



Policy and Resources Committee

Date: Wednesday, 28 July 2021

Time: 6.00 p.m.

Venue: Floral Pavilion, New Brighton

Members of the public are encouraged to view the meeting via the webcast, (see below) but for anyone who would like to attend in person, please contact the box office at the Floral Pavilion by telephone on 0151 666 0000, in advance of the meeting. All those attending will be asked to wear a face covering (unless exempt) and are encouraged to take a Lateral Flow Test before attending. You should not attend if you have tested positive for Coronavirus or if you have any symptoms of Coronavirus.

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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 - 12)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June, 2021.

5. **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

5a. **Public Questions**

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Friday, 23 July, 2021 to the Council's Monitoring Officer

(committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10.

For more information on how your personal information will be used, please see this link:

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5b. Statements and Petitions

Notice of representations to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Friday, 23 July, 2021 to the Council's Monitoring Officer (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 in advance of the meeting.

5c. 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. THE WIRRAL PLAN 2021-2026 (Pages 13 - 34)**
- 7. COMMUNITY BONDS (Pages 35 - 42)**

SECTION B - BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- 8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21 (Pages 43 - 58)**

SECTION C - WORK PROGRAMME / OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

- 9. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE (Pages 59 - 70)**

SECTION D - REFERRALS AND SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

- 10. REFERRAL FROM CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE - PREVENTION POLICY (Pages 71 - 118)**

- 11. REFERRAL FROM ECONOMY REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - WIRRAL GROWTH COMPANY: BIRKENHEAD PHASE 1 FINAL SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (Pages 119 - 134)**
- 12. MINUTES OF THE SHAREHOLDER BOARD (Pages 135 - 136)**
- 13. MINUTES OF THE SENIOR OFFICER AND APPOINTMENTS STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE (Pages 137 - 140)**
- 14. EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The following item contains exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

- 15. WIRRAL GROWTH COMPANY: BIRKENHEAD PHASE 1 FINAL SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN - EXEMPT APPENDICES (Pages 141 - 336)**

Exempt appendices to agenda item 11.

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 30 June 2021

Present: Councillor J Williamson (Chair)

Councillors	T Anderson	EA Grey
	H Cameron	T Jones
	W Clements	J McManus
	P Cleary	Y Nolan
	P Gilchrist	J Robinson
	JE Green	L Rennie

Deputies: Councillors K Greaney (In place of P Stuart)
M McLaughlin (In place of S Hayes)

16 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the webcast.

17 APOLOGIES

The Chair confirmed that Councillor Paul Stuart had sent his apologies and that Councillor Karl Greaney was deputising for him.

Councillor Moira McLaughlin confirmed the apologies of Councillor Steve Hayes and that she was deputising for him.

18 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.

Councillor Moira McLaughlin declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 6, 'Homeworking Allowance', due to two close family members working for the Council, and confirmed that she would leave the meeting whilst the item was under discussion.

19 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 June, 2021, be approved and adopted as a correct record.

20 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

The Chair reported that no questions from either members of the public or Members had been submitted. Nor were there any statements or petitions to receive.

21 **HOMEWORKING ALLOWANCE**

Having previously declared a prejudicial interest, Councillor Moira McLaughlin vacated the room during consideration of this item (minute 18 refers).

Tony Williams, Assistant Director: HR and Organisational Development, introduced a report which set out the issues and implications relating to the implementation of a homeworking allowance and which also set out the detail and eligibility criteria should the Policy and Resources Committee agree to implement an allowance.

The Council had moved to a hybrid working model where significant numbers of staff would have the option to work at home regularly combined with some attendance at offices and site visits as required.

The Trade Unions had requested that the Council formally consider the implementation of a homeworking allowance for staff. It was appropriate that this request was considered by the Policy and Resources Committee.

There was no obligation for the Council as an employer to pay a homeworking allowance or meet any costs of homeworking that might be incurred by employees. As such, senior officers' position had been to maintain the position currently adopted, which was to signpost employees to apply to claim tax relief from HMRC. There was no cost to the Council for this and all employees could apply. Additionally, any staff who had concerns about the cost of homeworking could choose to work from a Council building.

An appendix to the report set out a proposed homeworking allowance policy, addressing the varying complexities in introducing such an allowance, including eligibility criteria.

The cost to the Council was difficult to predict precisely but for modelling purposes, a calculation based on 50% of employees at Band H or below who could work at home, claiming 3 days a week homeworking allowance for 46 weeks a year, would cost £80k per annum. This equated to around £165 per annum per employee.

Responding to comments from Members, Tony Williams stated that staff had not been surveyed as to the take up of the HMRC allowance and negotiations were still ongoing between employers and Trades Unions with regard to the current pay claim. The Council was able to reach local agreements which

might differ from what was agreed nationally and this wouldn't fall foul of any NJC national bargaining arrangements. There were a mix of local and national terms and conditions currently in place.

Members expressed opposing views as to whether an allowance should be paid or not. Some Members suggesting that the proposed allowance not be paid but that this could be reviewed after national pay negotiations had been resolved.

On a motion by Councillor Yvonne Nolan, seconded by Councillor Julie McManus, it was –

Resolved (8:6) – That a homeworking allowance be paid on the basis of the draft policy and eligibility criteria detailed in the report and appendix, subject to a review at a later date after national pay negotiations had been resolved.

22 **APPOINTMENT TO MERSEY FOREST STEERING GROUP 2021/22**

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced a report which requested the Committee to appoint a representative of the Council to serve on the Mersey Forest Steering Group in 2021/2022.

Membership of the Mersey Forest would support the Council to deliver the requirements of the Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy. An expectation of the Council's Mersey Forest membership was to be represented and contribute to the Steering Group's work.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Yvonne Nolan, it was -

Resolved – That Councillor Elizabeth Grey be appointed as the elected member to represent the Council on the Mersey Forest Steering Group.

23 **REVENUE OUTTURN FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2020-21**

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources introduced a report which provided a summary of the year-end revenue position for the 2020/21 financial year as at the end of March 2021. As part of the budget monitoring cycle, the financial position of the Council had been reported to Members quarterly, the first from April to June 2020 was reported to the former Cabinet. The following three reports, from July to September 2020; October to December 2020 and this report, to the Policy and Resources Committee.

At the end of the year, the position had improved since the last report to committee with an adverse variance of £6.525m reported as the final position and the value that the Council would borrow under the Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) (also known as the capitalisation directive) approval. As the

lockdown restrictions started to relax, there was an opportunity for the Council to take stock and review whether the assumptions made during the year for demand and expenditure commitments had come to fruition. As nothing like this had been experienced before, there was no real way to accurately predict the value of funding and support required so best estimates had been used and had been firmed up as more of the situation became known.

Although many of the savings agreed at Budget Council in March 2020 had still not been achieved, offsetting alternative savings had been available as a result of the way the Council had been working under lockdown restrictions. With the majority of Council buildings remaining closed and the majority of staff working at home, savings had been made from utilities costs, staff mileage and supplies and services costs such as printing, stationery and face to face training events.

She reported that in total, in 2020/21, £205m funding had been provided to Wirral by the Government to support the emergency pandemic. An additional £10m of Tranche 5 funding had been notified as being received in 2021/22 which had been fully committed to Covid-19 pressures already identified in 2021/22. The year-end position represented an adverse variance of £6.525m which would be the subject of borrowing under EFS approval from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). It must be noted that this was a draft position as this was subject to External Audit sign-off of the accounts by the Council's auditor, Grant Thornton.

In response to comments from Members, Shaer Halewood explained the use of the term 'cross cutting initiatives' in the report, which were in respect of unachieved savings not able to be allocated across directorates due to the unprecedented Covid situation and the Council's response. She assured the Committee that there had been no double counting in respect of any of these savings. The term would not show again in the report on the 2021/22 financial year.

Members expressed their views about the various funding streams which the Government had provided to Wirral during the pandemic.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Yvonne Nolan, it was –

A. Resolved – That this Committee,

- (1) agrees that the draft, unaudited outturn variance for 2020/21 is £6.525m as compared to the end of December forecast outturn variance of £8.9m;**
- (2) agrees that following the approval of 'not exceeding £9m' Exceptional Financial Support from MHCLG that the outturn of £6.525m is capitalised in line with the relevant guidance;**

- (3) notes the impact of funding and expenditure as a direct consequence of Covid-19, including the additional funding sources that have been received for 2020/21;**
- (4) notes the impact of funding and expenditure as a direct consequence of Covid-19, including the additional funding sources which have been identified, but as yet, not received.**

B. RECOMMENDED - To Council,

- (5) the 2020/21 budget of £46.574m in relation to Covid-19 funding for Council use and note the additional £22.963m of funds that is to be made available to the Council for onward relay to other organisations as passported funding. This recommendation follows on from the recommendation made by Policy & Resources Committee on 17th February 2021, following the recent notification of additional funding;**
- (6) that the debts in excess of £10,000 included within Appendix 2 be approved for write off against the Provision for Bad Debts.**

24 CAPITAL OUTTURN FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/21

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, introduced a report which detailed the Capital Out-turn for 2020/21, the resources used to fund the Programme and provided a review of the progress of the delivery of the agreed Capital Programme. The capital expenditure for the year amounted to £46.465m. This was funded from borrowing of £25.182m, Capital Grants of £20.311m, capital receipts of £0.784 m and other revenue/reserve contributions of £0.188m.

As a result of the £25.182m borrowed to finance the Capital Programme in 2020/21, the General Fund would be charged with its first repayment via the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) in 2021/22 of £0.815m. This would bring the total MRP charge for 2021/22 to £4.462m for borrowing associated with delivering the Capital Programme.

The re-profiling of schemes from 2020/21 to 2021/22 had seen the funding similarly re-profiled. This included the planned borrowing which had been deferred and had contributed towards the cost reductions in Treasury Management activities within the revenue budget. A permanent saving only occurred if schemes ceased, otherwise the full budget would be required in 2021/22 when the re-profiled expenditure was incurred. It must be noted too that this was a draft position as this was subject to External Audit sign-off of the accounts by the Council's auditor, Grant Thornton.

In response to Members' comments, Shaer Halewood stated that the appendices to the report listed all the capital programme schemes as approved at the start of the year, and that the quarter 1 financial monitoring report to come before committees in September would list where schemes were up to. She agreed that the way this was presented would be looked at as to how best the information could be shared with Members and to inform on the achievability of schemes. With regard to those schemes listed as proposed virements she agreed to provide a written response listing those which were still going ahead, where there had been slippage and those which were not, or which had been underspent. She also agreed to provide an update on proposed work at Riverside Primary School, Wallasey.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Yvonne Nolan, it was –

RECOMMENDED – To Council,

- (1) that the additional year end re-profiling of £27.4m from 2020/21 to 2021/22 be noted;**
- (2) that the financing of the Programme for 2020/21 be noted;**
- (3) the approval of the virements referred to in Appendix 3 of the report;**
- (4) that the Programme for 2021/22 and beyond be kept under review to ensure it is realistic, deliverable and affordable.**

25 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance, introduced a report which advised how this Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme.

The work programme would be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. The report provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year and was attached as an appendix to the report.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Tony Jones, it was -

Resolved – That the Policy & Resources Committee work programme for the 2021/22 municipal year, be agreed.

26 **PROPOSED REMOVAL OF DELEGATION**

Prior to consideration of the next item, Councillor Tom Anderson raised a matter for proposed removal of delegation, in accordance with Article 7.3 of the Constitution, in respect of the decision taken on agenda item 6, 'Homeworking Allowance' (minute 21 refers).

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance, confirmed that removal from delegation would require 40% of those Members present and voting to vote in favour of such removal, in this case being 6 Members. The matter would then be referred to a meeting of the full Council for consideration, if successful.

A vote was then taken, with 5 Members voting in favour of removing the Committee's delegated authority on the Homeworking Allowance decision. As there were insufficient votes to remove the committee's delegation, the matter was not referred to the Council.

27 **ACTIVE TRAVEL FUNDING - TRANCHE 1, TRANCHE 2 AND LOCAL AUTHORITY CAPABILITY FUNDING**

Alan Evans, Director of Regeneration and Place, introduced a report on the Economy Regeneration and Development Committee's recommendations, from its meeting on 4 March, in respect to the Active Travel Funding – Tranche 1, Tranche 2 and Local Authority Capability Funding.

A supplement to the agenda had been circulated with a correction to the recommendations made by the Committee, which numbered four and not three.

On 9 May 2020 the Secretary of State, Grant Shapps, had announced a £250 million Emergency Active Travel Fund. For Tranche 1 of the funding, and in line with DfT guidance, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority had identified the need to develop a programme of measures to reduce the dependency on car-based journeys and through segregation provide increased confidence to people wishing to cycle.

The matter was being referred to Policy & Resources Committee because in accordance with the Council's Constitution any amendment to the Capital Programme requested by a Committee or officer in excess of £100,000 was reserved to Policy and Resources Committee.

The Economy Regeneration and Development Committee was recommending authorisation of the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Resources, to approve the grant funding allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for the Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 and 2 Programmes and the Local Authority Active Travel Capability Fund Programme.

In response to a Member's comment, Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance, confirmed that in taking account of the Economy Regeneration and Development Committee's recommendations, the Policy and Resources Committee should not consider itself bound by that Committee's recommendations or otherwise fetter its discretion and could come to its own decision.

Concern was expressed by a number of Members on the lack of clarity over the responsibilities and terms of reference of both the Economy Regeneration and Development and Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committees with regard to Active Travel schemes. Members also suggested other areas where cross cutting responsibilities across committees could be looked at by the Constitution and Standards Committee, which could also be causing some confusion.

It was moved by Councillor Tom Anderson and seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, that –

“The recommendations be referred back to the Economy Regeneration and Development Committee with a view to adding walking schemes in to Active Travel programmes for the benefit of the Borough.”

The motion was put and lost (5:10)

On a motion by Councillor Elizabeth Grey, seconded by Councillor Tony Jones, it was -

Resolved (unanimously) – That,

- (1) the Director of Regeneration and Place be authorised to accept the grant funding of £1,153,380 allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for the Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 and 2 Programmes and accept the Local Authority Active Travel Capability Fund Programme indicative allocation of £286,000;**
- (2) the proposed Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 and 2 Programmes and the Active Travel Capability Fund Programme (“the Programmes”) as set out in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report, be approved;**
- (3) the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Chairs and Spokespersons of the Economy, Regeneration and Development and the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committees, be authorised to amend the Programmes if required having due regard to any issues that may arise during design or consultation stages of projects;**

- (4) Committee notes that the above authority and approvals are subject to the schemes at the Crescent, and proposed cycle way through Wallasey and New Brighton, being deferred until a consultation process has taken place;**
- (5) Committee notes the significant overlap between the terms of reference of the Economy Regeneration and Development Committee and the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee and requests that these committees work jointly with Economy Regeneration and Development Committee leading on active travel issues which affect major regeneration master plan projects and the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee to lead on all other transport, active travel and road safety strategy and schemes. Officers are asked to liaise with the Chairs of both committees on all transport planning to ensure that the work programmes are always agreed;**
- (6) Committee asks that the Constitution and Standards Committee consider whether existing provision within the Council's Constitution with respect to the planning for and implementation of active travel schemes are sufficiently clear and appropriate and if necessary to make recommendations to Council on any necessary changes to the Constitution.**

28 COVID SAFE OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

The Chair had agreed to consideration of this item as a matter of urgent business by reason of the special circumstances of the changing picture of public health advice concerning the spread of the Delta variant of Covid-19.

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance, introduced a report in respect of the expected lifting of coronavirus restrictions in line with the Government's roadmap and that the legal requirements on non-opening of venues to the public would come to an end. This was in the context of a rapidly changing and worsening of case numbers as the Delta variant of Covid-19 spread.

In addition to compliance with likely changing Government and public health guidance, additional requirements were likely to be placed upon the Council in terms of deployment of resources to respond to public health events, business continuity and commerciality that would have a direct and immediate effect on the operation of Council venues and facilities.

Support was therefore sought in relation to continued communication of public health advice and to speedy decision making in response to any such requirements.

With regard to the proposals in the report, Philip McCourt highlighted the following generic criteria which would support officers taking individual decisions in relation to venues, as follows:

- A. Covid-19 Guidance Compliance (health and safety);
- B. Ability to function and resource availability (business continuity); and/or
- C. Financial considerations (investment and commerciality).

Julie Webster, Director of Public Health gave an update to the committee on the current numbers of cases of COVID-19 in the Borough, with 229 cases recorded in one day on 28 June, a substantial increase since 17 May. At the beginning of May cases were 5 or 6 per day. The rise in case numbers was, however, fortunately not this time translating into a significant rise in hospitalisations. She also gave an update with regard to the number of school pupils self-isolating, 3,300, currently, approximately 6% of the schools population and 250 schools staff, approximately 5% of all school staff.

In response to comments from Members, Julie Webster confirmed the breakdown in respect of schools numbers for primary and secondary pupils and that with regard to free school meals, this should be notified to those families with children self-isolating through the COVID support hub and she would follow this up.

Responding to further comment, Philip McCourt stated that with revised guidance expected shortly, decisions would then be taken with regard to any expenditure required on facilities to reopen. If social distancing meant that a venue wouldn't be economic to open then discussions could be held with the Director of Resources and colleagues at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government about how funding could be used and reprioritised.

The Chair commented upon the need not to allow commercial considerations to override any public health advice.

On a motion by Councillor Yvonne Nolan, seconded by the Chair it was -

Resolved – That,

- (1) Committee endorse authority for the Chief Executive or a Director to suspend, vary or cease operation of a Council venue or facilities as a response to Coronavirus related events, including compliance with Government and public health advice, prioritisation of resource availability and economic impact.**

- (2) Where there is to be a variation proposed as a result of prioritisation or economic considerations then any decision shall be in consultation with the Chair and Group Leaders.**
- (3) That this decision be subject to review and an update report be submitted to the Committee's meeting of 1st December, 2021 at the latest, failing which the decision shall cease to be of effect.**

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 28th July, 2021

REPORT TITLE:	THE WIRRAL PLAN 2021-2026
REPORT OF:	PAUL SATOOR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

REPORT SUMMARY

This report presents The Wirral Plan 2021-26. This is the overarching plan to make Wirral a great place to live, work and prosper. The Plan sets out the vision and key priorities for the Borough over a 5-year period from 2021 to 2026.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the contents of the Wirral Plan set out in Appendix 1 to this report and refer to Full Council in September; and
2. Agree that further engagement and discussion with relevant Committees takes place to shape the underpinning delivery plans and work programmes required to implement the Wirral Plan; and
3. That P&R approve the approach for the development of delivery planning and corporate change programme to support implementation.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Wirral Plan is a key policy document for the Borough, and drives the high level priorities, ambition, and key deliverables for the organisation. The Plan reflects what people have told us is important to them and will be used to help all staff understand their role in helping to deliver our corporate priorities.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Wirral Plan is a key policy document and is vital for the Council's planning and development in the coming years. No other options were therefore considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In October 2019, The Wirral Plan 2025 received cross party support and was approval by Full Council. At that time, the Plan was designed to take full account of one year of activity in 2020 as well as shaping some well-informed long-term objectives.
- 3.2 However, the social, economic, and political landscape in the borough has significantly changed during 2020. There is no doubt that COVID-19 is having a significant impact on Wirral residents and businesses and will continue to do so for the coming months. We have therefore reviewed the 2025 Plan to make sense of the radically changed world that we find ourselves in.
- 3.3 High level thematic priorities remain broadly the right ones, but there are some immediate, short term actions that must be delivered in parallel with longer term aspirations and ambitions. Detailed delivery actions will be determined through further engagement and discussion with relevant Committees and with partner agencies.
- 3.4 The refreshed Wirral Plan 2021-26 has been developed to build on the five thematic priorities from the previous Plan. The thematic priorities are high level, focus on changes for whole population groups, and can only be delivered by working with partners.
- 3.5 The vision for the Wirral Plan 2021-26 is:
Equity for People and Place: To create equity for people and place and opportunities for all to secure the best possible future for our residents, communities and businesses.
- 3.6 The thematic priorities for the Wirral Plan 2021-26 are:
- A thriving and inclusive economy, creating jobs and opportunities for all.
 - A clean-energy, sustainable borough, leading the way in tackling the environment crisis.
 - Brighter futures for all regardless of their background.
 - Safe and pleasant communities that our residents are proud of.
 - Healthy and active lives for all, with the right care, at the right time.

- 3.7 The Plan is built on a detailed evidence base including the Strategic Needs Assessment drawing on the latest local and national data sources of the key challenges and opportunities facing the Borough.
- 3.8 During Summer 2020, a programme of partnership engagement was undertaken to help shape the content of the new Plan. This approach confirmed that there remains a strong appetite across the public, private and voluntary sectors for a shared strategic plan that supports collective ambitions.
- 3.9 As a result, the Plan brings together a number of organisational and partnership plans into a single coherent document and highlights the 'must do' priorities for the next 5 years. The Wirral Plan 2021-26 enables strong partnership working across Wirral, and promotes a collaborative and joined up response.
- 3.10 The Wirral Plan provides the policy framework for Council activity in the coming year. There is a need for a series of delivery plans against each of the Council plan priorities. Delivery plans are being developed which will define how the in-year priorities will be achieved. Delivery plans will need to align with the achievement of in-year budget efficiencies and be cognisant of emerging budget planning for 2022/23. It is proposed that draft delivery plans are reviewed by policy and service committees through dedicated sessions and budget workshops during the summer. This will align with the timetable to bring the Wirral Plan to Council in September.
- 3.11 This approach will ensure alignment with the Medium Term Financial Plan, any requirements MHCLG place on the Council in relation to the request for exceptional financial support, and any investment in change identified. The delivery plans will reflect activity delivered through Directorate operations, existing in-flight projects as well as new activities developed as part of a corporate programme of change. All new programmes and projects will be subject to business case approval through relevant policy and service committees. Details of the proposed change programme structure and governance will be confirmed following the approval of the Wirral Plan and associated delivery plans.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Wirral Plan is designed to align with and inform the budget setting process for the next five years.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Legal implications relating to the actions set out in the Wirral Plan will be addressed by directorates as appropriate.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Wirral Plan is a key strategic document to determine Council business planning and delivery resources.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The Corporate Risk Register is being refreshed in line with the new Wirral Plan to

ensure that any risks to delivery are understood and mitigating actions are put in place as appropriate.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

The Wirral Plan reflects what people have told us is important. Ongoing engagement will continue with staff, residents, businesses and partners as part of a collaborative approach to implementing the Plan.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The fundamental purpose and core of the Wirral Plan is to tackle inequalities and improve equity for all our residents. It will address the existing socio-economic and health inequalities in the Borough, to do things differently and make a fairer, more inclusive Wirral. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out as the priorities within the Plan are implemented.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Wirral Plan reflects the Council's strong commitment to improve the environment, with clear actions to address environment and climate emergency.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The Wirral Plan 2021-2026

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Wirral Plan 2021-2026

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Council	14 th October 2019

THE WIRRAL PLAN 2021-26

Equity for People and Place



FOREWORD FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Without a doubt, there has been some remarkable changes taking place across Wirral during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pace and efficacy in which council services have adapted to the challenges presented by the unfolding situation has been astounding and the willingness of people across the borough to work together to protect lives and support each other has been humbling.

Incredible examples of how partners have joined together in community outreach, for new partnerships with local organisations, businesses, and individuals and how council employees have volunteered to undertake radically different roles, provide support where needed most and to deliver the critical services required to protect our most vulnerable.

Analysis has highlighted the importance of emergency planning, clear and honest communication, flexibility of working arrangements, quick thinking, rapid responses, and forward planning. Underpinning all of this has been a robust digital system, which has provided remote connectivity where face to face contact has been extremely restricted. It has enabled the Council to maintain essential services and redeploy talent.

However, as well as these positive responses, we know that COVID has illuminated and accelerated existing inequalities within the Borough in terms of:

- **Impact on health outcomes is worse for some groups**
- **Impact on wider socio-economic inequalities. Some groups have been and will be much more affected e.g., through unemployment, redundancy, loss of income, debt, hardship, children, families, and young people in poverty.**

There is no doubt that this crisis has sharply exposed existing unacceptable socio-economic and health inequalities in our Borough. We know the unfair impact of the pandemic on those already disadvantaged groups, and the additional burden COVID-19 has placed on areas with already poor health outcomes. That is why we are committed to building a fairer, more prosperous Wirral, where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations. Community Wealth Building is a key part of how we will achieve this and will help improve the economic, social and health chances for residents. Community Wealth Building is therefore at the heart of our refreshed Wirral Plan, to help drive inclusive economic growth as well improving services for health and social care; families; environment; and housing.

For all of the above reasons, this Wirral Plan will put tackling inequalities at its core. We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to do things differently and make a fairer, more inclusive Borough.

Wirral Council Leader

Councillor Janette Williamson

J. Williamson



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Wirral Council touches almost every aspect of residents' lives. That is a huge responsibility. We're expected to do our job, do it well, and help people live better, happier and safer lives. We're committed to reducing inequalities and promoting opportunities for everyone, right across the Borough.

To show how we aim to achieve these things, in October 2019 Council unanimously agreed the Wirral Plan 2025 which set out the Strategic Vision and key priorities for the Borough. The Plan was based on what people told us matter. In it we set out our stall and committed to what we will deliver over the next five years.

However, because of COVID-19, we need to review the 2025 Plan to make sense of the radically changed world that we find ourselves in.

There is no doubt that COVID-19 is having a significant impact on Wirral residents and businesses and will continue to do so for the coming months. Over the last ten months, we have had to rapidly adapt; take significant daily decisions in an unprecedented context that was constantly evolving; learning as we go.

As well as our ongoing COVID response, the priorities within the 2025 Plan are just as important today, but there are also some new short-term actions we need to focus on.

