2	154	29.2%
Two	119		119	22.5%
Three	124	1	125	23.7%
Four	65		65	12.3%
Five	65		65	12.3%
Total	525	3	528	100.0%
<b>Delivering everyday neighbourhoods services to the best possible standard</b>				
One	199	1	200	38.0%
Two	155	2	157	29.8%
Three	92		92	17.5%
Four	34		34	6.5%
Five	44		44	8.3%
Total	524	3	527	100.0%

## Q8 Active and Healthy Lives data table

Importance	Online responses	Paper responses	Total responses	Percent
<b>Working collaboratively with our partner agencies to improve mental wellbeing</b>				
One	179	3	182	34.6%
Two	144	1	145	27.6%
Three	97		97	18.4%
Four	44		44	8.4%
Five	62		62	11.8%
Total	526		526	100.0%
<b>Encouragement and help with active living</b>				
One	137	2	139	26.3%
Two	162	1	163	30.8%
Three	127		127	24.0%
Four	57	1	58	11.0%
Five	42		42	7.9%
Total	525	4	529	100.0%
<b>Supporting people to live independently</b>				
One	158	3	161	30.5%
Two	150	1	151	28.6%
Three	123		123	23.3%
Four	50		50	9.5%
Five	43		43	8.1%
Total	524	4	528	100.0%
<b>Deliver Public Health services to help people live healthy lifestyles</b>				
One	148	4	152	28.7%
Two	152		152	28.7%
Three	120		120	22.6%
Four	67		67	12.6%
Five	39		39	7.4%
Total	526	4	530	100.0%
<b>Tackle health inequalities</b>				
One	161	4	165	31.4%
Two	116		116	22.1%
Three	126		126	24.0%
Four	68		68	12.9%
Five	51		51	9.7%
Total	522	4	526	100.0%



## **ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

**Thursday 22 January 2021**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which are within the remit of the Committee. It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of key decisions, 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, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

Members are invited to note and comment on the proposed Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2021/22 municipal year.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

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

- 1.1 To ensure Members of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 A number of workplan formats were explored, with the current framework open to amendment to match the requirements of the Committee.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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

- 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 Council Terms of Reference

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee has responsibility for parks and open spaces, highways management and infrastructure, coastal protection and flood defence and environment and waste matters. It is the Committee that leads on behalf of the Council in responding to and matters concerning the Climate Emergency.

The Committee is charged by full Council to undertake responsibility for the Council's role and functions:

- (a) in co-ordinating the response to cross-cutting sustainability issues such as reducing carbon emissions, climate change response, improving resource efficiency and developing sustainable energy;
- (b) in relation to all highways matters and as highway authority, street authority, bridge authority, including but not limited to public open spaces, street furniture on the highway and open spaces or parts of open spaces immediately adjacent to the highway;
- (c) in relation to traffic management and transport and as traffic authority, including but not limited to public passenger transport and the co-ordination of transport for service users, traffic orders and rights of way issues;

- (d) in relation to parking, including on and off-street parking and civil parking enforcement;
- (e) in respect of parks, open spaces, countryside management, allotments, playgrounds and cemeteries, including arboricultural, gardening and warden services;
- (f) in relation to the management of authorised and unauthorised sites and encampments, this to include all activities necessary or incidental to the Council's performance of its responsibilities in relation to Gypsies, Roma and Travellers;
- (g) in relation to waste and as waste collection authority, litter authority, including but not limited to dealing with litter, street cleansing, abandoned vehicles and dog fouling, and the Council's relationship with Merseyside Recycling & Waste Authority (MRWA) as the joint waste disposal authority;
- (h) as coast protection authority and lead local flood authority;
- (i) in respect of emergency planning and community resilience (infrastructure and contract services);
- (j) providing a view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management in relation to the Committee's functions; and undertaking the development and implementation of policy in relation to the Committee's functions, incorporating the assessment of outcomes, review of effectiveness and formulation of recommendations to the Council, partners and other bodies, which shall include any decision relating to the above functions.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This report is for information and planning purposes only, therefore there are no direct financial implication arising. However, there may be financial implications arising as a result of work programme items.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, there may be legal implications arising as a result of work programme items.

