WIRRAL

WIRRAL NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN

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VERSION 1

David Green, Director of Technical Services,
Wirral Council

CONTENTS

NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN

PREAMBLE

SECRETARY OF STATE'S INTERVENTION CRITERIA

The Secretary of State for Transport made the Traffic Management Guidance on Intervention Criteria (England) Order 2007 laying out the manner in which intervention will be carried out if a local traffic authority fails to adequately perform their duties under Sections 16 and 17 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA).

Consequences of an intervention could lead to the installation of a Department for Transport (DfT) appointed Traffic Manager, and the subsequent programme of remedial works and costs being charged to the local traffic authority.

The guidance also establishes the preliminary use of Section 19 powers within the context of enforcement. Under this section, the Secretary of State may direct an authority to provide information relating to any aspect of the performance of their network management duties. An authority could take advantage of this by working with the Secretary of State to raise their standards. This would provide an opportunity for remedying any potential issues without the need for further formal intervention.

The guidance sets out examples of questions that the Secretary of State may ask to determine an authority's level of performance, when assessing the evidence available. These give authority's level of performance, when assessing the evidence available. These give authorities a clear understanding of the general questions that they should be asking themselves in determining whether they are performing their network management duties properly.

The Act itself, which is seen as a spur for the better management of the road network, provides a built-in opportunity for engagement and recovery, by enabling a local traffic authority to work together with the Secretary of State at an early stage with the aim of making improvements. Making an intervention order to appoint a traffic director will be a situation reached only after serious efforts have been made to raise the standard of an authority that may not be properly managing its network.

The guidance highlights common features of the Network Management Duty Guidance (published by the Department for Transport in November 2004), for all of which a local traffic authority must have regard. It also re-states the network management duties and discusses ways in which an authority may present evidence of performance when reporting to the Secretary of State.

The guidance shows when and how the Secretary of State would reach decision points in relation to enforcement. This enables local traffic authorities to see if they are at risk of intervention and to take action accordingly. It will also act as a reference that authorities can use over time to improve their performance in managing their road network.

It is paramount that Wirral Council is not subject to such measures and the Technical Services Department will do everything within its powers to fully perform the duties as mandated under the Act.

1.0 EQUALITY OF TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

1.1 Introduction

The important consideration for our transport strategy is first and foremost about ensuring that the safe and efficient movement of people and goods assists regeneration and allows all members of the community the same opportunity to travel.

Demand for movement is rising inexorably. This means we have to manage the demand for movement making best use of our resources and develop innovative measures to provide solutions. Our approach to the Network Management duty, the transport SPD and smart choices – are critical elements of our approach.

Wirral recognises that in ensuring the efficient operation of the network, in order to protect the environment and health of the community, we shall wherever possible seek to reduce the need to travel. Proposals for a Transport Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) set out later are a major part of that strategy.

Underpinning Wirral's approach is the belief that the transport system has to be accessible to everyone. It is important to remember that accessibility is not just about physical barriers that people face, but also about ensuring everyone can use the highway and transport networks. We need to find new ways to engage and open up services for people who suffer from social exclusion.

To ensure that all members of society are included and that everyone has equal access to transport resources, it is vital to recognise that transport user needs are diverse. This embraces:

- Race
- Gender
- Age
- Faith
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Social inclusion

The Disability Discrimination and Race Relations Act have changed so public authorities have to ensure that they are proactive in ensuring services and employees are non-discriminatory and develop a diverse approach. This legal requirement now applies to Age since 2006 and Gender from 2007.

There are specific priorities relating to equalities communities (i.e. those with disabilities, BME groups, Faith groups, Women (gender), Young people, Older people and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities (LGBT) which are under consideration.

Transport has a significant impact on service delivery in the public sector. The failure of the transport system impacts on public service; for example lack of transport to access health opportunities costs the health sector money when people fail to attend appointments. There are also some important differences within travel patterns of men and women that pose a range of issues to be addressed.

1.2 Meeting the Needs of Disabled People

The definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) is fairly complex, but our plan assumes a person is disabled for the purposes of the Act if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Examples of normal day-to-day activities will include mobility; manual dexterity and physical co-ordination; continence, speech, hearing or eyesight; memory for ability to concentrate, learn or understand.

To address these issues, we will build on the principles of Universal Accessibility which Merseytravel have already adopted.

Provide: equitable use and accessibility for everyone irrespective of ability.

Allocate: appropriate space for people, regardless of body size, posture and mobility.

Ensure: ease of use, comprehension and understanding, regardless of physical or cognitive abilities.

Require: minimal physical strength, stress and economy of effort.

Achieve: comfortable and healthy conditions and minimise hazards.

The growing disabled and older populations will have social as well as economic problems if those responsible for transport systems and built environments do not recognise and address the need for more inclusive environments. Mobility and transport are vital to achieving and sustaining self-sufficiency and independence into old age.

Approximately 25,000 of Wirral's 312,000 population are in receipt of a blue badge.

The DDA of 2005 Part 1 (iii) puts an onus on local authorities to view the pedestrian environment as a "service provision" and therefore places greater emphasis on the wider environment. In adopting the principles of accessibility, usability and functionality in relation to meeting the needs of the disabled, Wirral recognises that this means paying particular attention to the "seamless" journey from accessible services to destination. The pedestrian environment and public transport are clearly critical.

These ideas are being developed further through our Merseyside Pedestrian Strategy which was adopted in June 2008.

We are building on initial assessments into the needs of our diverse community. We will build on the work of the DfT who are currently reviewing their gender checklist which acts as and aide-memoir to any transport project and this will act as a guide to our improvement programme.

1.3 Equality and Diversity Group

The Technical Services Equality and Diversity Group (TS EDG) aims to promote equality in all its Technical Services operations, to celebrate the diversity of its staff and the service users and to play a part in the prevention of unlawful discrimination.

The group:

- Is led by the Assistant Director of Support & Information Services who also sits on the Corporate Equalities and Inclusion Group (CEIG).
- Includes representation from all TS Divisions.
- Meets regularly through the year, on average, every six weeks.
- Supports the Council's approach and progress with respect to the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG) monitored through BVPI 2a *The level of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the authority conforms.*
- Supports progress against BVPI 2b *The duty to promote race equality* and therefore the Race Equality Scheme (RES).
- Supports the Gender Equality Scheme (GES) and Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and any other such scheme the Council implements.
- Supports the Council's Social Inclusion Strategy.

Information from the Corporate Equalities and Inclusion Group (CEIG) will be cascaded to the TS EDG representatives. Where appropriate, outcomes from discussions at the TS EDG will be used to inform the CEIG.

1.4 Measures to assist

Over the range of services discharged by the Technical Services Department, the following is a prioritised (not exhaustive) list of functions to assist on equality and diversity. Of particular note are those with direct relevance to the highway and traffic.

- Dropped crossings
- Provision of parking bays
- Event/Support planning
- Residents parking permits
- Forward Planning and Policy/Travelwise
    - accessibility planning/GIS mapping
    - pedestrian audits
    - cycle audits
    - travel training
- Driveway Access (Access Protection)
- Road Safety (including traffic calming)
- Road signs
- Street lighting
- Traffic signals

It is envisaged that under the action planning of these service areas, timely procedures will be put in place to meet the aspirations of the prevention of unlawful discrimination.

2.0 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

2.1 Aims and Objectives of the Plan

The aim of the Plan is to provide a joined up transport network that helps Merseyside grow and be a better place to live. The challenge is to achieve the designed growth in an environmental sustainable sustainable way with equal opportunity for all.

The clear objectives which Wirral and its partner authorities and Merseytravel has are well documented in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and represent the rationale for improvement up to 2011.

The five key objectives are:

- Provide appropriate infrastructure for regeneration
- Ensure accessibility for all
- Manage demand through effective management strategies and awareness programmes
- Promote healthier communities
- Protect and enhance the environment
- There is also an overarching objective to make best use of existing resources

Not one strategy or policy in respect of the management of traffic and people on the Transportation Networks can be read in isolation of many others. The Local Transport Plan is one such document, however, and in the context of Network Management is worthy of mention and in part summarising so as to be able to address key aims under the establishment of four shared priorities, these being:-

- Accessibility
- Road Safety
- Air Quality
- Congestion
- Overarching priority of quality of life

The four shared priorities inextricably link into the TMA and Network Management duty and the priorities set within the context of the LTP are those which the foundation of the TMA objectives are built upon and delivered over the life of LTP2.

Key Merseyside targets which Wirral has adopted as part of the Merseyside Local Transport Plan are:

Accessibility – to jobs and opportunities

- Access to jobs
- Access to education

Road Safety

- Reducing the total number of people Killed or Seriously Injured
- Reducing the number of children Killed or Seriously Injured
- Road and footway condition

Reducing Air Pollutants

- Estimated transport related emissions of CO, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter.

Managing Traffic Growth

- Cycling usage
- Person Delay Indicator
- Mode share to school
- Mode share indicators
- % New developments with SPD

The aim is to stitch together the various elements of the transport network and closely integrating the package to the wider social, economic and environmental agenda.

As a partner in the Merseyside LTP, Wirral Council will contribute to:

- Restricting increases in Merseyside's traffic levels to 9.2%
- An increase in cycling of 10%
- Restrict increases in off-peak HGV journey times to a third of the increase of the overall increase in traffic volume
- Accessibility of pedestrian crossings BVPI Target per Authority – local authorities will have a minimum of 80% fully accessible.
- Road works coverage and duration.
- Work closely with Merseytravel to increase bus patronage and assist in further development of Park and Ride and promote rail travel.

Whilst Wirral has a specific requirement to address the four shared priority areas, it is important that the actions taken in addressing those priorities are seen within the overall context of our consistent approach to developing an efficient and integrated transport network, where each mode contributes to the effectiveness of the network.

Over the coming years and within the lifetime of the current LTP (2006 to 2011) it is also intended that programmes will be developed to:

- Implement the integrated corridor management approach to the freight and public transport networks.
- Integrate this approach with agreed DfT congestion monitoring.
- Review the network of traffic sensitive streets, so they remain appropriate for current condition.
- Review the Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI 100) that measures the number of days temporary traffic controls or road closures that are in place on traffic sensitive streets, to ensure there is consistency amongst the Merseyside partners in the way it is being measured and to see whether it is feasible to expand the monitoring of these controls and closures to include statutory undertakers works.
- Examine the potential for the establishment of a central recording point for all works on the highway network.
- Agree additional indicators that monitor the effectiveness of the highway – these could incorporate reduced delays at critical junctions or road works finished ahead of schedule, for example.
- Implement the provision of contingency plans for road traffic accidents on all high speed roads and/or the strategic highway network, incorporating emergency plans (access and egress points, traffic management proposals etc) and the provision of permanent diversion signs and storage cabinets for traffic management signs at key locations.
- Take forward the UTMC Business Plan.
- Review speed limits on category A and B roads by 2011.
- Review Traffic Regulation Orders for No Waiting.
- Deliver on a Roadsafe Action Plan.

Wirral recognises that setting targets for performance is a central component of good planning. A well framed target that measures the achievement of the plan's objectives is a vital tool in ensuring real delivery and real improvements to the region. Much emphasis has been given to the importance of making targets well balanced.

2.2 ACCESSIBILITY

2.2.1 Strategy

Wirral's vision along with our fellow Merseyside Region constituent local authorities and partnered with Merseytravel and Merseyside Police is to develop:

"a fully integrated safe transport network for Merseyside, which supports economic and social regeneration and ensues good access for all, and which is operated to the highest standards to protect the environment and ensure quality of life".

Our strategy envisages the need to manage for growth in demand for travel and ensure the efficient movement of people and goods.

It also envisages amongst other matters:-

(i) Making best use of our existing assets to ensure continuing improvement to the capacity and efficiency of the transport network based on the best means of delivering the efficient movement of people and goods.

(ii) Continuously improving the links between transport and land use and locational choice in ways that support the efficient movement of people and goods.

(iii) Creating a well-connected region in terms of our links to neighbouring areas and beyond and within the Merseyside and wide city region. (This may involve consideration of wider joint planning for future LTPs).

(iv) Ensuring **equality of travel opportunity for all** by setting out in the Access Plan a programme of action to ensure all members of the community have equal access to opportunities and services.

(v) Improving and enhancing a single integrated public transport network to make it affordable and accessible to all, and enhancing capacity to support connectivity and alternatives to private car use.

(vi) Managing demand for travel by ensuring that the transport network operates efficiently and minimises the impact on the environment, contributes to addressing climate change, and does not impact on people's health.

(vii) Creating a safe and secure travel environment by continuously reducing the level of accidents on the highway network and ensure personal security across all modes.

(viii) Providing the community with "informed choices" through continuous communication about travel options that are available and the need for change to be understood.

Wirral recognises the problems to the quality of life, health and well-being to the community that increasing traffic levels and congestion can bring. Particular measures will have to be taken to ensure that our most disadvantaged communities are not further affected by the transport impacts of this economic growth. Many of these communities are most vulnerable to increases in traffic passing through their neighbourhoods, bringing with it health concerns relating to road accidents, air quality and noise.

Many of the areas will also suffer the effects of high levels of worklessness and unemployment. Changing work patterns may make it harder for them to access jobs and opportunities, and enjoy the fruits of economic renaissance across the region.

We are committed within this Plan to "equality of travel opportunity" and to manage and mitigate issues that affect our most disadvantaged communities.

Specifically under the TMA and NMD, Wirral has been active in the following areas:

- Improving accessibility through planning, delivering and managing the local public transport, highways, cycle, footway and rights of way networks.

- Integrating and mainstreaming accessibility considerations into their wider transport strategies, policies and programmes.
- Integrating and mainstreaming accessibility objectives across the planning and delivery of the authority's wider policy areas and within the corporate centre.
- Influencing partners' policy and scheme delivery so that accessibility considerations are taken into account.
- Ensuring public transport provision is matched to the agreed Access Strategy and Plan.
- Co-ordinating the development of the Accessibility Strategy; and
- Developing the role of the partnership working with key stakeholders.

Work so far has led to the establishment of Merseyside Strategic Accessibility Partnerships (SAPs) around the themes of health, employment and education. In addition to this, further partnerships at a local level have been established with Housing Market Renewal teams and good leads in each of the Wirral Primary Care Trusts and Wirral Hospital Trust across Merseyside. Each of these Partnerships include stakeholders with both policy development and delivery roles.

Wirral has developed a Local Area Access Plan, setting out actions to meet identified accessibility problems and this is reviewed on an annual basis.

Officers are keen to tap into the various strategies and funding schemes not necessarily usually associated with their particular work area. The table below identifies key issues from Wirral's local Accessibility Audit and notably employment, education and health action planning is fundamental in eradicating the key accessibility issues.