This 1-year Business Plan sets out the Council's priorities for the next 12 months.

Further discussions with residents, elected members, and Wirral partner agencies will continue in the coming months, to refresh and relaunch our 2025 Wirral Plan - as the joint Vision for the Borough - in Summer 2021.

2.0 THE BOROUGH OF WIRRAL

Wirral is as diverse as it is distinctive. It is a place of disparities. Some of the most affluent wards sit side by side with some of the most deprived wards, both nationally and on Wirral. There are huge inequalities in income and life expectancy depending on your Wirral postcode.

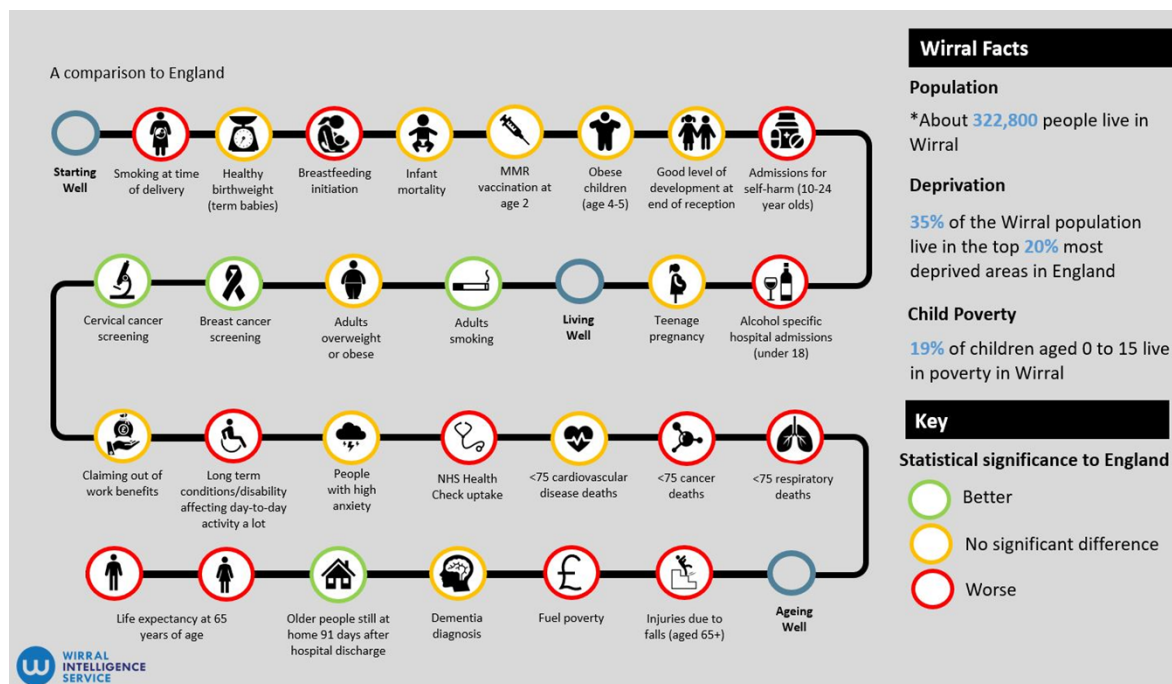
The below provides an overview of many key headlines, when compared to England, that affect Wirral residents from cradle to grave.

WIRRAL – THE PLACE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Named one of the happiest places to live in the UK.• A Peninsula of 15 miles long and 7 miles wide, bounded by the River Dee to the west, River Mersey to the east, and the Irish Sea to the north• A well connected and accessible destination – A place to live, work, visit and to do business.• Transformational regeneration of Wirral Waters and Birkenhead underway, creating sustainable waterfront neighbourhoods and urban parks on the LeftBank of the Mersey• 50 miles of rural walking routes, cycle areas and beaches and 24 miles of coastline, featuring the longest prom in Britain and five nature reserves• Some of the best parks and green spaces in the country – boasting 30 Green Flags and the world's first publicly-funded park in Birkenhead

- A prime leisure destination with 14 golf courses, award-winning boutique hotels and destination dining, including Michelin starred restaurant Fraiche.
- Untapped built, industrial, maritime and social heritage that is internationally significant. Including the development of a Maritime Knowledge Hub to support innovation in the sector
- Current population of 322,796 makes it one of the largest metropolitan boroughs in England, set to grow by 3% by 2040.
- Compared to Liverpool City Region partners, and England as a whole, the borough also has a diverse make up in terms of age, with a relatively higher older population and a low proportion of people in their twenties and thirties.



IF WIRRAL WERE 100 PEOPLE



IMPORTANCE OF CREATING EQUITY FOR PEOPLE AND PLACE THROUGH OUR VISION

- The inequalities in life expectancy at birth sees both male and female residents continuing to compare poorly against the England average, with a large gap in life expectancy between wards in the east and west of Wirral.
- This gap widened for both men and women between 2015-17 and 2016-18 from 9.3 to 10.7 years for women, and 9.8 to 12.1 years for men reflecting the large inequalities in the borough.
- In further trying to understand the challenges of our borough's inequalities, the 2019 Indices of Deprivation saw Wirral ranked the 77th most deprived authority (of 317 authorities) in England.
- The report found that just over 35% of the Wirral population (around 115,500 people) are suggested to live in areas classified as being in the most deprived 20% of areas in England, with over 83,000 of those residents living in the 10% most deprived.

KEY DATA - WIRRAL PLAN THEMES	
INCLUSIVE ECONOMY	<p>Wirral Borough is home to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 7,400 businesses providing employment for 111,000 people. • Economic activity rates in Wirral are currently below the national average at 73.9% compared to 79.1% of the working age population of Great Britain. • Gross weekly pay in Wirral (full time workers) is £561.2 compared to £560.3 in the North West. • Youth unemployment in Wirral (12%) is currently higher than the England average (9%), although working-age unemployment claimants in Wirral are at similar level to England. • In Wirral 23,000 people are employed in jobs related to human health and social work activities. This is 22.5% of the jobs available in Wirral, nationally in Great Britain 13.1% of people are employed in this sector and in the North West 14.2%.
SAFE AND PLEASANT COMMUNITIES	<p>Wirral sees lower than the average crime levels, compared to England:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between September 2019 and August 2020 Wirral had 97.8 crimes per 1,000 population compared to 102.2 per 1,000 population for England.
SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	<p>Key environmental concerns for the borough are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impacts of climate change, such as flood risk associated with more extreme weather events. Tidal and river flooding is also an issue in some areas, with parts of the Borough having a high surface water flood risk, and some being at risk from rising groundwater levels. • In response to the Climate Change Emergency the Council is committed to achieving net zero carbon by 2041.
BRIGHTER FUTURES	<p>In terms of children and families Wirral has the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rate of children in care per 10,000 population in Wirral remains high at 121.6 compared to a national average of 67 • Inequalities in education have also been highlighted, with lower GCSE attainment of just 11.8% of LAC pupils achieving Grades of 4 or above in English and Maths, compared to 24.4% nationally (2020) • The percentage of pupils in Wirral with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) is 3.4%, slightly higher than the England average of 3.3% (2020)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of children who are being electively home educated in Wirral has increased by 39% from 181 in March 2020 to 252 in March 2021 • There has been 16.6% increase in pupils eligible for Free School Meals, from 10,848 in January 2020 to 12,652 in January 2021
ACTIVE AND HEALTHY LIVES	<p>Resident health is also a concern. Recent reports show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions are almost double the national average, with prevalence of hypertension (high blood pressure) at around one in six of the Wirral population. • Other areas of health inequalities locally include a high rate of both diabetes and dementia diagnosis, • Almost 4% of the working age adults claiming some type of Mental Health related benefits. • Premature mortality (deaths in those aged under 75), with significantly higher rates of mortality from almost all the major causes of death (cancer, liver disease, heart disease and respiratory disease) in Wirral compared to England.
IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC	
<p>The full implications and population outcomes for the Coronavirus Pandemic are yet to be felt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the first 12 months to January 2021, there have been almost 22,000 reported cases of COVID-19. This is with over 108,545 tests per 100,000 residents being completed. In that same period, there has been 732 registered COVID-19 deaths in the borough. <p>However, due to the pandemic the cost to society in terms of impact and changes to life will likely be happening for many years to come.</p>	

3.0 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

There have been some great achievements over the past 12 months under each of the key priority areas of the Wirral 2025 plan including:

INCLUSIVE ECONOMY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Plan Reg 18 Issues and Option consultation achieved to MHCLG agreed timeline and now focussing on Urban Option Local Plan • New comprehensive regeneration strategy produced leading to starts on site for Wirral Waters and the Town Centre (LGA acknowledging that Wirral is on cusp of Regeneration of National Significance) • COVID-19 led distribution of £50m Business Grants and Strong Economy Plan with Community Wealth Building at its heart. • Council's response to Homelessness and the Everyone In campaign. • Safe closedown of operational estate during lockdown and remobilisation of Covid secure operating environments to ensure business continuity.
SAFE AND PLEASANT COMMUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways, streetlights, and roads have improved - 13,500 LED streetlights fitted over last 12 months and £6m structural maintenance programme to support our biggest asset our roads including £15m transport schemes programme. • Delivered improved resident focused Neighbourhood services.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managed services through challenging Covid19 pandemic, using innovative and collaborative solutions.
SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highways, streetlights, and roads continuing to improve - 13,500 LED streetlights fitted over last 12 months and £6m structural maintenance programme to support our biggest asset our roads including £15m transport schemes programme (consistent with above). Climate Emergency Declared and new Action Plan to address it. Launched the new Wirral Tree Strategy and planting programme.
BRIGHTER FUTURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedded the improvements made since the 2016 inspection to secure the transition of local authority out of intervention by the DfE and build on the recognition that leadership in Children's Services is good. Ensured services provide value for money by implementing our prevention strategy through a range of innovation programmes which include Cradle to Career, Social Workers in Schools, First Step for Families, Community Matter, Family Nurse Partnership Extension, PAUSE, DRIVE and our sufficiency strategy. Responded effectively to Covid-19 by keeping children safe from abuse and neglect and ensuring that children were able to access education and learning.
ACTIVE AND HEALTHY LIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Led the boroughwide response to Covid-19 and provided strong public health leadership, advice and action. Provides support to the care provider market during the pandemic and supported providers to respond quickly to changes in policy. Worked with the regeneration team to improve health outcomes resulting from economic regeneration of the built environment, inputting health impact assessment into the Local Plan and the employment market. Supported independent living and improved resident's experience of Health and Care through partnerships and integrated services. Commitment to encouraging contracted care providers to pay the Real Living Wage.
RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC	
<p>During the Coronavirus Pandemic Wirral delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 700 items of content published. Over 15m social media impressions. Over 9m page views to Wirral's websites. Over 3m items of PPE issued. 24,271 helpline calls answered. Over 10,000 covid-19 emails answered. 506 staff redeployed to the front line. 2306 staff safely working from home. 12,250 business grant applications received. £94.5m business grants paid out. Over 18,000 food hampers delivered. 12,137 children able to access free school meals. 1,064 laptops & 147 routers to Wirral children and young people to support learning at home. 	

BUT WE KNOW THERE IS MORE TO DO...

These thematic priorities are still relevant, but some of the underpinning activity will change to reflect COVID context and learning from this year.

The focus must continue to be on:

STRATEGIC RECOVERY AND BUILDING ON OUR THIRD SECTOR & COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

The Covid-19 pandemic has been the most challenging emergency the Borough of Wirral and the Council has responded to in recent times. The nature of the pandemic saw the Council react at speed to implement Government policy and local priorities to limit the spread of the virus, protect the health of all our residents and ensure the most vulnerable in our communities are safe and cared for.

This required a remarkable effort by our staff, partners and residents many of whom have worked tirelessly and acted with compassion to protect, support and care for others. Yet the financial, social and wider economic impact of the pandemic is the great test we now face and the scale of it cannot be underestimated.

As we move from lockdown to a transition period, we as a Council must commit to fundamentally transform and collectively work with our partners through the unprecedented challenges, while retaining the behaviours and principles which are at the core of being Wirral. We should take this unique opportunity to refresh our priorities and ambitions and move into a phase of transformation where we can create a fairer and more secure future for all of our residents in Wirral.

We aim to support all communities, businesses and public services in Wirral to recover following Covid-19. We will have to transform as a Council to address the significant adverse economic impacts of the crisis. We will strive to create a new future through harnessing the innovation and improvements made during the pandemic. We will build on the strengths and creativity of our communities and the partnerships we have developed to build a fairer, safer, greener and more secure society, with better health outcomes and a growing and more sustainable local economy.

During 2020 the social, economic, and political landscape in the borough has significantly changed. Covid has sharply exposed existing inequalities. That is why we are committed to building a fairer, more prosperous Wirral, where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations. Community Wealth Building is a key part of how we will achieve this. It sets out a strong commitment to achieve ambitious growth that also brings benefits for local people, communities, and businesses; and helps to tackle wider social and economic disparities. That is why we are putting Community Wealth Building at the heart of our emerging Strategic Recovery Planning.

To do this our Strategic Recovery Plan forms the core of the Wirral Plan 2021 - 2026. Our planning should consider two key phases: Recovery and Renewal.

1. Recovery: Recovery concentrates on the safe re-opening and resumption of assets and services, aligned with the government roadmap. It also supports the recovery of local businesses, schools and education, events, and planning for the winter period.

2. Renewal: Renewal considers new initiatives that will provide better services and experiences for our communities. It also aims to provide stronger resilience across the seven renewal themes:

- Corporate Organisation
- Children and Families
- Economy
- Neighbourhoods and Communities
- Housing and Homelessness
- Inequalities and Well-being
- Improving our High Streets and Coastal Areas

DELIVERING THE LOCAL PLAN

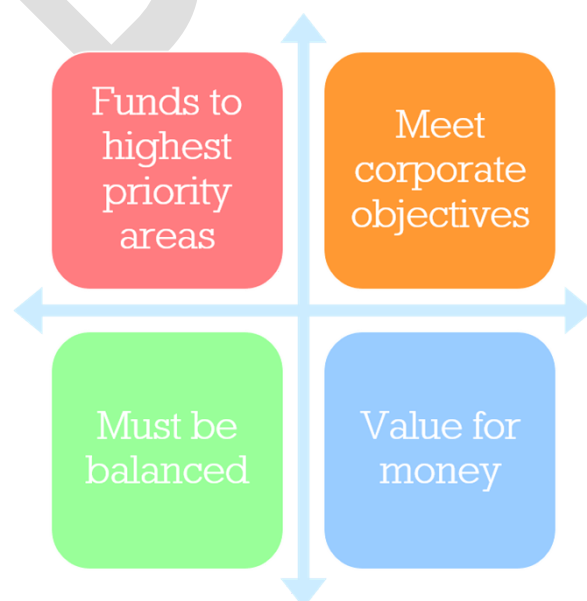
The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan for the period 2020 to 2037. The Plan will set out how the Council will meet the Borough's housing and development needs, and will include policies to tackle climate change, and protect our natural and built environmental assets. The Local Plan's strategic policies will align with the objectives and aims of the Wirral Plan Refresh and will have at its heart the comprehensive regeneration of Birkenhead.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Council is striving to deliver the best for residents against a background of challenging circumstances of uncertainty and additional financial pressures. Choices will be available and difficult decisions will have to be made as part of budget setting and the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and related Plan (MTPF); balancing the impact of short-term decisions in order to align to the financial sustainability of the Council will be key in this process. The Wirral Plan needs to ensure that the MTFS and MTPF are achievable and capable of managing future pressures.

The purpose of the MTFS is to ensure that the Council's available resources are prioritised to the areas of highest need to ensure, amongst other things, that:

- Vulnerable residents can be supported.
- These resources are aligned to the Wirral Plan to enable strategic borough and corporate objectives and priorities to be met.
- Value for money is delivered for the services we provide.
- Financial sustainability is in place via a balanced budget year on year.



General Fund Balancing & Earmarked Reserves

Maintaining General Fund Balances and Earmarked Reserves at an appropriate level is part of the Council's strategic financial planning and approach to the management of risks it will face in the future. Both need to be maintained at sufficient levels to ensure that unforeseen financial pressures can be met without jeopardising the viability of the Council.

The Council's approach to how it manages its reserves are based on Wirral's local circumstances inclusive of the impact of Covid-19. The amount held is decided by the Council in line with its perceived future local demands. This is particularly important in an environment where future funding remains uncertain.

In determining the appropriate level of reserves, the Section 151 Officer (the Chief Financial Officer of the Council who has statutory responsibilities; in Wirral's case this is the Director of Resources) assesses several local factors. In determining the appropriate level for the General Fund Balance, the Council has to consider the strategic, operational and financial risks facing it. This approach is supported by Grant Thornton (the Council's external auditors) and by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy - a professional body which issues guidance in this area).

The Council adopts a risk-based approach to financial planning, which is used to determine the minimum level of reserves required. The aims of this approach are to:

- Ensure the General Fund Balances are set at a reasonable level. This is the Council's last line of defence and should only be used if unforeseen difficulties emerge, which create unmanageable financial pressures for the in-year position.
- Ensure Earmarked Reserves are set at a reasonable level to cover specific financial risks faced by the Council. These may also be used on a short-term, temporary basis for other purposes, provided the funding is replaced in future years.

Over recent years the overall level of available reserves has continued to decline. Previously, one-off funding and the use of flexible capital receipts has been used to close the budget gap. In future years, the budget gap will be closed through the implementation of new financial proposals, additional income and reducing pressures.

General Fund Balances

Wirral Council's risk-based strategy is applied in the context of the current state of the economy, other financial risks facing the Council and the underlying financial assumptions within the MTFS.

The setting and justification of the General Fund Balance, at a minimum of £10m for 2021/22, is part of the MTFS and is consistent with previous years. It is crucial the Council has sufficient contingency in this reserve to maintain financial standing and resilience. For Local Councils there is no statutory minimum level of the General Fund Balance and it is for each Council to take local circumstances into consideration.

The foundations for determining the level of General Fund balances are consideration of risks, available funding and a risk percentage factor.

Earmarked Reserves

In addition to the General Fund Balance, the Council maintains Earmarked Reserves that are set aside for specific purposes, some through internal decision-making others through legal

requirements (the Council is obliged to maintain a number of legally restricted reserves which represent sums of money that the Council is required to set aside for legally defined purposes). These reserves are set aside by the Council to meet future expenditure, such as decisions causing anticipated expenditure to be delayed. As such, they are made available to be spent on specific purposes.

The key categories for Earmarked Reserves are as follows:

- Insurance & Taxation - Assessed liabilities including potential cost of meeting outstanding Insurance Fund claims.
- Business Rates - To cover potential costs of appeals and retention rate risk.
- Schools Related - Which can only be used by schools and are not available to pay for Council services.
- Support Service Activities and Projects - Includes Government Grant funded schemes; when a grant is received, and the sum of money is earmarked for the completion of programmes across years.

A robust reserves strategy is a key part of the financial resilience of the Council and provides the first line of defence in underpinning the statutory requirement to set an annually balanced budget. Adequate reserve levels help to prevent local authorities from overcommitting themselves financially, mitigate against risk and provide organisational stability in the event of unanticipated, unforeseen, or emergency spending being required. An assessment of the adequacy of reserves is a key statutory requirement to be undertaken at least annually.

Risk

Risk is an integral part of financial resilience and is embedded in all that we do. To enable the Council to monitor its financial resilience it needs to take an assessment of risk across all activities to ensure that where corporate risks have been identified that these are being mitigated and monitored on a regular basis.

4.0 THE WIRRAL PLAN 2021-2025: VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

The vision for the Wirral Plan 2021-26 has been developed to build on the five thematic priorities from the previous Plan. The thematic priorities are high level, focus on changes for whole population groups, and can only be delivered by working with partners locally and regionally.

VISION FOR THE WIRRAL PLAN 2021 - 2025

Equity for People and Place:

To create equity for people and place and opportunities for all to secure the best possible future for our residents, communities and businesses.

The key underpinning principles for achieving our vision are:



Joined up design

Ensuring our services are accessible, person-centric and joined-up



No one left behind

Inclusive Services which recognise the different needs of residents, families and communities



Prevention

Tackling the root cause of inequalities and demand on Council Services.
The right support at the right time



Regeneration

Investing in infrastructure and



Independence

Enabling individuals, families and



Relationships

Working with residents, partners,

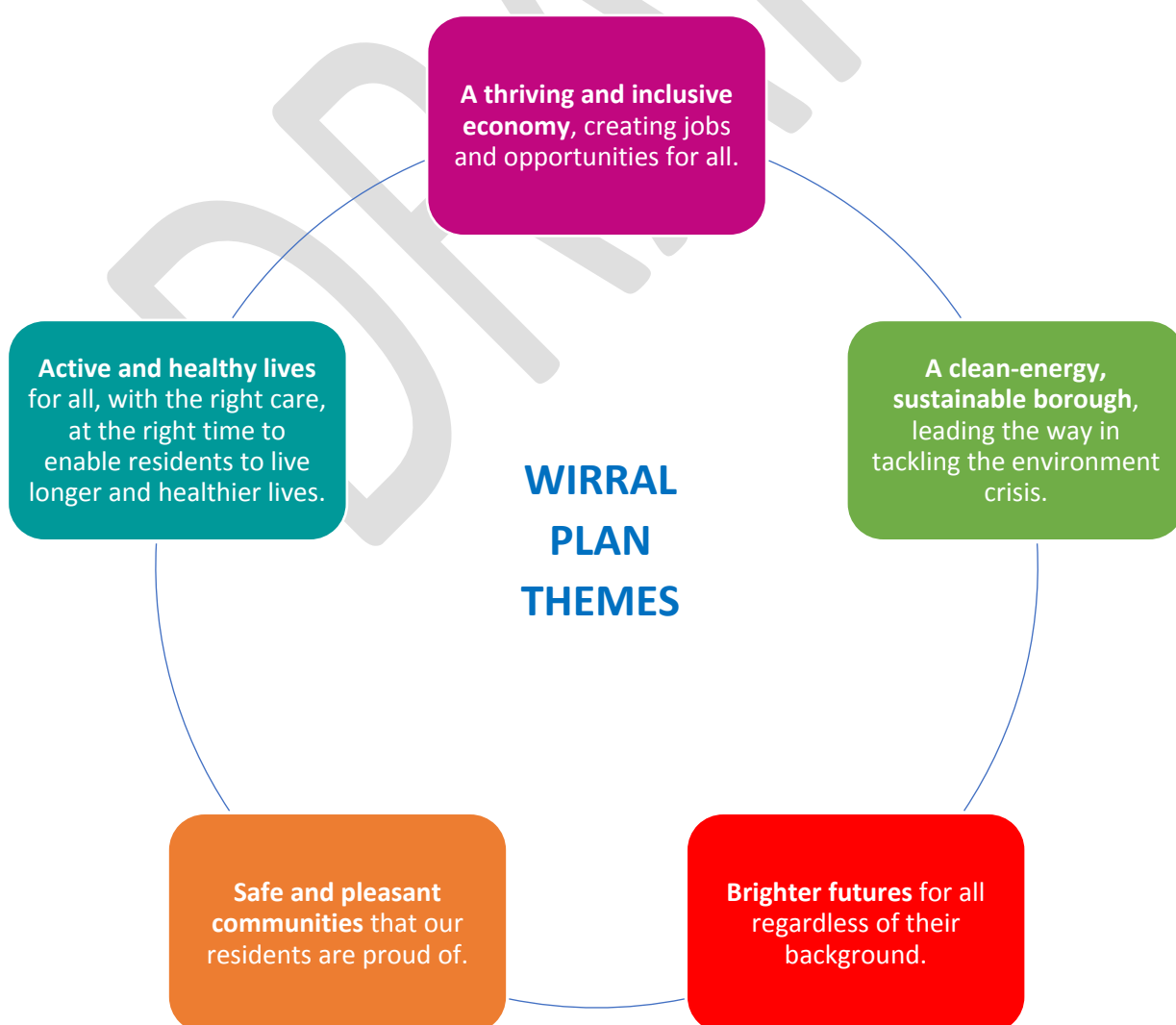
5.0 THE WIRRAL PLAN 2021-2026: KEY THEMATIC PRIORITIES

The Wirral Plan 2021-26 is a key policy document and articulates the ambition and key deliverables for the organisation for this year.

Our Plan has been created by:

- Listening to what people have told us is important to them.
- Helping staff understand their role in supporting the delivery of our corporate priorities.
- Committing to deliverables which local people can hold us to account.

The thematic priorities for the Wirral Plan 2021-26 are:



Appendix 1 captures the detail of aims, deliverables and performance on a 'Plan on a Page'.

