

Wirral's Economic Recovery Plan

Progress Update

May 2010

Appendix 1

Actions and interventions agreed by Wirral partners

The Council and its partners will continue to meet regularly to agree the best ways to support Wirral residents and businesses in the current situation. The interventions outlined below detail some of the planned activity, developed in response to our detailed understanding of the recession. These actions will also help to have a positive impact on Wirral's short, medium and longer term corporate and LAA objectives that are set out within our Sustainable Community Strategy and partners' strategic plans. A key overarching driver running right across the Recovery Plan will be to help narrow the gap in outcomes for Wirral residents and businesses.

1. Supporting Wirral Businesses

The Issue	Response	Lead Partner(s)	Area of Impact	Progress May 2010
<p><u>Advice and Information</u></p> <p>As many businesses will lack experience of operating during a recession it is important that these firms get access to advice early and adapt their business plans to changing market conditions.</p>	<p>Invest Wirral is working with Business Link North West (BLNW) to ensure that information is cascaded through and online business forums networks and Wirral Investment Network (WIN)</p> <p>We will continue to use the online local business network which further promotes key support services.</p> <p>We will circulate an up-to-date brochure with a breakdown of all of the support agencies that can help businesses.</p>	<p>Wirral Council, Business Link</p>	<p>Take up of Information events and e-business information.</p> <p>Jobs safeguarded/created</p>	<p>Through ERDF funding, three BLNW advisors now work within the Invest Wirral offices</p> <p>The business network now has 1,100 members</p> <p>The Council's Business Start Programme continues to exceed targets (by 20%)</p>

				<p>despite the economic conditions. Latest data from WirralBiz indicates that 300 new businesses have been created. In 2009/10.</p> <p>Wirral is holding a Future Jobs Fund Employer Forum on 24th May. Both Invest Wirral and Business Link are attending in order to provide support to Wirral 3rd sector organisations.</p>
<p><u>Access to and Management of finance</u></p> <p>Advice and financial assistance are critical to help businesses to manage cash flow and to access finance</p>	<p>Wirral will continue to work with partners to develop a structured package of support to businesses in a direct response to the recession.</p>	<p>Wirral Council</p>	<p>Number of business taking up grants for investment projects in current economic climate. (Number of Jobs Safeguarded /</p>	<p>Working relationship Further relationships developed with key partners to</p>

	Flexible package of financial support eg Think Big Grants ; BIG Support Grant/ Consultancy Support		Created)	provide support. The Council has supported 31 projects which have applied and received funding support through the Council's BIG and Think Big schemes totalling £1.656m.
<u>Public sector procurement</u>				
Wirral Council will support local businesses and explore how local firms can access public sector contract opportunities	Continue commitment to pay Council invoices within 10 days for all creditors from local businesses that employ less than 250 people. We have held bespoke workshops for local businesses to increase awareness of public sector procurement opportunities.	Wirral Council	Local Sustainability	
<u>Affordable premises and managed workspace</u>				
There is a growing recognition of the need to develop a portfolio-based approach to intervention, ensuring	Council Officers are investigating proposals to make additional bespoke units available to provide supported	Wirral Council	Additional workspace created	Wirral Council is in discussion with partners to

<p>that programmes provide not only early stage incubation and flexible managed workspace but also larger workspace units and grow-on space offered on more traditional terms</p> <p>Wirral Council will therefore prioritise the development of physical facilities to support businesses (workspace and one-stop shop business facilities)</p>	<p>accommodation for new and fledging businesses. Eg Employment Land Survey.</p>			<p>develop a number of proposals to support local businesses/ SMEs</p>
<p><u>Recruitment and training</u> Feedback from businesses and partners indicates the adverse impact that the recession was starting to have on the availability of apprenticeship places in the borough</p>	<p>Continue to develop the Wirral Apprenticeship Programme.</p>	<p>Wirral Council</p>	<p>Numbers and profiles of apprenticeships Reduction in NEET</p>	<p>Wirral Council has committed funding for over 200 subsidised apprenticeship places. The Programme has secured employment for NEET and vulnerable young people in a diverse range of sectors such as construction, health and social care, engineering, accountancy and science and technology.</p>

2. Supporting Wirral Residents

The recession is having an impact on Wirral residents. This section sets out the services that will be provided to minimise unemployment and debt, to support those facing redundancy, and also to exploit opportunities that may arise during recession.