2.22 Key Accessibility Issues

Priority Groups and Areas	Key Accessibility Issues	Transport Issues	Links to Strategic Stakeholder Priorities
Pathways areas of: Birkenhead Leasowe Woodchurch Moreton Beechwood Noctorum Seacombe Poulton Egremont Tranmere Rock Ferry Bebington/ Bromborough Mill Park	Poor access to employment opportunities on Wirral International Business Park Poor cross boundary linkages to Deeside Industrial Park, Chester Business Park and Cheshire Oaks Poor accessibility to post 16 education at Wirral Met 12 Quays site Poor links from many part of Wirral to major hospital at Arrowe Park Lack of evening services	Access to Chester Business Park, Broughton and Deeside for employment Access to health and education/training services Night buses Bus service penetration of housing estates Good links to HMRI areas And Park and Ride Schemes	Improved access to key employment sites – Wirral and cross boundary – **Employment Action Plan** Improved access to post 16 education for excluded young people – **Education Action Plan** Reducing health inequalities by improving access to healthcare – **Health Action Plan** Improved accessibility for staff and patients at health sites – **Health Action Plan**

In liaison with the Housing Market Renewal Initiative team, an assessment of the HMRI intervention areas has shown that some communities are not well served by public transport, particularly in parts of the Wirral, where the North-South link to employment opportunities in Deeside and North East Wirral are limited.

The ability to access and understand information is crucial in overcoming transport barriers and broadening travel horizons for excluded people. The establishment of a team of Neighbourhood Travel Teams (NTTs) has been well received in Wirral. Working with partners and NTCs across Merseyside as part of an expanded Workwise programme across the area. They are responsible for:

- Maximising the transport and travel opportunities of residents.
- Identifying and developing low cost travel solutions for local community needs.
- Providing a full range of travel information and personal travel advice (personal journey planning).
- Liaising with Merseytravel, local authorities, key agencies and transport operators (including community/voluntary transport organisations) with regard to transport improvements/ initiatives in each area.
- Liaising with Travel Training Co-ordinator to promote and support independent travel.

2.3 ROAD SAFETY

2.31 Key Aims

The safe and expeditious movement of people and traffic is as has been previously stated as the key principle of the TMA.

In Wirral, we intend to make the roads safer for everyone and progressively reduce the level of accidents on the highway.

In 2007, the Police recorded over 1129 people injured on the roads of Wirral. We know that the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities suffer the most.

Our aim is to provide a safe and efficient highway network for all users, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable users, and our new priorities for action that have been identified.

We will measure our performance by:

- Over the next three years reduce by 40% the total numbers killed and seriously injured.
- Reduce by 50% the total numbers of children killed or seriously injured.
- Not increase the number of people suffering minor injuries through road crashes.

2.32 Local Authority Agreement

From 2008/09 Local Area Agreements will feature 'up to 35' improvement targets drawn from a rationalised national indicator set.

Of these 35, Wirral has included additional stretched targets for two key areas of casualty reduction within its Local Area Agreement., which reflect the high degree of priority and concern over road safety issues. These are:

Percentage reduction in the total number of people killed or seriously injured:

Three year rolling averages				
	Baseline (05/06/07)	2006 to 2008	2007 to 2009	2008 to 2010
KSI Casualties	174	154	138	123
%age change	~	11.3	10.4	11.1

Percentage reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured

Three year rolling averages				
	Baseline (05/06/07)	2006 to 2008	2007 to 2009	2008 to 2010
KSI Casualties	31	26	22	22
%age change	~	16.3	15.6	6.2

2.33 Strategy

The number of children killed or seriously injured on Wirral's roads is successfully responding to our programmes and is down in line with our target. However, the overall number of people killed or seriously injured, although down is not reducing in line with our target. The downward trend in child casualties is being offset by rises in some groups of adult casualties.

The Road Safety Strategy for Merseyside has two main themes: first, it seeks to sustain success in reducing child casualties which are particularly numerous in the more deprived areas; second, it proposes additional programmes to combat newer and rising threats to adults, where younger adults are found to be especially at risk. The partnership between the highway authorities in Merseyside and the Police is strong, as is their joint commitment to tackling this problem. We believe that the programmes now proposed and summarised briefly below will bring the partners back on target by 2010.

Records, Analysis, Co-ordination, Consultation and Monitoring. We will undertake:

- Data Collection, analysis, strategy formulation and co-ordination with partners.
- Consultation with community on strategies and programmes.
- Monitoring of results of individual initiatives and programmes. Annual refresh of Casualty Report and Road Safety Strategy.

Education Training and Publicity for Children. We will continue with the following programme:

- Pre-Schools information distributed by Health Visitors as road safety advice for new parents; advice in fitting and checking child car seats and seat belts. Activities for Nursery Groups.
- Reception starting School Pack – advice for Parents.
- Year2:; Assessment of children's pedestrian skill-level. "I can keep myself Safe" – Books for children with Teachers notes and CDROM.
- Year 4: Pedestrian skills and awareness programme in schools
- Years 5 and 6: Cycle Training; speed and risk awareness on highway.
- Years 7 and 8: Pedestrian skills and in car safety; Education curriculum resource (Sophies Journey)
- Years 9 and 10: Teenage pedestrian issues; Pre-driver Training and 4Wheel-Ed multi-agency programme

Other Education Training and Publicity. We will continue to work with:

- Taxi Drivers, Ice Cream Vendors, Nursery Nurses, Childminders, Parent/Carers, Offenders, Road Safety Committees, Awareness raising, Summer and Winter anti-Drink Drive, Road Safety at Work (HSE/DfT), BikeSafe for safety of motor cyclists.

Enforcement. We will develop:

- Intelligence-led Policing to reduce excessive speed. (NIM compliant).
- Enhanced working arrangements with the Police.
- Campaigns targeted at drink driving, failing to use seat belts, mobile phone usage while driving, failing to comply with traffic lights, disqualified or uninsured Drivers.
- The Road Safety Camera Partnership.

Engineering. We will undertake:

- Annual evaluation for Local Safety Schemes at single and mass action sites.
- Area and Route based analysis leading to co-ordinated speed reduction and other safety measures through Urban Safety Management and a variety of Local Safety scheme initiatives.
- Walking and Cycling Schemes.
- Comprehensive Safety Audit of all Highway schemes.
- Consultation on all highway changes.

Transport and Travel Planning. We will ensure:

- Assessment of all aspects of the LTP Strategy and Implementation for Road Safety Implications.

Develop working arrangements with TravelWise to develop:

- Safety opportunities during School and Workplace Travel planning.
- Safety Audit of Routes to school.
- Full involvement with Accessibility Planning.

The above interventions are described in more detail in the Merseyside Road Safe Action Plan which will form the basis of individual programmes of action for the partner authorities and other bodies involved.

2.34 Merseyside Police

The partnership between the highway authorities in Merseyside and the Police is strong. The Local Strategy and Policing Plan for Merseyside acknowledges the important part that roads policing has to play in reaching the Government's target to reduce road traffic casualties. It is keen to achieve a cultural change in the way it deals with road traffic law and safety issues, and has increased the level of resources available for road safety policing with an increase in the Traffic road safety by 20%.

Consistent with the views of the Government and the Association of Chief Police Officers and backed up by the Road Safety Bill, it clearly sets a commitment to deal with all forms of illegal and anti-social use of the roads, including drink-driving, speeding, dangerous or careless driving and driving-behaviour threatening to road users including pedestrians and other drivers.

The Road Safety Strategy has identified those areas of casualty reduction where enforcement is probably the most effective and appropriate option if we are to reach our targets. This particularly applies to the increase in casualties that have been noted among younger drivers

Joint working including sharing of technical expertise between the Police and Local Authorities has created profiles, describing the times and areas where this can be most effectively applied. The Police have developed this assessment according to the National Intelligence Model (NIM) using the National Roads Policing Framework. In identifying the specific areas where action is required, the NIM interplays between the Force-wide level 2 Assessment and the Level 1 Assessment for each Basic Command Unit (BCU). BCUs are contiguous with the Local Authority Boundaries. The Police have set themselves targets for casualty reduction which match our targets, and have expressed these at BCU level.

As well as casualty reduction, the Road Policing Strategy addresses several key objectives. For example, Merseyside Police are equipped with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology, which is being used as part of their strategy to deny the use of roads to criminals. In practice, many of the area requiring greatest attention are also found to have the highest casualty rates, so enforcement here is effective on both fronts. There is also a measure of reassurance provided by the Police presence, which meets yet another objective of the strategy.

The need for speed reduction has emerged from analysis of the road casualties as a common theme running through many strands of our safety strategy for Merseyside and hence in the programmes of intervention that have been developed by the Highway Authorities, the Police and our other partners.

Partners are committed to undertaking a complete review of speed limits on the major roads across Merseyside. This will be consistent with the road and road user hierarchy set out elsewhere in the LTP and will take into account the objectives of the five Traffic Managers and the Police, and the history of road casualties on the network. This area of work will be complete by 2011.

In addition to the year round attention to speed reduction; there is also a highly visible police presence on the roads, with specific campaigns to target:

- Drink driving
- Failing to use seat belts
- Mobile phone usage while driving
- Failing to comply with traffic lights
- Disqualified or uninsured drivers

Wirral has pursued strategies in the way we have prioritised speed reduction on the residential and other minor roads, guided by the elected members and residents of those areas.

Casualty reductions of around 65% are commonplace from such schemes. However, there is also great amenity value from lower traffic speeds in residential areas, which offer significant benefits to vulnerable users and form part of the cycling and walking strategies in their locality.

Any changes made to the highway system can affect the levels of risk. The now familiar practice of Safety Audit attempts to avoid the unwitting introduction of hazards in all new designs that vary the functionality or appearance of the highway. Equally, there is a potential safety bonus from any improvement where there has been a history of casualties.

The Merseyside Road Safety Partnership is engaging with staff in the other programme areas to ensure that added value by the use of collision data is being taken, and also to attempt to quantify the extent of the safety benefit. The Strat-e-gis system being developed will be of assistance in this area.

2.35 Highways Agency

The programmes of the Highways Agency are playing an important role in our strategy on the strategic highway network. Junction improvements at the M53 interchanges are designed to further reduce casualties at the sites which have been significant trouble spots in recent years. Their co-operation via the Memorandum of Understanding with Merseyside Authorities will minimise risk at congested locations. Their partnership with highway authorities via the National Traffic Control Centre is welcomed as a valuable method of highway management which will assist the traffic managers of Merseyside in their task.

2.4 AIR QUALITY

The long-term impacts of Climate Change have to be addressed through initiatives at a local level as set out in this Plan. The Government has highlighted valid concerns regarding increasing CO2 levels together with other pollutants that affect our climate. At a local level, these issues are recognised through the declaration of Air Quality Management Areas.

Air quality is known to impact on the health of the community, and this is particularly noticeable in deprived areas. People living within areas of social deprivation are more than twice as likely to die from respiratory disease than the average for England. These areas may also be further disadvantaged by poor accessibility to health, education, fresh food and employment and also subject to poor road safety records. Given the high mortality ratios from respiratory disease, improving air quality may well serve to reduce health inequalities. Traffic growth must be managed and controlled to improve urban air quality and reflect positively on the other shared priorities and quality of life issues.

For Wirral no significant air quality problems have been identified in Emission Reviews and Assessments to date and therefore a detailed plan is not currently needed. There is, however, a need for on-going monitoring.

Generally, however, officers are mindful of the air quality agenda and are embracing initiatives that help promote sustainability. Examples include:

- Contracts for quality improvements to bus services
- More Park & Ride schemes
- Better signage
- Employers to offer incentives not to use the car
- More cycle lanes and cycle parking
- Low emission buses
- Traffic lights that give priority to buses
- Car free residential developments and workplaces

2.4 CONGESTION

2.41 The Indicators

Government concerns about congestion, particularly in urban areas, has resulted in an indicator being set by the Department for Transport (DfT) which is to be measured in 10 major urban areas in England.

Merseyside is one of these areas and a composite target has been determined for the sub-region that informs the national congestion target.

The period over which the indicator is measured is the morning peak period (defined as 07:00 – 10:00).

The Merseyside congestion target is comprised of both journey time and person throughput (i.e. flows) that reflects that some traffic growth is expected as part of the increase in economic activity.

There are eleven target routes in Merseyside and the change in journey time is measured per person per mile. The target is reported to Ministers as the percentage change in journey time. Of the eleven routes along which this person delay indicator is monitored, only one is in Wirral, this being the A552 Woodchurch Road/Singleton Avenue/Borough Road (towards the Queensway Tunnel from M53 junction 3).

Selection of the eleven Merseyside routes was done in accordance with DfT Guidelines and to represent various urban conditions represented in the area.

Notwithstanding the identification of this one route, Wirral is not complacent, and we look to review our procedures, particularly project management, to ensure that the issues of congestion and delay across the Borough are considered during the planning stages of projects, including traffic regulation orders, as well as at the construction stage. Congestion will then be one of the criteria to consider when deciding whether a project is to be brought forward to the implementation stage. Of course, this will be balanced against other considerations, such as safety.

Under the new national performance framework, a performance indicator (NI 167) has been developed to directly measure how well authorities are performing in meeting their network management duties. Our performance on this indicator, which measures the average journey time per mile during the morning peak, will be regularly updated and reported through the LTP progress reports to the Council's Streetscene and Transport Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2.42 Congestion Monitoring Target

The key aim of LTP2 in relation to congestion is:-

To provide a safe and efficient transport network that supports regeneration and seeks to minimise delay and disruption

Performance against this aim will be measured by various targets, including:

- Restricting traffic growth across Merseyside to 9.2%
- Increasing non-car journeys to school
- Increasing the numbers of people using Park & Ride by 35% by 2010/11
- Increasing the numbers of people using the bus by 1% and rail by 7.9%

The identification of congestion hotspots can be a subjective matter depending on the road user. What is needed are clear criteria as to what constitutes congestion and benchmarks against which delays at any particular location can be measured. Along the Woodchurch Road/Singleton Avenue/Borough Road route, specific hotspots may be identified. Other hotspots can be identified through other traffic modelling work.

In order to aid monitoring of traffic growth across Wirral, Automatic Count Loops have incrementally been installed across the Borough over the past ten years or so. Monthly data collection has created a database to facilitate analysis of flows around Birkenhead Town Centre and at various background sites. There are approximately 35 ATC locations to date, and opportunities will be taken where appropriate to extend this source of data collection.

In terms of managing, a balanced approach is being adopted which will enable economic growth and increasing travel to be accommodated whilst, at the same time, aim to prevent congestion in the long term. These measures include:

(a) In partnership with Merseytravel, improvements and development of the single integrated public transport network and further enhancements to Park and Ride capacity and increasing rail capacity for passengers and freight;

(b) Increasing the use and development of Integrated Transport Systems (ITS) and Urban Traffic Control (UTC);

(c) The effective utilisation of our Network Management Duty (NMD) to tie together the various elements of the package approach; and

(d) Underpinning the package by a range of smarter choice measures and the utilisation of our revised communication strategy.

(e) Automatic traffic counts assist with congestion monitoring.

The constituent Merseyside local authorities in partnership with Merseytravel have created a vision for the delivery of an Integrated Transport Strategy to address the safe and expeditious movement of people and traffic.

3.0 CORPORATE AND DEPARTMENTAL OBJECTIVES

3.1 Mission Statement

Behind any strategies and policies, it is fundamental that planned delivery is achieved through a strong and dedicated staff/resource base.

In the Technical Services Department we are demonstrating on all service fronts our pledge to our customers that we are:-

"Consulting and engaging with residents, our business and community partners, to deliver a range of efficient and high quality Technical Services, from building control and design, highways maintenance and transportation to planning matters, land charges, drainage, waste and recycling, which improve the quality of life for people in Wirral."