6.0 THE WIRRAL PLAN 2021-2026: CROSS CUTTING STRATEGIES

To help us achieve our aims, we are creating some underpinning strategies for how we will get there:

Wirral Local Plan 2021 – 2037	Wirral's Local Plan sets out the vision for how the borough will be developed over the next 15 years, in line with national policy and legislation.
Health Inequalities Strategy	The Health Inequalities Strategy will improve health outcomes for all by a focusing on wider socio-economic factors and tackling health inequalities.
Healthy Wirral Plan	The Healthy Wirral Plan places a great emphasis on closer working between health and social care, helping people to stay healthy and preventing people becoming unwell. There will also be more use of digital technology and health and care staff working together as teams to deliver better care to people.
Prevention and Early Intervention Programme	The Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (including Anti-Poverty Strategy) will set out the need for a whole system approach across council and partnership to meet the needs of our residents earlier, in order to deliver better outcomes and prevent/avoid demand for high-cost statutory services.
Community Wealth Building	Driving Community Wealth Building right across everything we do, to create and maintain local wealth and assets for everyone.
Economic Strategy	The Economic Strategy sets out our economic vision for the Borough, as well as a number of significant regeneration projects, which will help us to achieve our economic goals.
Affordable Housing Plan	There is a need to ensure that the delivery of affordable housing continues to be a priority aligned to and both the local plan process and regeneration programme for the borough. A new plan will be set out outlining our needs and opportunities for the delivery of affordable housing with our partners.
Homelessness Strategy and Rough Sleeping Plan	Wirral's Homelessness Strategy and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out the Council's ambition to meet the challenges faced, through partnership working to deliver better outcomes for our households at risk of homelessness and to reduce rough sleeping. The strategy sets out a five-year action plan (2020 – 2025) setting out the short, medium and long-term solutions and actions identified to deliver lasting change to those at risk of, or currently homeless in Wirral.
Active Travel Strategy	The Active Travel Strategy will embed active travel solutions and local cycling and walking infrastructure as part of regeneration projects and ambitions.
Neighbourhoods Model	The COVID-19 pandemic has been unprecedented in highlighting the importance and critical role of our communities and the unique ability of our Voluntary, Community and Faith sectors to mobilise and respond to the humanitarian and social needs of local communities. We will build on our community assets and develop ways in which our residents, neighbourhoods and community sector can be at the heart of our new Plan to see things working differently in their local communities.

Climate Emergency Plan	The Climate Emergency Plan will highlight the actions we will take to tackle the climate emergency in our borough, to ensure Wirral is a greener, more sustainable place to live, work and visit.
Digital Strategy	New Digital Strategy will focus on doing things differently and tackling digital exclusion.
Community Safety Strategy	The Community Safety Strategy builds on the collaborative approach developed throughout the current COVID pandemic. Community partnership work during the pandemic has achieved real results and the aim is to harness this learning to help build an outcome-rich, more inclusive Community Safety Strategy. The thematic drivers include the following: Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Crime and Violence Reduction, Hate Crime, Modern Slavery, Community Safety, Domestic Abuse, Emergency Planning and Road Safety

7.0 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

In recent months, we have been having discussions across the Wirral Partnership about future joint priorities to refresh the Wirral Plan as our collective vision for the Borough.

The Council and our partners agree that we can only achieve our goals by working together, and that the Partnership has a unique strategic role in shaping Wirral as a place.

Ongoing engagement with our partners indicates a strong appetite across the public, private and voluntary sectors for a shared strategic plan that supports collective ambitions. We are reviewing our Partnership arrangements to ensure that we continue to build on our excellent partnerships and networks to support delivery of our refreshed Wirral Plan. The delivery plan will be a live document that can be updated as and when necessary, to ensure that The Wirral Plan 2021-26 remains agile and is ready to respond to challenges and opportunities as they arise.

Wirral's Partnership arrangements are also being reviewed to reflect national changes for NHS reforms. This includes proposals for local Integrated Care Systems.

New Partnership arrangements will provide strategic vision, shared leadership and coordination of local networks in order to improve Wirral and the population health outcomes of its residents. To achieve this there are some key pillars of work related to the delivery of the Wirral Plan:

- Ensure that the sustainable regeneration of the Borough, contributes to improved outcomes for residents in line with those set out in the Wirral Plan.
- Ensure that partnership and integrated care arrangements are in place and that they are effective in delivering improved health outcomes and experiences of care for residents of Wirral.
- Understand the needs of the local communities in order to develop and implement a Health & Wellbeing Strategy to tackle inequalities and improve the lives of residents.
- Provide oversight, strategic direction, and coordination of the statutory responsibilities of the Health & Wellbeing Board.

In the coming weeks, partnership engagement will continue. Building on extensive partner engagement and collaborative working with our third sector and communities as part of our joint response to the pandemic, new arrangements will be brought forward and systemised to ensure that we have a shared commitment to the Wirral Plan 2026, and an effective platform for delivery.

As well as partnership working during Covid, Wirral has been playing a key role within the LCR Combined Authority, working together to drive the devolution of powers and resources to have a real impact on the City Region's communities, in areas such as economic development, education and skills, transport, employment, culture, digital and housing.

To support delivery of the Wirral Plan, we will continue to build on our successful partnership working in the Liverpool City Region including to:

- Ensure Wirral's interests are represented.
- Secure significant funding opportunities to support Wirral's Regeneration ambitions absolutely key to the borough's recovery and generating income for future sustainability and inclusive economic growth.
- Lead Community Wealth Building and Inclusive Economic Growth.
- Joint lobbying for additional resources to support our local communities.

We are a Borough of inequality but one of great aspirations, communities and a desire to work with our partners to deliver a shared goal.

8.0 OUR COMMITMENT TO WIRRAL

The ambitions described in this report are our promise to Wirral residents. These are the things we will deliver to make this borough a better, fairer, more prosperous place for everyone who lives here.

They are about creating jobs, improving services and making public money work harder for public benefit and community wealth. They're about making sure Wirral residents can continue to live in a place which they are proud of, with modern public services there to support them.

In 2025, when this Wirral Plan is complete and we reflect on our progress, I am keen to be held accountable for delivering the priorities set out in this document.

Now it is time to deliver on our promises.

APPENDIX 1 The Wirral Plan 2021-26: Plan on a Page

APPENDIX 2 How the Plan aligns with our Governance and Committee Structure

APPENDIX 1 – THE WIRRAL PLAN 2021 – 2026: PLAN ON A PAGE

WIRRAL PLAN 2021 – 2026				
EQUITY FOR PEOPLE AND PLACE				
To create equity for people and place and opportunities for all to secure best possible future for our residents, communities and businesses.				
Brighter Futures	Inclusive Economy	Sustainable Environment	Safe & Pleasant Communities	Active & Healthy Lives
AIMS				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break the cycle of poor outcomes. Reduce educational attainment inequalities. Raise the aspirations of all our children and young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver regeneration, transport and growth ambitions. Create Community Wealth/Social Value. Create jobs and support local businesses. Develop quality, affordable and sustainable homes. Prevent and relieve homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to the Climate Change emergency. Protect our cherished local environment. Improve street cleanliness. Support active travel networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partner agencies to reduce crime and tackle anti-social behaviour. Tackle rough sleeping and homelessness. Deliver everyday neighbourhood services to the best possible standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partner agencies to improve mental wellbeing. Encourage active living. Support people to live independently. Deliver public health services and actions to improve wider determinants of health. Tackle health inequalities.
DELIVERABLES				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a prevention programme. Deliver the Transformational Partnership Accommodation Strategy. Build the 'early help and intervention' offer. Deliver the School Asset and Sufficiency Strategy. Deliver the SEND Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the Local Plan. Deliver the Economic Strategy 2026. Deliver the Birkenhead 2040 Framework. Deliver regeneration enabling strategies. Deliver transport strategies and regen/active travel projects. Deliver the Community Wealth Building Strategy. Deliver the Homelessness Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the Climate Emergency Action Plan and Cool Wirral 2 Strategy. Progress the major LED replacement scheme. Implementation of major capital infrastructure investment which supports Wirral Highways and Infrastructure. Deliver the Cycling and Walking Programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the DRIVE programme. Begin design of new Neighbourhoods model Deliver the new libraries model and strategy. Deliver new Sports and Physical Activities Strategy. Deliver the Community Safety Strategy. Ensure Culture and Learning is embedded in the heart of communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the strategic and operational Outbreak Management Plan. Launch the Health Inequalities Strategy. Develop a new leisure offer. Develop a new adult social care model. Deliver against the Prevention programme.
PERFORMANCE MEASURES				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in children making expected progress educationally. A closing gap in educational achievement. Increase in children ready for school. Decrease in rate of looked after children in Wirral. Children in Need rate per 10,000 0-17 population. Increased success of the early intervention family programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value of investments secured Hectares of Brownfield Land remediated/regenerated. Number of jobs created and safeguarded. Claimant Count (reduction) Business Count (increase) No. of affordable homes delivered. Reduction in those living in temporary accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased recycling Reduce the overall collected general waste (non-recycling) per household Increase energy efficiency in Council owned buildings Increase in the number of trees planted and wildflower verges in Wirral Increase the number of people cycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease in anti-social behaviour Reduction in the number of crimes reported to the police Reduce first time entrants into the Youth Justice System Reduce the incidents of repeat domestic abuse reporting. Increased library usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More people are supported to remain independent in their own homes. Care, health and support services are joined up and responsive. Fewer admissions to hospital or long term care. Number of home adaptations completed. Proportion of residents living in suitable housing. Increase in people using Council leisure facilities.
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGIES AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES				
1. Wirral Local Plan 2020 – 2037 2. Health Inequalities Strategy 3. Healthy Wirral Plan 4. Prevention Programme 5. Community Wealth Building Strategy	6. Economic Strategy 7. Affordable Housing Plan 8. Homelessness Strategy and Rough Sleeping Plan 9. Active Travel Strategy 10. Neighbourhoods Model	11. Climate Emergency Plan 12. Digital Strategy 13. Community Safety Strategy		

Appendix 2: Overview of Committees

Committee	Policy and Resources	Adult Social Care and Health	Children, Young People and Education	Economy, Regeneration and Development	Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport	Housing	Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure
Nominated Committee Chair	Cllr Janette Williamson	Cllr Yvonne Nolan	Cllr Wendy Clements	Cllr Tony Jones	Cllr Elizabeth Grey	Cllr Julie McManus	Cllr Helen Cameron
Lead Officer(s)	Chief Executive	Director of Care and Health and Director of Public Health	Director of Children's Services	Director of Regeneration and Plan	Director of Neighbourhood Services	Director of Regeneration and Plan and Head of Housing Services	Director of Neighbourhood Services
<div>Overview of Committee Responsibilities (detailed responsibilities included within Appendix)</div> <div>Page 34</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy matters• Performance, budget monitoring and risk management.• Lead in matters concerning relationships with HM Government, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, and other major public and non-public bodies.• Lead in the Council’s response to the Climate Emergency.• Appointment of Council representatives.• Nominate Councillors and other persons to outside bodies• Undertake responsibility for developing and monitoring the enabling corporate services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult social care matters (18+) including protection for vulnerable adults, support for carers.• Drug and alcohol commissioning• Mental health services• Preventative services• All Public Health functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Services to children and young people in relation to their care, wellbeing, education, or health.• Provision of education• Corporate Parent for children in care and care leavers.• Working with schools in raising standards of attainment and developing opportunities.• Delivery of services for children, young people, and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Plan• Spatial planning• Economic development including infrastructure, enterprise, skills and seeking, securing, and managing external funds.• Promotion of economic growth and the establishment and development of business.• Promotion and development of the economic factors in the area.• Overseeing the development of major projects as enabler, funder, or joint enterprise partner with Wirral Growth Company LLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highways matters• Traffic management and transport• Traffic orders and rights of way issues.• Parking, including on and off-street parking and civil parking enforcement.• Parks, open spaces, countryside management, allotments, playgrounds, and cemeteries, including arboriculture, gardening, tree strategy and warden services.• Management of authorised and unauthorised sites and encampments.• Waste - waste collection authority and litter authority.• Coast protection authority and lead local flood authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic and private sector housing policies as the housing authority.• Homelessness and Rough Sleeping• Housing needs and links to affordable housing• Council’s Housing Strategy.• Analysis, development, and overview of housing policies.• Financial Assistance• Empty Homes• Disabled Facilities Grant in line with legislation• Policy for housing register and allocations policy for affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer and community contact services, including various offices and meeting points, customer contact centres and advice and transaction services.• Community engagement.• Considering options and develop proposals for neighbourhood arrangements.• Provision and management of leisure, sports, and recreation facilities.• Delivery of the authority’s library and museums services.• Tourism, the arts, culture, and heritage• Bereavement services and support to the Coroner’s service.• Community safety, crime, and disorder• Trading standards and environmental health.



POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 28 July 2021

REPORT TITLE:	COMMUNITY BONDS
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of community bonds and their uses, and how Warrington and West Berkshire Councils have used them to fund capital spend. The report assesses their use in Wirral and possible next steps.

Community Bonds/Community Municipal Investments are a form of debt/loan-based crowdfunding. Community Bonds are issued by a council corporate body, with residents and general public investors providing capital on the basis of receiving a financial return. The majority of community bonds are typically linked in some form to environmental or social criteria and provide tangible benefit to the local community beyond just financial.

Community Bond issues are generally related to a specific project. In 2020, West Berkshire and Warrington Councils issued Community Bonds to fund solar projects in the Borough. They each issued bonds to the value of £1m and worked with the crowdfunding platform Abundance to administer the bonds.

Community Bonds would support the inclusive economy strand of the Wirral Plan. Ordinarily, the interest that the Council pays on borrowing would be paid back to the lenders, typically outside of the borough. Community Bonds opens up the opportunity for local residents to become investors in the council, keeping both the investment capital and the interest payments in the local area.

There is also the potential to support the sustainable environment strand of the Wirral plan if the council decided to use community bonds to fund a project that tackles the climate emergency, as Warrington and West Berkshire have done.

Community bonds have a higher social value than mainstream borrowing. Social value could be in the form of increased community engagement, as well as directing the cost of borrowing (interest payments) back into the local area. However, Community Bonds are a more expensive means of borrowing, and at the moment, the social value attached to the bonds does not justify the extra costs.

This matter affects all wards in the borough.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to:

1. Agree that guidance is developed to help assess if Community Municipal Bonds are a suitable funding stream for future capital bid projects.
2. Recommend to Council that Community Bonds be added to the Treasury Management Strategy as an alternative form of debt financing..

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 At this time, the use Community Bonds to finance capital projects would incur additional borrowing costs compared to alternative methods of financing. Members would need to weigh up any engagement advantages. Should the cost of inter-authority lending increase, Community Bonds may become a competitive source of capital borrowing for the council. To ensure that Community bonds are considered in the future, they should be added to the treasury management strategy as an alternative form of debt financing. Guidance should also be developed to help explore Community Bonds as a borrowing option at the capital bid stage.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 To not add community bonds to the Treasury Management Strategy. Should inter-authority rates change in the future, not considering Community Bonds as an alternative form of debt financing would reduce our borrowing options.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At a Council meeting on 22nd March 2021, a motion on Community Investment Bonds was passed, which called on the Policy and Resources Committee to complete an examination of Community Investment Bonds. This work was to include:

- A review of the use of Community Investment Bonds elsewhere in the country.
- An assessment of their potential application to fund projects in Wirral.
- An outline of the practical steps required to set up Community Investment Bonds in Wirral.

As part of this, Wirral commissioned a report by Camdor Global advisors, for an overview of community bonds.

- 3.1 Crowdfunding is a way of financing projects, businesses, and loans through small contributions from a large number of sources, rather than large amounts from a few. Individuals deposit money on an online crowdfunding platform, committing that money to a specific project, business, or loan, and have that relationship mediated by a platform. Crowdfunding in the UK can be divided into three areas; donation based, civic crowdfunding and debt/loan-based crowdfunding.

3.1.1 Donation/Rewards-based crowdfunding platforms

This is usually a financing platform for charities, other smaller non-profit organisations and individuals undertaking charitable activities. Investors typically believe in the project's social/environmental goals with the donation furthering this aim. The returns are non-financial. This included platforms such as JustGiving and Crowdfunder.

3.1.2 Civic Crowdfunding

Civic crowdfunding uses the donation-based crowdfunding model to bring individuals to donate money for their local community, e.g. to a community fund. Example platforms are Crowdfunder, Spacehive, Hubbub, Abundance.

3.1.3 Debt or loan-based crowdfunding platforms

This type of platform enables debt finance to companies or businesses, bypassing the traditional need for banks. Typically, the lender will receive interest on the money lent and the lender will either be repaid the principal at maturity or amortised over the life of the loan. Community municipal investment (community bonds) are in this category. Example platforms are Funding Circle and Abundance.

3.2 Community Municipal Investments are issued by a council corporate body, with residents and general public investors providing capital on the basis of receiving a financial return. Issuances are typically small and in the region of £0.25mn – £10mn for a single issue. The investments give a mix of financial and social returns, typically providing investors with certainty of returns (i.e. in line with a low risk appetite) and often meeting the funding requirements of a specific project. It is important to note that the majority of community bonds are typically linked in some form to environmental or social criteria, e.g. funding solar projects, regeneration etc., or in other words, providing tangible benefit to the local community beyond just financial.

3.2.1 In principle, any local authority capital project could be financed through a Community Municipal Bond, as there are no obvious restrictions on purpose. However, from research conducted by the University of the Leeds, it is clear that the social and environmental aspects are important to investors.

3.2.2 As there is also no restriction on using multiple sources of financing, a Community Municipal Bond could theoretically be run alongside a traditional borrowing or investment process, e.g. cash balances, PWLB, etc. For example, in the case of the Warrington bond, the community bond was used to part fund the solar farm with other borrowing and sources of finance making up the rest.

3.2.3 Debt or loan based crowdfunding platforms are fairly new, with the first Community Municipal Bond, issued by Swindon Council in 2016. The main platforms in the UK that host investment-based crowdfunding are Funding Circle and Abundance. Funding Circle focusses on small businesses, while Abundance has worked with a number of Local Authorities (Swindon, Warrington and West Berkshire) to issue Community Municipal Investments. Warrington and West Berkshire issued the following bonds in 2020:

Issuer	West Berkshire	Warrington
Year Issued	2020	2020
Investment Funding Target	£1m	£1m
Maturity	2025	2025
Internal Rate of Return	1.2%	1.2%
Platform	Abundance	Abundance
Purpose	Tackling the climate emergency by building new solar installations.	Helping Warrington to tackle the climate emergency by part funding a new solar farm.

3.2.4 It is important to note that Community Bonds are classed as borrowing and as a result:

- Will have an impact on the revenue budget in the form of interest payments and the minimum revenue provision (MRP).
- Will have to be paid back at maturity.
- Will be subject to the normal Local Authority borrowing rules and the Prudential Code.
- Can only be used for capital spend and cannot be used for day to day running of the council (revenue spend).

Cost of Capital

3.3 One of the main arguments for Community Bonds is that they provide a competitive source of capital for Local Authority compared to the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). The current PWLB rates are below. The West Berkshire and Warrington bonds, issued at 1.2% had the aim of matching the PWLB rate, however it is up to the issuing authority to set the rate at their chosen level – choosing to either match or undercut the PWLB rate. There are also additional costs to consider such as the arrangement fee and legal costs associated with establishing the bond issue. Warrington and West Berkshire also had legal documents relating to the bond issue reviewed by external lawyers at a cost of £2,500.

Issuer	Maturity	Annuity Rate (%)	Maturity Rate (%)
PWLB	3 years	1.10	1.21
PWLB	5 years	1.16	1.40
PWLB	10 years	1.43	1.86

3.3.1 However, the PWLB is not the only source of capital available to the council. Currently, the Council's main source of external capital is from inter-authority lending. Indicative rates are below. Inter-authority lending is for a shorter time frame, however the treasury management team are able to ensure that borrowing is always at the correct level. The rates for inter-authority lending are significantly lower than the PWLB and community interest bonds.

Indicative Inter-authority Lending	
Maturity	Rate (%)
1 month	0.01
3 months	0.02
6 months	0.03 - 0.05
9 months	0.05 - 0.07
12 months	0.08 - 0.12

The table below shows comparison of indicative borrowing costs. Please note that these are estimates.

Lender	Amount (£)	Term (years)	Rate (%)	Arrangement Fee/Broker Fee (%)	Total borrowing costs (%)	Total borrowing costs (£)
PWLB	1,000,000	5	1.4	N/a	1.4	70,000
Inter Authority	1,000,000	5	0.12	0.5	0.62	31,000
Community Bond	1,000,000	5	1.2	0.2	1.4	70,000

Currently inter-authority lending is the cheapest source of borrowing for the council.

Why Issue Community Municipal Investments?

3.4 Evidence from the University of Leeds suggests that community bonds, when compared to existing sources of local authority financing (e.g. PWLB, Municipal Bond Agency, Bond Issuance to institutions, Inter-Authority Lending), the issuance of a Community Municipal Bond has several key social impact benefits that help to make it attractive for public sector bodies. It:

- Drives local engagement in local authority activity by offering a new channel for communicating strategy and progress to residents, increasing awareness and fostering ongoing support for local authority activities;
- Redirects returns on capital to local residents who have invested in the bonds, which are then likely to be spent in the borough; and
- Has the potential to encourage new donation-based income streams from civic minded resident investors, who may begin to donate bond interest payments back to the local authority for non-core services

3.4.1 For investors, the attraction is the opportunity for their money to create socially and environmentally positive outcomes.

Risks Associated with Community Bonds

3.5 There may be reputational risks if the council was unable to repay the bonds at the maturity date, and local investors lost capital. However this is extremely unlikely. There are additional reputational risks should the Council fail to deliver the project as anticipated.

3.5.1 There is also the risk of not being able to raise sufficient capital. This might be easier to manage on smaller scale projects, as the risk of not raising the required funding decreases. Warrington and West Berkshire were able to hit their £1m funding target well before the deadline.

3.5.2 As this is a new avenue, the council would need to engage with platforms and other providers to create and distribute these bonds. This would open the council up to operational and counterparty risks.

- 3.5.3 It is also important to consider, given the level of deprivation in some areas of the borough, Community Bonds could exclude some residents from being engaged with the project.
- 3.5.4 Community bonds would be a new source of funding for the council, and many investors for the project have to be found. This could take a significant amount of time and could lead to delays of the overall capital project. To reduce this risk, alternative sources of funding such as community bonds should be considered as early as possible, ideally at the capital bid stage.

Community Bonds in Wirral

- 3.6 Community bonds have the potential to fund capital spend in the Wirral, however they are currently a much more expensive form of borrowing than inter-authority lending. The extra cost of borrowing would have to be considered against the additional social value of a community bond issue. In light of the current budget position, the extra revenue costs generated by financing capital spend via a community bond issue rather than inter-authority lending would need to be justified.
 - 3.6.1 Alternative forms of capital finance such as Community Bonds should still be considered as a future source of potential financing as interest rates for other financing sources may change making the advantages of Community Bonds more advantageous.
 - 3.6.2 The advantage to not use community bonds as a source of capital funding while inter-authority lending rates are so low. However, as inter-authority rates may increase in the future it would be useful to develop guidance to help assess if community bonds could be a suitable source of capital funding for a project. Any bond would require proper regulatory oversight, marketing and administration. It would therefore be likely that as others have done a partner would need to be procured to undertake the administration. Fees for this are assumed to be 0.2% of the bond value but would need to be confirmed

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications involved with the recommendations in this report. There would be implications were there be a decision to proceed with a bond issue and these would be reported back to a later committee meeting. Any bond issue would require repayment on maturity and likely annual provision for repayment so would require financing identifying.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 Time required to develop the criteria can be worked into existing staff resources. There are no direct implications on ICT and assets.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 There are no relevant risks to the recommendations of this report. Risks of Community Bonds more generally are included in the background information at 3.5.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Crowdfunding platform, Abundance was contacted to gather information on arrangement fees for a community bond issue.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no equality implications involved with the recommendations in this report. Any further decisions related to community bonds may need an equality impact assessment.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Warrington, West Berkshire Councils issued bonds to fund projects that had a clear aim of tackling the climate emergency. If Wirral Council were to choose a project to fund similar to Warrington and West Berkshire then there would be a positive environment and climate impact. There are no direct environmental and climate implications of this report.

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APPENDICES

No appendices.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Community Bonds Overview; Camdor Global for Wirral Council
- Financing for Society: Assessing the Suitability of Crowdfunding for the Public Sector. The University of Leeds.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Motion passed at Council	22/03/2021



POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 28 July 2021

REPORT TITLE:	TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

REPORT SUMMARY

The Authority's treasury management activity is underpinned by CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management ("the Code"), which requires the Authority to approve treasury management semi-annual and annual reports.

This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Investment Guidance.

As projected in the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report, there was an overspend on Treasury activities which is attributable to 2020/21 budget savings that were not achieved due to implementation delays emanating from COVID response activity and significant changes in interest rates on investments. This overspend was incorporated into the Revenue Outturn report.

The level of Capital Financing debt held on the balance sheet, including the Merseyside Residuary Body debt managed by the Council on behalf of the constituent authorities, was £166 million at 31 March 2021. This is a reduction of £3 million since 1 April 2020 and reflects policies to minimise and delay borrowing costs which adversely impact upon the revenue budget.

The Council has complied with the Treasury Management Indicators as set out in the agreed Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

The decisions in this report are key decisions.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1 The Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Council that the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2020/21 be agreed.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Wirral has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (“the Code”), which includes regular update reports to Members of treasury activity. This report is the annual review for 2020/21.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 There is a legal requirement to produce an Annual Report on Treasury Management activities so no other options have been considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Treasury management is defined by CIPFA as: “The management of the local authority investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”
- 3.2 The Council approves the Treasury Management Strategy at the start of each financial year. This identifies how it is proposed to finance capital expenditure, borrow and invest in the light of capital spending requirements, the interest rate forecasts and the expected economic conditions. During the year members receive a mid-year report on treasury management activities and at the end of each financial year an Annual Report.

ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Growth & Inflation

- 3.3 The coronavirus pandemic dominated 2020/21, leading to almost the entire planet being in some form of lockdown during the year. The start of the financial year saw many central banks cutting interest rates as lockdowns caused economic activity to grind to a halt. The Bank of England cut Bank Rate to 0.1% and the UK government provided a range of fiscal stimulus measures.
- 3.4 In its March 2021 interest rate announcement, the Bank of England noted that while GDP would remain low in the near-term due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, the easing of these measures means growth is expected to recover strongly later in the year. Inflation is forecast to increase in the near-term and while the economic outlook has improved there are downside risks to the forecast, including from unemployment which is still predicted to rise when the furlough scheme is eventually withdrawn.
- 3.5 Despite the furlough scheme, national unemployment still rose. Labour market data showed that in the three months to January 2021 the unemployment rate was 5.0%, in contrast to 3.9% recorded for the same period 12 months ago. Wages rose 4.8% for total pay in nominal terms and was up 3.9% after inflation in real terms. Unemployment is still expected to increase once the various government job support schemes come to an end.