The Issue	Response	Lead Partner(s)	Area of Impact	Progress May 2010
<p><u>Employment Support:</u></p> <p>Wirral residents must have speedy and effective access to information, advice and guidance on employment and training services to help them back into work.</p>	<p>Key partners (Wirral Council, Jobcentre Plus, Connexions and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) will continue to co-ordinate activity and additional provision to support those under threat or notice of redundancy and those recently unemployed.</p> <p>The Council will continue to ensure that additional activities commissioned through Working Wirral are used to complement mainstream provision, helping to improve local people's skills and employment prospects.</p>	<p>JCP, SFA, Connexions, Wirral Council.</p>	<p>Increased employment rates</p>	<p>Jobcentre Plus (JCP) continues to work very closely with the SFA and other key partners to deliver a bespoke support package for employers and employees facing redundancy. JCP continues to have a redundancy support team</p> <p>A raft of extra support and provision has been provided for all Jobseekers</p>

				<p>Allowance (JSA) customers from the first day of their claim; with support increasing the longer they are unemployed.</p> <p>The introduction of a new Jobseekers Regime & Flexible New Deal (FND) from April 2010, will establish a new, unified approach for all jobseekers, whatever their age, skills or barriers to work. A staged programme of support will apply to all Jobseeker's Allowance customers from day one of their claim.</p>
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				Note: New Deal for Lone Parents and New Deal for Partners will continue.
<p><u>Wirral partners will work to minimise the impact of the recession on young people</u></p> <p>Feedback from Greater Merseyside Connexions ¹ highlights that the recession is likely to impact on post-16 retention in education and training.</p> <p>Data indicates that young people are being particularly affected by the recession.</p>	<p>Mainstream partners will deliver an enhanced package of support for 18-24 year olds through the young persons guarantee</p> <p>We will continue the implementation and expansion of the Future Jobs Fund initiative to create many new opportunities for Wirral residents, particularly young people.</p> <p>Wirral partners will target activity to address the numbers of those aged 18-24 claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)</p> <p>Continuation of the Activity Agreement Pilot through Connexions, aimed at 16 & 17 year old NEET and NEET vulnerable groups, until March 2011</p>	<p>JCP, Connexions</p> <p>Wirral Council</p> <p>WEDS partners</p> <p>Connexions</p>	<p>Increased employment rates</p> <p>Numbers of FJF starts</p> <p>Reduction in JSA rates</p> <p>NEET Reduction</p>	<p>Additional support has been introduced under Young Persons Guarantee. This includes offering all young people on JSA additional support with jobsearch, Adviser support, the offer of a job, training or meaningful activity. This includes Future Jobs Fund (FJF)</p> <p>A new initiative 'Tranmere</p>

¹ 'The Impact of the Recession on the Employment Prospects of the Young People of Wirral' (April 2009) Carlyne Kershaw: Great Merseyside Connexions Service.

				<p><i>Rovers Return to Work</i> supported by JCP, will target from day 1 of unemployment.</p> <p>The 'Wirral Apprentice' programme has been given additional funding to target vulnerable groups including those leaving care.</p>
<p><u>Tackling Debt and Financial exclusion</u></p> <p>Feedback from voluntary sector organisations demonstrates a substantial increase in service users. Wirral Advice Network indicates significantly increased demand for debt advice over the last year.</p>	<p>Locally based advice services are vital for the most vulnerable sections of the community.</p> <p>Wirral Council will work with partners including Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), voluntary groups and community advice agencies to increase the capacity and availability of advice for residents that are struggling to cope with the recession.</p> <p>Introduction of Wirral Moneyline to assist with the availability of affordable</p>	<p>Wirral Council, Third Sector partners, Wirral Advice Network, CAB, RSLs.</p> <p>Riverside Housing Association</p>	<p>No of people seen at financial advice and health surgeries within One Stop Shops</p> <p>No who have taken up Fair Debt policy</p> <p>No of people on low income who have accessed loan.</p>	<p>Discussions are taking place with partners regarding enhanced debt and financial inclusion provision.</p> <p>Moneyline has provided 425 loans since October 2009, 153 of these</p>