3.2 Statutory Responsibilities

The Department has a wide variety of statutory responsibilities and functions and works within a complex legislative and policy framework. The main statutory responsibilities and corresponding legislation used by the Department is as follows:

Activity	Legislation
Maintain highways at public expense	Highways Act 1980 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Road Traffic Act 1988 Local Government Act 2000
Secure and facilitate the expeditious movement of traffic	Traffic Management Act 2004
Carry out work in a safe manner	Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 1994 Road Safety Code of Good Practice 1996 The Confined Spaced Regulations 1997
Allocation of postal addresses within the Borough	Public Health Act 1925 & County of Merseyside Act 1980
Powers to ensure maintenance of flow in watercourses	Land Drainage Act 1991
The safety of the public attending events at Prenton Park	Safety at Sports Grounds 1975
Enforce the Building Regulations within Wirral; deal with dangerous, ruinous and dilapidated buildings or structures and with demolitions in the interests of public safety	Building Act 1984
Powers relating to erection of scaffolding, retaining walls and dangerous land	Highways Act 1980
Enforce Planning legislation	Town & Country Planning Act 1990
Facilitate land charges operations	Local Land Charges Act 1975

In addition to the above, the Department is required to produce a number of statutory documents including the Local Transport Plan (in conjunction with other Merseyside authorities).

3.3 The Assets

In practice, these responsibilities relate to service delivery to 312,000 local people over an area of 15,560 H acres with an extensive range of Council assets as follows:

- 48km of coastline 90% of which is protected;
- 26km of sea defences;
- 300 bridges or other highway structures;
- 54,500 gullies most of which are cleaned twice each year;
- 25km of drainage channels;
- 37,600 lighting units;
- 5,350 illuminated signs;
- 30 Pay & Display car parks;
- 38 free car parks;
- 119 School Crossing Patrols serving 125 schools;
- 102 traffic-signalled junctions;
- 141 pedestrian signal crossing facilities;
- CCTV at 110 locations;
- Variable Message Systems at 19 locations;
- 122kms of A roads, 61kms of B roads, 922 kms of unclassified roads;
- 2.2 million square miles of grass in landscaped areas and highway verges;
- 11.8km of cycleway

In terms of workload, each year staff can expect to:

- Deal with 50,000+ fixed penalty notices;
- Investigate 1,000 injury collisions;
- Carry out 10,000 site inspections;
- Receive 2,200+ building regulation applications;
- Receive 2,000 planning applications;
- Handle 200 requests for disabled parking bays;
- Enforce 50 temporary road closures;
- Be called out 125 times to assess dangerous buildings; and
- Delivery approximately £20m of capital constructions works.

During the past twelve months, key achievements in a highway traffic context by the Technical Services Department include:

- Investors in People accreditation to the new standard;
- Successful Open Golf tournament in 2006 – acclaimed by national and international press, visited by over 250,000 people and specific praise for traffic management;
- 2008 Tall Ships Parade of Sail Traffic Management;
- ISO 14001 accreditation and ISO 9001:2000 registration retained and expanded;
- Awarding of bulk change street lighting contract;
- Procurement of a new Environmental Streetscene Services Contract – a refuse, recycling and street cleansing service;
- Income generated from inspection of Utility Company reinstatements and S.74 fines;
- Achieving BV 199 Streetscene and Environmental Cleanliness stretch targets;
- Introduction of an Assessment programme for Council fleet vehicle drivers;
- Completion of many Capital Programme projects significantly affecting the built environment and the highway network within the Wirral;
- Setting up the Nottingham Declaration Working Group and leading the development of the Council's Climate Change Strategy with staff and Members;
- Submission of second LTP to DfT that sets out our transport strategy up to 2010/11;
- Piloting of a Green Courier scheme to provide a more sustainable way of transporting correspondence between Council buildings;
- Acknowledged improvements in processing planning applications which led to a significant increase in the Planning Delivery Grant award.
- Tendering the HESPE Contract under the Gateway Review Process.

3.4 Council's Corporate Plan

The Department plays an important role in the delivery of most of the priority areas in the Council's Corporate Plan

3.5 Council Constitution

The Council's Constitution requires the Authority to be managed by a Cabinet comprising a Council Leader and nine Cabinet Members each with a specific portfolio.

The Highway and Traffic responsibilities are delegated to the Cabinet Member Technical Services, with the exception of the approval of Traffic Regulation Orders and the details of highway improvement schemes that are delegated to the appropriate Local Area Committee.

3.6 Vision for Wirral

- Our vision is of a more prosperous and equal Wirral, enabling all communities and people to thrive and achieve their full potential.

- We aim to build a Borough founded on a strong, vibrant economy with high levels of employment. We will give priority to providing the environment and developing the skills needed to make Wirral a place where business chooses to invest – an economy that retains and attracts our young people and provides opportunity for all to realise their full potential. We have already agreed an investment strategy to help deliver this.

- Our ambition is to end deprivation. We will work to narrow the gap in education, employment, health and housing both within and between communities. We will give priority to raising the aspirations, opportunities and quality of life of our most vulnerable, disadvantaged or excluded citizens, wherever they might live.

- We will seek to establish a shared Wirral identity, which draws together the Borough's urban, rural and coastal communities – proud of our history and heritage, confident in our future, welcoming, inclusive and open to all people. We will encourage a real pride in the borough, through high standards of cleanliness, environmental protection and public safety, creating a clean, safe and sustainable environment.

- We are committed to playing our full part in the economic, political and cultural life of the city region. We recognise our success if closely linked with that of our neighbours in Liverpool, Chester and beyond. We will work enthusiastically with them and others to ensure Wirral both contributes to and benefits from growth and development in the region. We will also develop links with regions elsewhere in the UK and abroad in order to further enhance our economic prosperity.

- As a 'can-do' council, our aim is to deliver first class services, which are affordable, sustainable and meet the needs of local people. Wherever possible we will do this through the engagement and empowerment of individuals and communities in both the design and delivery of local services, and by working together with partners in the public, private and the community/voluntary sectors.

TECHNICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT – DEPARTMENTAL OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

Corporate Objective	C1 "To create more jobs, achieve a prosperous economy and regenerate Wirral"		C2 "To create a clean, pleasant, safe and sustainable environment"						C5 "Create an Excellent Council"					
Corporate Priority ***(Improvement Priority 2008/9 in bold)*** ***<Lead Officer>***	***1.1 Increase investment & encourage new developments*** 2.8 Conserve the Borough's natural & built heritage & increase civil pride & public participation		***2.1 Increase levels of recycling <M. Smith>***	***2.2 Reduce our carbon footprint <B. Anderson>*** 2.3 Create exemplary levels of street cleanliness	***2.4 Reduce number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents <M. Smith>***	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a	***5.2 Create a sustainable & stable budget providing value for money***	n/a	5.4 Improve accountability, accessibility & openness & involve those who use our services in their design & delivery	n/a
DEPARTMENTAL AIM	TS1 Work with partners & the private sector to promote appropriate development of the built environment & encourage more employers to the Borough while protecting our natural assets		TS2 Manage waste effectively & maximise recycling within the Borough	TS3 Improve environmental quality in our neighbourhoods with particular emphasis on developing the Authority's sustainability programme including reducing its carbon footprint	TS4 Work with partners to improve the safety & accessibility of the transport network with particular emphasis on reducing the number & severity of road accidents & access to jobs & key services for everyone	TS5 Improve the management of the Authority's highway network by introducing a new strategic contract by April 2009	TS6 Ensure the Authority's resilience in the aftermath of foreseeable emergencies & minimise the long-term effect of such emergencies		TS7 Value our staff by monitoring views & taking action to address issues raised & ensure proper engagement & consultation to facilitate the effective management of organisational change	TS8 Ensure the effective management of risk in all the Department's activities including contributing to the delivery of the Authority's Risk Management Strategy	TS9 Continue to improve the efficiency & value-for-money of our services to contribute to the Departments financial savings targets	TS10 Improve our approach to managing performance & projects to facilitate the delivery of our Departmental Aims	TS11 Improve the efficiency & quality of customer access to our services through the continued roll-out of CRM in all service areas	TS12 Improve the marketing of our services focusing on clearly defining our service standards & improving the perception of our customers
Divisional Responsibilities (L – lead, S = support) ***<Lead Officer>***	Development Control (L) ***<P. Grey>*** Design Consultancy (S)		Environmental Services (L) ***<T. Dumas>***	Design Consultancy (L) ***<J. Sherlock>*** Environmental Services (L) Bldg Control Development Control (L)	Traffic & Transportation (L) ***<G. Bell>***	Highway Maintenance (L) ***<M.Wilkinson>*** Operational Services (S)	Emergency Planning Team (L) ***<M. Camborne>***		SMT ***<D. Green>***	SMT ***<M. Camborne>***	SMT ***<D. Green>***	SMT ***<A. Murphy>***	SMT ***<M. Smith>***	SMT ***<B. Anderson>***
National Indicator (old BVPI reference) ***(CAA Improvement Priority in bold)*** (r = for reporting	NI157 (BVPI 109a, 109b, 109c) Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for major, minor & other		NI191(BVPI 84a) Residual house-hold waste – kg landfilled per household per year ***NI192 (BVPI 82a(i) & BVPI***	NI185 CO_2 reduction from LA operations ***NI186 Per capita reduction in CO_2 emissions in the LA area*** NI188 Adapting to climate	***NI 47 (BVPI 99a(i) People KSI in road traffic accidents*** ***NI48 (BVPI 99b(i) Children KSI in road traffic accidents***	NI168 (BVPI 223) Principal roads where maintenance should be considered NI169 (BVPI 224a) Non-principal	NI 36 (r) Protection against a terrorist attack – reducing the vulnerability of crowded places from terrorist attack NI 37							

purposes only)	application types		***82b(i)) Household waste recycled and composted*** NI193 (r) Municipal waste landfilled	change NI194 Air Quality – reduction in No_x & primary PM_{10} emissions through LA's estate & operations ***NI195 (BVPI 199a, 199b, 199c) Improved street & environmental cleanliness – Litter, Detritus, Graffiti & fly posting*** NI196 (BVPI 199d) Improved street & environmental cleanliness – fly tipping	***NI167 Congestion – average journey time per mile during morning peak*** NI175 Access to services & facilities by public transport, walking & cycling NI176 Working age people with access to employment by public transport (& other modes) NI 177 (r) Local bus passenger journeys originating in LA area NI 178 (r) Bus Services running on time NI198 Children travelling to school – mode of travel	roads where maintenance should be considered NI189 Flood & coastal erosion risk management	Awareness of civil protection arrangements in local area							

Fulfilment of General Requirements relating to the Network Management Duty in Wirral

Section of Act	Duty	Comments
16 (1) (a)	Securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network	This is done on a day-to-day basis as described in Chapter 5 and 6
16 (1) (b)	Facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority	This is achieved as described in Chapter 4
16 (2) (a)	(actions contributing to securing) the more efficient use of the road network	This is achieved through the Council's mode shift approach and the Council's parking enforcement practices.
16 (2) (b)	(actions contributing to securing) the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic	This is done using mode shift as described in Chapter 2 and 6.
16 (2)	The exercise of any power to regulate or co-ordinate the uses made of any road (or part of a road) in the road network	Details are given in Wirral's LTP Programme. Wirral Council will review the roads designated as traffic sensitive.
17 (1)	Arrangement (considered) appropriate for planning and carrying out the action to be taken in performing the network management duty	The management of the duty is described in Chapter 3.
17 (2)	The appointment of a person..the 'traffic manager'	This was done at an early stage Chapter 3.
17 (4)(a)	Identifty things (including future occurrences) which are causing or which have the potential to cause road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic on the road network	The management of planned and unplanned events are described in Chapter 5.
17 (4)(b)	Consider any possible action that could be taken in response to (or in anticipation of) anything so identified	Same as above and day-to-day highway management.
17 (5)(a)	Determine specific policies or objectives in relation to different roads or classes of road in the road network	The Council's road classification for network management duty purposes is described in Chapter 2 and 5.
17 (5)(b)(i)	(monitor the effectiveness of) the authority's organisation and decision making processes	This is achieved through the Network Management Advisory Group.

4.0 PARTNERS IN THE DELIVERY OF THE TMA AND NETWORK MANAGEMENT DUTY

Programme Co-ordination Forum

In order to fulfil the Network Management Duty, Wirral Council work closely with a series of key partners, both within and beyond the Borough boundary. The Council's partners will include:

- All internal Wirral Council Directorates
- Merseyside Police
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Merseyside Regional Ambulance Service
- National and Regional Traffic Control Centres
- Highways Agency
- Neighbouring County Councils / Merseyside Authorities
- Merseytravel including Mersey Tunnels
- Passenger Transport Operators
- Utility Companies
- Other Undertakers, e.g. developers, etc.
- The Public

Forums have been set-up with the above including:

National Traffic Control Centre – Detailed Local Operating Agreement (DLOA) in place with Traffic Information Systems to provide reciprocal information about networks.

Highways Agency – Liaison Meetings with Highways Agency and their agents and Quarterly Co-ordination Meetings.

Neighbouring Authorities – Various cross-boundary working and regional groups, including Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee and Traffic Managers Group.

The objective of the above forums is to:

- Raise awareness to the requirements of the TMA
- Inform stakeholders of the actions Wirral Council have taken to date
- Define roles that stakeholders have to play
- Consider network management options
- To set actions to implement the TMA and NMD
- To set priorities and an implementation programme
- To set metrics against the achievement of actions
- To monitor and report on successes/failures

To promote continuous improvement in fulfilling the duties of the Act.