- 3.6 Inflation has remained low over the 12-month period. Latest figures showed the annual headline rate of UK Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) fell to 0.4% (year on year) in February, below expectations (0.8%) and still well below the Bank of England's 2% target.
- 3.7 After contracting sharply in Q2 (Apr-Jun) 2020 by 19.8%, GDP growth in Q3 and Q4 bounced back by 15.5% and 1.3% respectively. The easing of some lockdown measures in the last quarter of the calendar year enabled construction output to continue, albeit at a much slower pace than the 41.7% rise in the prior quarter. The Q1 2021 lockdown prompted a further contraction of 1.5% (quarter on quarter) in UK GDP as expected, but the robust monthly rise in March GDP suggests that the economic activity started to pick up ahead of the end of the severest restrictions.

Monetary Policy

- 3.8 The Bank of England (BoE) held Bank Rate at 0.1% throughout the year but extended its Quantitative Easing programme by £150 billion to £895 billion at its November 2020 meeting. Government initiatives supported the economy and the Chancellor announced in the 2021 Budget a further extension to the furlough (Coronavirus Job Retention) scheme until September 2021. Access to support grants was also widened, enabling more self-employed people to be eligible for government help.

Market Reaction

- 3.9 Monetary and fiscal stimulus helped provide support for equity markets which rose over the period, with the Dow Jones beating its pre-crisis peak on the back of outperformance by a small number of technology stocks. The FTSE indices performed reasonably well during the period April to November, before being buoyed in December by both the vaccine approval and Brexit deal, however they remain lower than their pre-pandemic levels.
- 3.10 Ultra-low interest rates prevailed throughout most of the period, with yields generally falling between April and December 2020. From early in 2021 the improved economic outlook due to the new various stimulus packages (particularly in the US), together with the approval and successful rollout of vaccines, caused government bonds to sell off sharply on the back of expected higher inflation and increased uncertainty, pushing yields higher more quickly than had been anticipated. The 5-year UK benchmark gilt yield began the financial year at 0.18% before declining to -0.03% at the end of 2020 and then rising strongly to 0.39% by the end of the financial year. Over the same period the 10-year gilt yield fell from 0.31% to 0.19% before rising to 0.84%. The 20-year declined slightly from 0.70% to 0.68% before increasing to 1.36%.

BORROWING AND DEBT MANAGEMENT

PWLB Borrowing Update

- 3.11 In November 2020 the PWLB published its response to the consultation on 'Future Lending Terms'. From 26th November the margin on PWLB loans above gilt yields was reduced from 1.8% to 0.8% providing that the borrowing authority can confirm

that it is not planning to purchase ‘investment assets primarily for yield’ in the current or next two financial years. Authorities that are purchasing or intending to purchase investment assets primarily for yield will not be able to access the PWLB except to refinance existing loans or externalise internal borrowing. As part of the borrowing process authorities will now be required to submit more detailed capital expenditure plans with confirmation of the purpose of capital expenditure from the Section 151 Officer. The PWLB can now also restrict local authorities from borrowing in unusual or large amounts.

- 3.12 Acceptable use of PWLB borrowing includes service delivery, housing, regeneration, preventative action, refinancing and treasury management. Misuse of PWLB borrowing could result in the PWLB requesting that Authority unwinds problematic transactions, suspending access to the PWLB and repayment of loans with penalties.
- 3.13 Competitive market alternatives may be available for authorities with or without access to the PWLB. However, the financial strength of the individual authority and borrowing purpose will be scrutinised by commercial lenders.
- 3.14 The Authority’s underlying need to borrow as measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) at 31 March 2021 was £362.6 million.

Table 1 – Level of External Debt

	Balance at 01/04/20 £000	New Borrowing £000	Matured Debt £000	Balance at 31/03/21 £000
CFR	348,521			362,517
Outstanding Debt				
Short Term Capital Debt	6,191	16,194	(6,191)	16,194
Long Term Capital Debt	162,339	3,289	(16,194)	149,434
Total Capital Debt	168,530	19,483	(22,385)	165,628
Temporary Cashflow Loans	140,601	303,504	(359,101)	85,004
Other Long Term Liabilities	39,558	0	(2,692)	36,866
Total External Debt	348,689	322,987	(384,178)	287,498

- 3.15 The Authority pursued its strategy of keeping borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing, in order to reduce risk and keep interest costs low.
- 3.16 Affordability and the “cost of carry” remained important influences on the borrowing strategy alongside the consideration that, for any borrowing undertaken ahead of need, the proceeds would have to be invested in the money markets at rates of interest significantly lower than the cost of borrowing. As short-term interest rates

have remained lower than long-term rates, it was more cost effective in the short-term to use internal resources instead.

- 3.17 The benefits of internal borrowing were monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise. Arlingclose, the treasury management advisers, assist the Authority with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis.
- 3.18 The chief objective when borrowing is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the long-term plans change, being a secondary objective.
- 3.19 Given the reductions in local government funding, the borrowing strategy continued to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio.
- 3.20 As a consequence of the decision to borrow internally, the Authority's level of external long-term borrowing has reduced significantly over recent years. Utilisation of the short-term borrowing market has aided the policy of internal borrowing, whilst enabling the Council to have enough liquidity at a lower cost compared to the longer-term loan market.
- 3.21 With external borrowing reducing, the annual cost of financing this debt has also fallen year on year, generating savings. These cost reductions, coupled with the deferral of further borrowing costs through internal borrowing provided substantial one-off savings.
- 3.22 At 31 March 2021 the total external debt included £25.1 million for the Merseyside Residuary Body debt, which is repayable by other external organisations, which is administered by the Authority (£27.7 million at 31 March 2020).
- 3.23 The following table shows the capital financing loans repaid during the year.

Table 2 – Loan Maturities in 2020/21

Loans maturing in 2020/21	Principal £'m	Fixed/ Variable	Rate %	Loan start date	Terms
PWLB	0.25	Fixed	1.89	October 2010	E I P
PWLB	0.50	Fixed	2.30	November 2011	E I P
PWLB	0.25	Fixed	2.16	February 2019	E I P
Landesbank Hessen	2.50	Fixed	6.95	June 2000	Maturity
SALIX	0.36	Fixed	0.00	October 2015	E I P
Total Maturing Borrowing	3.86				

Note: Equal Instalments of Principal (EIP) loans are loans that are repaid in equal instalments spread over the duration of the loan. Maturity loans are repaid in full at the maturity date of the loan.

- 3.24 During 2020/21 the Council secured a further interest free loan from SALIX in respect of energy efficient lighting schemes. This loan was for £1.00 million and matures in 2025/26.
- 3.25 The average rate of interest paid on long term borrowings as at 31 March 2021 was 5.83% (5.85% at 31 March 2020) and the average term is 28 years, (28 years at 31 March 2020). It should be noted that the average rate calculation excludes the benefit received from the policy of using internal borrowing to delay borrowing for capital financing purposes. This incurs a £nil borrowing cost at the expense of foregone investment income and if included would reduce the average rate.
- 3.26 Temporary, short, dated loans, predominantly from other local authorities remain affordable and attractive for periods of low cash flow.

Other Long-Term Liabilities

- 3.27 Other Long-Term Liabilities relates to the schools Private Finance Initiative (PFI) scheme. Under the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) these items are now shown on the Balance Sheet as a Financial Liability and therefore need to be considered within any Treasury Management decision making process.
- 3.28 As at 31 March 2021 the PFI liability was valued at £36.9 million to be repaid by 2031.

INVESTMENT ACTIVITY

- 3.29 Both the CIPFA and the MHCLG's Investment Guidance require the Authority to invest prudently and have regard to the security and liquidity of investments before seeking the optimum yield. These investments arise from a number of sources including General Fund Balances, Reserves and Provisions, grants received in advance of expenditure, money borrowed in advance of capital expenditure, Schools' Balances and daily cashflow / working capital.
- 3.30 At 31 March 2020 the Council held investments of £88 million, this decreased to £50 million in June 2020 and maintaining similar levels at the end of September (£45 million) then reducing to December 2020 (£19 million). During the final quarter of the financial year the Council received further financial assistance from Central government in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, hence the increase in investment levels seen in the table below to £48 million.

Table 3 – Level of Investment 2020/21

Investment Counterparty	Balance 01/04/20 £000	Investments Made £000	Maturities £000	Balance 31/03/21 £000	Credit Rating
Government Debt Management Office	10,450	584,695	-595,145	0	AA-
Banks	10,000	1,380	-11,380	0	AA-
	5,000	73,541	-77,600	941	A+
	5,000	25,620	-25,620	5,000	A
Money Market Funds	39,500	347,173	-362,756	23,917	AAA
Corporate	975		0	975	Unrated
Externally Managed Funds	17,000			17,000	AAA
Total	87,925	1,032,409	-1,072,501	47,833	

Note 1: Unrated Corporate investments are cash flow facilities backed by suitable financial guarantees.

- 3.31 Security of capital remained the main investment objective. This was maintained by following the counterparty policy set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2020/21 which defined “high credit quality” organisations as those having a long-term credit rating of A- or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher.
- 3.32 Counterparty credit quality was assessed and monitored with reference to credit ratings (the Authority’s minimum long-term counterparty rating for 2020/21 was A- across rating agencies Fitch, S&P and Moody’s); credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support and reports in the quality financial press.
- 3.33 The following table shows the credit composition of the Council’s investment portfolio as at 31 March 2021:

Table 4: Investment Portfolio – Credit Components

Credit Rating	Proportion of Portfolio %
AAA	65
A+	2
A	10
Unrated	23
Total	100

Note: 'Unrated' components relate to corporate investments that despite the absence of a formal rating, are either deemed credit worthy due to analysis of their performance over a variety of credit metrics or backed by suitable financial guarantees. These institutions are subject to a lower counterparty limit than those with formal credit ratings.

- 3.34 Investments with Banks and Building Societies were primarily call accounts and fixed-rate term deposits. The maximum duration of any new investment was constantly reviewed in line with the prevailing credit outlook during the year as well as market conditions.
- 3.35 The Authority also has investments in externally managed cash plus funds, a strategic bond fund and a pooled property fund, which allow the Authority to diversify into asset classes other than cash with the need to own and manage the underlying investments. The funds which are operated on a variable net asset value (VNAV) basis offer diversification of investment risk, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager; they also offer enhanced returns over the longer term but are more volatile in the short-term. The Authority's pooled fund investments are in the respective fund's 'distributing' share class which pay out the income generated.
- 3.36 Any unrealised capital movements will not have an impact on the General Fund as the Authority has either, depending on the fund, elected to present changes in the funds' fair values in other comprehensive income (FVOCI) or is using the alternative fair value through profit and loss (FVPL) accounting and must defer the funds' fair value losses to the Pooled Investment Fund Adjustment Account until 2023/24.
- 3.37 Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Authority's investment objectives is regularly reviewed. Strategic fund investments are made in the knowledge that capital values will move both up and down on months, quarters and even years; but with the confidence that over a three to five-year period total returns will exceed cash interest rates. Their performance and suitability in meeting the Authority's investment objectives are monitored regularly and discussed with Arlingclose.
- 3.38 For diversification purposes the Treasury Management team invest in a variety of counterparties and financial instruments to help mitigate counterparty and liquidity risks. A summary of the instruments invested in follows:

Table 5: Investment Portfolio – Financial Instruments

Investment Instrument	Proportion of Portfolio %
Money Market Fund	50
Externally Managed Fund	36
Call Account	12
Term Deposit	2
Total	100

- 3.39 As stated in the Revenue Monitoring reports the budgeted investment income for the year estimated at £2.1 million was unlikely to be achieved. The final income for the year was £0.23 million (£0.37 million in 2019/20) with the reduction attributable to these key factors:
- a) Low interest rates offered for investments
 - b) The economic impact of COVID-19
 - c) The continuing policy of relying on internal borrowing to temporarily fund and thereby delay borrowing for the capital programme, which reduces balances available to put into investments but generates savings in interest incurred.
- 3.40 The level of investment income does not reflect the savings of an estimated 2.0% on delayed borrowing for amounts internally borrowed. Throughout 2020/21 the Bank of England Base Rate was set at a level of 0.10%. The Authority had expected to receive significantly lower income from its cash and short-dated money market investments, including money market funds in 2020/21, as rates on cash investments are close to zero percent. Income from most of the Authority's externally managed funds will also be lower than in 2019/20 and earlier years. Dividend and income distribution was dependent on company earnings in a very challenging and uncertain trading environment as well as enforced cuts or deferral required by regulatory authorities.
- 3.41 The return on investments, along with our policy of internally borrowing, reflects prevailing market conditions and the objective of optimising returns commensurate with the principles of security and liquidity.

Credit Rating Developments

- 3.42 Credit Default Swaps (CDS) can be used as a measure of the financial markets view of the financial health of a banking institution, the higher the CDS the higher the uncertainty level. After spiking in March 2020, credit default swap spreads declined over the remaining period of the year to broadly pre-pandemic levels.
- 3.43 Credit rating actions to the period ending September 2020 have been covered in previous outturn reports. Subsequent credit developments include Moody's downgrading the UK sovereign rating to Aa3 with a stable outlook which then impacted a number of other UK institutions, banks and local government.
- 3.44 The vaccine approval and subsequent rollout programme are both credit positive for the financial services sector in general, but there remains much uncertainty around the extent of the losses banks and building societies will suffer due to the economic slowdown which has resulted due to pandemic-related lockdowns and restrictions.
- 3.45 The institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by treasury management advisors Arlingclose remain under constant review, but at the end of the period no changes had been made to the names on the list or the recommended maximum duration of 35 days.

Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) Issues

- 3.46 Over 250 UK local authorities, including Wirral, have declared a climate emergency to tackle the drivers and impact of climate change, adapting now for sustainability in

future years. Whilst there are no universally agreed metrics to assess these issues, the Council has included within its Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22 an appendix noting future ESG considerations.

Non-Treasury Investments

- 3.47 The Treasury Management Code definition of ‘investments’ has been widened to include financial assets as well as non-financial assets held primarily for financial returns such as investment property. These, along with other investments made for non-treasury management purposes such as loans supporting service outcomes and investments in subsidiaries, must be discussed in the Capital Strategy or Investment Strategy. Additional risks of such investments are to be set out clearly and the impact on financial sustainability is to be identified and reported.

COMPLIANCE WITH TREASURY INDICATORS

- 3.48 The Authority confirms that it has complied with its Treasury Management Indicators for 2020/21, which were approved by Council on 2 March 2020 as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement. Details can be found in the Appendix.
- 3.49 In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice this report provides Members with a summary report of the treasury management activity during 2020/21. None of the indicators have been breached and a prudent approach has been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.

OTHER MATTERS

- 3.50 **CIPFA consultations:** In February 2021 CIPFA launched two consultations on changes to its Prudential Code and Treasury Management Code of Practice. These follow the Public Accounts Committee’s recommendation that the prudential framework should be further tightened following continued borrowing by some authorities for investment purposes. These are principles-based consultations and will be followed by more specific proposals later in the year.
- 3.51 In the Prudential Code the key area being addressed is the statement that “local authorities must not borrow more than or in advance of their needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed”.
- 3.52 **IFRS 16 - Lease accounting standard:** Due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, CIPFA/LASAAC has delayed the implementation of the new IFRS 16 Leases accounting standard for a further year to 2022/23.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In the financial year 2020/21 treasury management activities produced an overspend of approximately £2.4 million. which is attributable to 2020/21 budget savings that were not achieved due to implementation delays emanating from COVID response activity and significant changes in interest rates on investments.

- 4.2 Interest rates have been significantly reduced by the Bank of England as a response to the COVID pandemic. Opportunities for investments have been curtailed whilst the rate of increase for yields has slowed, however work is being carried out with advisors to try and enhance the rate of return on the investment portfolio. With regards to reducing the interest costs associated with the Council's loans, work is taking place to renegotiate borrowing terms with lenders but is behind schedule due to other demands on financial institutions and other involved parties.
- 4.3 Capital financing debt has reduced to £166 million, per the balance sheet as at 31 March 2020, a decrease of £3 million since 1 April 2019, despite additional capital expenditure commitments.
- 4.4 Investment income has also helped to generate resources for service delivery.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. This requires the annual production of Treasury Indicators and a Treasury Management Strategy Statement and the reporting of treasury management activities at least twice a year.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The Council is responsible for treasury decisions and activity and none of these decisions are without risk. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk are important, and the main risks are: -

Risk	Mitigation
Fluctuations in interest rate levels	That the borrowing and investment profiles are balanced both in terms of maturity (utilising short- and long-term instruments) and also in terms of the nature of the interest rate of the portfolio (fixed rate and variable interest rate products)
Exposure to inflation	That wherever possible investments are entered into at inflation equalling levels of interest. This depends entirely on the nature and purpose of the proposed investment.
Legal and Regulatory Risk	That appropriate legal advice is sought on new opportunities to ensure adherence to relevant legislation and regulation.

Credit and Counterparty Risk (Security of investments).	That any potential counterparty is subjected to suitable due diligence to ascertain appropriateness for investment and investment criteria
Council issues S114 notice	Should the Council encounter difficulties in obtaining borrowing following a S114 notice, the Authority has access to borrow from the PWLB as a lender of last resort. Any such borrowing would be subject to higher rates of interest.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 This strategy report has been written in consultation with the Council's external treasury management advisors, Arlingclose Ltd, in accordance with best practice.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no equality implications directly from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 As part of future investment strategy, consideration will be given to potential opportunities to invest in environmentally focussed instruments or organisations. 'Ethical, Social and Governance' (ESG) investment criteria will be considered and, where viable in adherence to the policies laid out in this strategy, will only be entered into following satisfactory assessment of the instrument and/or organisation. An example of such investment is the holding in the Public Sector Social Impact Fund.

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APPENDICES

Appendix Treasury Indicators 2020/21

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management

SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2020-21	2nd March 2020
Treasury Management Annual Report 2019-20	19th October 2020
Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2021-22	11th November 2020

APPENDIX

TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS

Background

Treasury management indicators are not in the 2017 edition of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code itself but in the separate Treasury Management Code guidance notes for local authorities, which was last published in 2011. The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

Treasury Management Indicators

1. Security

The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Credit risk indicator	Target	31.3.21 Actual	Complied?
Portfolio average credit rating	A-	A+	Yes

2. Liquidity

The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount it can borrow each quarter without giving prior notice.

Liquidity risk indicator	Target	31.3.21 Actual	Complied?
Total sum borrowed in past 3 months without prior notice	£15m	£75m	Yes

3. Maturity Structure of Borrowing

This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be:

Maturity Structure of Borrowing	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Actual	Complied?
	2020/21	2020/21	31.03.23	
	%	%	%	
Under 12 Months	0	90	68	YES
12 Months and within 24 months	0	50	10	YES
24 Months and within 5 years	0	50	4	YES
5 years and within 10 years	0	50	0	YES
10 years and over	0	100	18	YES

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment, including LOBO loans, many of which have repayment options every six months.

4. **Principal Sums Invested For Periods Longer Than a Year**

The Council has placed an upper limit for principal sums invested for periods longer than a year. This limit is to contain exposure to the possibility of loss that may arise as a result of the Council having to seek early repayment of the sums invested.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£30m	£30m	£30m
Actual principal invested beyond year end	£10m	£10m	£10m
Complied?	Yes	Yes	Yes

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 28 July 2021

REPORT TITLE:	WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

The Policy and Resources 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 Policy and Resources Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy & Resources Committee are invited to comment on and note the proposed Policy and Resources 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 Policy and Resources committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1** Various formats for the workplan were explored. The current format is 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:

- (i) The Council Plan
- (ii) The Council's transformation programme
- (iii) The Council's Forward Plan
- (iv) Service performance information
- (v) Risk management information
- (vi) Public or service user feedback
- (vii) Referrals from Council

Terms of Reference

The Policy and Resources Committee has two main areas of responsibility, which is to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, including making decisions on policies and co-ordinating spend not reserved to full Council, and to maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets.

The Committee is charged by full Council to:-

- (a) formulate, co-ordinate and implement corporate policies and strategies and the medium-term financial plan (budget), which includes responsibility for any decision:
 - (i) that relates to such matters to the extent that they are not reserved to full Council;
 - (ii) on any cross-cutting policies that impact on other committee areas;
 - (iii) on policy matters not otherwise allocated to any other committee; and
 - (iv) to determine any dispute or difference between committees;
- (b) provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a 'whole-council' view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management, which includes responsibility for a decision:
 - (i) that has a major impact on a number of Council services or on the Council as a whole;

- (ii) on any virement between Budget funds (revenue) requested by a Committee or officer in excess of **£100,000**;
 - (iii) on any virement between Budget funds (capital) or any amendment to the Capital Programme requested by a Committee or officer in excess of **£100,000**;
 - (iv) regarding land and property including major acquisition and disposals, which includes reserved decision making concerning any purchase, sale or transfer of a value in excess of, or likely to exceed, **£100,000**;
 - (v) regarding companies or limited liability partnerships including acquisition and disposals; and
 - (vi) which is deemed significant in terms of impact on the Council's revenue or capital (to be determined by the Head of Paid Service and/or Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Leader);
- (c) without limiting the generality of responsibility for cross-cutting policies (at (a) above), lead on behalf of the Council:
- (i) in matters concerning relationships with HM Government, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and other major public and non-public bodies;
- (d) appoint Council representatives as required;
- (e) nominate councillors and other persons to outside bodies; and
- (f) undertake responsibility for developing and monitoring the enabling corporate services, including, finance and investment, project support and risk management, strategic procurement and commercial strategies, ICT, property and asset management, human resources and organisational development, law and governance, communications and public affairs, emergency planning and business continuity.

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.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Policy and Resources Committee Work Plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Council Plan
The Council's transformation programme
The Council's Forward Plan

Subject History (last three years)

Council Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	7 October 2020
Policy and Resources Committee	11 November 2020
Policy and Resources Committee	21 December 2020
Policy and Resources Committee	20 January 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	17 February 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	17 March 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	9 June 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	30 June 2021

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

28 July 2021

Contact Officer/s: Andrew Mossop / Bryn Griffiths

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PROPOSED AGENDA FOR POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 28 July 2021

Item	Key Decision Yes/No	Lead Departmental Officer	Wirral Plan Priority
The Wirral Plan 2021-2026	Yes	Chief Executive: Paul Satoor	All
Community Bonds	No	Director of Resources: Shaer Halewood	Inclusive Economy
Treasury Management Annual Report 2020/21	Yes	Director of Resources: Shaer Halewood	Inclusive Economy
Referred from Children, Young People & Education Committee on 15.06.2021: Prevention	Yes	Director of Children, Family and Education: Simone White	Brighter Futures, Safe & Pleasant Communities and Active & Healthy Lives
Referred from Economy Regeneration and Development Committee on 26.07.2021: Wirral Growth Company: Birkenhead Phase 1 Final Site Development Plan	Yes	Director of Regeneration and Place: Alan Evans	Sustainable Environment, Inclusive Economy

Deadline for SLT	Deadline for Cleared Reports	Agenda Published
02 July 2021	12 July 2021	20 July 2021

UPCOMING KEY DECISIONS

Item	Brief Description	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer
Liverpool City Region Enabling Powers and Associated Issues Key	Various matters which may require the consent of this Authority as one of the constituent authorities of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	Between August 2021 and October 2021	Director of Law and Governance, Phil McCourt
Strategic Asset Acquisitions Key	Approval to acquire key assets as part of the Council's growth strategy	Between August 2021 and October 2021	Director of Regeneration and Place, Alan Evans
Liscard Neighbourhood Framework / Integrated Masterplan Key	Approval of the Neighbourhood Framework / Integrated Masterplan for Liscard Town and confirmation of next steps	Between August 2021 and October 2021	Director of Regeneration and Place, Alan Evans
Wirral Local Plan: 'Local Green Space - Assessment of Applications for Designations' Key	TBC	Between August 2021 and October 2021	Director of Regeneration and Place, Alan Evans
Loan / Loan Facility Application Key	To agree a business loan application relating to a local business	Between August 2021 and October 2021	Director of Resources, Shaer Halewood
Northwest Community Bank Key	Update and decisions on Community Bank	Between August 2021 and October 2021	Director of Resources, Shaer Halewood

Edsential Update and Finance Key	Update and decisions on Edsential	Between August 2021 and October 2021	Director of Resources, Share Halewood
Real Living Wage Foundation Accreditation Key	Report on accreditation being sought from the Real Living Wage Foundation following a report to Cabinet on 27 July, 2020	Between August 2021 and October 2021	Director of Resources, Shaer Halewood
Financial Monitoring Quarter 1 Key	TBC	Between August 2021 and October 2021	Director of Resources, Shaer Halewood
One Wirral Change Programme Key	This report provides an overview of the Council's emerging change programme.	Between August 2021 and October 2021	Director of Resources, Shaer Halewood
Council Tax 2022/23 (Tax Base, Discounts and Exemptions and Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme) Key	Agree the Council Tax Base for Council and precepting authorities (including discounts and exemptions and Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme).	Between September 2021 and November 2021	Director of Resources, Shaer Halewood
Medium Term Financial Strategy Key	TBC	Between September 2021 and November 2021	Director of Resources, Shaer Halewood

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Brief Description	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer
Application for National Non Domestic Rate Relief	From time to time an organisation or body that may qualify for Discretionary Rates Relief to reduce their liability for paying Rates will apply to the Council for such support which requires a formal decision.	Between July 2021 and October 2021	Director of Resources, Shaer Halewood

Income Generation	Added at request of P&R Committee	Between July 2021 and October 2021	Director of Resources, Shaer Halewood
Refugees and Asylum Seekers	Referred from Council on 22 March 2021	Between July 2021 and October 2021	Director of Regeneration and Place, Alan Evans

STANDING ITEMS AND MONITORING REPORTS

Item	Reporting Frequency	Lead Departmental Officer
Performance Monitoring	TBC	Carly Brown
Financial Monitoring	TBC	Shaer Halewood
Work Programme Update	Every Meeting	Phil McCourt

WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

Item	Format	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Working Groups/ Sub Committees				
Task and Finish work				
Spotlight sessions / workshops				
Corporate scrutiny / Other				



POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 28 July 2021

REPORT TITLE:	PREVENTION
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

The report provides for consideration of the recommendations of the Children, Young People and Education Committee. The full minute of the Children, Young People and Education Committee and associated Report of the Director of Children, Families and Education are attached.

