

Wirral's Future. *Be a part of it*

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PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROJECT

**Economy Task Force
Meeting 2
17th August 2010**

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Wirral's Economy: Recap of the issues....

Challenges

- The lowest GVA per resident in England, which is a measure of economic performance
- The second highest concentration of Economic Inactivity in disadvantaged communities in England
- Above average levels of Economic Inactivity across the Borough, including a higher rate of unemployment than the North West and England
- Wirral's economy is predominantly made up of small or medium sized businesses.
- More than 40,000 residents currently travel outside Wirral to access higher paid employment in the wider region.

Challenges

- 8th most deprived area for employment as measured by English Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- Extremely low Job Density rate of 61
- Low levels of VAT registered businesses
- Significant differences within Wirral in relation to skill levels
- A number of poorly performing employment sites and a limited office market

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Financial Challenge

The latest projections for Wirral Council indicate a budget 'gap' of about £108 million over the next four years

..... rising from £24 million in 2011/12 to £26 million, then £30 million and then a further £28 million in 2014/15.

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Our Response: Economic Planning

Investment Framework is centered on 3 key aims to enable:

- Competitive People
- Competitive Places
- Competitive Businesses

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1. People - Priority Aims

- An increase in self-employment
- Tackling barriers to work and linking people to jobs
- Equip residents with the relevant skills to match employer demand

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1. People - Current activity

Includes:

Council Teams –

Strategic Development, Regeneration and Tourism

Also includes:

- Reachout
- Wirral Change
- Apprenticeship Programme
- Construction Employment Integrator

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2. Places - Priority Aims

- Planning for Investment
- More suitable business accommodation
- Enabling more Investment
- Creating the environment for Growth
- Greater brand awareness

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Places: current activity

Includes:

Council Teams - Strategic Development, Regeneration, Tourism.

Also includes:

- Commitment to develop world class ICT infrastructure/NGA project
- Brand and marketing for Investment
- Tourism Strategy
- International links

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3. Businesses - Priority Aims

- More new firms
- To increase the stock of VAT-registered businesses
- A more external facing & innovative business base
- More inward investment

3. Businesses - Current activity

Includes:

Council Teams: Strategic Development, Regeneration, Tourism.

Also Includes:

- Start Up Service
- BIG Grants
- Business Advisors
- Business Network

Council Spend on Economic Regeneration

Strategic Development 2010/11

- Forward Planning Team:
£420k (£75k is short term to March 2011)
- Invest Wirral:
 - £410k (£35k is short term to March 2011)
 - Investment Strategy team:
£250k (all of this short term to March 2011)

Council Spend on Economic Regeneration

Strategic Development 2010/11

- International Links:
£360k (all of this short term to March 2011)
- Economic Policy Team:
£380k
- Special Initiatives Team:
£300k
- Capital Programme resource for Business Support:
£300k

Council Spend on Economic Regeneration

Regeneration 2010/11

- Implementation:
£1.410 M (of which £800k is short term funding until March 2011)
- Working Neighbourhoods Funds:
£11.655 M (all of this resource is short term until March 2011)

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Council Spend on Economic Regeneration

Tourism and Marketing 2010/11

Includes Destination Marketing

Support to Wirral Tourism Business Network

- £993k

Council Spend on Economic Regeneration

A significant point is relatively low levels of existing spend on economic development in Wirral.

Recent Value for Money profile shows Wirral's total spend on economic development for 2008/09 was £9.89 per head of population compared to an average spend of £33.94 for nearest neighbour comparator group.

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Council Spend on Economic Regeneration

A second key point is that a significant proportion of existing budgets come from external funds that are time limited and due to expire in March 2011.

This further increases the challenge for the Council in taking forward the economic regeneration of Wirral

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**Therefore careful consideration of priorities
for the future is needed.**

Key Questions for 3 sub-groups

- Are these the right objectives? What else is important?
- Are there any significant gaps?
- Which services could be delivered with or by partners in the future?
- Could the Council consider introducing or increasing charges for some of these services?
- How can the Private, Public and Third Sectors improve outcomes by working better together?
- What are the areas, in priority order, that the Task Force consider essential to maintain or introduce?
- Which services should we stop?

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Conclusion

The aim is to have a frank and open discussion

To produce some objective and independent proposals

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Session Aims

The aim of the session is to produce 3 sub-sets of proposals in terms of what the Council:

- Must do
- Could do
- Stop

This afternoon the whole task group will discuss and agree the options.