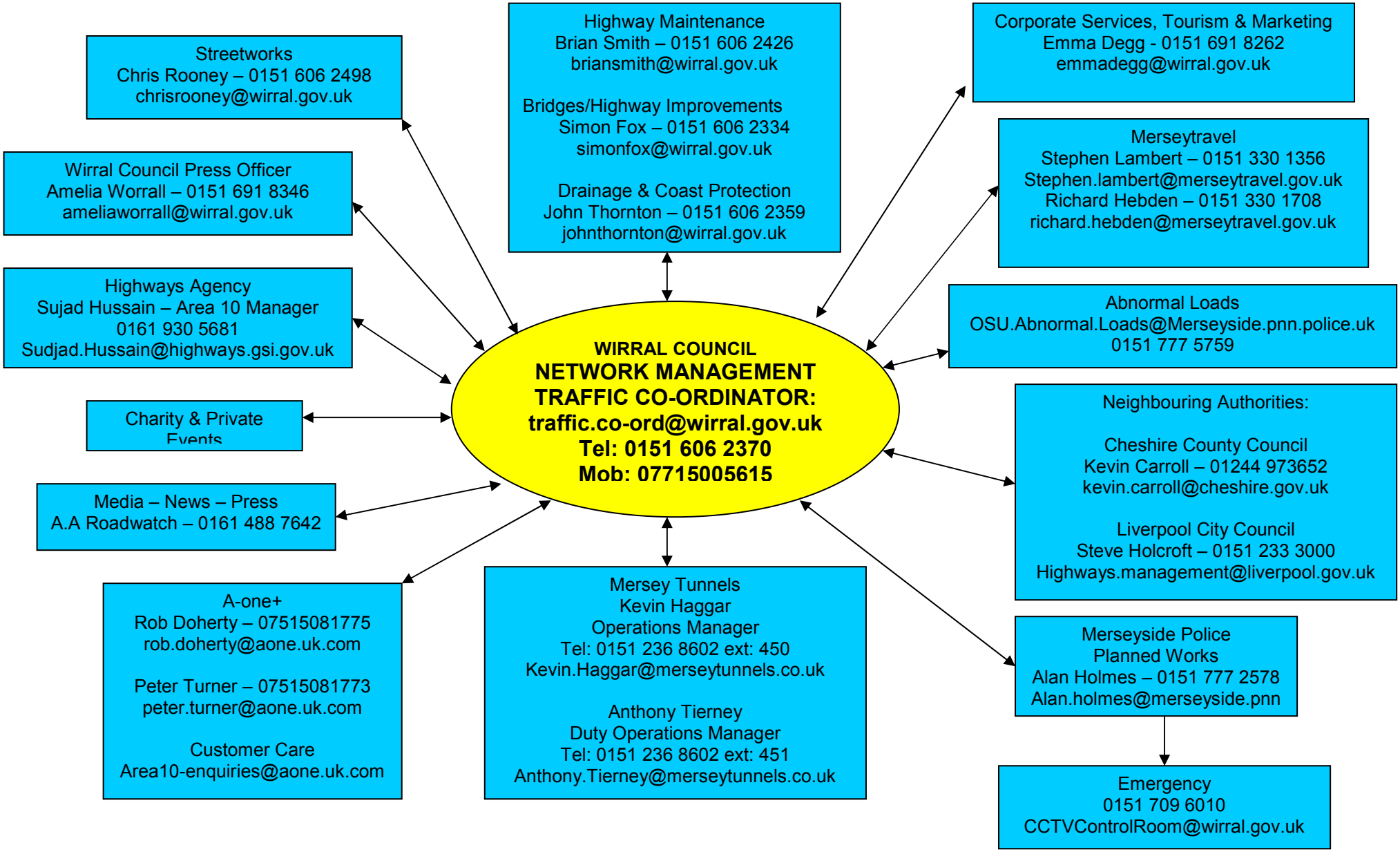
Wirral Council has taken a number of steps to ensure the maximum possible opportunities for coordination. These include:

a) Quarterly coordination meetings with utilities, Wirral's Streetworks section, Traffic Co-ordinator and neighbouring authorities.

b) Weekly Streetscene coordination meetings within the Technical Services department during which, officers from Highway Maintenance, Environment, Streetworks, Traffic Management, Street Lighting and Operational Services discuss existing and potential works that will impact the highway.

c) Any works assessed as major on the carriageway or difficult or sensitive locations are subject to a site meeting and walks with both the Traffic Co-ordinator and Street Works Officers to ensure effective working and reduction of any disruption of the network.

d) Regular meeting with works contractors to discuss any problems on site.



Role of Traffic Co-ordinator

To act as a point of contact for any agency/group planning works/events on the highway
To record details of those works/events and to identify possible conflicts/problems
In the event of a possible conflict, to facilitate liaison between the agencies/groups involved
To release relevant information to the press/media via press office (Amelia Worrall)

5.0 MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION OF THE HIGHWAY NETWORK

5.1 Road Hierarchy

A brief description follows of the highway network in Wirral for which the Council is responsible as local highway authority and importantly in the discharge of the TMA and NMD.

An integrated approach is being adopted which is built on the definition of a road hierarchy based on road users and mode priority. This approach will allow those designing or planning works that affect the highway to fully utilise measures to give the greatest effect for the different road users. It is anticipated that the road hierarchy will be the pivotal focus in our proposals to tackle congestion.

There are two streams to the road hierarchy; these being:

- Road User Hierarchy
- Road Mode Hierarchy

These hierarchies, along with the identified networks below, are to be used when considering any new works on the highway network, and the resulting proposals should be fully reflective of these.

The Road User Hierarchy gives a definition of priority for road users as follows:

(a) Pedestrians;
(b) Cyclists;
(c) Public transport passengers; and
(d) Other motorised vehicle users.

The use of the Road User Hierarchy is intertwined with the classification of a road within the Road Mode Hierarchy.

The Road Mode Hierarchy is defined as follows:

(a) Strategic Routes with priority for freight movement;
(b) Strategic Routes with priority for public transport;
(c) Strategic Routes with priority for motorised traffic generally;
(d) Local Distributor Roads, and
(e) Local Access Roads.

On Local Distributor Roads there will still be a need to accommodate motorised traffic, but these roads will not generally be signed for through traffic and heavy goods traffic is discouraged. For motorised traffic, priority will vary depending on the circumstances of the individual route, such as whether or not it is part of the identified networks discussed below.

On Local Streets (including residential, service and pedestrianised areas) pedestrians receive the highest priority, followed by cyclists. As with Local Distributor Roads, further prioritisation will depend on the circumstances of the individual streets, such as whether or not it is used by public transport, service vehicles or taxis. District centres are to be treated in a similar fashion to Local Access Roads with walking, public transport and cycling receiving the top priority.

A plan of the Road Hierarchy is shown in Appendix A.

Table 1 – Carriageway Hierarchy			
Category	**Hierarchy Description**	**Type of Road General Description**	**Description**
1	Motorway	Limited access motorway regulations apply	Routes for fast moving long distance traffic. Fully grade separated and restrictions on use.
2	Strategic Route	Trunk and some Principal 'A' roads between Primary Destinations	Routes for fast moving long distance traffic with little frontage access or pedestrian traffic. Speed limits are usually in excess of 40 mph and there are few junctions. Pedestrian crossings are either segregated or controlled and parked vehicles are generally prohibited.
3a	Main Distributor	Major Urban Network and Inter-Primary Links. Short-medium distance traffic	Routes between Strategic Routes and linking urban centres to the strategic network with limited frontage access. In urban areas speed limits are usually 40 mph or less, parking is restricted at peak times and there are positive measures for pedestrian safety.
3b	Secondary Distributor	Classified Road (B and C class) and unclassified urban bus routes carrying local traffic with frontage access and frequent junctions	In rural areas these roads link the larger villages and HGV generators to the Strategic and Main Distributor Network. In built up areas these roads have 30 mph speed limits and very high levels of pedestrian activity with some crossing facilities including zebra crossings. On-street parking is generally unrestricted except for safety reasons.
4a	Link Road	Roads linking between the Main and Secondary Distributor Network with frontage access and frequent junctions	In rural areas these roads link the smaller villages to the distributor roads. They are of varying width and not always capable of carrying two-way traffic. In urban areas they are residential or industrial inter-connecting roads with 30 mph speed limits random pedestrian movements and uncontrolled parking.
4b	Local Access Road	Roads serving limited numbers of properties carrying only access traffic	In rural areas these roads serve small settlements and provide access to individual properties and land. They are often only single lane width and unsuitable for HGVs. In urban areas they are often residential loop roads or cul-de-sacs.

5.2 Footway Hierarchy

Footway hierarchy, as with the carriageway hierarchy, will not necessarily be determined by the road classification, but the functionality of the footway and scale of use. In urban areas the contribution of the footway to the quality of public space and streetscene will be particularly important. Local factors such as the age, distribution of the population, the proximity of schools or other establishments attracting higher than normal numbers of pedestrians to the area should also be taken into account. As a general guide, five broad maintenance categories are recommended for footways, as described in Table 2 below:-

Table 2 – Footway Hierarchy		
Category	**Category Name**	**Description**
1(a)	Prestige Walking Zones	Very busy areas of towns and cities with high public space and streetscene contribution.
1	Primary Walking Routes	Busy urban shopping and business areas and main pedestrian routes.

2	Secondary Walking Routes	Medium usage routes through local areas feeding into primary routes, local shopping centres etc.
3	Link Footways	Linking local access footways through urban areas and busy rural footways.
4	Local Access Footways	Footways associated with low usage, short estate roads to the main routes and cul-de-sacs.

The assignment of a footway to a particular category within the hierarchy is a matter for local discretion. However, the following issues should be taken into consideration:-

- pedestrian volume;
- current usage and proposed usage;
- accident and other risk assessment;
- age and type of footway (e.g. old flagged footways may require more frequent inspection than newly laid); and
- character and traffic use of adjoining carriageway

The footway hierarchy should have regard to any network of "housing footways", serving housing estates or related development, which may be unadopted as public highways but maintained separately by the authority. Users will make no distinction and will consider the footway network as a whole.

Category 2 Secondary Walking – Small retail shopping outlets + 5 shops, large schools and industrial outlets +500 pupils or equivalent pedestrian movements.

Category 3 Link Footways – Urban access, busy rural, all other schools.

Category 4 Local Access – Rural footways, non feeder footways in housing estates.

5.3 Cycle Route Hierarchy

The categories suggested by this Code for cycle routes are shown in Table 3 below. They are categorised not by use or functionality but by location, as the level of use is generally low and not related to maintenance need. This approach also reflects the differing risks associated with shared, partially segregated and fully segregated cycle routes. Where the level of use on particular cycle routes is significant and relevant to maintenance need, for example on commuter cycle routes, authorities may establish categories based on use.

Table 3 – Cycle Route Hierarchy

Category	Description
A	Cycle lane forming part of the carriageway, commonly 1.5 metre strip adjacent to the nearside kerb. Cycle gaps at road closure point (no entries allowing cycle access).
B	Cycle track: a highway route for cyclists not contiguous with the public footway or carriageway. Shared cycle/pedestrian paths, either segregated by a white line or other physical segregation, or un-segregated.
C	Cycle trails: leisure routes through open spaces. These are not necessarily the responsibility of the highway authority, but may be maintained by an authority under other powers or duties.

5.4 Public Rights of Way Hierarchy

Authorities have not generally established a formal hierarchy for PROW, for the purpose of assigning maintenance and improvement priorities. The range of guidance on preparation of ROWIPs includes no reference to the need for hierarchy.

Some authorities have established hierarchies based on designation:

- Byways open to all traffic (BOAT);
- Long Distance Trails (LDT);
- Designated Recreational Routes (DRR);
- Right of Way (ROW).

Some use the following, which reflects the different maintenance responsibilities:

- Strategic link path;
- Recreational path (maintained);
- Recreational path (non-maintained);
- Other access rights.

The integration of ROWIPs with LTPs to ensure that PROWs are recognised as key ingredients of an integrated transport network may make it helpful to establish some general principles of hierarchy, based on the relative contribution of particular links.

Like many authorities that have adopted maintenance regimes that incorporate PROWs with a metalled surface, particularly those within or on the fringe of urban areas into the footway hierarchy, irrespective of their designation to recognise users' requirements consistency in highway maintenance. Wirral is working towards a strategy and policy in this regard.

Using the Road User Hierarchy and the Road Mode Hierarchy as an overarching umbrella, the needs of specific road users have been considered in more detail, along with further mode routes.

A number of routes/networks have been identified across the Borough.

5.5 A and B Roads

Road classification is primarily based on the function of a road. It would therefore be expected that A roads will reflect principal through routes, while B roads may interconnect these routes or lead from these routes to local destinations. It is therefore the case that these routes will be expected to take the majority of traffic.

The current road classification in Wirral has been in place with little change for a long time. It is recognised that the circumstances which defined the original classifications may have changed and would benefit from a review. This will establish a more appropriate network fit for purpose under the TMA along which traffic will be directed. Wirral is committed to a review of the road hierarchy.

5.6 Traffic Sensitive Roads

Under Section 64 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, a highway authority may designate certain roads (or parts of roads) as "traffic-sensitive". For a road to be traffic-sensitive it will meet one or more of the criteria detailed in Appendix B.

The designation of a traffic-sensitive road may apply to the carriageway, or to a footway or pedestrian area, to part of a length of road and to certain times of the day, days of the week or days of the year depending on circumstances.

Works on traffic sensitive roads will have the greatest impact on traffic in terms of delays and congestion, on the road itself and for the surrounding network. Therefore, unless there is not alternative, any works or activities will be co-ordinated so that they will avoid traffic-sensitive situations at sensitive times, i.e. at peak rush hours.

This network of traffic-sensitive roads is under review alongside that of the road hierarchy.

5.7 Freight Route Network

The ability to move freight efficiently to and from the ports and industrial areas is crucial to the economic health, physical health and attractiveness of Wirral and indeed Merseyside. Wirral's strategic freight route network comprises the M53 motorway, Kingsway Tunnel and the local roads to and around the Birkenhead Docks/Freeport.

Journey times for freight traffic on the strategic network are one of the key indicators for the LTP and there is a particular focus on traffic management along these routes. These are also at the top of the road mode hierarchy. (Refer to Section 5.1).

The Council recognises the need to maintain a sustainable freight transport system that has good links to the national road network, and that is effectively signed to avoid unnecessary intrusion in residential areas.

Wirral, along with its LTP partners, continues to liaise with local freight hauliers and members of the Merseyside Freight Partnership. Themed events have given the LTP partners the opportunity to inform the freight industry of key projects, such as Bidston Moss Viaduct Strengthening and proposed rail schemes, and enabled the freight industry to raise key issues. This two-way process is seen as instrumental in developing effective working to ensure effective freight access is maintained.

Further details on the Merseyside Freight Strategy can be seen at:
www.letstravelwise.org/goods.

5.8 Emergency Services Route Network

In the development of any proposals that will affect the highway network, whether they are permanent or temporary, consultation and, if necessary, liaison will always be undertaken to ensure that the right balance between achieving a project's objectives and the potential effect on emergency response times are achieved.

Representations from the emergency services also sit on a number of strategic and operational groups and can also provide their input in this manner.

Currently, the plan of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's Strategic Route Network is being reviewed and updated. Merseyside Police and Mersey Regional Ambulance Service requirements are being accommodated for in the plan. A plan of the Emergency Services Priority Routes is shown in Appendix C.

5.9 Cycle Routes

Introducing key cycle routes and promoting cycle use throughout the Borough is key in delivering the objectives of the Local Transport Plan. Cycling plays a much increased role for the journey to work and short trips such as local visits and the journey to school, therefore plays a key role in addressing congestion, accessibility, air quality and safety aims. The target across Merseyside is a 10% increase in cycling of the life of the 2nd LTP.

There is an approved cycle strategy for Wirral that has been in place for a number of years. This strategy is complemented by an Action Plan that details the proposed works over the next few years.

Despite Wirral being unsuccessful, in 2007, in its bid to the Government for Cycle Demonstration Town status, the focus of cycle provision in the next few years will see the implementation of a comprehensive cycle network in the Wallasey area. This district network will maximise links with key services and attractors, and complement other programmes such as Safer Routes to Schools and accident reduction.

To facilitate the on-going expansion of the Borough's cycle network, the Council ensures that requests for cycle parking at key developments are included within the determination of Planning Applications along with other accompanying features for cyclists.

To ensure that participation from the local communities is maintained, the Council's Cycling Officer holds regular meetings with representatives from various agencies and interest groups under the banner of the "Wirral Cycle Forum".

5.10 Pedestrian Routes

Wirral has prepared a walking implementation plan as part of the Merseyside Pedestrian Strategy which sets out aims and objectives to improve the pedestrian environment over the period of the 2nd LTP. The strategy is essential in delivering the objectives of the LTP, with its shared priorities for transport of congestion, air quality, road safety and accessibility and the overarching priority of quality of life.