This matter is being referred to Policy and Resources as it is a cross-cutting policy that impacts on Adult Social Care and Public Health as well as Children, Young People and Education.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee held on Tuesday, 15 June 2021 resolved to recommend that the Policy and Resources Committee:

1. Approve of the Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework.
2. Approve the Breaking the Cycle programme approach.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The emerging vision of Wirral Council is *equity for people and place and opportunity for all*, with emphasis on tackling health inequalities and improving outcomes. In this context, it is beneficial for the Council to outline a clear policy statement for prevention which promotes early intervention activity and approaches. The Prevention Framework is a tool for use by any public service to ensure that they are working to meet needs and resolve issues earlier, thereby contributing to Wirral Council's future vision.
- 1.2 Prevention is a cross-cutting theme of significance in Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Health, and Public Health. It is therefore essential that there is cross-Council agreement to prioritise preventative activity and to outline the expectations and delivery methodology for preventative approaches. Therefore, the matter is put to the Policy and Resources Committee for approval following a recommendation from Children, Young People and Education Committee.
- 1.3 The Breaking the Cycle programme is an example of how the Prevention Framework can be used to bring together a range of interventions working towards very similar outcomes. With eight projects, all working with people facing multiple disadvantage, it is anticipated that bringing them into a single programme will maximise the potential of the resource, reduce likelihood of duplication, and increase the chance of successfully supporting local people living in the most deprived wards to turn their lives around.
- 1.4 Supporting the Breaking the Cycle programme provides an opportunity to test the impact and potential of the Prevention Framework. Learning from the experience to then apply similar approaches to preventative work across people services.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Other options have been considered as reported within the minutes of the Children, Young People and Education Committee and appended report.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 This report provides the Children, Young People and Education Committee with an overview of the prevention approach recommended for adoption by Wirral Council, including a Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework. In addition, the report details the Breaking the Cycle programme, which seeks to demonstrate how a collaboration of preventative activity can maximise opportunity and lead to better outcomes for people, services, and organisations.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. It is intended that existing resources will be used differently as opposed to new resources being sought.
- 4.2 Over the initial course of the Breaking the Cycle programme, which continues up to April 2023, a total of £6.54m is being invested. This includes £682k invested by Wirral Council and £5.858m from other funding sources. Each programme has specific funding, contract management and oversight arrangements. The Prevention Steering Group will have oversight of performance, but responsibility for delivery lies with the nominated Project Sponsors and Project Leads as detailed in the Appendix of the Breaking the Cycle Prospectus.
- 4.3 A number of the catalyst prevention programmes featured within the Breaking the Cycle programme are evidence-based and provide anticipated cost avoidances. Further work to consider cost benefit and cost avoidance will be undertaken throughout the programme to understand how preventative activity can contribute to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In accordance with the Part 3B of Constitution (Committee Terms of Reference), the Policy and Resources Committee has two main areas of responsibility, which is to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, including making decisions on policies and co-ordinating spend not reserved to full Council, and to maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets.
- 5.2 the Policy & Resources Committee is charged by full Council to provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a 'whole-council' view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management. In particular, this includes specific responsibility for a decision on any cross-cutting policies that impact on other committee areas as per section 1.2(a)(ii) of the Terms of Reference.

As part of the matter of business that was the subject of the report to Children, Young People and Education Committee falls under that responsibility reserved to the Policy and Resources Committee, the Children, Young People and Education Committee's resolution is presented as a recommendation.
- 5.3 As the decision in this matter is the subject of a recommendation from another Committee, the Policy and Resources Committee must take into account the resolution of that Committee and give due regard to the guidance and comments made by its members. The Policy and Resources Committee must not, however, consider itself bound by that Committee's recommendations or otherwise fetter its discretion; its Members must come to their own decision. In doing so, the Committee must satisfy itself that it has been provided with all relevant information or a suitable précis to enable it to comply with its duties and make a lawful decision.

5.4 Other legal considerations are as set out in the annexed report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 This report is for information only and does not contain any direct resource implications.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The risks were covered in the original report submitted to the Committee.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The report has been considered by the Children, Young People and Education Committee and the recommendation from that Committee is presented to Policy and Resources Committee. The report has also been considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board, where there was support for the approach and it was suggested that the work already ongoing in partner organisations such as the NHS around prevention and tackling health inequalities could align with that taking place within the Council.

8.2 Other Engagement and Consultation considerations were covered in the original report submitted to the Committee.

9.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS (EQUALITY, ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE)

9.1 Other implications arising from the subject matter were considered as set out in the annexed report(s) and meeting minute.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Report to Children, Young People and Education Committee
Appendix 2 – Minute from Children, Young People and Education Committee
Appendix 3 – Prevention Policy Statement
Appendix 4 – Prevention Framework
Appendix 5 – Breaking the Cycle Prospectus

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Marmot Review report – 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives | Local Government Association](#)

[Health Equity in England The Marmot Review 10 Years On full report.pdf](#)

[Childhood in the time of Covid | Children's Commissioner for EnglandChildren's Commissioner for England \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Children, Young People and Education Committee	15 June 2021
Health and Wellbeing Board	16 June 2021

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 15 June 2021

REPORT TITLE:	PREVENTION
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the Children, Young People and Education Committee with an overview of the prevention approach recommended for adoption by Wirral Council, including a Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework. In addition, the report details the Breaking the Cycle programme, which seeks to demonstrate how a collaboration of preventative activity can maximise opportunity and lead to better outcomes for people, services, and organisations.

The report and strategy are aligned to priorities of Wirral Council's Plan 2025:

- Working for brighter futures for our children, young people and their families by breaking the cycle of poor outcomes and raising the aspirations of every child in Wirral.
- Working for safe and pleasant communities where our residents feel safe, and where they want to live and raise their families.
- Working for happy, active and healthy lives where people are supported, protected and inspired to live independently.

This matter affects residents across the borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is requested to recommend to Policy and Resources Committee that:

1. The Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework be approved.
2. The Breaking the Cycle programme approach be endorsed.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The emerging vision of Wirral Council is *equity for people and place and opportunity for all*, with emphasis on tackling health inequalities and improving outcomes. In this context, it is beneficial for the Council to outline a clear policy statement for prevention which promotes early intervention activity and approaches. The Prevention Framework is a tool for use by any public service to ensure that they are working to meet needs and resolve issues earlier, thereby contributing to Wirral Council's future vision.
- 1.2 Prevention is a cross-cutting theme of significance in Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Health, and Public Health. It is therefore essential that there is cross-Council agreement to prioritise preventative activity and to outline the expectations and delivery methodology for preventative approaches.
- 1.3 The Breaking the Cycle programme is an example of how the Prevention Framework can be used to bring together a range of interventions working towards very similar outcomes. With eight projects, all working with people facing multiple disadvantage, it is anticipated that bringing them into a single programme will maximise the potential of the resource, reduce likelihood of duplication, and increase the chance of successfully supporting local people living in the most deprived wards to turn their lives around.
- 1.4 Supporting the Breaking the Cycle programme provides an opportunity to test the impact and potential of the Prevention Framework. Learning from the experience to then apply similar approaches to preventative work across people services.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The alternative option is to continue delivering services without a cross-Council arrangements for prevention. However, with demand for acute services continuing to rise and budget pressures increasing, continuing with the existing status quo would make it unlikely that the Council would alleviate those pressures.
- 2.2 Existing arrangements, whereby individual departments lead prevention within their own scope of control, can lead to single-issue responses. Whilst this may be helpful to service providers, in that their single-issue objective is more easily responded to, it does not work well for people or families who experience multiple issues at once. There are many inter-dependencies between key life stages which require a more joined up response from services.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In September 2020, having been successful in securing funding for a range of preventative approaches, members of Children's Services Management Team presented an overview of activity to the Council's Senior Leadership Team. It was agreed that a cross-Council approach to prevention would support the work initiated by Children's Services to have greater impact.

- 3.2 The need for a cross-Council, cross-directorate approach is based on the understanding that the vast majority of children who enter the care system do so because of the circumstances affecting their parents, such as domestic abuse, poor mental health, and substance and/or alcohol misuse. Whilst the adult directly experiences these difficult circumstances, the impact of them is felt by the child and often compromises parenting.
- 3.3 The Council's Senior Leadership Team agreed that a more joined up approach, involving housing, community safety, leisure and library services, as well as Children's and Adult Social Care and Health departments, would lead to more effective prevention and potentially reduce the need for acute services and admission to care.
- 3.4 In the interim there has been a growing focus on health inequalities both at local and national level which add weight to the case for a bold preventative approach. Locally, the Health and Wellbeing Board has been refreshed to place greater emphasis on having an integrated approach to prevention and community-based health and wellbeing services that address wider determinants of health. The emerging vision for Wirral Council is focusing on *equity for people and place* and tackling problems which have become entrenched. Nationally, prompted by impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, there have been many publications such as *The Marmot Review 10 Years On* and *Childhood in the Time of Covid* by the Children's Commissioner, which call for more joined up, preventative approaches.
- 3.5 Following a programme of engagement sessions with multi-disciplinary workers from across the borough, the Prevention Policy Statement, Prevention Framework and Breaking the Cycle Prospectus, included in the appendices of this report, have been produced.
- 3.6 The Prevention Policy Statement
The proposed policy statement is included in Appendix 1. The purpose of this is to enable Wirral Council to make a clear commitment to prevention within the policy context, highlighting the influential role of the Council and the benefits to people and services.
- 3.7 The Prevention Framework
The proposed framework is included in Appendix 2. This document aims to demonstrate how the Council's policy for prevention can be put into action. The framework is intended for use as guidance for anyone working in public services, as a practitioner, commissioner, manager or leader. It outlines the values and underpinning principles for prevention (as were articulated through the co-production activities) and provides a range of considerations as to how preventative services can be delivered to benefit local people.
- 3.8 The Breaking the Cycle Prospectus
The prospectus is included in Appendix 3. This preventative programme is an exemplar of the policy and framework in action. The programme will bring together eight separate projects, introduce adapted practice across Council services, and pilot an outcomes plan and data collation approach intended to improve understanding of impact.

- 3.9 As reflected within the Prevention Framework, there are many strands of preventative work which could be aligned to, or further developed, under the overarching framework. There is significant work in train to embed a new model of earliest help for children and families utilising the same principles. Likewise, for the new Youth Offer model, *Safer Adolescence Strategy* and emerging *Community Safety Strategy*, prevention is a key focus. Preventing need, such as hospital admissions or care, or extending early help to include those living with frailty, are within scope for a prevention framework approach.
- 3.10 Ensuring a strong relationship with the Health and Wellbeing Board as well as the Committees will enable prevention approaches to grow and develop.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. It is intended that existing resources will be used differently as opposed to new resources being sought.
- 4.2 Over the initial course of the Breaking the Cycle programme, which continues up to April 2023, a total of £6.54m is being invested. This includes £682k invested by Wirral Council and £5.858m from other funding sources. Each programme has specific funding, contract management and oversight arrangements. The Prevention Steering Group will have oversight of performance, but responsibility for delivery lies with the nominated Project Sponsors and Project Leads as detailed in the Appendix of the Breaking the Cycle Prospectus.
- 4.3 A number of the catalyst prevention programmes featured within the Breaking the Cycle programme are evidence-based and provide anticipated cost avoidances. Further work to consider cost benefit and cost avoidance will be undertaken throughout the programme to understand how preventative activity can contribute to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework are intended to be beneficial for resources by supporting and enabling public services to deliver high-quality activity for early intervention.
- 6.2 The Breaking the Cycle programme seeks to improve coordination of resource without impacting on staffing or assets.
- 6.3 It is intended that improved data and intelligence will lead to better understanding of need and better understanding of which interventions, or combination of interventions, lead to the best outcomes for families. An improved level of data maturity can be achieved within the existing ICT capacity and resource.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Failing to deliver a co-ordinated approach to prevention programmes presents the risk of missed opportunity, both in terms of meaningfully tackling issues that lead to health inequality and in optimising the funding we have secured for these programmes. The Breaking the Cycle programme seeks to maximise the current opportunity and provide an evidence base for future, long-term preventative programmes.
- 7.2 A Risk Management plan has been completed for the Breaking the Cycle programme and is included within Appendix 3 - Breaking the Cycle Prospectus.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Over the months November 2020 to April 2021, considerable engagement has taken place to develop the Prevention Policy Statement, Prevention Framework and Breaking the Cycle Prospectus. Supported by external agency, Peopletoo, activity has included: workshops, focus groups, one-to-one conversations, use of online surveys and interactive message boards. Engagement has been across Council directorates, with partner agencies, third sector organisations and with youth voice groups.
- 8.2 Learning from other relevant engagement and consultation work, including the *Why Community Matters* report on early help, the Youth Offer consultation, and co-production activity for the *Domestic Abuse: No Excuse* and *Safer Adolescence Strategy* has also informed the prevention documentation and programme.
- 8.3 As detailed within the Prevention Framework, co-production is a fundamental building block of preventative activity. The framework outlines the commitment to ensure meaningful engagement and involvement of local people within all aspects of preventative work. The Prevention Steering Group, which will report to the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, will have lay member representation for youth and adults.
- 8.4 The Partnership for Children, Young People and Families has had oversight of the engagement work, with progress reports being presented twice during this period. Monthly updates on progress have also been provided to the Programme Management Office.

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 It is recognised that a disproportionate number of people facing multiple disadvantage have protected characteristics of the nine groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the Breaking the Cycle programme and can be found via the following link:

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

- 9.3 To ensure that equality implications are appropriately considered throughout the duration of the Breaking the Cycle programme and across further prevention activity, an officer with expertise in Equality and Diversity has been recruited as a member of the Prevention Steering Group.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework are intended for application across public services and relevant to each aspect of the Wirral Plan, including the *sustainable environment* domain. Both documents should be used to inform and support development of prevention activity with Wirral residents in relation to the environment and climate emergency.
- 10.2 There are no environmental or climate implications arising from the delivery of the Breaking the Cycle programme. It will have no impact on the emission of greenhouse gases.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Prevention Policy Statement
Appendix 2- Prevention Framework
Appendix 3- Breaking the Cycle Prospectus

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
N/A	NA

MINUTE EXTRACT**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 15 JUNE, 2021****6. PREVENTION**

Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director: Early Help and Prevention introduced the report of the Director for Children, Families and Education, which provided the Committee with an overview of the prevention approach recommended for adoption, including a Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework. In addition, the report detailed the Breaking the Cycle programme, which sought to demonstrate how a collaboration of preventative activity could maximise opportunity and lead to better outcomes for people, services, and organisations.

It was reported that the Prevention Policy Statement was intended to make a clear commitment from the Council to early intervention and prevention, whilst the framework provided structure and guidance on taking preventative approaches, defining the different levels of prevention and setting out 6 foundations for preventative approaches, these were:

- Strategic Leadership
- Place-based Approach
- Strengths-based Approach
- Equity
- Whole-system Approach
- Co-production

The intention was to create a suite of preventative programmes, one of which was the Breaking the Cycle programme which was presented to the Committee. The programme intended to bring together a range of interventions working towards similar outcomes, and would work with people dealing with deprivation factors associated with deprivation such as drug abuse and risk of homelessness to give them priority access to catalyst projects, and eventually would be used to ask wider agencies to work differently with this cohort of people to provide support in a more suitable way.

Members expressed significant support for the approach and sought further clarity on the source of the funding. The Assistant Director: Early Help and Intervention informed the Committee that the Council had been successful in funding bids over a number of years, and that this workstream pulled together those different strands of work to maximise their effectiveness.

Resolved – That Policy and Resources be recommended to:

- 1) Approve the Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework.**
- 2) Endorse the Breaking the Cycle programme approach.**

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Prevention Policy Statement

1. Introduction

As a local authority, we can have a positive influence through how we organise our operations and services; the regulations and policies we set; the goods and services we buy; the investments we make; and the example we set to others.

Taking a borough-wide approach to prevention presents major opportunities for the Council, with its partners, to practise, demonstrate and live by its commitment to improve quality of life, health and well-being of its local community through helping to identify and address needs at the earliest possible time. By prevention we mean literally “preventing” things that can have real life, long term impact on both current and future generations. More than this, it is about promoting the best outcomes and life experiences for Wirral residents, to achieve equity for people and place and opportunity for all.

2. Policy Context

Tackling inequality through prevention is at the core of key National legislation, policy and strategic plans. This Policy Statement outlines Wirral Council’s commitment to actively and demonstrably deliver key priorities set out within:

- The Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 2004
- The NHS Long-Term Plan
- The Five Year Forward Plan for Mental Health, Primary Care and the NHS
- The Public Health England Strategy 2020-2025
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

This Policy Statement is informed by the Marmot report, titled 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives', which emphasises the need to address the social determinants of health, the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age and which can lead to health inequalities. The detailed report contains many important findings, key to a preventative approach are:

- People living in the poorest neighbourhoods in England will on average die seven years earlier than people living in the richest neighbourhoods.
- People living in poorer areas not only die sooner but spend more of their lives with disability - an average total difference of 17 years.
- Health inequalities arise from a complex interaction of many factors - housing, income, education, social isolation, disability - all of which are strongly affected by one's economic and social status.

- Health inequalities are largely preventable. Not only is there a strong social justice case for addressing health inequalities, but there is also a pressing economic case. It is estimated that the annual cost of health inequalities is between £36 billion to £40 billion through lost taxes, welfare payments and costs to the NHS.
- Action on health inequalities requires action across all the social determinants of health, including education, occupation, income, home, and community.

Marmot highlights that, traditionally, government policies have focused resources only on some segments of society. To improve health for all of us and to reduce unfair and unjust inequalities in health, action is needed across the social gradient. For Wirral, this means a borough wide approach to prevention that does not simply focus on the bottom ten percent but takes action across the borough seeking to promote prevention for all, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage.

3. Defining Prevention

Prevention can mean different things to different people. In essence it is about helping people stay healthy, happy and independent for as long as possible. It means stopping problems from arising in the first place; focusing on keeping people healthy and thriving, not just treating them when they become ill or run into problems. If they do need help, it means supporting them to manage their health and wellbeing earlier and more effectively. This means giving people the knowledge, skills, and confidence to take full control of their lives, their health and social care and making better choices as easy as possible.

Wirral Council adopts the Public Health approach to prevention through a tiered model with three distinct levels:

- Primary prevention: all of the help, support, activities, and opportunities that are available to all of us, at any time.
- Secondary prevention: targeted interventions and specific projects and programmes, delivered at a local level by partnerships and communities.
- Tertiary prevention: interventions provided by statutory organisations, such as Councils and Health Boards.

4. The Benefits of Prevention

There is growing awareness and acceptance of the importance of taking a “prevention is better than cure” approach to policy making and the planning of services.

The benefits of a preventative approach are far reaching and can enable the following positive outcomes to be achieved.

Outcomes improving for the individual:

- improved wellbeing
- reduced offending
- reduced substance and alcohol misuse
- better physical and mental health
- secure housing
- increased financial security
- increased levels of education, employment, and training
- increased safety
- experiencing purpose, belonging and security
- improved experience of services through co-production

Outcomes improving for professionals and services:

- person-centred focus
- greater integration
- greater collaboration
- more effective delivery of service
- reduce demand on reactive services
- improved information sharing
- improved experience of work through co-production

Outcomes improving for organisations and systems:

- stronger multi-agency partnerships
- improved governance
- data shapes commissioning
- achieving common goals
- better value for money
- joint commissioning approaches
- improved system of practice through co-production

5. Wirral Council's Approach

In taking a preventative approach to policy making and planning, Wirral Council commits to improving, for its residents and businesses, quality of life, health, wellbeing, and the economy. Wirral Council is committing to acting to:

- Support partners and communities to work together, as equals, to tackle the biggest issues and risk factors that have a negative impact on health and wellbeing across Wirral.
- Build connections and strong communication across partner agencies and services, driving and enhancing collaboration.
- Support the coordination and creation of a positive eco-system within which individuals and families can thrive.
- Creating a Wirral which is flourishing, active and green.
- Embedding its approach to prevention through a co-productive approach with local communities-only by coming together will we create solutions that will truly help people in Wirral to achieve their goals and aspirations.

Wirral Council will do this by ensuring that policy, strategy, and decision-making across the Council promotes and enables a preventative approach.



Prevention Framework

A framework for embedding preventative approaches in public services

June 2021

1. Introduction

(a) Who this Prevention Framework is for

This framework is for all people engaged in the delivery of public services. It seeks to provide an understanding of what is meant by prevention, why it benefits us all, what it means to take a preventative approach, how to deliver preventative services, and most critically, the value of involving local people in the design and delivery of public services.

In our working lives, whether we are frontline practitioners, commissioners, strategic leaders or working in administrative roles, it is essential that we work in partnership to ensure that the children, young people, adults, families, and communities we serve get the education, advice, support and help they need at the earliest opportunity, so that they can live happy, healthy and purposeful lives.

This framework does not aim to replace strategic plans that public services in Wirral are working towards achieving. Shaped by national policy and the local direction of travel, this framework sets out our overarching aim, a clear set of principles and shared values within which we are committed to working.

(b) Defining Prevention

Prevention can mean different things to different people. In essence it is about helping people stay healthy, happy and independent for as long as possible. It means stopping problems from arising in the first place; focusing on keeping people healthy and thriving, not just treating them when they become ill or run into problems. If they do need help, it means supporting them to manage their health and wellbeing earlier and more effectively. This means giving people the knowledge, skills, and confidence to take full control of their lives, their health and social care and making better choices as easy as possible.

Multi-agency partners in Wirral define prevention as:

Building on the unique personal strengths and resilience of children, families and adults, through co-ordinated and enabled communities, to help people achieve the very best outcomes throughout their lives.

There are three distinct levels of prevention:

- Primary prevention: all of the help, support, activities, and opportunities that are available to all of us, at any time.
- Secondary prevention: targeted interventions and specific projects and programmes, delivered at a local level by partnerships and communities.
- Tertiary prevention: interventions provided by statutory organisations, such as Councils and Health Boards.

Providers of public services should consider the level of prevention they seek to work within, and where services are cross-cutting, providers should think about how their offer is adapted across levels.

2. The Aim of the Framework

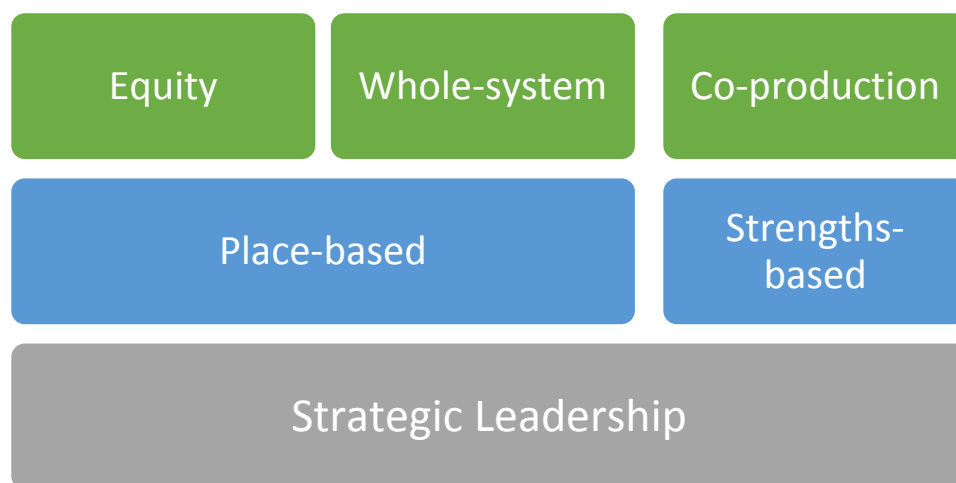
Across Wirral there are a growing number of examples of single-agency and community-level approaches to prevention that are making a positive difference to the lives of people in the borough. The aim of this framework is to enhance and build on those examples by providing guidance and structure for preventative work, which is collaborative, consistent and can lead to greater collective impact.

Whilst this framework is primarily focused on people services, which aim to tackle health inequalities and improve outcomes, taking a preventative approach is applicable across all aspects of public service. The foundations, principles, values and approaches described in this framework can be applied across the spectrum of the Wirral Plan.



3. The Foundations for Preventative Approaches

Multi-agency partners co-producing this framework, identified a core set of building blocks which form the foundation required for prevention. These building blocks should be considered in all that we do, whether as individuals living and working in Wirral and looking after our and our family's health and wellbeing, or as organisations shaping the living, learning, or working environment, and coordinating and providing services.



Strategic Leadership –Strategic leaders must recognise that no one agency, and no one person, can remove inequality or improve local neighbourhoods on their own. Through collaboration and investing in relationships, Senior Leaders can build wide and strong partnerships which deliver collective impact with and for Wirral residents.