	housing credit.		<p>Development of Council's Financial Inclusion Strategy which will set a list of measurable actions.</p> <p>Possibly: No of free home computers distributed through new central government scheme (C&YPD)</p>	<p>were resulting from referrals made by Housing Associations. This has resulted in a reduction of loans from loan sharks due to lack of alternative.</p> <p>Financial Inclusion Action Plan being developed with partners.</p>
<p><u>Availability of business start up services</u></p> <p>For some, the recession will be an appropriate time to start a new</p>	Wirral has had considerable success in supporting business start ups and sustaining new businesses.	Wirral Council, Wirral Biz	Numbers of new business starts and sustained	The number of new business start-ups and number of businesses

<p>business. It is essential that Wirral residents (particularly those facing redundancy or newly unemployed) have access to appropriate advice and support.</p>	<p>Wirral partners will continue to provide tailored advice and support to new enterprises to exploit new markets and to successfully establish themselves in Wirral</p>			<p>supported through the Council's Business Start Programme continues to exceed targets (by 20%) despite the economic conditions. Latest data from WirralBiz indicates that 300 new businesses have been created. In 2009/10.</p>
<p><u>Securing local jobs</u></p> <p>Businesses will continue to recruit during the recession.</p> <p>There are also still a number of significant regeneration initiatives taking place.</p>	<p>It is important that new and emerging opportunities are made available to local residents. Wirral partners will ensure that local people are supported to benefit from such opportunities</p> <p>Local labour commitments such as the Construction Integrator will seek to maximise the engagement and recruitment of local workless residents in major capital projects, housing</p>	<p>Wirral Council Officers</p>	<p>Numbers of local residents taking up employment</p>	<p>Build Wirral project currently being implemented. An initial pilot is taking place as part of the New Brighton development.</p>

	refurbishments and related activities across Wirral through agreements that could be brokered with employers.			
<p><u>Mortgage Rescue Scheme</u></p> <p>The recession is having an adverse effect on housing and homelessness. Help is needed to support people who are facing the real possibility of losing their homes.</p>	<p>Wirral will continue to provide advice and support to prevent homelessness and continue to provide additional fast track referral advice to Mortgage Rescue eligible households.</p> <p>Wirral is monitoring the levels of repossession claims and orders and targeting resources appropriately</p> <p>Eg Wirral was one of the first local authorities to introduce an intervention in line with the national mortgage rescue scheme</p>	Wirral Council, Housing Partners, CAB	People requesting and receiving assistance NI 156	<p>Reduction in repossessions and homelessness due to repossessions</p> <p>Wirral was a fast track authority for the introduction of the national mortgage rescue scheme and after the first year, in December 2009 was in the top 20 performing authorities for rescues completed.</p>
<p><u>Supporting communities</u></p> <p>Although this recession is likely to be felt across all communities, it will inevitably exacerbate pressures faced by vulnerable groups.</p>	Wirral Council partners in housing support, children's services and social care will work in partnership to mitigate the worst impact as the	Wirral Council Adult Services, Children's Services	NI46-Adults with learning disabilities in paid employment.	Colleagues in DASS have been leading on an initiative to

<p>We will continue to engage with communities - eg through Citizen's panels, Area Forums and police and health consultative groups to gain feedback on how the recession is impacting upon individuals, groups and communities</p>	<p>financial strains on households begin to show</p> <p>The Council acknowledges the essential role of local communities and the Third Sector in growing the economy and tackling worklessness, and the increased potential for local social enterprise to contribute to this agenda. Through the 'Working Wirral' approach, Wirral has made good progress in building strong strategic and delivery partnerships with the Third sector and we look forward to building on these.</p>	<p>Third Sector partners, Working Wirral</p>	<p>NI150- Adults receiving secondary mental health services in employment</p> <p>The proportion of people of working age currently using Adult Social Services moving on to employment or voluntary activities.</p> <p>VCAW is placing itself in a position where they will gather evidence of trends and measure impact</p>	<p>increase employment opportunities.</p> <p>The council is leading on a good practice approach to this by permanently employing a group of people with Learning Disabilities.</p>
<p><u>Tackling Child Poverty</u></p> <p>Wirral has some significant concentrations of child poverty and tackling the causes and impacts are a key priority for Wirral partners.</p>	<p>Wirral partners will continue to build on local level analysis of child poverty, in line with the new duties on local authorities set out within the proposed Child Poverty Bill;</p> <p>We will collate local data and analysis to identify the extent of child poverty in</p>	<p>Wirral Council and LSP Partners</p>	<p>Reduction in levels of Child Poverty – Including in-work poverty and NI 116 Child Poverty which impacts on worklessness targets.</p>	<p>Officers have worked up proposals to reduce, and mitigate the effects of, child poverty. Preparing a local child poverty needs</p>