As part of the strategy, we are planning to undertake walking audits Following consultation, works which have been highlighted as being high priority will be carried forward to be assessed and prioritised in the wider capital programme.

5.11 Main Pedestrian Areas

These areas are essential in maintaining pedestrian flows and movement throughout the urban area in order to sustain economic growth. Pedestrianised areas within the Borough have high footfalls and provide priority to pedestrians in order to promote growth within the retail area. Vehicular traffic have access to these areas at set times within the day to maintain safety and movement of pedestrians.

5.12 Public Right of Way

A Public Right of Way (PROW) is a highway, usually in the form of a footpath, which the public has a right to use at any time.

Wirral has a set of definitive maps showing the routes of each individual public rights of way in the Borough. We intend to build on this to provide a comprehensive and accessible network. The maps, along with a supporting statement, are a legal record of the public's rights along the identified routes, and may be relied upon as evidence if a path were obstructed. The information may also be used for highway searches.

The government recognises that the PROW network plays an important role in encouraging walking for leisure, and we are now required to record a Best Value Performance Indicator to measure how well signed and accessible the network is.

Improvements to local rights of way (as defined in Section 60(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) links with cycling and walking and has the potential to contribute in a number of ways to the key objectives of the LTP.

To this aim, the Merseyside Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan, completed in 2007, sets out a framework for future PROW improvements in each district. Further details can be seen at www.merseysiderightsofway.org.

5.13 Bus Routes

Within Wirral and Merseyside, the co-ordination of public transport is undertaken by Merseytravel.

We will continue to work with Merseytravel to deliver the aim of providing a comprehensive and integrated approach to the provision of bus services and their supporting infrastructure as part of the Single Integrated Public Transport Network detailed in the Local Transport Plan.

These on-going improvements include provision of:

1. New, modern buses;
2. Bus priority measures (including Selective Vehicle Detection (SVD) and bus lanes);
3. Higher quality and better improved shelters and information boards.

Bus punctuality and reliability are key issues that can affect how people judge the effectiveness of this important service. It is therefore essential to maintain traffic flows and movement along specified bus corridors in order to cut congestion and delay. Enforcement is also a crucial action along these routes to ensure their effectiveness.

Wirral is committed to the introduction of bus quality corridors and supports the Merseyside Bus Strategy. This strategy demonstrates how buses support measures to tackle congestion, improve accessibility and support regeneration and create opportunity for all.

The objective of the Merseyside Bus Strategy is:

"to provide a high quality bus network that meets the needs of the people of Merseyside in a secure, accessible, sustainable and cost effective way".

Greater usage of public transport facilities such as buses will help our congestion aims by reducing the number of private cars on our roads.

Other measures, such as SVD, VMS and CCTV, can improve traffic management and minimise delays, not only for buses but for all road users.

5.14 Taxis

The Licensing Section is responsible for issuing all taxi related licences, as required by law. They also monitor compliance with licence conditions, standard of service offered to the public and take enforcement action where necessary.

The following taxi-related licences are issued by the Licensing Section:

- Private Hire Driver
- Private Hire Vehicle
- Private Hire Operator
- Hackney Carriage Driver
- Hackney Carriage Vehicle

We have excellent links with the taxi trade and hold regular meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee to discuss topical issues which highlight new initiatives and share information.

5.15 Coaches

We currently have a coach drop off/pick up facility located on Chester Street, Birkenhead nearby the Woodside gyratory to accommodate national and local services. This facility is situated in close proximity to Hamilton Square train station, Woodside bus and ferry terminal.

5.16 Motorcycles

Wirral Council Road Safety are part of the BikeSafe initiative which is a nationwide plan of action to reduce the number of motorcycle accident casualties by promoting safer riding. Bikesafe Merseyside was formed as a partnership between Merseyside police, Merseyside fire and rescue service and Wirral Council as an active response within the national bikesafe initiative. Bikesafe workshops are held on the Wirral to promote safe riding system for everyday motorcyclists.

5.17 Abnormal Loads

We receive approximately 250 requests to assist with abnormal load movements per month.

The assessment of route suitability takes into account:

- Provide information on loading and/or height limitations on specific bridges to the Client, Department for Transport, Traffic Police and Hauliers to assist in identifying suitable routes for specific abnormal loads;

- Undertake assessment of all elements of the structure to determine acceptability for the passage of a specific abnormal load where acceptability for similar roads has not previously been established. Assessment to use global analysis and computer modelling as required;

- Advise the Client, Department for Transport, Traffic Police or hauliers on the suitability of proposed routes for specific abnormal load movements with regard to loading and headroom restrictions on highway structures.

Checking Abnormal Load Movements is carried out as and when required upon receipt of notifications of abnormal load movements and generally within two working days of receipt. For large enquiries, i.e. from the Highways Agency, assessments are made within five full days and involves liaison with the Police in case escorts are required.

Each assessment is kept on a Register which shows:

- The date enquiry is received
- The decision, i.e. acceptable/not acceptable/warning given/re route required
- The date response sent

Such load movements are likely to be undertaken in off-peak hours and therefore have a minimal effect on congestion there is still a desire to capture and share this information. Appendix D shows a list of height and weight restrictions.

5.18 Co-ordination of the Highway Network

It is essential that with all of the work taking place on the highway network that effective co-ordination is undertaken. Whilst there are existing procedures and forums whereby this co-ordination takes place, there is a desire to further embed this process. Existing procedures that co-ordinate and monitor the network include establishment of the Network Management Advisory Group (NMAG).

The subscription to this group is the Wirral Traffic Manager, key officers, Merseyside Police, Merseytravel, the Fire and Ambulance Services and, when required, other attendees who have an interest in future special events affecting the highway.

5.19 NMAG (Network Management Advisory Group

It is essential that with all of the work taking place on the highway network that effective co-ordination is undertaken. Whilst there are existing procedures and forums whereby this co-ordination takes place, there is a desire to further embed this process. Existing procedures that co-ordinate and monitor the network include establishment of the Network Management Advisory Group (NMAG).

The subscription to this group is the Wirral Traffic Manager, key officers, Merseyside Police, Merseytravel, the Fire and Ambulance Services and, when required, other attendees who have an interest in say special events affecting the highway and/or coastline.

NMAG was set up to consider and approve/decline permission and co-ordinate any works of any description that have an impact on the movement of traffic and pedestrians on designated traffic-sensitive roads. NMAG ensures that works are undertaken in such a capacity that they will limit the disruptive impact to the road network (and hence the travelling public) by considering highway works in terms of occupancy. NMAG meets monthly, however can be quickly convened should the need arise.

The scale of regeneration and tourism work planned to take place over the coming years is unprecedented. A combination of high profile events, major projects and general developments are being planned in association with a range of public and private agencies and developers. These projects are likely to lead to widespread changes to the levels of disruption across the region whilst they are being constructed. However, the investment is expected to transform the cultural, social, educational and business life of the Wirral and lead to significant inward investment and economic growth.

Running in parallel with the remit of NMAG is a separate group of officers which meet, the Events Advisory Group. Amongst the matters which they assess prior to sanctioning events are:

- Safety of the public, crowd management;
- Unnecessary or unacceptable levels of inconvenience to the public;
- Emergency service provision;
- Acceptable traffic management proposals;
- Risk assessments;
- Contingency planning;
- Licensing issues;
- Adequate lead-in time for media and regulatory purposes.

Events on the highway come in two categories, planned events such as carnivals or street parties and unplanned events such as closures due to road traffic accidents, fires or utility apparatus failure.

In relation to planned events, Wirral Council has a traffic co-ordinator who is responsible for ensuring that these activities are publicised and the correct traffic regulations are implemented. The traffic co-ordinator liaises with the Streetworks section to ensure they do not conflict with any planned roadworks. Any closure or events with traffic management implications will be publicised on the Wirral Council website. Wirral Council will collate a list of all re-occurring annual events and produce details of associated traffic management requirements. This information will be made available to the public and other Council departments and will be posted on the Wirral Council Internet site.

Unplanned events are, by their very nature, much more difficult to deal with. However, Wirral Council has already carried out some procedures to try to reduce the adverse effects of such eventualities on network traffic flow.

Some events, although unplanned, do occur regularly such as the closure of the New Brighton sea front due to extreme tides exacerbated by adverse weather conditions. Wirral Council has erected variable message signs to inform drivers of alternative routes.

Wirral Council are also working with the Highways Agency to identify and implement tactical diversion routes for M53 Junction 1-5. The Council proposes to expand this procedure to cover all the major routes within the Wirral highway network so that diversionary routes for the most critical parts of the network are planned well in advance.

Wirral Council hosts numerous high profile events attracting many visitors to destinations within the Borough and therefore significant emphasis is placed on partnership working with other Directorates within the Council and external partners. Examples include the Wirral Show in New Brighton and the Wirral Egg Run .

Events on the highway must be registered with and approved by the Highway Authority. Temporary Road Traffic Regulation Orders may be required to ensure the Event is managed safely or other Traffic Management arrangements are advised or directed by the Highway Authority. Costs for such arrangements will be borne by the Event Organiser.

The NMAG and Events Advisory Group has to be satisfied with all elements prior to granting approval.

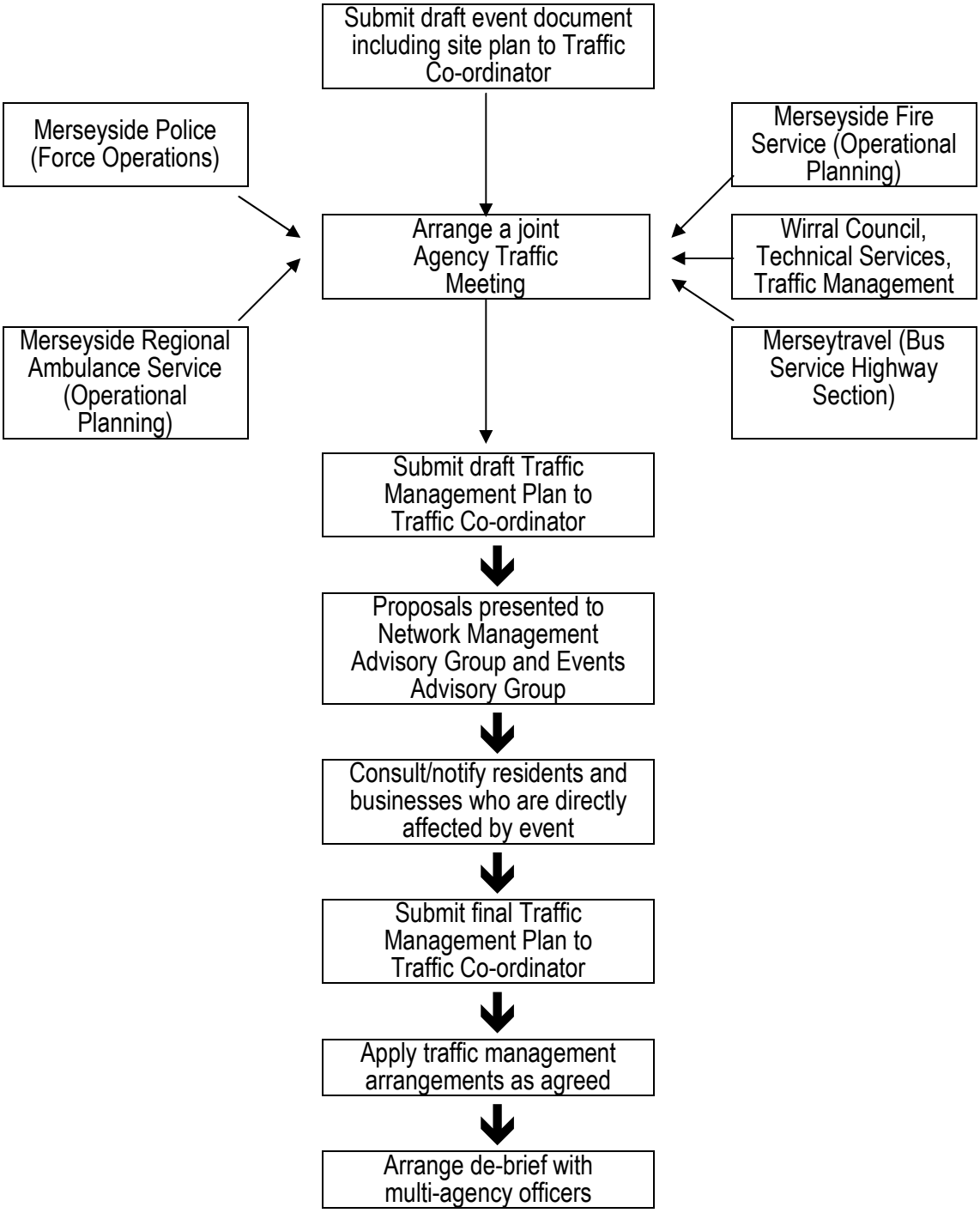
Traffic Plan Approval Process

Typically below is the flow chart accounting for the stages in approving a Traffic Plan for an activity likely to impact on the highway.

Crowd Management Plan

It is the responsibility of the event organiser to manage the safety of people visiting the event and it is always important to keep pedestrians and traffic separate.

Certain areas may need to be cordoned off to members of the public and in some areas you may also need a steward to “man the barrier” to prevent people moving them and walking through regardless. In some areas you may need to operate a one-way system for pedestrians at peak times to minimise risks. Consider access and egress of the emergency services and make sure that clear access is available through entry and exit points for both pedestrians and traffic. The larger the site, the more barriers, signage and stewards will be required. Assess the needs of wheelchair users, prams etc and ensure that signage is highly visible.



5.20 Management of Incidents

It goes without saying that unplanned incidents, whether on the highway network or not on the highway network, can have implications for all road users, causing disruption and congestion. There have to be procedures in place to mitigate the effect of such incidents, which will cover dealing with the incident itself, to communicating it to road users and stakeholders.

Wirral, in close partnership working with the emergency services and the Operational Services Division already has established procedures in place to tackle incidents on the highway network. These include the following:

- Road traffic accidents;
- Broken down vehicles;
- Debris or diesel chemical (including fuel) spillage on the road;
- Structural failures of the carriageway, such as potholes;

- Failure of utilities' apparatus, which may cause disruption to the highway, such as burst water, sewage or gas mains;
- Emergency repairs to utilities' and telecoms apparatus;
- Adverse weather conditions;
- Security alerts.

The first point of contact for members of the public in reporting incidents on the highway network is through the Police. A contact list is available internally which gives details of all contact officers across the Portfolios of the Council. This needs to be updated on a regular basis and are contained in the Emergency Plan, which is a controlled document checked 2 times per year.

5.21 Major Incidents

Major incidents and disruptive challenges requiring urgent action can strike suddenly, unexpectedly and anywhere. Many agencies have a part to play in dealing with these emergencies and their aftermath. Emergency Planning is the process whereby the Council prepares to deal with major emergencies and incidents and assist in the welfare and recovery of the community. The aim of Emergency Planning is to maintain appropriate arrangements and procedures that enable the Council to respond to and manage major incidents.