Place-based – to ensure equity across the borough, prevention approaches should be place-based so that services and solutions meet the unique needs of people living within local communities. A coordinated approach which considers the assets, strengths and needs of the place, as well as individuals who live there, is key to tackling the inequalities in health and wellbeing.

Strengths-based – A strengths-based approach recognises that everyone has strengths, skills, capabilities, and protective factors that surround and support them within their lives. A strengths-based approach will ensure that staff and services enable people to build on these and can access opportunities to grow and achieve in the areas where they feel they need most support. The key to improved health and wellbeing is the feeling of empowerment, and strengths-based practice is essential to empowering and enabling people to become the architects of their own solutions.

Equity – A meaningful approach to prevention is dependent on equity across local communities, enabling everyone to have the same chances in life as everybody else. The concept of equity can often be challenging to explain and understand; however, we must recognise that some neighbourhoods and communities may need more help and resource than others. This will support the breakdown of structural and systemic barriers to equal opportunity and improve outcomes.

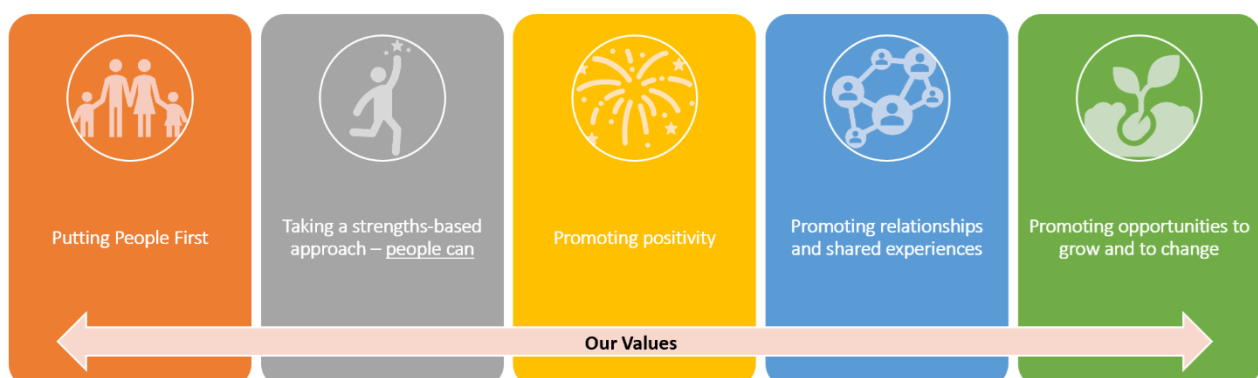
Whole-system – Applying a whole-system approach will ensure that partners work together more effectively to understand current and emerging issues and challenges impacting on the health and wellbeing of people living and working in Wirral. Embedding a whole-system approach will help to create the learning culture needed to evaluate and understand the impact of preventative work, to be flexible and responsive to emerging needs and to continually strive for improved outcomes across the borough.

Co-production – Co-production with people living and working in Wirral is essential to a meaningful, impactful approach to prevention. Co-production will ensure that partners fully understand people’s needs, hopes and ambitions and challenges faced, and it will also ensure that communities themselves are activated and supported to take meaningful steps towards improving their own health and wellbeing, creating improved connectivity, a sense of citizenship and increased social value along the way.

When establishing new services and projects, or reviewing the effectiveness of existing delivery, these foundations should be considered and evaluated.

4. The Values Underpinning Preventative Approaches

Multi-agency partners co-producing this framework, identified a core set of values which should underpin preventative approaches.



These values need to be at the heart of preventative approaches, driving decision-making and shaping projects and services. Living these values means that they should be evident in

all that we do including how agencies work with each other as well as how they deliver services to the public.

5. Considerations for Preventative Approaches

As services are designed and developed, there are many factors to consider in how they operate- where and when, how they are advertised, who they are for and what they will achieve. Where services do or can take a preventative approach, it is useful to consider the following to ensure that they are inclusive and optimise opportunities for people to resolve issues at the earliest point.



It is to be noted, that the greatest asset for prevention is the people who deliver the services. Creating the conditions where staff can embrace the values of prevention, deliver relationship-based practice, and have opportunity for continuous learning and development, should be a priority for all public services. Relationships can be transformational and mean a lot to people when they face challenges and uncertainty in their daily lives.

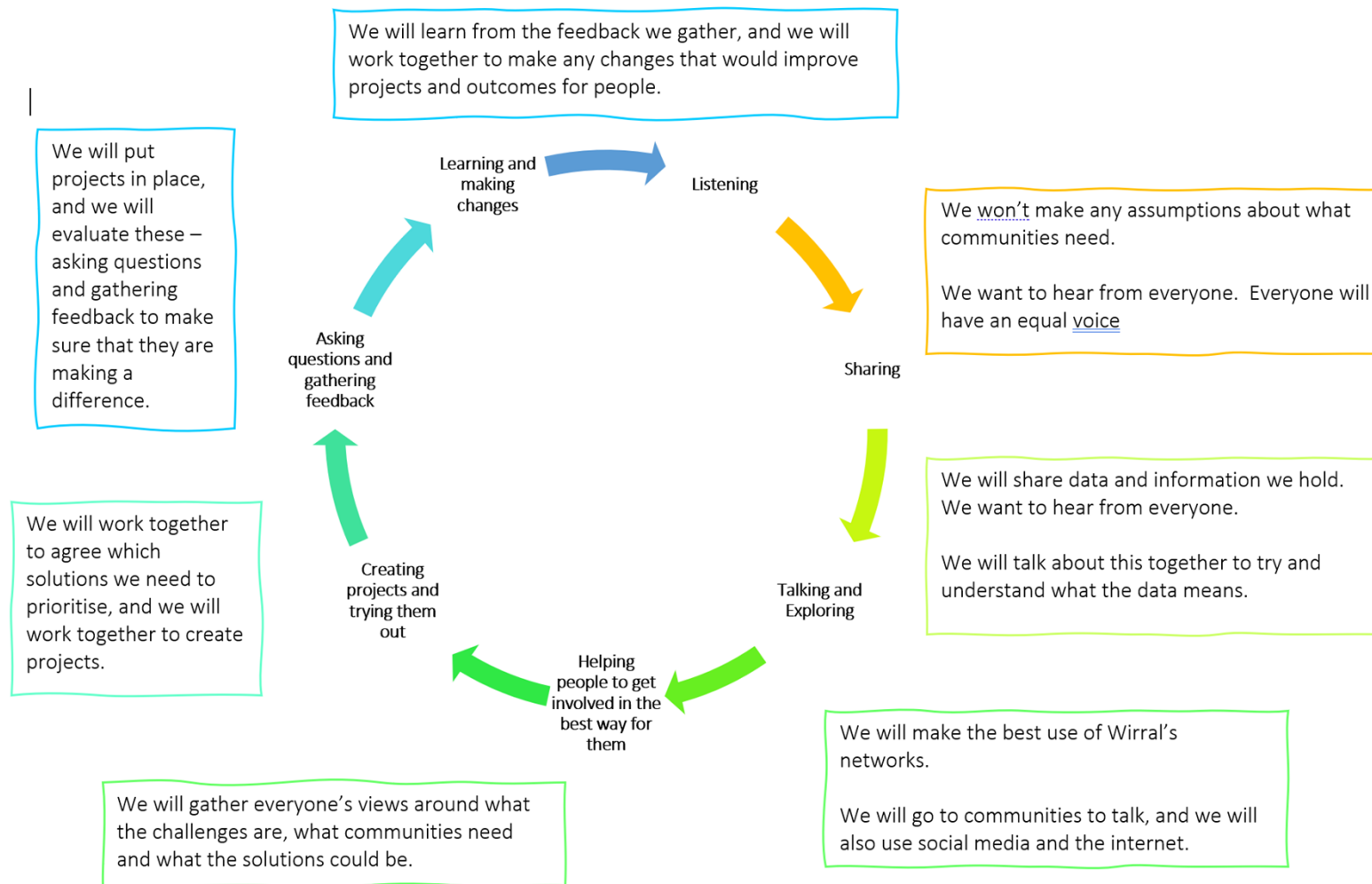
6. Co-production

Fundamental to the success of this framework is co-production. Co-production is not consultation, and it is not community engagement. Co-production, quite simply, means:

“Coming together to create something.” (Poppy Cain, Youth Apprentice)

The following diagram provides further detail on how to take a co-production approach.

APPENDIX 4



5. Creating a Suite of Preventative Programmes

Prevention is a broad term, and across public services there are many areas where a preventative approach can, and should, be taken. It is anticipated that this framework provides as an overarching structure from which a range of projects, interventions and services are delivered. To assist with thinking on what this may include, it is helpful to refer to the six domains outlined in *The Marmot Review: Fair Society, Healthy Lives*. These are:

- Give every child the best start in life.
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control of their lives.
- Create fair employment and good work for all.
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill health provision.

These domains provide categories from which to define preventative programmes.

Specific preventative programmes, which will be aligned to this framework may relate to areas such as:

- Earliest help for children and families.
- Earliest help for people living with frailty.
- Preventing hospital admissions.
- Breaking cycles for people facing multiple disadvantage.
- Promoting independence.

A multi-agency Prevention Steering Group has been established and will provide support to those wishing to apply a preventative approach to services. This group will also promote the need for, and establishment of, wider preventative programmes, such as those suggested above.



Breaking the cycle

A prospectus of preventative programmes for
people facing multiple disadvantage

1. Introduction

Jen grew up in Birkenhead, went to local schools and wanted to be a nursery nurse. At 18 she had her first child. Her baby was only 4 months old when the first reported incident of domestic abuse was made to Children's Social Care. Professionals described her as a "nurturing mum" who "loves her baby unconditionally". Having grown up in a home with domestic abuse, Jen was no stranger to violence and was quick to minimise the abuse she experienced.

By age 21, Jen was mum to 3 children, and considered a "warm and loving parent" by those who knew her. But Jen felt she was "letting them down" as she found herself becoming stuck in a cycle of domestic violence and alcohol misuse. As her mental health deteriorated, she turned to pain medication, illegal substances, and alcohol to "get by". Over the coming years, Jen and her children had intermittent contact with Children's Services and other support agencies, but the words "lack of engagement" are repeated throughout the case files.

At age 30, after many months of medical treatment, Jen died of liver failure. Her 3 children were placed in the care of the Local Authority.

There are an estimated 363,000 adults experiencing multiple disadvantage in England - including a combination of homelessness, substance misuse, mental health issues, domestic abuse, and contact with the criminal justice system. Many of these people have been caught in this situation for years, experiencing entrenched disadvantage, trauma, and ill-health. They come into repeated contact with our police, criminal justice, social care, and health services without receiving the support they need to help them break the cycle. The most vulnerable adults in this situation are estimated to cost the state five times more than the average citizen per year. Beyond the finances is the human cost: life without hope; experiencing desperation; lack of options; feeling on the outside of a *normal life*; lost potential.

As Wirral Council sets out its ambitious and inspiring plans to transform the borough through the regeneration of Birkenhead and The Left Bank, it is the right time to be purposeful, collaborative, and work with intention, to enable people in those communities to break out of intergenerational cycles of disadvantage and poor outcomes- to help them find *room to breathe and space to grow*.

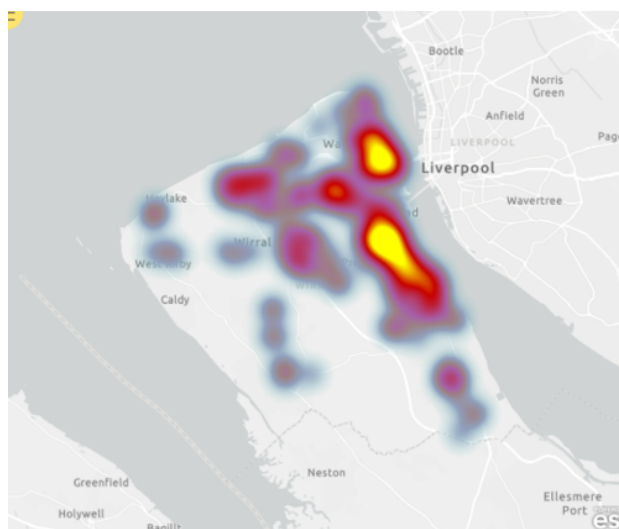
Emerging policy and plans for Wirral Council and its partners seek *equity for people and place and opportunity for all*. To make this a reality, it is time to abandon phrases such as *hard to reach* and *difficult to engage* and accept that perhaps it is not that the responsiveness of the people that is the barrier, but rather the support offer and the public services system that needs to change.

Breaking the cycle requires a more joined-up, person-centred approach to local delivery, with commitment to making long-term and sustainable changes to our local system that will deliver improved outcomes for individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage.

2. Rationale for change

(a) Understanding local need

Wirral, when considered as a whole, is a *fairly average* borough in terms of outcomes for its people. But the average masks a picture of disparity between the east and west sides of the borough. The heat map below shows referrals to social care services because of alcohol and substance misuse, domestic abuse, mental health issues, risk of homelessness and involvement with the criminal justice service.



Inequity has rightly become a priority for several strategic groups including Wirral's Health and Wellbeing Board, Wirral Health and Care Commissioning and Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership. They highlight:

- Difference in life expectancy between the most and least deprived wards in Wirral is 12.1 years for men and 10.7 years for women (2016-18 data, Wirral Intelligence Service).
- Wirral has become more deprived between 2015 and 2019 and has 35% of its population living in deprivation (2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation).

Wirral Intelligence Service's collection of statistics and insight, *This Is Wirral*, provides key messages relating to multiple disadvantage categories:

- The Wards of Birkenhead & Tranmere, Rock Ferry, Bidston & St James and Seacombe, consistently featuring in the bottom performing wards for "No Qualifications", "Participation in Higher Education", "Healthy Life Expectancy at Birth", "Out of Work Benefit Claimants" and "Net Household Income".
- In Wirral (2018), the economic costs of alcohol were estimated to cost the borough £131 million.
- People living in lower income households were more likely to have requested, but not received mental health treatment.

- Over half (55%) of all social care users report having anxiety and depression in Wirral.
- The health of people experiencing homelessness is significantly worse than that of the general population, with the cost of homelessness experienced by single people to the NHS and social care being considerable. 41% of homeless people report a long-term physical health problem and 45% had a diagnosed mental health problem compared to 28% and 25% respectively in the general population.
- The majority of local YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) residents are in contact with drug and/or alcohol services. Wirral had over double the national rate of benefits claimants for 'alcoholism'.
- In 2015/16, 22% of all crime costs in Wirral were estimated to be related to alcohol. Anti-social behaviour incidents related to alcohol were most common in the more deprived areas, with peaks in domestic violence associated with periods of increased alcohol consumption.

(b) Looking to future need

Whilst the Breaking the Cycle programme will work with adults, with and without children, now to support them to make sustainable change, it is important to give particular attention to the experiences of children and young people in the borough, our future adult population. Breaking the cycle means creating a different, *brighter future* for them. Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership's Annual Report for 2019-20 focused on disparity of experience and outcomes for children, producing the following insightful infographic:



3. Ambition for our people

(a) Change for individuals, services, and systems

The Breaking the Cycle approach aims to improve outcomes for those experiencing multiple disadvantage and placing a high demand on local response services, but for whom current systems of support are not working. By improving the way our local system and services work we seek to re-energise local people, their support workers, and our organisations.

Local people experiencing intergenerational cycles of disadvantage need, and deserve, more from public services and their local community so that ambitions for *brighter futures for children and young people, safe and pleasant communities* and *living an active and healthy life* are within their reach. This is what their support workers and our organisations want for them. Breaking the Cycle means change at individual, service, and system levels.

Change for the individual:

- ✓ improved wellbeing
- ✓ reduced offending
- ✓ reduced substance misuse
- ✓ better physical and mental health
- ✓ secure housing
- ✓ increased financial security
- ✓ increased levels of education, employment, and training
- ✓ increased safety
- ✓ experiencing purpose, belonging and security
- ✓ improved experience of services through co-production

Change for professionals and services:

- ✓ person-centred focus
- ✓ greater integration
- ✓ greater collaboration
- ✓ more effective delivery of service
- ✓ reduce demand on reactive services
- ✓ improved information sharing
- ✓ improved experience of work through co-production

Change for organisations and systems:

- ✓ stronger multi-agency partnerships
- ✓ improved governance
- ✓ data shapes commissioning
- ✓ achieving common goals
- ✓ better value for money
- ✓ joint commissioning approaches
- ✓ improved system of practice through co-production

(b) People who need help to break the cycle

This programme of preventative approaches is for people facing the following multiple disadvantage categories:

- domestic abuse
- mental health issues
- substance and alcohol misuse
- experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- involvement with criminal justice system

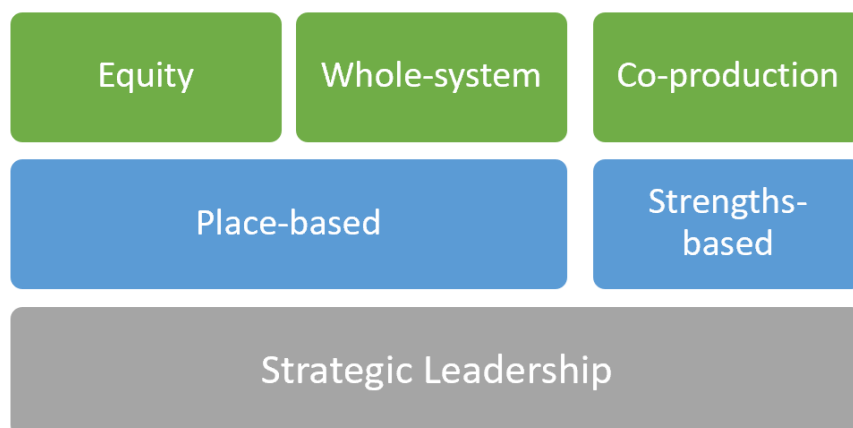
Priority will be given to people facing the above categories who also live in wards identified as having the highest levels of need which are creating the greatest levels of demand:

- Birkenhead and Tranmere
- Bidston and St. James
- Seacombe
- Rock Ferry
- Liscard
- Leasowe and Moreton East

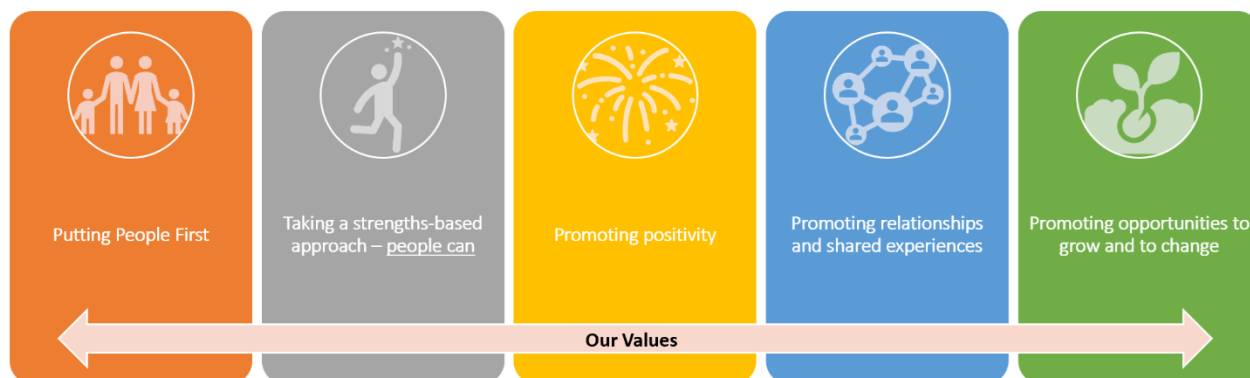
The programme will work with individuals and families. Where adults are parents, or likely to become parents, the impact on their children and future cycles of disadvantage will be given significant consideration. Breaking the cycle for both the present and the future.

(c) Delivery Principles and Values

The co-produced Prevention Framework outlines the values and delivery principles which underpin the Breaking the Cycle programme. The figure below outlines the core set of building blocks to set the foundations for preventative approaches.



Local organisations and workers collaborated to agree a set a value base for prevention as follows:



With regard to the Breaking the Cycle programme, there is a further *ask* to workers, supporters, leaders, services and organisations and that is, for people facing multiple disadvantage and intergenerational cycles we need to be prepared to give **a bit more**.

- ✓ a bit more understanding
- ✓ a bit more time
- ✓ a bit more empathy
- ✓ a bit more support
- ✓ a bit more one-to-one help
- ✓ a bit more encouragement
- ✓ a bit more patience
- ✓ a bit more compassion
- ✓ a bit more choice

Giving *a bit more* will be achieved through the notion of *adapted practice* described in section 4 on delivery model and approach.

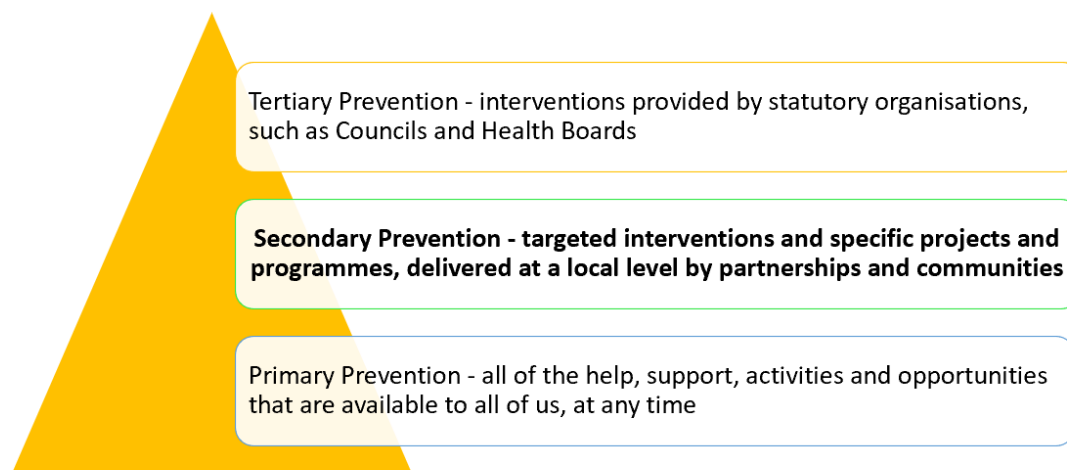
(d) Strategic Fit

The Breaking the Cycle prospectus is aligned with the following:

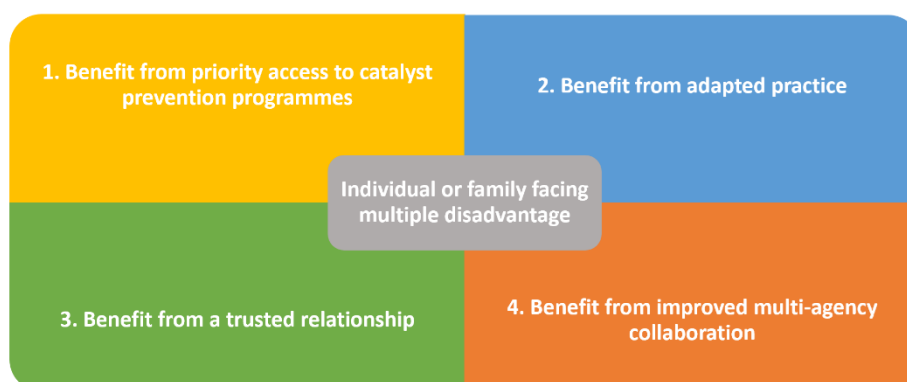
National Legislation & Policy	Local Strategic Plans and Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Care Act 2014 ✓ The Equality Act 2010 ✓ The Children Act 2004 ✓ The NHS Long-Term Plan ✓ The 5-Year Forward Plan for Mental Health, Primary Care and NHS ✓ The Public Health England Strategy 2020-25 ✓ Domestic Abuse Act 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Wirral Plan 2021-26 ✓ Climate Emergency Plan ✓ Community Wealth Building Strategy ✓ Neighbourhoods Strategy ✓ Domestic Abuse- No Excuse ✓ Safer Adolescence Strategy ✓ Health Inequalities Strategy ✓ Healthy Wirral Plan ✓ Digital Strategy ✓ Community Safety Strategy

4. Delivery model and approach

The Breaking the Cycle programme can be described as *secondary prevention*, with specific projects delivered to benefit particular groups. It is designed to offer more intensive support, beyond that which is available from more universal, early help services.



The delivery model features 4 aspects, to be delivered simultaneously, in collaboration with the individual and/or family.



1. Benefit from priority access to catalyst prevention programmes

There are 8 catalyst prevention programmes:

Pause- a programme for women who have had multiple children removed from their care aiming to give a pause from pregnancy to provide treatment and recovery from trauma.

Drive- a programme which aims to prevent harm to victims of domestic abuse, and their children, by working with high-risk, high-harm perpetrators to challenge and change their behaviour.

We Can Talk About Domestic Abuse- an additional provision of subject expertise and advocacy to work alongside Social Workers to improve the experience of families affected by domestic abuse.

Cradle to Career- a place-based, collective impact project which aims to improve the life chances of people within the North Birkenhead community, with a specific focus on educational aspiration and attainment.

Family Nurse Partnership- a home-visiting programme for first-time young mums to support a healthy pregnancy, improve child development and health outcomes, and increase family aspiration.

ADDER- a programme which seeks to reduce drug-related crime, drug-related deaths and the prevalence of illicit drugs through multi-agency collaborations.

Get Real Programme- a specialist employability programme for care leavers and children looked after who are not in education, employment or training providing tailored, individual support to improve life chances.

Ways to Work- tailored help for people aged 16+ who are struggling to secure long-term employment, building confidence to become *job ready*, with access to mentoring and traditional work preparation activity.