	<p>Wirral (including in-work poverty) and co-ordinate activity as the basis for our local child poverty needs assessments</p> <p>We will continue to work with LCR partners to develop the Child Poverty Commission.</p>			<p>assessment and a joint child poverty strategy setting out measures to tackle child poverty in Wirral.</p>
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3. Investing in Skills

Skills are the key to sustainable employment and a strong and competitive economy. This is important during a recession, but also in the future as employers look to improve their competitiveness in preparation for when the economy starts to recover.

The Issue	Response	Lead Partner(s)	Area of Impact	Progress May 2010
<p><u>Employer Responsive Training</u></p> <p>The skills of employees are the most important assets for any company. Wirral partners will enable funding and training to firms that want to invest in their future competitiveness by improving the skills and qualifications of their staff.</p>	<p>Wirral Council is working with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Job centre Plus (JCP) to deliver an Integrated Employment and Skills programme across Greater Merseyside.</p> <p>Partners will continue to develop appropriate pre-recruitment and in work training programmes eg Train to Gain to enable more individuals and employers to become eligible and benefit from training.</p>	<p>from April 2010, Skills Funding Agency</p>	<p>Employer Engagement framework</p> <p>Numbers of participants</p>	<p>The Council is currently carrying out consultation with local businesses to gather robust and reliable information from employers regarding skills requirements for their business.</p> <p>This will then be used locally as part of an evidence base to frame our future employment and skills plans.</p>

<p><u>Access to adult learning</u> Training schemes covering the skills demanded by employers will be available to Wirral residents</p>	<p>Wirral partners have developed a wide range of training opportunities to improve employability including improving basic skills, learning to use computers or re-training for a new career.</p>	<p>Wirral Council, FE Colleges,</p>	<p>Training participation rates; increase in skills and qualifications</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p><u>Apprenticeships and trainee places for young people</u> It is essential that young people are supported to get a good start in their chosen career</p>	<p>Apprenticeship Programme We will continue to develop the Wirral Apprenticeship Programme.</p>	<p>Wirral Council, Connexions, NAS</p>	<p>Numbers and profiles of apprentices from vulnerable groups eg NEET</p>	<p>The Wirral Apprentice Programme has funded 167 new Apprenticeships to date with a further 34 planned. Of these, 72 were recruited from the NEET cohort, 31 would have been NEET if it were not for the programme and 16 were unemployed young adults who had previously been NEET.</p>

4. Improving Health

It is anticipated that the recession will have a negative impact on the health of the population, particularly those adversely affected by redundancy and those experiencing economic and social problems

The Issue	Response	Lead Partner(s)	Area of Impact	Progress May 2010
<p><u>Improving the health of Wirral residents</u></p> <p>Health partners, both locally and regionally, are prioritising how the NHS can mitigate the impact of the recession through health inequalities prevention activities; service provision and corporate citizen role, e.g. recruitment and workforce and procurement.</p> <p>Wirral partners have a clear commitment to reducing health inequalities in Wirral and will work in partnership to tackle the socio-economic links between low income, unemployment and ill-health.</p>	<p>A diverse range of services including:</p> <p>Improving peoples' quality of life and how long they live by addressing the underlying socio-economic determinants of health;</p> <p>Improving access to services for people with poor health;</p> <p>A key priority is to reduce health inequalities.</p> <p>Joint projects to support people with a health condition into training and employment.</p> <p>The Primary Care Advice Liaison (PCAL) service offers a service to a wide number of people with more complex inter-related issues including debt, repossession and worsening mental health.</p>	<p>NHS Wirral, Wirral Council, Third Sector partners</p>	<p>Reducing levels of lifestyle risk factors strongly associated with poverty and ill health such as smoking</p> <p>Number of people from most deprived areas accessing prevention activities</p> <p>Number of people on benefits or at risk of losing employment as a result of poor health supported into education, training and employment</p> <p>Number of people with underlying health issues</p>	<p>NHS Wirral progress in 2009-2010 includes:</p> <p>NHS services helped 2,250 people to stop smoking, a further 1,500 people being motivated to quit and 1, 065 smokers who have pledged to quit.</p> <p>Alcohol treatment and prevention services have been strengthened and admissions to hospital from</p>

