

**WIRRAL LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP EXECUTIVE BOARD****WEDNESDAY 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2010****SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY – ANNUAL REPORT 2009-10****1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report sets out the approach being undertaken to produce an annual report relating to Wirral's Sustainable Community Strategy which has been in place since April 2009. This is in accordance with the commitment set out in the Community Strategy document to review progress annually. It is proposed that the annual report should initiate partnership discussions and consultation with local communities about future improvement priorities.
- 1.2 It should be noted that there is a wide range of existing partnership and thematic documents and reports which will inform the content of the annual report. These include the Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report, Local Area Agreement end of year performance report, Community Safety Partnership strategic assessment, Economic Recovery Plan reports, and Wirral's Public Health Annual Report.
- 1.3 As Executive Board members will be aware, the Wirral 2025 strategy sets out a vision for partnership working in the borough and provides the framework for key local authority and partner strategies. In the current financial and economic climate, where all sectors in Wirral face change and uncertainty, ensuring that this vision and framework remains 'fit for purpose' is critical. The risks presented by the current climate to delivering the vision set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy are of course considerable. The production of the annual report provides an opportunity to articulate these risks and begin to consider how the Local Strategic Partnership can mitigate against them through joint working, building on the activity that is being delivered for example through Wirral's Recovery Plan.
- 1.4 The report also provides a vehicle for emerging partnership responses to legislative and other policy drivers and plans including the Child Poverty Bill, the Marmot Review and the development of the third Local Transport Plan.

**2. OUTLINE OF THE ANNUAL REPORT**

- 2.1 Section 1 of the annual report will review the Community Strategy vision and objectives and provide a summary of overall progress. Wirral's vision is about increasing the prosperity of the borough through strategic economic regeneration and ensuring that partners work together to reduce inequalities in outcomes for different groups and for people in different parts of the borough. Wirral has taken steps in the last twelve months to deliver this vision, for example through progressing key regeneration projects. Work is being undertaken to ensure that the spatial vision for the borough provided by the Local Development Framework reflects the over-arching vision provided by the Community Strategy and an update in this respect will be provided in Section 1 of the full report.

- 2.2 Section 2 of the annual report will provide detailed narrative about the achievements which have been made against the six delivery objectives of the Community Strategy alongside future challenges for each thematic partnership area. Evidence already demonstrates that:

***Wirral is strengthening its local economy***

- 738 jobs were created and 545 jobs safeguarded during 2009-10
- Wirral Apprentice Programme has allocated funding for 200 new apprenticeships within local small and medium-sized businesses
- Increased business engagement has delivered clear outcomes, for example 252 businesses supported through the Council's business start programme continue to operate 12 months after start up
- Plans for economic regeneration are moving forward, for example the 2nd phase of 'Brand New Brighton' and progress on Wirral Waters

***Wirral is safer***

- Crime is falling more rapidly in Wirral than in other parts of the region and the borough has the lowest rate of recorded crime in Merseyside
- Number of reported incidents of anti-social behaviour has fallen again this year, success which is linked to an intelligence led focus on hotspot locations to deploy resources and the Respect Consortium
- A stronger communities initiative is in place focusing on Morpeth Dock

***Wirral is healthier***

- Wirral became the first borough in the North West to achieve National Healthy School Status (NHSS) for every school.
- Hospital admissions relating to alcohol harm are significantly lower than the target set in Wirral's Local Area Agreement
- Targeted and successful smoking cessation activities, including the BME Quit and Win Campaign, are making lifestyles healthier

***Life chances for children and young people are improving***

- Wirral has seen a reduction in teenage conceptions
- There have been improvements in GCSE results and rates of persistent absence in secondary schools are lower
- Less children were involved in road traffic accidents in 2009-10
- Looked after children are achieving well at Key Stages 2 and 4
- Performance has improved in relation to the numbers of young people not in employment, education or training
- Positive involvement of children and young people is taking place in a wide range of ways

***Wirral's living and working environment is improving***

- Less people were involved in road traffic accidents in 2009-10



- Wirral wide carbon reduction activities are in place support by the Wirral Climate Change Group, which involves a wide range of partners and stakeholders
- There has been investment in Energy Efficiency programmes
- Wirral's CRed website has been launched

#### ***Working to deliver sustainable & affordable housing***

- The number of affordable homes delivered has improved
  - Wirral has secured almost £1.5m for new affordable rented homes in Seacombe, Bebington and Prenton
  - Homelessness in Wirral reduced by a further 74% in 2009-10
- 2.3 There will be a particular focus in Section 2 of the annual report on the outcomes which have been achieved in relation to tackling inequalities in Wirral and how such activity will continue to be focused. Case studies and best practice gathered in preparation for Comprehensive Area Assessment will also be utilised in the production of Section 2 to ensure that this evidence is not wasted in light of the abolition of CAA.
- 2.4 Section 3 of the report will seek to demonstrate how partnership working in Wirral is improving. It will, for example, include updates on the delivery of the Local Strategic Partnership's Comprehensive Engagement Strategy and the development of an Equality Charter for Wirral, and the actions being undertaken to make smarter and more efficient use of information across the partnership. These include the knowledge management project agreed by Executive Board members at their last meeting in May. Section 3 will also refer to how the delivery of the Community Strategy is supported by the Local Strategic Partnership's governance arrangements, which are currently subject to review. It is proposed that this review of partnership governance is considered by Executive Board members alongside the full annual report in August.

### **3. PARTNERSHIP INVOLVEMENT**

- 3.1 The Council's Corporate Policy Team is working closely with thematic partnerships on the production of the annual report through the Local Strategic Partnership's Management Group to identify appropriate sources of information and evidence. A presentation was made to the Local Strategic Partnership Assembly on 9<sup>th</sup> June to outline the approach being undertaken to produce the annual report and to invite discussion. Plans are also in place to convene a session in conjunction with Voluntary and Community Action Wirral to engage the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Assembly in the issues emerging from the report.
- 3.2 As indicated in 1.1 above, the annual report will provide the starting point for engaging with partners and local communities on future improvement priorities for Wirral. As Executive Board members are aware, Wirral is now in the final year of the current Local Area Agreement, which sets out a series of improvement priorities and targets for 2008-11. Whilst no announcement has yet been made by the Department for Communities and Local Government about the future of LAAs, it is proposed that the Local Strategic Partnership seeks to identify a revised set of shared improvement priorities to drive forward joint



working in Wirral from 2011 onwards. Consultation with local people will inform this prioritisation process.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 It is recommended that Executive Board members:

4.1.1 Note the approach being undertaken to produce an annual report relating to Wirral's Sustainable Community Strategy.

4.1.2 Agree that the annual report provides a vehicle for the Local Strategic Partnership to set out the challenges to delivering the Community Strategy vision presented by the economic and financial climate, and to identify how partners will work together to address these.

4.1.3 Agree to consider a draft of the full annual report at the next Executive Board meeting in August 2010, alongside a review of the Local Strategic Partnership's governance arrangements.

**Jim Wilkie**

**Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Corporate Services**

This report was prepared by Jane Morgan, Wirral Council's Corporate Policy Manager, who can be contacted on 691 8140.