Priority access to the catalyst prevention programmes will be given to those people requiring help to break the cycle, and there may be instances where individuals and/or families access a combination of programmes. Further details on each programme is contained within Appendix 1.

2. Benefit from adapted practice

The catalyst prevention programmes, many of which have well-established evidence-bases, are designed to provide specialist expertise for particular issues, but we are reminded that they operate within a much wider system of public services and communities. Those delivering preventative programmes need the commitment and support of the wider system to optimise their chance of success. To break the cycle, the wider system, services, and workers need to adapt practice and offer that bit more, for those facing multiple disadvantage.

Whilst a significant proportion of the catalyst prevention programmes are delivered by children's and adult services, the role of wider Council departments such as Neighbourhood Services, Libraries, Museums and Galleries, Leisure Services, Housing, and Transactional Management is equally important as they provide vital services, support and advice which is part of everyday life for our residents. So too, the services and support provided by partners such as Police, probation services, hospitals, health care professionals and education can make a significant difference in whether an individual will be successful in making a positive change. Adapting practice will allow us to go further, faster with our ambition to break cycles and improve outcomes for Wirral residents.

What adapted practice may involve:

- ✓ rather than send a leaflet or letter, take time to have a conversation.

- ✓ rather than expect the individual to come to you, go to them.
- ✓ open up venues, offering a welcome to individuals and their support workers to use the space as an alternative to more traditional or clinical venues.
- ✓ offer induction sessions on a one-to-one basis to allow individuals to gain confidence in attending facilities or taking part in activities.
- ✓ rather than expecting an individual, who is already overwhelmed, to join a queue or fit in with your appointment schedule, try to fit in with them.
- ✓ rather than signpost, make the contact together.
- ✓ adapt your pace, chunk it up, do less but more frequently to complete the task.
- ✓ try to provide choice.
- ✓ be inclusive, consider literacy or language barriers, and promote advocacy services.

On a case-by case basis, support workers will partner with colleagues to consider how practice needs to be adapted to ensure that individuals and families can access and engage with wider services. Whilst this may give rise to concerns for capacity of services and time constraints, it should not be forgotten that our current collective experience of *revolving doors*, repeat referrals, poor outcomes, frequency of *DNA- Did Not Attend* notices, and unsatisfactory contacts, means that together we must try a different approach.

3. Benefit from a trusted relationship

All individuals and families engaged in a catalyst prevention programme will have a designated key worker whose role it is to form a trusted relationship.

We have learned a lot from initiatives such as the Troubled Families Programme and Trauma Informed Practice to understand the value of a key worker with whom an individual and family can build a trusted relationship. Having a dedicated worker, who is dedicated to the family is a key part of breaking the cycle. It is the key worker's role to:

- ✓ Be honest, clear, assertive, and persistent.
- ✓ Understand the daily lived experience of each individual.
- ✓ Understand the dynamics within the family and wider networks.
- ✓ To be solution-focused, flexible, and creative in their approach.
- ✓ To act with authenticity, congruence and show unconditional positive regard.
- ✓ To co-ordinate support plans, collaborating and negotiate with partners.
- ✓ To help individuals and families recognise positive change in their lives.

The relationship between the worker and the individual is often the most transformational aspect. As noted by the Director of Dissemination for the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF):

“In early intervention services, the trust that develops between a skilled practitioner and a parent, child or young person can motivate and equip people to change their lives. The evidence shows that positive relationships can support the development of skills, coping strategies, confidence, and behaviour change for children and young people.”

Whether their job title is Social Worker, Case Manager, Intervention Worker, Support Worker or Advocate, is no matter so long as the worker is enabled through support, supervision, training, and collaboration to establish and maintain a meaningful relationship with those whom they work with.

4. Benefit from improved multi-agency collaboration

The catalyst prevention programmes are multi-agency in their formation. This combined with adapted practice from those agencies on the periphery of the support plan, brings immediate improvement to multi-agency collaboration. What this Breaking the Cycle programme will actively seek to improve is information and data sharing across agencies.

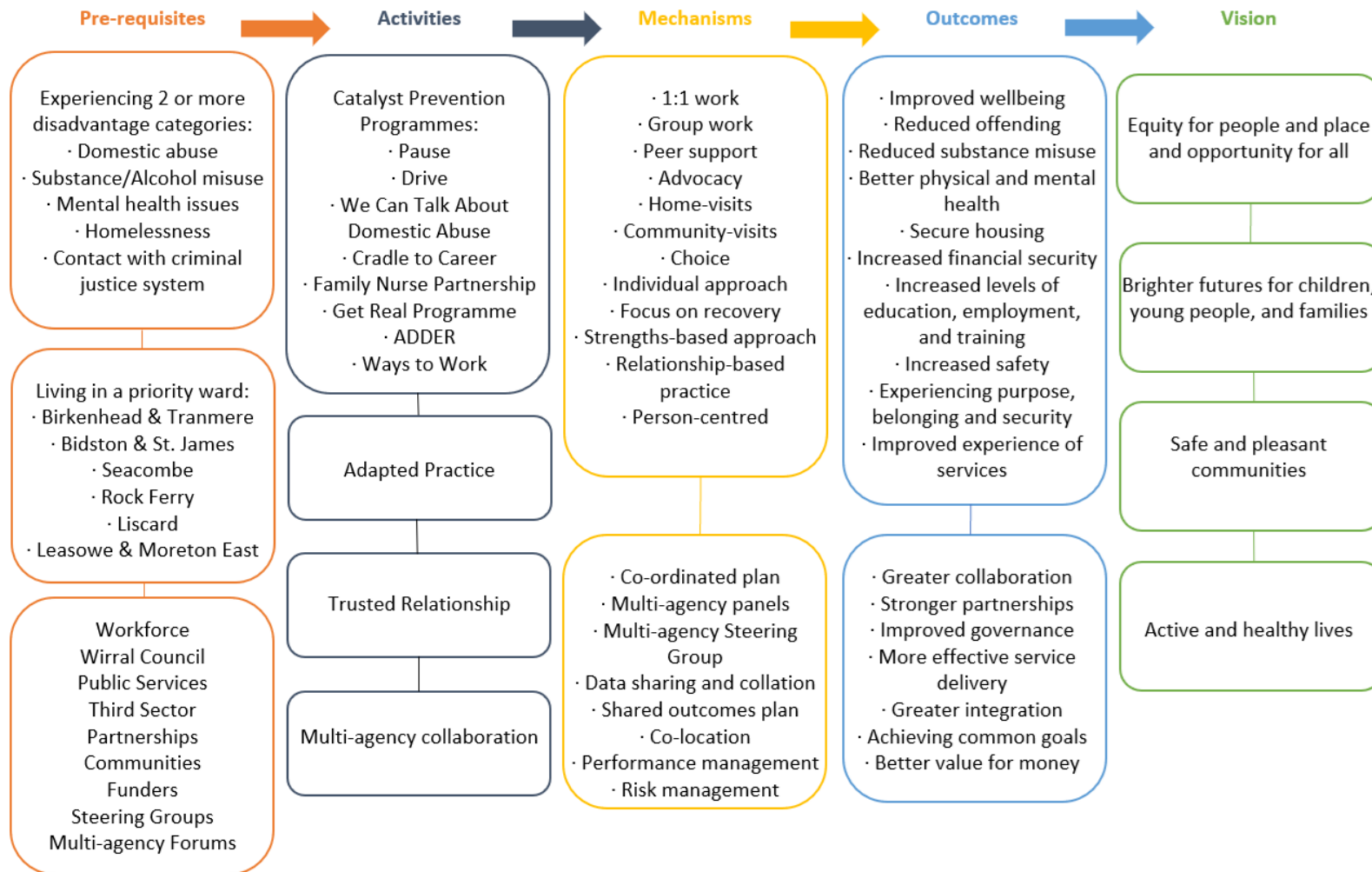
Individuals and families facing multiple disadvantage will be interacting with many different public services at once, including schools, health services, the police and social care services. As we operate on different data systems, often the information available to workers is limited and means that they do not have a complete picture of the presenting issues. Sharing and matching data, in accordance with GDPR, means bringing together data from different services to get a combined view of the multi-faceted needs of individuals, families and different communities.

Previous data collection practices from the Troubled Families Programme will be extended to provide means to collect, match, and analyse data for families engaged in the Breaking the Cycle programme. The resource to extend this approach is available to the programme. This will enable:

- ✓ Better information for workers: whilst data does not replace professional judgement or decision-making, good access to information can support decision-making and holistic practice.
- ✓ Better understanding of how the catalyst programmes and wider services operate: data analysis will help us understand how well our services are working and to ensure optimum performance. This will support benchmarking costs and performance, make reporting easier, enable more sophisticated cost benefit analysis.
- ✓ Better evaluation of what works: improved data collection will enable an evidence-based assessment to be undertaken on how well each project, or combinations of projects, work to break the cycle for people facing multiple disadvantage and inform future programmes.

5. Achieving change

(a) Breaking the Cycle- Theory of Change Model



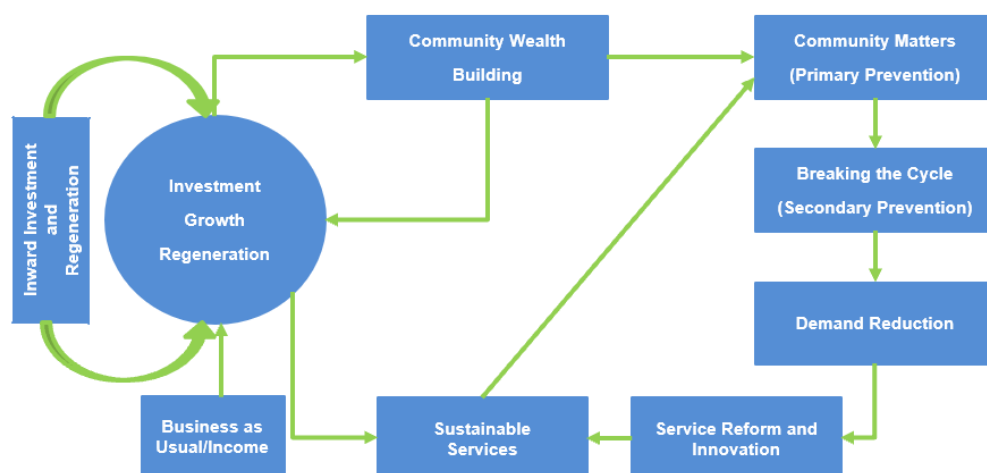
(b) Breaking the Cycle Outcomes Plan

Issue	Breaking the Cycle Success Target	Sustainment Period	Cohort Target
1. Individuals involved in crime and anti-social behaviour	Individuals have stopped offending with a realistic expectation that this will continue	12 months	60% of families no longer offend – have not offended during sustainment period
	Individuals have ceased involvement with ASB with a realistic expectation that this will continue	12 months	50% of families have no involvement in ASB during the sustainment period
2. Children and young people who have not been attending education regularly	All children in the family are attending school at or above 90% for the most recent consecutive terms. Alternatively, where attendance issues are severe, substantial improvement may be deemed acceptable where: (i) Overall attendance is over 50% for the most recent consecutive terms (ii) Overall attendance has improved by 40% or more during the same period (iii) this decision is consistent with the views of the Attendance Service	Three consecutive Terms	60% of families achieve the 90% attendance threshold, 65% reduction in the number of families affected by fixed term exclusion, and 75% reduction in the proportion of families with a 16- to 24-year-old NEET throughout the sustainment period
3. Children who need help	The aim is for the needs to be met and children to de-escalate through the threshold of need. Evidence should indicate that needs have been met and it is safe for all children in the family to de-escalate by at least 1 level of need	12 months	De-escalation in level of need, by at least one level, for 75% of the cohort
4. Worklessness	Evidence should indicate that all workless individuals have engaged with employment support and made identifiable progress to work such as training, voluntary work, employment coaching etc	12 months	20% of workless individuals have worked for a minimum period (6 months) within the sustainment period
5. Violence within families	Domestic Abuse Outcomes Matrix evidences low/no risk which has been maintained for 3 months. If the matrix score is unavailable, evidence from an assessment where lead professional is satisfied that no further risk of domestic violence or abuse is present will be sufficient	12 months	70% of individuals affected by domestic abuse have reduced their levels of risk to 'low' within the sustainment period
6. Individuals with a range of health problems	Engagement with an appropriate health service or the completion of a health programme and a reduction in score for Alcohol and Drugs Misuse / Mental Health assessment in an appropriate Distance Travelled Tool. If the Distance Travelled Tool is not available, evidence from an assessment where lead professional is satisfied that health issues have been addressed and there has been a significant improvement in the individual's health	At case closure	95% of families have engaged in appropriate treatment services
7. The Individual or Family Journey	All individuals/families recognised and benefit from progress in a number of relevant areas such as parenting capacity, confidence, relationships, problem solving evidenced through the distance travelled tool	At case closure	85% of individuals/families report improvement in relevant areas

(c) Breaking the Cycle Investment Plan

Project	Wirral Contribution	Other Contribution	Total Investment	Annual Cost	Unit cost for 12-month activity
Pause	£200k	£224k from Department for Education	£424K	£283k	£11,778
Drive	£285K	£225k from the Community Safety Partnership £330k from the National Lottery	£840k	£336k	£5,600
We Can Talk About Domestic Abuse	Nil	£350k from What Works for Children's Social Care	£350k	£350k	£1,620
Cradle to Career	Nil	£2.6m from a collaboration of the Steve Morgan Foundation, Shine and Right to Succeed	£2.6m	£867k	£1,040
Family Nurse Partnership	Nil	£470k from the Public Health Grant	£470k	£470k	
ADDER	Nil	£1.4m from the Home Office and Public Health England	£1.4m	£1.4m	Tbc
Get Real Programme	£25k	Nil	£25k	£25k	£1,042
Ways to Work	£172k	£259k from European Social Fund	£431k	£216k	£859
Total	£682k	£5.858m	£6.540m	£3.947m	

Whilst the key driver for the Breaking the Cycle programme is to improve outcomes for people facing multiple disadvantage, the programme can make an important contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Further work is being undertaken to calculate potential savings and/or cost avoidance. The role of prevention in the MTFS can be illustrated as follows:



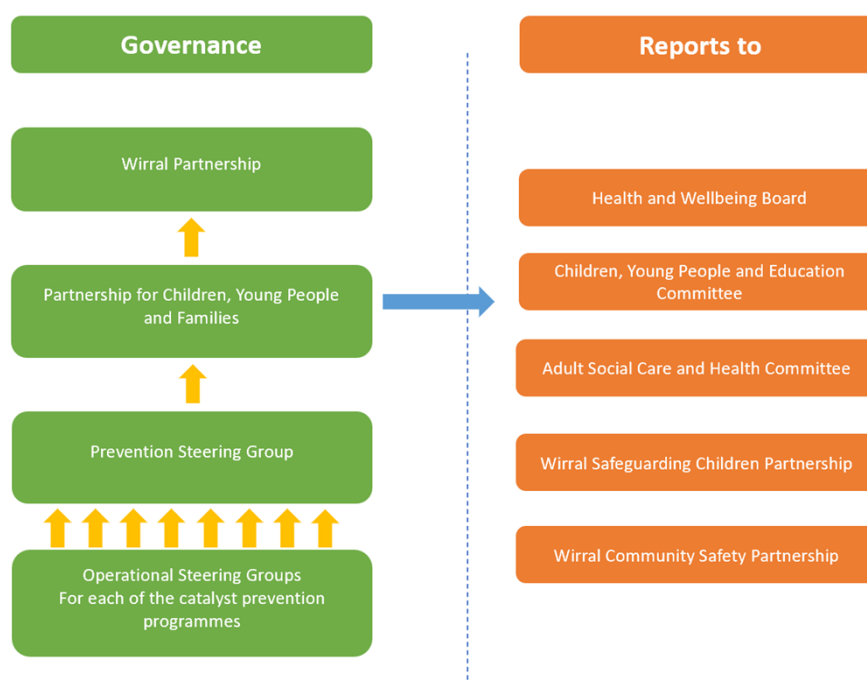
(d) Breaking the Cycle Risk Management Overview

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Catalyst prevention programmes do not meet their contractual requirements and are ceased.	Capability of the Breaking the Cycle programme is reduced.	Robust arrangements are in place for contract management of all catalyst prevention programmes, with clear milestones, deliverables and outcomes identified. The Prevention Steering Group will provide oversight of contract performance, reporting to the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families and the Council's Project management Office.
Catalyst prevention programmes do not apply consistent practice in accordance with the prevention framework and Breaking the Cycle prospectus.	Likelihood of achieving long-term change for individuals and families is compromised.	Responsibility for the delivery of the programmes is held by a single senior officer, who Chairs the Prevention Steering Group and reports directly to the Chair of the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, and to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health. Quality assurance activity will be used to routinely test the consistency of practice across programmes.
Ability to share quality data across agencies would prevent full implementation of integrated information.	Failure to capture and share relevant data will reduce the capacity to understand and measure change, cost-benefits, and create an evidence base for preventative intervention.	The programme is endorsed by the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, and benefits from a multi-agency steering group. Escalation routes are established through the partnership. Objectives and intention to share data is supported by GDPR and legislation related to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
Inability to engage the wider organisation and partners to adapt practice for individuals within the cohort.	Likelihood of achieving long-term change for individuals and families is compromised.	The programme is endorsed by the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, and benefits from a multi-agency steering group. Escalation routes are established through the partnership. Wirral Council's Senior Leadership Team support for a prevention programme
Lack of engagement for individuals and families.	Lack of take-up would lead to continued high demand of acute services. Individuals would continue to face cycles of poor outcomes.	Known cohort of individuals and families experiencing multiple disadvantage is high, with the majority already engaged with public services. Information leaflets are available for each catalyst prevention programme, with explicit consent obtained for all participation. Partnership workforce informed and able to inform individuals and support engagement where in their best interest. A communications plan will be implemented for Breaking the Cycle.
Too many individuals and families wanting to engage on catalyst prevention programmes.	Individuals and families would continue to face cycles of poor outcomes.	The Breaking the Cycle prospectus clearly outlines the priority categories for access. Each programme has a clear eligibility criteria linked to its funding arrangements which supports the priority categories.
Capability of data management system to collate, present and provide analysis of information.	Manual collection of information would lead to missed opportunities and less efficient and effective responses at individual, service and system level.	There is capability within the Liquid Logic system and Power BI tool which can be developed to meet needs. Further support available from IT and providers if required.

(e) Local Partnerships and Governance

All aspects of the Breaking the Cycle programme are multi-agency in nature. Each of the catalyst prevention programmes have arrangements in place to oversee operational delivery and strategic co-ordination.

It has been agreed by the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, that a multi-agency Prevention Steering Group, with representation across public services, third sector organisations and involving young people and adult as lay members is established. This Prevention Steering Group will be Co-Chaired by the Assistant Director for Early Help and Prevention and a nominated third sector representative. It will meet on a 6-weekly basis and report to the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families. Governance and wider reporting are illustrated in the diagram below:



The Assistant Director for Early Help and Prevention will lead on the programme, with the Director of Adults, Health and Strategic Commissioning as the Senior Responsible Officer.

The Project Management Office (PMO) will provide oversight of project deliverables, plans, milestones and Key Performance Indicators, ensuring that the Senior Leadership Team are kept updated on progress.

Where external evaluations are in place, commissioned by external funders, participants and beneficiaries will be supported to engage. Interim and final evaluations will be shared through governance and reporting arrangements. Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership is committed to sharing all multi-agency learning, audits, reports, via their website.

Appendix 1- Further Detail on Catalyst Prevention Programmes

Pause	
Summary	The programme will work with women who have experienced repeated pregnancies that result in children needing to be removed from their care. This will involve the Local Authority and other partners working together to implement an integrated, intensive and systemic model of support tailored to meet women's needs.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director Early Help & Prevention Project Lead: Lynn Campbell, Head of Service Children's Social Care
Funding Arrangements	£0.2m contribution from Wirral Council £0.2m contribution from Liverpool City Council £0.448m from Department for Education (split between Wirral and Liverpool)
Target Cohort	24 women (Wirral cohort) who have experienced repeat pregnancies that result in children being removed from their care
Timeline	18-month programme, commencing April 2021.
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Estimated net cost savings for Wirral £0.3m per year, for 6 years, from 2022. · Reduction in pregnancies · Reduced referral rates to Children's Social Care · Reduced number of Section 17 (Child in Need) or Section 47 enquiries (Child Protection) · Reduced number of children in care · Positive service-used feedback
Anticipated Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · This will prevent the damaging consequences of children being taken into care every year. · Positive and significant impact on women engaging on the programme including progress towards learning and employment, improvement in mental health, reduction in domestic abuse, stability of housing, quality contact with removed children, reduction in substance misuse, support from specialist agencies.

Drive	
Summary	Drive will improve the lives of victims/survivors by working with high-risk, high-harm perpetrators of domestic abuse to challenge and change their behaviour. This will involve a multi-agency panel having oversight of all cases and working together to apply disruption tactics whilst the Case Manager undertakes an intensive behaviour change programme.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director Early Help & Prevention Project Lead: Anna Jones, Performance and Improvement Manager
Funding Arrangements	£0.33m contribution from the National Lottery £0.225m contribution from the Community Safety Partnership £0.285m from Wirral Council
Target Cohort	125 high-risk, high harm perpetrators of domestic abuse
Timeline	30-month programme, commencing March 2021
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reduced number of serial perpetrators of domestic abuse · reduced number of repeat and new victims · Reduced harm to victims and children · Reduced referral rates to Children's Social Care · Reduced number of Section 17 (Child in Need) and Section 47 enquiries (Child Protection)
Anticipated Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reduction in prevalence of domestic abuse · Improved co-ordination and collaboration in tackling perpetrators · Significant contribution to key priorities of the Domestic Abuse- No Excuse strategy to <i>increase safety without adding to trauma and reduce opportunities for perpetrators to abuse</i>

We Can Talk About Domestic Abuse	
Summary	An additional provision of subject expertise and advocacy to work alongside Social Workers to improve the experience of families affected by domestic abuse. Team includes 3.0 FTE Domestic Abuse Practice Professionals, 3.0 FTE Domestic Abuse Family Advocates, 1.0FTE Team Manager and 1.0 FTE Project Officer. The project is being evaluated by Manchester Metropolitan University.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director Early Help & Prevention Project Lead: Alex Kaittell, Head of Service Children's Social Care
Funding Arrangements	£0.35m contribution from What Works for Children's Social Care Fund
Target Cohort	216 families affected by domestic abuse with cases open to Children's Social Care
Timescale	12-month delivery, commencing in January 2021
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 54 families receiving support in 3 months · 108 families receiving support in 6 months · 162 families receiving support in 9 months · 216 families receiving support in 12 months · Quarterly audits completed plus Learning Report published and Learning Event held
Anticipated Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reduction in Section 47 enquiries (Child Protection) · Prevention of children becoming looked after · Improved relationships between families affected by domestic violence and their Social Worker · Social Worker understanding and experience of working with people affected by domestic abuse improves · Contribution to the priorities for Domestic Abuse- No Excuse strategy to <i>increase safety without adding to trauma</i>

Cradle to Career	
Summary	A place-based, collective impact project which aims to improve the life chances of people within the North Birkenhead community, with a specific focus on educational aspiration and attainment.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director Early Help & Prevention Project Lead: Kerry Mehta, Head of Service Family Matters
Funding Arrangements	£2.6m contribution from The Steve Morgan Foundation, Shine, Right to Succeed. Realignment of Local Authority and Public Service staff resource.
Target Cohort	2,500 children and young people living in North Birkenhead and their families.
Timeline	3-year pilot commencing in September 2020.
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Increased uptake in universal services, related to the Childhood Offer (take up of 2, 3 and 4-year old funding, school attendance, school attainment) · Reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour · Increased levels of education, employment and training Increased participation in health services- substance and alcohol treatment, mental health support, physical health support
Anticipated Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Increased community cohesion · Collective impact achieved with partners, residents and community organisations · Positive service user feedback

Family Nurse Partnership	
Summary	A home-visiting programme for first-time young mums to support a healthy pregnancy, improve child development and health outcomes, and increase family aspiration. Women are recruited onto the programme early in pregnancy and support can be provided until the child is two years of age.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Jane Harvey, Consultant in Public Health Project Lead: Julie Graham, Senior Public Health Manager
Funding Arrangements	£0.47m Wirral Council (Public Health grant)
Target Cohort	First time young mothers and their families (predominantly teenage parents, but support can be provided for mother aged up to 22 years if they have additional needs)
Timeline	The programme is a longstanding element of the Healthy Child Programme for 0-19 years.
Key Performance Indicators	FNP is licenced under a National Unit with a requirement to complete a reporting framework which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Client attrition fidelity goal, · Recruitment before 16 weeks gestation, · Programme uptake, · Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), · Behaviour change impacting on maternal health · The 'New Mum's star' to identify personal goals and progress.
Anticipated Impact	To improve vulnerable children's development, their readiness to learn at school, and their early educational attainment: factors which are known to influence improved health, wellbeing and economic outcomes for people in the long term.

ADDER	
Summary	Pilot project to test an intensive, whole-system approach, led by local police and drug treatment and recovery services, to tackle drug misuse and drug-related crime.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Elspeth Anwar, Consultant in Public Health Project Lead: Gary Rickwood, Senior Public Health Manager
Funding Arrangements	£1.4m contribution from the Home Office, Department for Health and Social Care, Public Health England
Target Cohort	Problematic drug users, particularly those who are also offenders. Cohort number to be confirmed.
Timeline	15-month programme commencing in April 2021
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reduction of drug-related deaths; · Reduction in drug-related offending; · Reduction in the prevalence of drug use; · Sustained and major disruption of high-harm criminals and networks involved in middle market drug and firearms supply. <p>These are to be delivered by the combined and co-ordinated efforts of drug treatment services (and their local health and social care partners), and Merseyside Police.</p>
Anticipated Impact	To reduce the number of Drug Related Deaths/Deaths in Treatment by strengthening the health and care partnership work around the specialist treatment service. Increased diversion from problematic drug use, for younger people before they begin, or at the very beginning of their experimentation, and for those young people and adults who have got into difficulty and who are offending as a consequence, increasing the diversion away from a prolonged journey along a criminal justice pathway. Increase the engagement of drug using offenders with specialist treatment and reduce their level of criminal activity as a consequence of that engagement.