			<p>helped to access and sustain employment</p>	<p>alcohol related conditions are 15% below expected trajectory</p> <p>2,879 people have taken part in a new community programme of health promotion courses and activities in the most deprived areas of Wirral.</p> <p>A health trainer service has been established to support people in the most deprived areas to successfully make lifestyle changes. So far 1,205 have accessed the service to set out personal action plans and make lifestyle</p>
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				<p>changes'</p> <p>Actions within the Health Inequalities Action Plan continue to be progressed and the annual report is due to LSP Exec in June 2010.</p> <p>Wirral Working for Health continues to support people on long term sickness benefits back into work and has had 274 referrals to the programme.</p> <p>An event was held for managers on options such as Apprenticeships, Backing Young Britain,</p>
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				<p>Internships, Cadets etc. Each of the NHS Trusts are progressing the Wellbeing Agenda, and NHS Wirral has in place a Mindful Employer action plan, to ensure the health and wellbeing of existing staff is supported.</p>
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5. **Housing and Homelessness**

The Issue	Response	Lead Partner(s)	Area of Impact	Progress May 2010
<p><u>Preventing homelessness</u></p> <p>Until economic confidence improves, the housing market is likely to struggle. Housing partners will continue to develop services designed to prevent homelessness and stave off repossessions.</p>	<p>The recession has prompted a change in the targets for new-build housing as part of the HMRI programme, re-phasing of HMRI development programmes, changing tenure of new-build schemes.</p> <p>Wirral Council has allocated additional resources to address increasing Housing Benefit claims.</p> <p>Housing Officers are putting more resources into repossession prevention via third party specialist service such as debt advice and mediation.</p>	<p>Wirral Council, Strategic Housing Partners, CAB</p>	<p>Payment of benefits claims and actioning of changes in circumstances (NI's 180 /181)</p> <p>Note: NI 180 stopped wef 1/4/10 although we still measure actioning changes in circumstances.</p> <p>NI 156 (number of households in temporary accommodation)</p>	<p>HB Claims and associated changes are paid promptly and well within national standards, all claims being initially considered within 3 days of receipt. Fast tracking operates where appropriate.</p> <p>Statutory homelessness fell by 74% in 2009-10</p>
<p>The recession has caused a shift in strategic housing priorities towards creating opportunities to support and enable the occupation of new-build housing particularly by first-time</p>	<p>This has been in the form of developing options for shared equity, rent-to-buy and making the most of national initiatives such as HomeBuy Direct.</p>	<p>Wirral Council, Strategic Housing Partners</p>	<p>Increased access to housing opportunities</p>	

buyers.				
<p><u>Supporting Housing Growth</u></p> <p>The recession has had a significant impact on the delivery of housing and supply of affordable housing programmes, and increase in the number of stalled development sites</p>	<p>Wirral Council and its partners will continue to review tenure changes to schemes where appropriate to ensure housing supply is delivered.</p> <p>Wirral Council will work with partners to secure additional resources available to help support affordable housing and kickstart stalled housing developments.</p>	<p>Wirral Council Strategic Housing, Partners, Local Developers, Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)</p>	<p>Increase to targets set under NI155. Delivery of affordable homes</p>	<p>Local authority new build programme planning approvals gained works after tenders secured £3.28M through Kickstart and the local authority new build programme to deliver 130 new homes. 204 affordable new homes completed during 2009/10 and 32 so far during 2010/11.</p> <p>Two apprenticeships are expected to be appointed as part of the LA New Build contract.</p>