5.22 The Council Emergency Plan

The Civil Contingencies Act, 2004 is the primary legislation that underpins the responses of the Emergency Services and other Category 1 responders, including local authorities like Wirral. The Emergency Plan co-ordinates the planning, training, exercising, activation and the management of the Council's response to emergencies. The service works in collaboration with the emergency services, adjoining local authorities, voluntary agencies and the many other varied responders who have a role to play, to ensure there is a co-ordinated and effective response.

Emergency Planning falls into four broad categories:

Planning	The Council is continually assessing the risks posed within Wirral and developing and maintaining plans to ensure that procedures are in place to control and mitigate their impact.
Training and Exercising	The service conducts a programme of training and exercises for our staff and partner agencies to make them aware of the need to plan. Training and exercising helps provide an effective response.
Liaison	The service works closely with partner agencies and stakeholders to share information and ensure dovetailing of plans and procedures thereby providing a co-ordinated and integrated response to emergency incidents.
Operational	The Council provides a 24-hour, 365 day response to major incidents. Several service areas operate a Duty Officer system and are available out of hours. The Council's emergency response is activated by the Wirral Call Centre.

5.23 Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)

The successful management or our highway network is critical to the success of our NMD. Not only does this mean the management of movement and activities on the network, but also the infrastructure of the network itself.

It is imperative that monitoring regimes are in place that provide meaningful information so that we are able to determine how well we are doing, what is working and what isn't, so we can change things.

Monitoring in this sense does not just mean looking at traffic flows, but it means assessing how well our procedures are working and whether we are meeting targets, both national and local.

Our strategy for the management of our highway and transport assets will be detailed in the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). This Plan is currently being developed as part of the LTP. The intention is that the Plan will bring together all the policies, aims and objectives of the Authority and will clearly set out management arrangements, aspirations for service delivery and maintenance of our assets.

The Merseyside Districts, together with our transport-related partners including Mersey Tunnels and Merseytravel, have developed a framework TAMP. Each district will also have its own specific TAMP to take into account local conditions. By working together in partnership, it is intended to facilitate change, innovation and best practice with the objective of managing transport and highway assets for the benefit of all stakeholders in Wirral and across Merseyside.

There are many facets to the highway infrastructure that need to be managed. The Merseyside Districts will endeavour to include and capture all highway network components during the life of the TAMP.

Such components (but not exhaustively) will include:

- Footways
- Street lights
- Cycleways
- Signs
- Drainage
- Road markings
- Traffic signals
- Verges
- Trees
- Street furniture
- Bus lanes
- Bus stops
- Transport interchanges
- Taxi facilities
- Structures including gantries, bridges, tunnels, culverts, retaining walls etc

5.24 Contractors Working Group

Currently these meetings occur on a weekly basis where major works are involved. Programmes of work are discussed along with any particular traffic management problems the works may cause. Known traffic 'hotspots' are programmed outside school term times to minimise their disruptive impact. Performance issues are also discussed at the meetings to highlight issues that may involve further excavations on defective workmanship that can result in further disruption when remedial works are required to poor quality reinstatements. Possible road closures and temporary signal requirements are also highlighted.

Wirral Council also have a weekly meeting to discuss and, if need be, co-ordinate our own works for road purpose in association with any programmed Statutory Undertakers works. This way any roads closures can be utilised to carry out tree pruning, gully replacement or cleansing etc to minimise any disruption that would otherwise be caused by such operations

5.25 Routine Co-ordination of Highways and Street Works Activities

Advanced notice is required for any works undertaken on the highway that have 4 working days or more duration. Emergency and Urgent works have to be noticed within 2hrs of works starting on site. Opening notices have, from 1ST April 2008 been transferred in real time via web service, EtoN 4. All notices received are monitored on a daily basis. We issue on occasion challenges in relation to duration of works and the timing of works. This is usually done in response to an excessive duration request for certain works or where works are likely to cause major disruption if undertaken at the requested time period.

The Authority has powers to direct the timing and placing of apparatus under section 56 and 56a of the TMA. At present the majority of major and standard Authority works are noticed and it is envisaged that all highway works undertaken by the Authority will be noticed in the same manner as utility work. Currently skips hoardings and scaffolding is dealt with outside the scope of TMA but it is envisaged that these items will be registered on the Street Works data base to assist in the co-ordination process. It is also envisaged that the council web site will contain a list of all highway works showing their location, start and end dates and a description of the planned works for each individual works promoter, both Utility and Highway works will be displayed.

5.26 Statutory Undertakers Co-ordination Meetings

In accordance with Section 59 of NRSWA 1991 Wirral hold co-ordination meetings on a quarterly basis. Any person with an interest in works on the boroughs highway network is welcome. The invitation extends to the Police and our Neighbouring authority, Ellesmere Port and Neston Council.

The meetings are designed to discuss both Utility and Highway major works that are normally planned at least six months in advance.

5.27 HAUC Meetings

Wirral attend the North West HAUC quarterly meeting. All North West Highway Authorities represent themselves at the meeting as of May 2008.

In addition, the North West Street Works Highways Group meet on a quarterly basis. The aim of this meeting is to try to create a consistent approach to the various issues surrounding NRSWA and the TMA throughout the North West. The use of recycled materials is an issue, which needs to be addressed, and a working group has been set up to investigate the way forward in accordance with the WRAP protocols. Wirral welcomes the use of recycled materials with the caveat that the material must perform to the same criteria as the virgin material would. The group has also created a broadly acceptable duration table designed to create a consistent approach to the duration timescales the Utilities request for their various operations.

5.28 Permit Scheme

Wirral are currently exploring the possibility of becoming a Permit Authority and would envisage that it would take between 18 months to two years before this option could be realised. A Merseyside working group has been set up to investigate the option of setting up a Merseyside joint permit scheme.

Currently we are notified of a works promoter's intention to undertake works on their apparatus by means of the notice regime as set in the Code of Practice for the coordination of street works. The current method of noticing is a fairly passive operation that involves members of the street works team looking at all notices that we receive on a daily basis, currently in the region of 130 per day. A significant number of these notices would, in the new regime, require a permit on any given day.

The current emphasis, in terms of scrutiny, is directed towards major and standard works as these normally present the most risk of traffic/pedestrian disruption. Works promoters submit their notice informing us what work is intended and when they propose to start and finish. Historically the works neither start nor end on their proposed dates on a significant number of occasions. This is usually, in my opinion, a resource issue.

This can, and does, make coordination of any works quite a difficult process. The current method of noticing, EtoN 4, gives Highway Authorities little power if the works do not start on their due date.

From October 2008 Highway Authorities can apply to the Secretary of State to become a permit authority.

The process involved is quite lengthy, as all works promoters who undertake work within Wirral will need to be consulted about our proposal as the scheme does place a financial burden on all works promoters. The application will also need to demonstrate that the permit scheme will allow us to undertake our Network Management Duty more effectively.

It is envisaged that by becoming a permit authority we can exercise greater control over all works on our highway. Any promoter would have to apply for a permit, regardless of the work they propose to undertake or where they plan to undertake such work. All permits will have a charge attached to them and works likely to cause greater disruption will have a greater charge. The current system of noticing does not incur a charge therefore there is no real incentive for certain works to start when they are meant to start.

In the permit regime, should proposed works not start on time, a variation to the permit would be required and this would incur a further charge. It is envisaged that the costs incurred in the permit scheme will focus the works promoter's attention on starting the works when they should. The same principal would apply should the works not end when they were supposed to.

The permit option also allows the authority to impose conditions on the permit that must be adhered to and failure to comply with a permit condition can incur a fixed penalty fine.

5.29 Winter Maintenance (Gritting)

In accordance with council policy Wirral grit the primary and secondary road network in response to forcasts received from the Met office

Wirral has its own weather station and special computer links which provide the Met Office with data. Together with other weather stations across Merseyside, this enables Manchester weather centre to forecast Wirral's weather and more importantly the road surface temperatures.
Forecast information is updated 24 hours a day and used by trained Wirral staff to make the decision on whether or not to grit. Salting decisions are taken very seriously to ensure road safety, to avoid unnecessary gritting and to protect the environment.

Unnecessary gritting poses a threat to the environment as most of the 3,500 tonnes of salt spread on to roads will eventually be washed off by rain or snow and find its way into a watercourse.

We grit all major roads and bus routes in Wirral, whenever it is necessary. Side roads are not gritted unless they are on exceptionally steep hills or at problem locations, eg at roundabouts.

5.30 Street Repairs

The Council has a duty to ensure that all roads and footpaths in its ownership are properly looked after and safe to use. This includes signs and road markings on the highway. Again, this is undertaken by the Operational Services Division. Ensuring that repairs are undertaken quickly can have an effect on safety and also of promoting other modes of travel, i.e. walking and cycling.

Wirral undertakes safety inspections of all roads and footpaths at regular intervals to check that there are no significant hazards which could endanger users.

5.31 Insurance Claims

Wirral Council proactively focuses effort and energy in its approach to risk management for highway claims, which has traditionally been one of Wirral's largest insurable risk exposures.

In 2001 the Council saw a sharp increase in the number of claims made against it by over 50% in 12 months and by over 75% in 2 years. This had a severe impact in claims administration and the Council had to set aside large sums to pay for the cases that it may be liable, taking away resources from front line services.

By the summer of 2001 maintenance inspections provided a defence in only 50% of claims, work completed on time was only at 50% with a best value review indicated that Highway Maintenance was failing with no sign of improvement.

In order to resolve this problem, the highway maintenance management was given a total cultural change and the foundation was laid to bring about a complete joined up approach to maintenance management.

The inspection system was reviewed with each inspector given clear areas of ownership, set target dates, support in cover personnel and clear written procedures.

The streetscene weekly meeting was introduced to ensure there was a co-ordination of all works on the network.

A full survey and categorisation of the highway structure was carried out and a risk related best practice inspection hierarchy and maintenance system established.

The whole joined up approach is designed to improve the condition of the network providing resources where needed and being able to compliment various network improvement schemes.

This joined up approach also extended to the Risk and Insurance team in the Finance Department. The team took a greater role in the investigation process and deciding if a liability exists for claims using local knowledge. Strategic decisions were made not to make economic settlements on cases, but not to settle if any doubt existed of liability.

The aim of this whole approach is to improve the service delivery, condition of the network and provide a co-ordinated management of the networks.

The result of this co-ordinated approach has been a dramatic increase in the percentage of highway claims that Wirral is able to successfully defend. Up to the year 2001 the percentage claims defended was about 50% with the introduction of the streetscene approach. This percentage increased year on year to around 95% of claims successfully defended.

This success rate has continued even with the fall of claims being made which has gone from a peak of 952 in 2002 to below 300 highway claims for 06/07.

The effect of fewer claims has enabled the Council to reduce its self-insurance premiums by £2m 2005/06 and a further £0.5m in 2006/07. In addition funds of £1.8m in 2005/06 and a further £2.1m in 2006/07 have been released from reserves set aside for settlements.

These savings have enabled the Council to provide extra resources into front line services.

5.32 Safety and Serviceability Inspections

A full review of the inspection procedures was undertaken during 2001/2002, during which the network hierarchy was established in accordance with the new code of practice.

Detailed risk assessments and causes of highway condition was undertaken using records from the previous six years.

This information was then used to set the inspection frequencies and standards.

The result of this assessment was the creation of the ward inspection.

The ward inspection is a combination of safety and serviceability inspections, as defined by the code of practice.

The inspection also covers a number of highway enforcement duties utility inspections and a whole range of streetscene items, such as signs, litter bins, grass, trees, etc.

The inspections are all walked within set limits which are given target dates for inspections to be completed.

In addition to the walked inspections there are, four times a year, driven inspections of all the main and link routes.

Inspectors will also undertake investigations to enquiries by elected members and the public with levels of service set and performance targets given for all aspects of the inspectors' duties.

Items picked up during inspections which do not fall within the maintenance remit are forwarded to other Divisions or Departments for considered action.

The overall inspection strategy has been to develop a geographical based generic highway inspector who has clear areas of responsibility with a one point of contact manager to allow for easy access for elected members and the public.

The inspector also monitors all minor development work, small traffic scheme and medium improvement works.

Wirral has 15 inspectors: 7 inspectors have one ward
8 inspectors have two wards

The inspectors are divided into four teams, with each team headed by a Streetscene Manager. The areas covered by the teams are divided by the points of the compass.

With the inspectors divided into teams and some only covering one ward, this allows for cover for extra work levels and support other members of the team.

Following the network hierarchy, the inspection regime was set to the following frequencies:

12 times a year
4 times a year
twice a year
once a year

The supervision of Traffic schemes by the area teams allows for a joined-up approach to the works removing conflicts over costs of work, materials used and standards applied, providing a complete co-ordinated management of the network.

5.33 Maintenance Type

The main types of highway maintenance are as follows:

- reactive – responding to inspections, complaints or emergencies;
- routine – regular consistent schedule, generally for patching, cleaning, grass cutting and landscape maintenance;
- programmed – flexibly planned schemes primarily of resurfacing, reconditioning or reconstruction;
- regulatory – inspecting and regulating the activities of others. Much of this will be undertaken by the Traffic Manager under the new statutory duty for network management;
- winter service;

- weather and other emergencies.

Each of these maintenance types contribute in varying degrees to the core objectives of safety, serviceability and sustainability, summarised earlier in this section of the Code. In each case therefore, standards and delivery arrangements should preferably be established having regard to these objectives focussed on outcomes, rather than on inputs mainly related to maintenance type. It is accepted that this principle may take time to establish and will be easier to pursue in conjunction with new procurement arrangements.

5.34 Maintenance Category

Within each of the above types there are various categories of maintenance as follows, each of which should be considered in terms of their output contribution towards the core objectives of safety, serviceability and sustainability:

Reactive

- all assets – sign and make safe for safety purposes;
- all assets – provide initial temporary repair for safety purposes;
- all assets – provide permanent repair for safety purposes.

Routine

- carriageways, footways and cycle routes – minor works and patching;
- drainage systems – cleansing and repair;

The following measures are used to plan works effectively:

- Best use of school holidays for works to take advantage of reduced traffic flow;
- Internal team meetings to agree on programming of highway works;
- Agreement of night time working if appropriate and acceptable to Environmental Health with regard to noise nuisance in non-residential areas;
- Weekend closures to carry out works if necessary in consultation with residents and businesses;
- Review of Traffic Sensitive Streets, with the hours of traffic sensitivity;
- Meetings with events organisers/developers/utility companies and highway contractors to discuss individual works and local conditions.

Attendance at neighbouring boroughs co-ordination meetings to discuss impact of works on each others networks.

6.0 MONITORING & CONTROL OF THE HIGHWAY

6.1 Managing the Highway Network

The historic trend on rising car usage presents a particular problem in managing the highway network. It is well known that we cannot build ourselves out of trouble to cope with rising traffic levels. It is therefore imperative that strategies are in place to manage existing and future traffic. As well as more traditional engineering measures, it is recognised that the use of "softer" initiatives to encourage modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport will help to achieve this aim.

6.2 Traffic Signals

Wirral has a number of traffic signal installations managed in-house. These have been located strategically for a number of reasons ranging from safety to provision of pedestrian facilities to managing traffic flows.

The Urban Traffic Control system was originally implemented in Wirral in 1990. There are currently 46 junctions and 12 pedestrian crossings connected to the UTC/SCOOT system. The UTC system co-ordinates the operation of traffic signals and crossings in a network and reduces the delay to pedestrians and motorists.