Get Real Programme	
Summary	A bespoke, intensive employability programme for care leavers aspiring to access employment and overcome their personal barriers. The programme is delivered by a Wirral based education provider, Eutopia Project, alongside officers from the Council 14-19 Team.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Paul Smith, Head of Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment Project Lead: Gareth Jones, 14-19 Learning, Skills and Employment Manager
Funding Arrangements	£25,000 per annum contribution from Wirral Council
Target Cohort	24 Care Leavers aged 17 to 21 not in employment, education and / or training (NEET)
Timeline	2 courses commissioned (12x care leavers per course) - January 2021 to July 2021 and January 2022 to July 2022
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Minimum of 60 percent of programme participants to access and sustain employment post internship phase. · Significant cost savings to the public pursue (up to £20k / annum / successful outcome) from no further benefit payments, housing support, reduced requirement for health services, reduced incidences of anti-social behaviour, as a positive consequence of sustained employment. · Increase in the percentage of care leavers in employment, education and / or training (EET).
Anticipated Impact	This programme seeks to break the cycle of worklessness and a poverty of aspirations often exhibited by care leavers. All participants in the programme will get to undertake experiences that take them of their comfort zone and help to identify their strengths and build confidence / resilience. A paid internship element of the programme will give the participants an opportunity to shine, develop positive routines, gain valuable real-world experience and employment.

Ways to Work	
Summary	Supports young people and adults who are unemployed and have multiple barriers to positive participation. Each participant is supported by a designated coach who will undertake an initial assessment and provide a tailored package of support leading towards employment, education and / or training.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Paul Smith, Head of Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment Project Lead: Joanne Smith, ESIF Programme Manager
Funding Arrangements	£172,340 contribution from Wirral Council £258,510 contribution from European Social Fund (ESF)
Target Cohort	251 enrolments of which 160 long term unemployed, 91 young people not looking for immediate employment (active enrolments are a challenge to remove barriers and promote participation), 38 young people from the BAME community and 78 young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities and 25 enrolments from lone parents with a dependent child.
Timeline	2-year programme commencing December 2020
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Improvement in basic skills · Reduction in NEET for 16- to 18-year-olds · Assisting inactive young people to overcome barriers to positive participation · Participation in local volunteering opportunities · As a minimum, 43 percent of all participants to successfully access employment, education and / or training
Anticipated Impact	The anticipated impact on young people and families will include a reduction in reliance on and access Universal Credit and benefits. Young people and families will also benefit from improvements in wellbeing including mental health and self-esteem. In our most deprived communities, the project will tackle multi-generational unemployment and worklessness presenting positive role models and raising aspirations.

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 28th July, 2021

REPORT TITLE:	WIRRAL GROWTH COMPANY: BIRKENHEAD PHASE 1: FINAL SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

The report provides for consideration the recommendations of the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee in respect of Wirral Growth Company: Birkenhead Phase 1: Final Site Development Plan. The full minute of the Economy and Regeneration Committee will be forwarded in due course and the associated Report of the Director of Regeneration and Place is attached.

This matter is being referred to Policy and Resources Committee because in accordance with the Council's Constitution any issue regarding land and property including major acquisition and disposals, which includes reserved decision making concerning any purchase, sale or transfer of a value in excess of, or likely to exceed, £100,000; is reserved to the Policy and Resources Committee

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy and Resources committee is recommended to consider the decision made by the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee on 26 July and determine whether to support the recommendation, 'That the Policy and Resources Committee approves the Formal Site Development Plan for Birkenhead Commercial District Phase 1'.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The implementation of the SDP will directly support the regeneration of Birkenhead which has been a long-term priority for the Council. It supports the Council's ambitions around sustainable development and the generation of a prosperous inclusive economy where people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations regardless of their background or where they live.
- 1.2 Specifically the delivery of Phase 1 of the plan will result in the construction of circa 150,000 sq.ft (13,900 sq.m) of Grade 'A' office accommodation in two buildings referred to as A1 and A2 with associated quality public realm. The larger of the two buildings A1 measuring 89,591 sq.ft (8,323 sq.m) will be occupied by Council employees while the second building A2 measuring 58,176 sq.ft (5,405 sq.m) will be let on the open market to commercial occupiers.
- 1.3 Through taking the head lease on the first two office buildings and relocating up to 800 administrative staff into the Birkenhead Commercial District the Council will intervene to unlock and drive forward the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre.
- 1.4 The draft indicative SDP was approved by Cabinet as part of the approval of the Partnership Business Plan on 24th February 2020. Now that planning permission has been granted, the next stage under the Partnership Agreement is for the formal SDP to be approved. Then any remaining conditions need to be satisfied by the WGC, such as having construction contracts in place, before the option contained in the Supplemental Option Agreement for Milton Pavements will be triggered and the long leases granted to the funder, then leased back to the Council, and construction can commence.
- 1.5 This matter has been referred to Policy and Resources Committee because regarding land and property including major acquisition and disposals, which includes reserved decision making concerning any purchase, sale or transfer of a value in excess of, or likely to exceed, £100,000; is reserved to the Policy and Resources Committee.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Council could choose not to approve the formal SDP. This would then halt the progress of the development of the Birkenhead Commercial District and incur the legal and financial consequences set out at paragraph 5.2. This option is not recommended.
- 2.2 Other options discussed at the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee will be sent to the Policy and Resources Committee in due course.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Member endorsement to the formal Site Development Plan (SDP) for Phase 1 of Birkenhead Town Centre. The plan has been developed by the Wirral Growth Company (WGC) as part of the Partnership Agreement that the Council and MUSE Developments entered into on 19th March 2019. The draft indicative SDP was contained in the Partnership Business Plan and approved by Cabinet on 24th February 2020. Now that WGC has obtained planning permission for Phase 1 of the scheme it is the appropriate time to bring the formal SDP for approval to both partners of the WGC, in accordance with the processes set out in the Partnership Agreement. The proposed SDP (which can be found at Appendix 1 to this report) was approved by the Wirral Growth Company Board at its meeting on 1st July 2021.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are a number of financial matters connected with the delivery of the Site Development Plan. As these are commercially sensitive a detailed financial summary can be found at Appendix 3 of this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In accordance with the Part 3B of Constitution (Committee Terms of Reference), the Policy and Resources Committee has two main areas of responsibility, which is to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, including making decisions on policies and co-ordinating spend not reserved to full Council, and to maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets.
- 5.2 The Policy & Resources Committee is charged by full Council to provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a 'whole-council' view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management. In particular, this includes specific responsibility for a decision regarding land and property including major acquisition and disposals, which includes reserved decision making concerning any purchase, sale or transfer of a value in excess of, or likely to exceed, £100,000;
- As part of the matter of business that was the subject of the report to Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee falls under that responsibility reserved to the Policy and Resources Committee, the Economy Committee's resolution is presented as a recommendation.
- 5.3 As the decision in this matter is the subject of a recommendation from another Committee, the Policy and Resources Committee must take into account the resolution of that Committee and give due regard to the guidance and comments made by its members. The Policy and Resources Committee must not, however, consider itself bound by that Committee's recommendations or otherwise fetter its discretion; its Members must come to their own decision. In doing so, the Committee must satisfy itself that it has been provided with all

relevant information or a suitable précis to enable it to comply with its duties and make a lawful decision.

5.4 Other legal considerations are as set out in the annexed report(s).

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 This report is for information only and does not contain any direct resource implications.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The risks were covered in the original report submitted to the Committee.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Engagement and Consultation were covered in the original report submitted to the Committee.

9.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS (EQUALITY, ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE)

9.1 Other implications arising from the subject matter were considered as set out in the annexed report(s) and meeting minute.

REPORT AUTHOR: Anna Perrett
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – SDP Phase 1: Birkenhead Town Centre

Appendix 1 contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Appendix 2 Social Value Plan Appendix 2 contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Appendix 3 – Financial Summary Appendix 3 contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Appendix 4 DLA Piper report contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Partnership Agreement made between Council and MUSE Developments dated 19th March 2019 (Exempt)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet Decision to approve the preferred bidder (MUSE) to form the Joint Venture Company.	28th February 2018
Council Decision to approve the start of consultation for the Master planning of Birkenhead.	26th November 2018
Council Decision to approve the full Business Case for Birkenhead Commercial District.	24th February 2020
Council Decision to approve the design and delivery of the new offices and for Director of Law and Governance and Director of Regeneration to negotiate and enter into appropriate agreements to allow project to be delivered.	27th July 2020

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ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**26th July 2021**

REPORT TITLE	WIRRAL GROWTH COMPANY: BIRKENHEAD PHASE 1: FINAL SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.
REPORT OF	DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLACE

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Member endorsement to the formal Site Development Plan (SDP) for Phase 1 of Birkenhead Town Centre. The plan has been developed by the Wirral Growth Company (WGC) as part of the Partnership Agreement that the Council and MUSE Developments entered into on 19th March 2019. The draft indicative SDP was contained in the Partnership Business Plan and approved by Cabinet on 24th February 2020. Now that WGC has obtained planning permission for Phase 1 of the scheme it is the appropriate time to bring the formal SDP for approval to both partners of the WGC, in accordance with the processes set out in the Partnership Agreement. The proposed SDP (which can be found at Appendix 1 to this report) was approved by the Wirral Growth Company Board at its meeting on 1st July 2021.

Approval of the formal SDP is one of the conditions of the Option Agreement that is in place between the Council and the Wirral Growth Company regarding, amongst others, Milton Pavements. Once the final conditions regarding funding and construction contracts are in place, Milton Pavements will be drawn down by way of long leases to the funder and construction of the first two office buildings will commence.

Town Centre regeneration is a long-standing priority of the Wirral Council Plan 2025 and is reflected through the requirement to deliver inclusive economic growth, working for a prosperous inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their potential.

The matter affects all wards.

This is a key decision owing to the significance in terms of the effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the Borough, as well as being in excess of £500,000 in monetary value.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Appendices to this report contain exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

It is in the public interest to exclude the press and public during consideration of these items under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as they contain commercially sensitive information.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Economic, Regeneration and Development Committee:

- (1) Request that Policy and Resources Committee approves the Formal Site Development Plan for Birkenhead Commercial District Phase 1.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The implementation of the SDP will directly support the regeneration of Birkenhead which has been a long-term priority for the Council. It supports the Council's ambitions around sustainable development and the generation of a prosperous inclusive economy where people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations regardless of their background or where they live.
- 1.2 Specifically the delivery of Phase 1 of the plan will result in the construction of circa 150,000 sq.ft (13,900 sq.m) of Grade 'A' office accommodation in two buildings referred to as A1 and A2 with associated quality public realm. The larger of the two buildings A1 measuring 89,591 sq.ft (8,323 sq.m) will be occupied by Council employees while the second building A2 measuring 58,176 sq.ft (5,405 sq.m) will be let on the open market to commercial occupiers.
- 1.3 Through taking the head lease on the first two office buildings and relocating up to 800 administrative staff into the Birkenhead Commercial District the Council will intervene to unlock and drive forward the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre.
- 1.4 The draft indicative SDP was approved by Cabinet as part of the approval of the Partnership Business Plan on 24th February 2020. Now that planning permission has been granted, the next stage under the Partnership Agreement is for the formal SDP to be approved. Then any remaining conditions need to be satisfied by the WGC, such as having construction contracts in place, before the option contained in the Supplemental Option Agreement for Milton Pavements will be triggered and the long leases granted to the funder, then leased back to the Council, and construction can commence.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Council could choose not to approve the formal SDP. This would then halt the progress of the development of the Birkenhead Commercial District and incur the legal and financial consequences set out at paragraph 5.2. This option is not recommended.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Wirral Growth Company plans for Birkenhead Town Centre form a key part of the Council's ambitions for the Borough as set out in the Birkenhead 2040 Framework. The creation of a new commercial district in the heart of the town will act as a catalyst for further investment by Wirral Growth Company helping to drive business confidence and make Birkenhead a location to invest in.
- 3.2 Specifically the SDP meets the following 4 Council Objectives (as defined in the Partnership Agreement):
 - (i) Secures Local Economic Growth,

- (ii) Makes a positive contribution towards the delivery of the Council's Asset Transformation Programme,
 - (iii) Contributes to ensuring that businesses encouraged to invest in the Wirral have access to property that meets their needs and delivers business rate growth and;
 - (iv) Better utilises the Council's assets to drive socio-economic change to secure a sustainable future for the benefit of the community.
- 3.3 The full SDP is appended to this report but in summary the key elements of the plan are as follows:

Proposed Development.

- 3.4 Phase 1 of the SDP will see the construction of two office buildings (A1 and A2) on the former site of Milton Pavements which has now been demolished and cleared. The larger of the two offices A1 (Measuring 89,591 sq.ft) will be occupied by the Council while Building A2 (58,175 sq.ft) will be let on the open market to commercial tenants. The new buildings will be Wired score gold rated, constructed to Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) Excellent standard and have been designed to secure an EPC rating of A. The offices will sit within a high-quality public realm that will provide new pedestrian routes through Birkenhead. A new primary sub-station will also be constructed on Council owned land to the rear of Europa Pools to future proof the power supply within the master plan area.

Planning

- 3.5 Following an extensive public consultation exercise held over the Summer and Autumn of 2019 the Growth Company submitted a hybrid planning application for the first Phase SDP on 19th August 2020. The application included outline consent for a mix of uses over the wider master plan area covering 27.4 acres together with a detailed consent for the development of the two office blocks A1/A2 along with a request to construct a new primary sub-station on Council owned land to the rear of Europa Pools.
- 3.6 The planning application was unanimously approved by the Planning Committee on 29th April 2021 and a Section 106 agreement has now been concluded allowing a planning approval decision notice to be issued to the Wirral Growth Company.

Social Value

- 3.7 When the Council entered into the Joint Venture Partnership with MUSE it was on the basis that the Wirral Growth Company must deliver a social value plan that ensures that the benefits of regeneration are made available to as many of the Borough's residents as possible. As part of the Phase 1 SDP the Wirral Growth Company has developed a Social Value Plan that will ensure that they and their sub-contractors meet their environmental and social obligations including the creation of job opportunities within Wirral for those furthest away from work including those with health conditions and/or disabilities.

3.8 The Wirral Growth Company has engaged with Council Officers to ensure that the plan:

- Aligns with the Council's own environmental policies and plans;
- Aligns with the Council's employment and skills policies;
- Targets the Council's focus groups such as care leavers, young offenders and young mums;

3.9 The detailed Social Value Plan can be found at Appendix 2 to this report.

Programme

3.10 A full project programme can be found within the SDP appended to this report. The key milestones for the delivery of the Phase 1 works are as follows:

Planning Consent Judicial Review Period	August 2021
Discharge of planning pre-commencement conditions	End of August 2021
Contractor Mobilisation	Early October 2021
Start on Site	Early October 2021
Completion of Phase 1 Office Blocks (A1/A2)	October 2023

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are a number of financial matters connected with the delivery of the Site Development Plan. As these are commercially sensitive a detailed financial summary can be found at Appendix 3 of this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 A full report on the documents produced by the Council's external legal advisers which the Council will enter in to once the SDP is approved and the funder is in place (the agreement for lease, the leases) is annexed at Appendix 4.

5.2 For Phase 1 of Birkenhead Commercial District, if the Draft Formal SDP is not approved (upon first presentation), it is a Deadlock Matter which is then escalated to the Senior Officers of the Joint V Partners (Council and Muse) for resolution. If it is not resolved, on three successive occasions then it shall be a Deadlock Event, which triggers the termination of the Wirral Growth Company. Milestone 4 of the Partnership Agreement will be breached if the Council fail to approve an SDP for Phase 1 of Birkenhead Commercial District within 18 months (plus time for planning processes and other processes which may introduce delay). If this occurs, it will trigger the winding up of the Wirral Growth Company and in such an event either a Milestone Payment or a Sites Costs payment will become payable by the Council to the Wirral Growth Company under the terms of the Partnership Agreement.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Council's monitoring and support for the WGC project will be met using existing staff resources from Regeneration, Assets and ICT.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The governance of the programme enables for the escalation and management of risks and issues which is controlled through the use of risk and issues logs. The process is supported by the Council's Corporate and Regeneration Risk Management structures.
- 7.2 An extract of the highest risks for the project are listed below. The risk register is reviewed and updated as part of the monthly Office Quarter meeting that has been established to oversee the successful delivery of the SDP Phase 1.

Risk	Mitigating Action	Impact Score	Impact
The office buildings A1/A2 are not constructed to the agreed brief and specification.	The project is being managed to Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) protocols and the Council is receiving technical support from Avison Young Consultants to ensure that the scheme is constructed in compliance with agreed plans and specifications.	5	Low
Market uncertainty, especially post Covid, impacts on the demand for office accommodation offered at Building A2 leading to financial implications for the Council.	The Council has commissioned a lettings and marketing strategy to ensure that potential commercial occupiers are made aware of the A2 offer. Occupier interest is already being registered in advance of the construction works commencing.	8	Medium
There is a lack of long-term investor appetite for the new office development.	The Wirral Growth Company undertook a soft market testing exercise to raise awareness of the investment potential of the scheme. This has led to Canada Life coming forward as forward funder of the project, subject to appropriate legal agreements being signed off.	3	Low
Unexpected or unforeseen issues result in a cost increase to the scheme.	The Wirral Growth Company has negotiated a fixed price contract with Morgan Sindall to deliver Phase 1 of the SDP.	4	Low

Risk of reputational damage to the Council for the late delivery of the project.	The contract negotiated with Morgan Sindall has appropriate compensation clauses to ensure that there is a focus to deliver the scheme on time and to budget.	4	Low
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8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The development of the SDP has been informed by an extensive consultation exercise completed over the last 2 years. This included holding two reach out events in The Pyramids Shopping Centre. The first, which took place in May/June 2019 was on the basis of a 'Your Town, Your Say' session and this was followed up by a 'You Said, We Listened' event in October/November 2019 to allow the public's feedback and ideas to be incorporated into the emerging plan. Further consultation events were held with key stakeholders including Wirral Chamber of Commerce, Birkenhead Sixth College and Mars Pension Fund, owners of the Pyramids Shopping Centre, as well as design reviews with the Places Matter team.
- 8.2 A briefing presentation was also made to Members of the Council's Strategic Planning Sub-Committee on 6th February 2021 to allow Members the opportunity to thoroughly interrogate the plans as they were being finalised.
- 8.3 This work culminated in a further comprehensive update of the submission on 25th February 2021 following officer and Member engagement including a statement of conformity for the Environmental Statement to include matters relating to Design, Heritage, Noise and Vibration and a Design Code to demonstrate the projects conformity to key elements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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 (EIA) 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. An EIA has been produced and concludes that due to the nature of the project there are no adverse impacts identified for any protected groups. The project aims to foster and deliver a regenerated Town Centre that is highly accessible, inter-generational in nature and open to all members of the community.
- 9.2 An EIA has been produced in support of the SDP Phase 1 Birkenhead Town Centre project and this can be found at:
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Regeneration of Birkenhead Commercial District supports the objectives of the Wirral Cool2 Climate Change Strategy, in promoting sustainable living and building design and will contribute to Wirral being net carbon neutral by 2041. The project is inherently sustainable in that it has strong environmental credentials in being a brownfield location in Birkenhead Town Centre and benefiting from sitting adjacent to Birkenhead Central bus station and Conway Park railway station. The development will be firmly integrated into the existing and improved cycle and pedestrian networks and will incorporate an upgraded public realm that will incorporate rain gardens and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). The offices will be constructed to BREEAM Excellent standard, which is the world's leading sustainability assessment method for measuring commercial buildings and will achieve an EPC A rating. The WGC has also given a commitment to exclude the use of fossil fuels as a power source for buildings A1/A2.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – SDP Phase 1: Birkenhead Town Centre

Appendix 1 contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Appendix 2 Social Value Plan Appendix 2 contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Appendix 3 – Financial Summary Appendix 3 contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Appendix 4 - Legal Report.

Appendix 4 contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Partnership Agreement made between Council and MUSE Developments dated 19th March 2019 (Exempt)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet Decision to approve the preferred bidder (MUSE) to form the Joint Venture Company.	28 th February 2018
Council Decision to approve the start of consultation for the Master planning of Birkenhead.	26 th November 2018

<p>Council Decision to approve the full Business Case for Birkenhead Commercial District.</p>	<p>24th February 2020</p>
<p>Council Decision to approve the design and delivery of the new offices and for Director of Law and Governance and Director of Regeneration to negotiate and enter into appropriate agreements to allow project to be delivered.</p>	<p>27th July 2020</p>

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SHAREHOLDER BOARD

Thursday, 1 July 2021

Present: Councillor Y Nolan (In the Chair)

Councillors JE Green

Apologies Councillors J Williamson

1 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

In the absence of Councillor Williamson, it was unanimously agreed that Councillor Nolan would act as Chair for this meeting.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Shareholder Board in this municipal year.

2 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Janette Williamson.

3 **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.

No such declarations were made.

4 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

There were no questions, statements or petitions from the public or Members.

5 **EDSENTIAL CIC CHAIR APPOINTMENT**

Stuart Bellerby, Senior Commercial Manager, introduced the report and highlighted that the Shareholder Board was responsible for reviewing 'Reserved Matters' set out in the Shareholders' Agreement entered into in respect of Edsential CIC, a company jointly owned by the Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council.

He reported that Edsential CIC had sought the Shareholders consent to appoint a new Chair to its Board of Directors.

The appointment was unanimously agreed and it was therefore –

Resolved – That the appointment of Mark Parkinson as Chair of the Board of Directors of Edsential CIC for a term of three years, be approved.

6 EDSENTIAL CIC DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT

Stuart Bellerby, Senior Commercial Manager, introduced the report and highlighted that Edsential CIC had sought the Shareholders consent to appoint a new Director.

The appointment was unanimously agreed and it was therefore –

Resolved – That the appointment of David McNaught as a Director of Edsential CIC, be approved.

7 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, it was:

Resolved – that in accordance with section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The public interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

8 EDSENTIAL CIC AUDITOR APPOINTMENT

Stuart Bellerby, Senior Commercial Manager, introduced the report and highlighted that Edsential CIC had sought consent to appoint new auditors.

The appointment was unanimously agreed and it was therefore –

Resolved – That the appointment of Crowe U.K. LLP as Auditors of Edsential CIC, be approved.

SENIOR OFFICER AND APPOINTMENTS STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 13 July 2021

Present: Councillor J Williamson (Chair)

Councillors L Rennie W Clements
P Gilchrist T Jones
S Hayes J McManus
H Cameron Y Nolan

Deputy: Councillors C Cooke (in place of P Cleary)

10 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Councillor Janette Williamson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

11 APOLOGIES

Councillor Pat Cleary had sent his apologies and Councillor Chris Cooke was deputising for him.

12 MEMBER'S CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Sub Committee were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, in connection with any item on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

13 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

The Chair announced that no questions from either members of the Public or Members had been submitted, nor were there any statements or petitions to receive.

14 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Tony Williams, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development, presented a report to the Sub-Committee, which sought approval for the Council's Health and Safety Policy Statement. The report also

provided an update on the work that was being undertaken to identify and manage risks and improve health and safety practice across the Council and the specific work undertaken in response to covid.

The committee questioned how healthy and safe working conditions would be maintained for staff in future buildings. Previously areas such as kitchens and breakout rooms were dedicated spaces for staff welfare. Tony Williams responded that a modern estate was being sought for future council workspaces and these would also be covid safe in order to maintain health and safety in staff welfare spaces. Tony Williams went on to explain the roles and responsibilities with regard to health and safety which would be laid out in all future job descriptions.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Yvonne Nolan, and agreed by assent, it was -

Resolved – That,

- a) the Health and Safety Policy Statement, be approved;**
- b) the ongoing work to identify and manage health and safety risks and improve health and safety practice across the Council, be noted.**

15 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Yvonne Nolan, and agreed by assent, it was -

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

16 CHIEF OFFICER STRUCTURE

The Chief Executive submitted a report which updated the Sub-Committee on the Chief Officer Structure. The report sought approval for some changes to the structure and for the commencement of recruitment to a number of vacant posts.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Yvonne Nolan, and agreed by assent, it was -

Resolved – That,

- (1) the proposals set out in the report in relation to the current Chief Officer structure, be agreed, namely:**
 - a) Commence internal and external recruitment to the Assistant Director: Children and Families.**
 - b) Commence internal recruitment to the Assistant Director: Strategic Change.**
 - c) Commence final stage interviews with the Staffing & Senior Appointments Sub-Committee for the two Assistant Director level posts in the Neighbourhoods directorate that are filled on a temporary basis:**

AD: Highways & Infrastructure
AD: Leisure, Libraries & Customer Engagement
- (2) the proposed timetable for the above as set out in Appendix Three, be agreed;**
- (3) the proposal to review and finalise requirements and commence recruitment to posts in the Regeneration and Place Directorate in Autumn 2021, be agreed;**
- (4) the deletion of the Assistant Director: Corporate Office post, be agreed;**
- (5) the temporary redesignation of the role of Assistant Director: Modernisation and Support to Assistant Director: Strategy and Partnerships (People Services), be noted.**

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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