<p>Wirral Free Insulation Initiative</p>	<p>Wirral Council is responding to the need in Wirral to provide free loft and cavity wall insulation to all households where it is required, to meet the carbon emissions reduction targets in the local area and improve Wirral's housing stock. This will enable the household to be more energy efficiency, save money on energy bills and reduce fuel poverty.</p>	<p>Wirral Council, partner delivery agent</p>	<p>All homes across the borough will benefit from improvements where required. Reduction to Wirral's carbon footprint. Improvement to the housing stock. Lift people out of fuel poverty. Make householders more energy aware.</p>	<p>A 4 year programme has been agreed at Cabinet, with a target to spend £18M over four years under the government's Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT). £1.049M has been committed for 2010/11. The is currently at the tender process, with a delivery agent expected to be appointed during summer 2010</p>
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6. **Community Safety, Fire and Rescue**

The Issue	Response	Lead Partner(s)	Area of Impact	Progress May 2010
<p><u>Partners will work to mitigate the impacts of the recession.</u></p> <p>Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS): Historically commercial fires increase as businesses fail, and there is often an increase in vehicle fires.</p> <p>Domestic fires are known to increase as statistically and anecdotally unemployed people become at more risk from fires in the home.</p> <p>Anti social behaviour fires can be tracked to SOA's experiencing higher levels of multiple deprivation.</p>	<p>Responses include the setting up of a new joint Police/Fire team with the remit of tackling arson related insurance fraud. This follows unprecedented rise in fire related insurance claims across the UK and is believed to be linked to the financial down-turn.</p> <p>MFRS continues with joint action with operational crew getting to know what is going on in their locality and being extra vigilant whilst about their communities, and linking with specialist advocates such as arson, and ASB advocates.</p> <p>MFRS continues to support campaigns run by the Fire Support Network and other partners and to work closely with Wirral community safety team.</p>	<p>MFRS</p> <p>Community Safety Teams</p>	<p>Reductions in incidents</p>	<p>The Arson Fraud Investigation Team have made significant progress in establishing a joint Police / Fire approach to tackling arson related fraud. The team is currently involved in enforcement action of serious arson related fraud with a strong prosecution case about to go forward to the courts. Additionally the team monitor police / fire data across Wirral in order to identify</p>

				<p>Arson Fraud Potential. Commercial Fires, Deliberate Property Fires and Domestic Fires have all shown reductions in incidents from 2008/09 to 2009/10, with commercial fires showing the greatest decrease of 26.8% (38 fires), followed by Deliberate Property Fires with a reduction of 5.2% (37 fires).</p> <p>However, although there are overall reductions in these incidents across the Wirral, some wards show no</p>
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				change and others have reported increases in ASB, Commercial, Deliberate Property and Domestic Fires. For example, Leasowe & Moreton East has seen a 64% increase (32 incidents) in ASB fires from 2008/09 to 2009/10
<p>Community Safety</p> <p>Recent evidence suggests that there has been an increase in the number of burglaries committed in people's homes across Wirral, although it is uncertain whether this can be attributed to the recession.</p> <p>Longer term time-lag effects of the recession still need to be considered and trends will continue to be monitored.</p>	<p>Partners will continue to review crime figures to ascertain any correlation with the recession.</p> <p>Burglary levels are monitored on a daily basis.</p>	Community Safety Partners	<p>The aim is to reduce overall crime figures.</p> <p>The Wirral wide increase in burglary figures will be closely monitored.</p>	The Serious Acquisitive Crime meets on a monthly basis in coordination with the prolific and priority offender meetings. These are both multi agency meetings ensuring any trends in victims

				<p>targeted, offending patterns or geographic hotspots are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity. Serious acquisitive crime is a national indicator (NI 16) for which Wirral is 30% below target.</p> <p>JCP are supporting the Stronger Communities Initiative in the Morpeth Dock Area of Wirral Working in partnership, JCP has developed an action plan and will continue to develop our activities in the area.</p>
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7. Growing Wirral's Economy: The Investment Strategy

This Recovery Plan is an important part of Wirral's overarching economic vision for Wirral. Wirral Council has, together with our partners, identified the need to prioritise the economic well being of the Borough through increasing investment and enterprise, and reducing economic inactivity. We have developed a comprehensive Investment Strategy and made good progress with partners through our Working Wirral Investment Framework and our LAA.