The system can also be used to remotely monitor the operation of the traffic signals and identify faults quickly. Measurement of delay and congestion is also possible. The system also allows manual or automatic intervention when problems occur, even when monitored by CCTV.

There are a further 60 isolated traffic signal controlled junctions in the borough and 139 pedestrian crossings. Many are connected to our remote monitoring system, which automatically notifies the control centre of faults.

Wirral Council currently has the following traffic signal installations:

No. of Traffic Signal Installations	
Type of installation (By Controller)	**No.**
Junction	106
Dual Pelican	18
Single Pelican	54
Dual Puffin	9
Single Puffin	54
Dual Toucan	4
Single Toucan	12
Wig Wag	1
TOTAL	258

6.3 Pedestrians

Traffic signals and signal-controlled pedestrian crossings are provided to improve the safety and progression of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists, buses and other vehicles.

Wirral Council's pedestrian crossings have enhanced facilities including tactile paving and audible signals to assist the disabled and rotating tactile cones under the push button for the visually impaired.

6.4 CCTV

Wirral Council is a leading authority in the use of CCTV cameras for monitoring congestion and delay.

Wirral's CCTV service started in 1996 with just 13 cameras in Birkenhead Town Centre. Today there are 111 permanent cameras throughout Wirral in town centres, community shopping areas, housing estates, car parks and major traffic routes including the M53 motorway. CCTV is a staffed service, operating from a secure urban traffic control unit at Cheshire Lines. Wirral also operates 'rapid deployment' CCTV cameras, which can be placed in areas temporarily to help to tackle specific, short-term situations or problems.

6.5 Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders

A temporary traffic regulation order (TTRO) is made by the Council when it is necessary to prohibit or control vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic along the highway. TTROs can be applied to roads, footways or public rights of way. The Council can make a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to cover planned situations, or we can issue an emergency notice if regulation is needed without delay.

TTROs are normally used to allow essential or emergency works to be carried out on the highway, typically installation of, or maintenance works to, services such as gas, electricity, water etc. However, roads can also be closed under the Town & Police Clauses Act, for street parties etc.

TTROs are made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended, and can take up to six weeks to arrange due to the legal requirements involved. A consultation process is undertaken with the police, emergency and other services. Initial public notification takes the form of an advertisement placed in the local press before the Legal Department makes the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order.

A TTRO can have a maximum duration of 18 months for a road and 6 months for a public right of way. Examples of TTROs include:

- Road closures
- Waiting restrictions
- Weight restrictions

There is a cost for providing the temporary traffic regulation order.

For an informal discussion on whether your proposals require a TTRO contact can be made with the Network Management Section within Technical Services. They will then be able to supply the appropriate forms depending on your requirements.

7.0 ENGINEERING WORK ON THE HIGHWAY

7.1 Resources

The local authority has a responsibility to routinely inspect and maintain its assets on the highway and procedures and practices are in place with partner agencies to fulfil this roll. Activities are numerous and on many fronts both from a reactive and proactive viewpoint.

The main source of financial resource is derived via the LTP process and annually Council members receive programmes of works to fulfil the local highway authorities obligations.

The programmes in the main cover structural maintenance, local safety schemes, improvements to bus facilities, cycling, walking, signalisation schemes and signing schemes and can be viewed in detail on the Council's website via www.wirral.gov.uk (click on transport and streets link).

We are seeking to integrate the highway services with those of the Development Control (Planning) services and are taking the initiative as laid out in the Government's white paper on Planning Gain.

There is an opportunity to ensure that congestion issues are given more of a emphasis in the planning process. Discussions will take place to give the Traffic Manager role a specific input in the approval of proposed developments.

7.2 Developers Manual

Wirral Council's Development Control Service has seen a dramatic increase in planning applications per year. The number has risen to between 4,500-5,000 full applications for consideration and determination. The Council is required to consider these applications within a period of eight weeks and is assessed on this timescale through corporate BVPIs. In addition to these planning applications, the service receives in the order of 15,000 pre-application consultations and enquiries per year from the public and prospective developers.

Whilst the Planning Portal offers the public a first line of enquiry, it is evident that the public and developers require a Development Manual, which offers a range of "standard" guidance for both pre-application and post application stages.

The proposed Developer's Manual is intended to be of value to commercial developers, planning consultants, community and environmental groups, householders and small entrepreneurs as well as local authority planners and designers.

The Manual will include some or all of the following:

- National and Local planning policy, guidance and standards e.g. CABE, LCC and other good practice guides;
- The expected format and content of submissions and accompanying documentation, including environmental, transportation and health impacts and other relevant information;
- Standards for different types of development; residential, commercial, industrial etc;
- Specialist Design Elements e.g. city centre public realm, drainage, street lighting, pedestrians, cyclists, urban traffic control, routing of utility services etc;
- Standard construction details;
- Procedural Guidance e.g. consultation which is necessary during pre and post-application stages, temporary and permanent traffic regulation orders (TROs), advice on NRSWA, legal agreements, etc;
- Statutory and adoption procedures;

- A schedule of fees and other payments which are required, together with timescales for applications, pre-payment etc;
- Buildability and programming guidance;
- Other information such as checklists of information to be provided, etc;
- Key contacts for various services.

Although there would be a wealth of reference material and recommendations, it is proposed that the Manual would be as simple as possible to use and is not prescriptive.

In terms of the TMA, the benefits of a Development Manual would be to ensure that buildability issues are considered early in the planning process. This would prevent the problems associated with developers wishing to start on site without the necessary TTROs which then causes co-ordination problems since there are more often than not contractual obligations in the time they have to construct any development.

7.3 Supplementary Planning Document for Transport "Ensuring Choice of Travel"

Well integrated land use and transport provision can assist our commitment to equality of travel opportunity and many priority areas. It can make it easier for people to access opportunities, and can reduce the need to travel. Policies in the Local Development Documents will form the principle means by which the demand for travel will be reduced, structuring the location and type of development, favouring mixed uses, brownfield sites, and locations with good public transport access. These policies will be supported by the Merseyside Supplementary Planning Document "Ensuring Travel Choice" (SPD) which will ensure developments are accessible by a choice of all modes and encourage sustainable travel to new developments. The SPD will provide the detailed guidance with regard to using planning obligations, accessibility and Travel Plans to locate developments in accessible locations and secure more sustainable travel to them.

At the present time Planning and Building Control assess and determine planning applications. Matters regarding transportation are considered by Development Control, Highways Management. Merseytravel comments on applications with transport implications and participates in planning meetings when possible but is not a statutory consultee on planning applications, and consequently there is no requirement to act on these comments. Pre-application meetings are usually held with Planning, and occasionally other partners may be included.

The planning system is used to bring about improvements for transport and access through use of conditions on applications or through Section 106 and 278 Agreements. These may include travel plans, bus services or alterations to infrastructure to facilitate improvements for sustainable transport access. However, the application of planning guidance, standards, conditions and requirements is applied inconsistently across Merseyside leading to missed opportunities to improve transport access. Fewer than 20, successful and substantive Section 106 Agreements have been entered into during the first LTP period.

In addition, the monitoring and enforcement of planning conditions and agreements is insufficient to provide appropriate weight to the system. Travel Plans are monitored through the TravelWise programme with enforcement support sought from Planning when difficulties are encountered. Currently no penalties are being used to enforce conditions. Section 106 planning agreements are monitored to some extent, however an increased use of the system is already identifying difficulties in ensuring agreements are delivered appropriately and in a timely fashion.

The development of the Merseyside Transport SPD aims to set out clear and consistent standards for LPAs and developers to ensure that a transparent, fair and clearly understood system is in place to improve the integration of land use planning and transport and to ensure that new developments promote good access by all modes of transport and encourage sustainable travel. In developing the SPD, the changing framework for planning is being taken into account.

The aim of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to ensure that sustainable transport and accessibility issues receive greater significance in the consideration of planning applications. It also seeks to secure a consistent approach across Merseyside by, for example, ensuring that new housing developments adequately cater for and support new bus routes, subsidised bus services where necessary, incorporate new cycle routes and parking facilities and cater for pedestrians.

The SPD will attempt to ensure that the same development standards are applied across Merseyside. The more rigorous standards will help to manage public and private parking stock, encourage alternative travel and in doing so help to reduce congestion.

By 2011, 95% of all Merseyside developments will be subject to the approval of the SPD, with an overall aim of having 100% of developments checked.

7.4 Capital and Revenue Schemes

The table below shows a list of local safety schemes to be included in the 2008/09 Capital Programme:

Location	**Scheme**
Thingwall Road, Irby	Speed Reduction Measures
Irby Road/Fishers Lane, Irby	Puffin Crossing
Bidston Link Road, Bidston	Anti-Skid, Vehicle Actuated Signing & signing
M53 Junction 5, Hooton	Signs & Road markings
Old Chester Rd/Union St, Birkenhead	Puffin Crossing
Poulton Rd/Brimstage Road, Bebington	Signal Re-Phasing
Hillbark Road/Montgomery Hill, Frankby	Signs & Road Markings
Column Road, West Kirby	Cycle Lane
Birkenhead Road (footpath adj. to railway), Meols	Pedestrian Measures – inc. Guardrail
Cathcart Street Area, Birkenhead	Minor Junction Improvements
Woodchurch Road/Prenton Hall Road, Prenton	Signal Re-Phasing
M53 Junction 4, Bebington	Signing & Road Markings
Martins Lane/Liscard Road, Liscard	Minor Junction Improvement
Rock Ferry By – Pass, Rock Ferry	Vehicle Actuated Signing
Frankby Road Roundabout, Frankby	Signing
Upton Road/Tollemache Road, Claughton	Pedestrian Facilities
Woodchurch Road/Holm Lane, Prenton	Pedestrian Measures – inc. Guardrail
Pensby Road (Downham Rd Nth – Ashlea Rd), Pensby	Signs & Road Markings

8.0 ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement is an essential element in keeping traffic moving on the highway network. It also assists in realising the full effectiveness of schemes introduced for road safety or accident reduction purposes and can help in the delivery of demand management and modal choice objectives. Within busy town centres enforcement of parking restrictions can play a significant role in encouraging effective use of road space by generating a turnover of parking space and removal of undesirable long-term parking to the benefit of local commerce. The various elements of enforcement activities on the highway network help to keep traffic, which include pedestrians, moving and to keep the highway clear of obstructions.

There are a number of agencies that undertake enforcement on the highway network and each have an important part to play in helping us to discharge our duties under the Network Management Duty.

8.1 Merseyside Police

The most obvious enforcement agency to the public is the Police. There are strong partnership links between Wirral Council and Merseyside Police. The Local Strategy and Policing Plan (2005-08) for Merseyside now recognises that road traffic policing can make a significant contribution in reaching the national 2010 casualty reduction targets. In support of this, the Police have increased the resources available for road safety policing by 20% in September 2005. This equates to an extra 20 dedicated staff (2 sergeants and 18 constables) who have been posted to Merseyside Police's newly formed Traffic Road Safety Unit. The unit's primary role will be to address the KSI casualty figures by means of enforcement of core traffic offences.

However, whilst the Police contribute and help in our co-ordination of the highway network further strategic links need to be made to promote more general road policing to keep traffic moving and reduce congestion.

8.2 Parking

Since the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) powers in Wirral in 2003, and now Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE), since March 2008 under the Traffic Management Act 2004, the enforcement of parking regulations has been undertaken by a Council appointed Enforcement Contractor.

Parking policy, management and appeals functions are undertaken '*in-house'* by the Parking Services unit. Wirral's parking policies support and compliment the transport and parking aims and policies adopted through the Merseyside Local Transport Plan and support national policies and guidelines on transport.

The Council's published policy and strategy on parking and enforcement is available online at www.wirral.gov.uk

8.3 Powers

Appointed Civil Enforcement Officers undertake enforcement of parking regulations within Council managed public off-street parking places, including both pay and display (P&D) and "free" car parks in Wirral. On-street parking enforcement of yellow lines and other parking and waiting restrictions is undertaken in the majority of the Borough's streets but excludes the M53 Motorway and the Mersey Tunnel approach roads.

The TMA 2004 has extended the Council's powers under Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) so that most regulations relating to on-street parking and waiting restrictions can now be enforced. These powers, however, do not extend to the issuing of penalty charge notices (PCN) for obstructive parking where no specific regulation or order exists, but do now potentially allow for the enforcement of parking across a dropped vehicular access, double parking and parking on pedestrian crossing zigzags. Before taking on the powers relating to dropped crossings and double parking, further clarification is being sought from the DfT.

The TMA 2004 also permits authorities to undertake enforcement via fixed or mobile cameras and for postal PCN's to be issued to motorists in these and other circumstances where otherwise prevented from issuing conventionally.

8.4 Revenue

Wirral Council is now in its fifth year of operating a CPE scheme. The use of CPE surplus revenue is governed by Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended by Section 95 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. This states that CPE surpluses may only be used to:

- Make good any deficits on CPE for the preceding four financial years
- Offset the costs of providing and maintaining Council off street parking
- Offset the costs of providing and maintaining non Council off street parking
- Meeting costs of the operation of or facilities for public transport
- For the purposes of a highway or road improvement project
- The reduction of environmental pollution [Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999]
- Improving or maintaining the appearance or amenity of a road or land in the vicinity of a road, or open land or water to which the general public has access
- The provision of outdoor recreational facilities available to the general public without charge.

Highway and road improvement projects cover such areas as: safety measures on dual carriageways and roundabouts; highway widening; cycle tracks; footways and guard rails; pedestrian refuges; levelling and altering the level of the highway; construction of road humps; other traffic calming works; etc.

Environmental pollution is defined as pollution of the air, water or land which may give rise to any harm and includes pollution caused by noise, heat or vibrations or any other kind of release of energy.

CPE income is an integral element of the on and off-street parking budget. All income generated is utilised to deliver the service within the budget set. Any excess income over expenditure would be used to offset budget allocations against eligible expenditure within the above definitions.

8.5 Resources

Parking Services utilise proven and reliable case management technology that is regularly updated to take on board new legislation such as the TMA 2004 and video evidence. CEOs record and issue PCNs using modern hand-held computers and printers, which were renewed early in 2008. Digital cameras are used to record photographic images of all contraventions. The case management system for notice processing (Si-Dem by Spur Information Solutions) is also utilised to manage car park and on-street resident parking permits. It is also proposed to utilise further add-in modules for other enforcement requirements including FPNs for environmental offences. Additional storage capacity for servers/hard drives etc can be accommodated through modular expansion.

The adoption of fixed and mobile camera enforcement and the use of postal PCN's will be managed to ensure the parking operation remains cost neutral to the Authority.

Enforcement of bus lanes is being considered and may be dependant upon funding from other sources including Merseytravel in order to implement and operate dependant upon the level of enforcement considered necessary for it to be effective across the Borough.

It is proposed that persistent parking penalty evaders will have their vehicles clamped if observed contravening further parking regulations. Details of this proposal are contained in the Council's published policy and strategy on parking and enforcement available at www.wirral.gov.uk

The use of wheel clamping will not increase the number of PCN's issued, but may assist in the recovery of existing unpaid debts.