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

- 6.1 There are no direct implications to staffing, ICT or Assets.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 The Committee's ability to undertake its responsibility to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, make decisions on policies, co-ordinate spend, and maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and

budgets may be compromised if it does not have the opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

## 8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Not applicable

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

## 10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

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

## 11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct implications as a result of this report.

### REPORT AUTHOR:

**Anna Perrett:** Senior Democratic Services Officer  
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email: [annaperret@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:annaperret@wirral.gov.uk)

**APPENDICES Appendix 1:** Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee Work Plan

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

<http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13641&path=0>

### SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years) Council Meeting Date

Council Meeting	Date
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2020
	3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2021
	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2021



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## ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

### WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

Contact Officer/s: Mike Jones  
Anna Perrett

### JANUARY AGENDA FOR ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

Item	Key Decision	Lead Departmental Officer
Road Safety Update	No	Simon Fox
Pollinators Update	Yes	Mike Cockburn
Allotment Strategy	No	Mike Cockburn
Tree Strategy	No	Mike Cockburn
2022/23 Budget Update	No	Shaer Halewood
Work Programme Update	No	Anna Perrett

**KEY DECISIONS – On forward plan to be scheduled**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Key Decision Yes/ No</b>	<b>Lead Departmental Officer</b>	<b>Wirral Plan Priority</b>
Highway 'A' contracts tender acceptance	Yes	Simon Fox	Sustainable Environment
Combined Authority Transport Plan Programme 2022/23	Yes	Simon Fox	Sustainable Environment
Highways Structural Maintenance Programme 2022/23	Yes	Simon Fox	Sustainable Environment
West Kirby Flood alleviation	Yes	Colin Clayton/Neil Thomas	Sustainable Environment
Wallasey Embankment Reinforcement	Yes	Colin Clayton/Neil Thomas	Sustainable Environment
Acceptance of Tenders for Civil and Highways Consultancy Support 2021/23	Yes	Simon Fox	Sustainable Environment
Tender Acceptance and Design Approval of Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) Green Travel Corridor Phase 5 - Beaufort Road / Wallasey Bridge Road Key	Yes	Simon Fox	Sustainable Environment

Winter Maintenance Plan 2021/22	Yes	Simon Fox	Sustainable Environment
Waste Strategy	Yes	Mike Cockburn	Sustainable Environment

#### ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer
Marine Lake Update	2021/22	Colin Clayton
Pollinators update	Jan 2022	Colin Clayton
Flooding Update	2021/22	Neil Thomas

#### STANDING ITEMS AND MONITORING REPORTS

Item	Reporting Frequency	Lead Departmental Officer
Budget Monitoring	Every Cycle	Sarah Cox
Performance dashboard	Commencing Oct 2022	Nicki Butterworth
Carbon Budget Performance Report	Annually in June	Andrew Snow

#### WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

Item	Format	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
<b>Working Groups/ Sub Committees</b>				
Car Parking Charges	Working Group	Nov 2020	Simon Fox	Completed
Road Safety	Working Group	Jan-Feb 2021	Simon Fox	Complete
Hoylake Beach	Working Group	Feb 2021	Colin Clayton/Neil Thomas	Completed
Climate Emergency	Working Group	December 2020	Mike Cockburn	Completed
Active Travel	Working group	December 2021	Julie Barnes	Ongoing
Roadside Maintenance Working group	Working Group	Early 2022	Mike Cockburn	TBC
Tree Maintenance Working Group	Working group	Early 2022	Mike Cockburn	TBC

<b>Task and Finish work</b>				
Allotment provision Task & Finish	Workshop and Report	October 2020	Alex Davidson	Complete
<b>Referral From Council</b>				
Motion - Protecting Residents from Flood Risks	TBC			
Motion – Equal Pavement Pledge	TBC			