The Issue	Response	Lead Partner(s)	Area of Impact	Progress May 2010
<p>The Investment Strategy will help to focus the activity of public and private partners, accelerate development activity in key sites and maximise opportunities to create local jobs and new business.</p>	<p>This is illustrated in our use of Working Wirral. The areas of focus for Working Wirral funding are intended to address structural issues and to maximise the competitiveness and long-term growth of Wirral businesses in order to foster a step change in performance (through both demand and supply-side measures).</p> <p>However, these interventions also have an important role to play in increasing the resilience of local businesses to withstand the current difficult trading conditions and will serve to increase the longer term potential of the Wirral business base when economic growth returns.</p>	Wirral Council	Working Wirral outputs achieved to support Employment and Enterprise Investment Priorities.	Review of Investment Strategy, identifying key sites and infrastructure requirements to support inward investment and job creation in preparation
<p>Better ICT infrastructure. Fast and reliable internet connectivity are important influences on business decisions on where to locate and</p>	<p>Wirral has commissioned a digital infrastructure scoping study with the aim of that will provide Wirral with a world class ICT network to support</p>	Wirral Council	Production of feasibility study to capture the likely scale and drivers of	Significant investment is being made into next generation broadband

<p>relocate</p>	<p>future development activity and increase investment into the area</p> <p>The introduction of a local fibre-optic broadband infrastructure could provide an important source of competitive advantage</p> <p>In addition, the roll-out of high-speed service would have a major impact on the delivery of local services in areas such as transport, housing, health and education and has the potential to generate significant social benefits.</p>		<p>demand (by business, sector and location) and identify key opportunities for increasing next-generation access availability</p> <p>Subsequent creation of new broadband infrastructure including backhaul facilities</p> <p>Upgrade of existing broadband infrastructure</p>	<p>access in Wirral to support business and investment.</p> <p>Next stage Action Plan currently being developed which includes procurement process..</p> <p>Initial feasibility study completed September 2009, further work on-going.</p>
<p><u>Marketing Wirral nationally and internationally</u></p> <p>The need for Wirral businesses to expand their markets from the competitive and limited parameters that they often operate in is clear.</p> <p>The composition of the Wirral economy suggests that a high proportion of businesses are not</p>	<p>We will work with local businesses and strategic contacts to position Wirral to attract business investment through the 'Think Big' marketing plan and materials.</p> <p>We will assist SMEs that have the potential to expand to export their product or service for the first time, along with assistance to those SMEs</p>	<p>Wirral Council</p>	<p>Progress towards Investment Marketing Objectives</p> <p>Progress towards Think Big project outcomes</p>	<p>International links survey send to Wirral Businesses to determine international links projects</p> <p>Links set up with other supporting</p>

<p>experienced in the development of new markets. This is a significant constraint on the growth potential of SMEs as international markets provide a significant opportunity for growth as the global economy emerges from recession.</p>	<p>that have been identified as having limited involvement in doing business overseas.</p> <p>We will seek to develop new markets in a proactive and strategic manner. Provision of a wide range of international trade support for SMEs in Wirral that are looking to enter or develop new international markets could help them to grow their business.</p> <p>We will continue to raise Wirral's international profile, and promote local businesses at significant international events such as the Shanghai Expo to be held in 2010; and Mipim.</p> <p>We will continue to market Wirral internationally and maximise Wirral's cultural and economic opportunities through our links with Suzhou.</p>		<p>Progress towards International Links Project outcomes</p>	<p>agencies like UKTI, NWDA, EEN</p> <p>Attended both Mipim and the Shanghai Expo to promote economic opportunities offered by Wirral.</p> <p>International Links Strategy currently under development</p> <p>Continued support for expansion projects together with partner support and guidance for increasing opportunities</p>
<p><u>Destination Marketing</u></p> <p>We have identified the need to market Wirral's tourism offer, more efficiently</p>	<p>We will effectively and efficiently market the Wirral Peninsula as a</p>	<p>Wirral Council, WTBN partners</p>	<p>Key Objectives of the Wirral</p>	<p>We have developed a</p>

and effectively, using existing visitor research.	quality investment and visitor destination, and create a sustainable environment that benefits both the local community and existing businesses alike.		Destination Marketing Implementation Plan	targeted marketing strategy and campaign (local, regional, national and international) to attract agreed and sustainable investment.
<u>Innovation, Technology and R&D</u> Wirral economy faces a clear productivity challenge, as evidenced by its low GVA per worker. Wirral has too many firms operating in low value added market segments	We will support Wirral firms to be more innovative in order to become more competitive and to create high-value jobs and attract high-skilled workers. Partners will drive up the level of university-business engagement and knowledge transfer and to build the business base's innovation capacity and commitment and extend the reach of R&D to smaller companies.	Wirral Council, Chester University, FE Colleges,	Development of the University Challenge proposal. Support for implementation of business processes to improve innovation performance Support for the development of new products for market using new technologies	
<u>Increase Inward Investment</u> Wirral's inward investment performance has improved in recent	Given the broad range of issues that Wirral faces, a variety of solutions will	Wirral Council	Increase in inward investors	Continue to respond to

<p>years and we will continue to build on this.</p> <p>We need to attract high value added job-creating inward investment as the global economy emerges from recession.</p>	<p>be required:</p> <p>to advise on investments that may help the business develop and strengthen;</p> <p>developing a strategic approach to firms marketing needs and helping them to access new markets;</p>			<p>inward investment proposals through Invest Wirral and Mersey Partnership links.</p> <p>Invest Wirral continues to successfully support business and helped generate jobs and investment.</p> <p>Over the last twelve months Invest Wirral has engaged with 1000 businesses</p> <p>This has led to 98 investment projects being supported and 3 inward investment projects</p>
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				<p>secured.</p> <p>31 businesses have been supported through the Council's "Big Business" investment grant and "Think Big" schemes.</p> <p>The total grants distributed amounted to over £1.6M.</p> <p>As a result of the activity above Invest Wirral has generated an investment value of more than £21.5M and has helped create 738 jobs and safeguarded a further 545.</p>

<p><u>Continuing to promote new development in Wirral</u></p> <p>We will continue to make good progress towards our economic vision for Wirral, despite the difficult economic conditions.</p>	<p>In the last year alone, we have helped 80 companies to create over 400 jobs, safeguarded over 500 local jobs and secured over £17million of private sector investment.</p> <p>Phase 2 of the New Brighton development will provide a new supermarket, cinema, budget hotel, outdoor lido, associated leisure and restaurant offer and public realm improvements (including major improvements to the seafront promenade) and will create over 700 new jobs within the local economy.</p>	<p>Wirral Council and strategic partners</p>	<p>Progress towards delivery of Investment Strategy</p>	<p>Phase 2 of the New Brighton project has been boosted by £3.9 million from Northwest Regional Development Agency and has already attracted six new major businesses to the area. It is hoped it will create 714 new jobs through a series of new retail and leisure facilities by 2012.</p>
	<p>In Wirral, Peel Holdings are promoting a mixed use development with a value of £4.5 billion, to regenerate Wirral's docklands.</p> <p>Wirral Council and Liverpool City Council are working with partners in a New Growth Point bid to provide new homes and an improved environment</p>	<p>Wirral Council, Peel Holdings, Strategic partners</p>	<p>Progress towards delivery of Investment Strategy</p> <p>New Growth Point resources to support HMRI housing market in recession and</p>	<p>Initial planning permission granted (subject to legal agreement) for 1,672 new dwellings, 6,037 sq m B1 office</p>

	in the most deprived areas of Wirral, within the Housing Market Renewal Area.		acquire key sites for housing redevelopment.	development. Large East Float scheme to be determined summer 2010 includes 422,757 sq m B1 office floorspace.
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Conclusion

The Council continues to lead partners in taking forward a co-ordinated and coherent response to the current economic situation. Despite prevailing economic conditions, the prospects for Wirral's economy remain good. A twin track approach of providing support to individuals and businesses to mitigate the effects of the recession, alongside continuing to deliver the Investment Strategy has positioned Wirral to prepare for recovery, to continue generating economic growth and deliver on the economic vision set out in its Investment Strategy.