8.6 Car Park Management

One of the fundamental requirements of an accessible, integrated transport network strategy is the provision of reliable and useful information. A clear signing strategy will ensure that traffic entering the Borough is informed through a combination of conventional and variable message signs where to access town centre car parks.

Signing of car parks within Birkenhead Town Centre is currently under review as part of a major re-development taking place within the town centre.

Wirral Council also plans to develop a parking strategy for the Town Centre, which will inform/ be an integral part of a Town Centre Management Strategy.

8.7 Camera Enforcement for parking contraventions

The TMA 2004 allows for the enforcement of parking regulations with approved devices (fixed or mobile cameras). It is proposed that cameras are used in places where enforcement is difficult or sensitive such as school entrance markings and locations where high turnover of persistent, but generally short duration parking, creates traffic problems but are difficult to enforce. Camera enforcement is considered a critical element of the tool kit available to us to ensure the effects of congestion are minimised.

As further powers relating to moving traffic offences are enacted under the TMA the Council will explore the feasibility of such options for example enforcement of yellow box junctions and banned turn etc.

8.8 Highways Act/New Roads and Street Works Act

Council officers assume responsibility for enforcing the relevant legislation concerning activities undertaken on the highway, and delivers, a wide range of enforcement activities aimed at safeguarding the environment and the wider community.

Enforcement action whether verbal, written, statutory notices, formal caution or prosecutions is primarily based upon an assessment of risk to public health and safety.

The adoption of standard practices ensure that enforcement decisions are consistent, balanced, fair and relate to common standards which strengthen the protection of the public.

Works conducted within the highway can limit the amount of road space available to traffic and so lead to congestion and disruption. Whilst some of the resulting disruption is inevitable given the need to carry out the works, this can be minimised by ensuring that works do not take longer than necessary, are planned and co-ordinated effectively with other works and that those likely to be affected by the works are consulted upon or informed of the works. The risk of not conducting such activities is that unnecessary disruption to road users and local residents and businesses continues.

8.9 Highway Obstructions

Within the adopted highway where advertising signs, goods or other items are causing an obstruction outside premises that are closed, the items will be removed with the owner being informed of any action taken at the earliest possible convenience. Periodically, the Police may be asked to support enforcement activities so as to negate possible “Breach of the Peace” when offending items are removed.

Any interference with public passage is technically an illegal obstruction of the highway. The Highway Authority will enact action and/or legal processes to ensure removal of any such obstructions in accordance with current legislation.

Ultimately, we have a duty of care that requires all unlicensed obstructions to be removed from the highway. This duty is conducted under the provisions of the Highways Act 1980 by removing nuisance contrary to the provisions of Section 137. Recent changes in the Disability

Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) also put greater onus on us in maintaining freer passage and access for those with disabilities.

Typical examples of obstructions under the Highways Act 1980 would be:

- ‘A’ boards, typically used for pavement or roadside advertising;
- Goods displayed outside shops (beyond any private forecourt) (overtrading);
- Unauthorised signs attached to poles and lighting columns.

It is important to recognise that much compliance is achieved through informatory and educational activities. However, where such educational processes have failed the use of enforcement powers including issuing FPNs and court prosecutions is an important element in ultimately securing compliance with legislation.

We have a duty:

- To maintain adopted highways to safe and serviceable standards;
- To protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of such highways;
- To ensure they are free from nuisance, danger, obstructions, unlawful stopping up, interference and encroachments.

8.10 Miscellaneous Activities

As well as the Council’s own highway activities and works, the Highways Act 1980 also sets out the legislative regime controlling a variety of other activities in the highway, such as the placing of skips, scaffolding and piles of building materials (e.g. sand or bricks) in the highway.

In contrast with utility works under NRSWA, the rules controlling these activities are generally set out in the 1980 Act itself, rather than in supporting regulations. So, for instance, under Sections 139 to 140A of the Highways Act 1980 it is against the law to deposit a builder’s skip on a street without the permission of the highway authority for that street.

The Council is currently reviewing its environmental and highway enforcement activities and will be presenting a Streetscene Enforcement Strategy report to Cabinet in September 2008 detailing how such activities will be undertaken in the future. The report will seek Members approval of a strategy embracing all the main areas of enforcement used to protect and improve the environment, to protect the public from risk and to ensure compliance with Council adopted policies, in particular when other avenues of education and encouragement have failed. The report will recommend policies on the use of different enforcement legislation, set priorities and include short, medium and long term actions.

8.11 Multi-Agency Enforcement Team

Given that enforcement of activity on the highway network is undertaken by a number of different agencies, it is an aspiration to set up a multi-agency enforcement team. This team would consist of officers from Wirral Council, Merseyside Police, Community Patrols and the Neighbourhood Management Team with support from Merseytravel, Street Crime Wardens, etc. This team would be able to utilise a control centre monitoring the highway and be able to react in a more co-ordinated manner to unplanned events.

9.0 EDUCATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT

9.1 TravelWise

Through the TravelWise campaign target marketing along corridors to encourage public transport use, reduce the dependence on private cars and improve quality of life.

9.2 Car Share / Car Clubs

The Merseyside Travelwise website (www.letstravelwise.org) hosts a Merseyside Car Share journey matching service for individuals and business/residential groups. Greater promotion of this site will support increases in car share and will include for example links to tunnel traffic.

9.3 Park & Ride

Park & Ride facilities are considered to be a key element of the overall transport strategy since they complement the aims of removing reliance on the use of the private car.

The Merseyside Park & Ride Strategy, which formed part of the first LTP submission in July 2000, set out a framework for implementation in both the short-term and longer-term across the sub-region.

Locations in Wirral were: Bidston; Woodchurch; Bebington; Bromborough; Upton; Spital; Birkenhead North; Birkenhead Park; New Brighton Seafront and Meols.

In 2002, an enhanced P&R strategy document was submitted to Wirral Council's Environment, Transportation & Planning Strategy Select Committee on 23rd July 2002 and Cabinet on 25th July 2002 and included additional locations, Hoylake and Beechwood.

Since 2002, Green Lane (Birkenhead) Rail Station has also been identified for future P&R provision due to its location on the cordon of Birkenhead Town Centre and its potential to serve as an important facility to access Liverpool.

To date, Wirral has P&R facilities at Spital, Leasowe, Grove Road (Wallasey) and Hoylake Rail Stations. There is also parking (but not specific P&R) at other rail stations on the Merseyside network.

Wirral officers continue to liaise with Merseytravel to deliver a rolling programme of P&R improvements. Consideration will also be given to the introduction of bus-based P&R if/where appropriate, to expand choice for travellers and encourage modal shift and reduce traffic levels.

9.4 Linking with Public Transport Information and Marketing

Merseytravel's TransportPlus (TransportPlus is the promotional brand for Merseyside's single, integrated public transport network) initiative highlights how improvements to services and opportunities to present information in new ways will enable targeted marketing of public transport. Prolonged campaigns relating to major new schemes will be developed including extensive marketing of the enhanced bus routes and rail improvements for example. In addition, campaigns will support maintenance of current public transport patronage, as well as raising the acceptability and attractiveness of public transport options. This is a crucial element of locking in the benefits of new infrastructure. Train and bus services will continue to be promoted through Travel Planning in support of the extensive marketing campaigns to promote new and improved services.

9.5 Communication

Communication and engagement with road users and key stakeholders is considered an essential element of any project, initiative or strategy that Wirral delivers. It is essential for any organisation to have good communication and this begins from within. If an organisation is not effectively communicating internally, it severely weakens their ability to communicate well externally.

With the rate of regeneration within Wirral, communication and engagement is brought even more to the forefront and is seen as critical indicator of success. This is even more critical in managing the disruption and congestion on the highway network that works over the next few years will create.

A review of consultation undertaken in the first Local Transport Plan period showed that in terms of congestion:

(a) It is perceived that local authorities and individuals could do more to tackle congestion – but, the solutions are seen to lie in persuasion not restraint.

(b) Traffic congestion is seen to be confined mainly to the peaks, but tolerance is very low with waiting or queuing of more than 3 minutes being seen as "congestion".

As Wirral becomes more prosperous and more people come to work, live and visit, the perceptions of congestion will present a challenge in meeting our duties under the TMA.

The need to market sustainable transport options at an individual level, with tailor made information and incentive packages is now more widely recognised.

9.6 Informed Choices

All projects proposed by the Council undergo a comprehensive consultation procedure involving all key stakeholders. Even without the TMA, the scale of projects being undertaken means that it is seen as desirable that once works start on site, information should be communicated to road users and stakeholders so that they can plan their journeys or their own works.

9.7 Provision of Travel Information to Road Users and the Community

It is an aim to introduce systems that will allow the provision of travel information. Intelligent Transport Systems will be used, together with internet technology to enhance the provision of comprehensive and integrated traffic and travel information. Wirral, along with its partners, proposes to use these systems to disseminate the following information:

- Traffic Information
  - Congestion
  - Journey Time

- Timetable Information
  - Bus
  - Rail
  - Ferry

- Real Time Passenger Information
  - Bus
  - Train

9.8 School Travel Plans

The importance of the school run as a major contributor to morning peak hour traffic is well known. The Merseyside Countywide Survey shows that the proportion of children driven to school has increased from 29.1% in 2001 to 31/8% in 2005. The vast majority of schools now experience localised congestion. School Travel Plans are a key element of addressing these problems. There is a commitment to engage with all schools by 2010. Development of Travel Plans will continue as a strong element to tackle congestion, safety, health and environment issues as well as engaging with the next generation regarding the impact of travel choices.

Work with secondary schools will increase in coming years as the need to address flexible learning pathways increases. Emerging analysis of data collected from schools developing School Travel Plans during the first LTP shows a measurable positive effect in reducing car usage and increasing walking to school. The data will be examined further in developing a target for mode share for the journey to school.

9.9 Workplace/Organisation Travel Plans

Car use for the journey to work has been increasing in Wirral and across Merseyside. As regeneration continues and employment increases, the contribution of the journey to work to congestion and poor air quality will also increase without intervention. Many of the major employers in Merseyside are now engaged in travel planning with 150 organisations involving more than 110,000 employees. Work will continue with these employers and the partner authorities themselves to ensure effectiveness of these plans. New travel plans will focus on key regeneration areas. In the next five years the programme will be strongly supported by planning requirements, which are envisaged to direct the majority of the work. This will encompass large employment sites, health sites, visitor attractions and residential developments. Over 100 travel plans across Merseyside have been required to date through the planning process. It is anticipated that 300 travel plans will be secured through the planning system over the next five years principally through our proposals for the transport Supplementary Planning Document. This approach also provides an important contribution to the Access Planning process by informing people of available travel options.

Travel Plans will be used to help address the impact of traffic generation at these sites as well as to increase their accessibility. The potential to introduce a workplace parking levy on organisations not implementing a travel plan has been discussed and will be kept under consideration as a tool to manage traffic growth.

As the largest employer on the Wirral, with approximately 13,000 staff, the Council recognises that it has a significant role to play in promoting sustainable travel.

The original Travel Plan was adopted in 2002, the second and current Travel Plan updated this plan and covers up to end March 2010.

9.10 Improving Bus Services

Wirral, along with Merseytravel, are keen to implement Quality Contracts (QC) so that more control can be gained over bus services, in relation to fares, quality, service frequency and bus routes.

Commercial bus services can, in some locations, provide over-competition of key routes and this can itself lead to congestion on these routes.

The Road Transport Bill, which is progressing through Parliament, would support the Government's efforts to cut congestion and improve public transport, particularly in the major cities outside London.

The draft Bill would:

- enable local authorities to improve the standard of bus services in their areas. Ministers have closely examined successful services and intend to set out proposals on future policy;

- reform Passenger Transport Authorities and Executives to enable a more coherent approach in major English cities. New governance options are being considered by Merseytravel in consultation with partner local authorities to determine the most effective arrangements for the sub-region.

We will look to use these new powers to help in our efforts to manage congestion on major routes.

9.11 Walking and Cycling Promotion

The benefits of increasing active travel are wide reaching for transport, health and environment sectors. The need to market these modes is well recognised and will be taken forward in partnership with the health sector.

A set of cycle and walk maps will be developed for local areas, covering all of Merseyside, and targeted marketing campaigns will take place through travel plan settings and more widely to support a new cycle and pedestrian infrastructure development. Campaigns to build on the higher levels of cycling already experienced in some area of Merseyside will also feature.

The new Merseyside Cycle Training and Promotion Service will also form part of the marketing strategy for cycling, presenting a positive opportunity to communicate the benefits of cycling and enabling greater activity.

9.12 Travel Awareness Campaigns

Awareness raising campaigns are an important element. As part of our communication strategy, this area of work will also include initiatives such as Walk to School Week and Car Free Day. Investment in awareness messages and association with Tavelwise will be particularly important in the next few years as an essential element of the communications approach.

The smarter choices, TravelWise programme, is a critical element in meeting the shared priorities.

- It reduces the risk of congestion by promoting the use of non single occupancy car travel;
- It supports air quality management by encouraging sustainable travel;
- It supports accessibility by covering access to education, work and healthcare through travel plans that inform and promote travel opportunities;
- It supports road safety by promoting safer travel to school and cycle training

10.0 MAKING USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology has an integral role in managing the network and relaying information to the public stakeholders.

Wirral is committed to introducing technology to assist in ensuring an efficient highway based network – evidenced by the following sections.

10.1 Urban Traffic Control Unit (UTC)

The Borough has invested, and continues to invest, significant funds into the Urban Traffic Control Unit based in Cheshire Lines building which has assisted in achieving the following objectives:

a) Well maintained and reliable traffic signal equipment
b) Active real-time control to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow
c) Provide road safety traffic control measures
d) Promote reliable journey times
e) Provide accurate information

This Unit acts as a hub for traffic control and maintenance of traffic control systems, and other intelligent transport systems, linked to multiple central control systems.

The UTMC computer system is based upon UTC/SCOOT complemented by an extensive CCTV network. This system ensures capacity efficiency in the highway network. The system is used on the main strategic routes within the Borough. Each junction has been modified by our Urban Traffic Control engineers to ensure optimum efficiency. This is monitored on a regular basis to ensure the system is being used effectively.

The Traffic Systems team monitors and control the operation of signal installations using Split Cycle Optimum Offset Technique (SCOOT) to reduce congestion and delay. This ensures, as far as possible, that the traffic signals are operating correctly and that most faults are automatically recognised and reported to our maintenance contractors as soon as possible.

Additionally, an incident management system, COMET, has been customised for each individual junction and common sub-area in order to operate at its most efficient, and is continually monitored and modified as necessary in order to meet the changing demand.

Due to new technology and improved maintenance, the serious fault rate has significantly reduced on the network. Wirral Council have set traffic signal service standards, which include a two hour urgent maintenance priority on serious traffic signal faults.

10.2 Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)

There have been a number of improvements to our ITS capacity over the last few years. There have been benefits to a variety of road users including people with disabilities, bus passengers and general vehicle drivers, through improvements ranging from the installation of more efficient pedestrian/cyclist crossing controls and more responsive traffic signal equipment (SVD – selective vehicle detection) to computerised traffic control systems to reduce congestion and traffic delays. ITS will influence vehicle flows to take into account congestion and locations where pollution exceeds nationally acceptable limits. The use of ITS is regarded as a critical element in ensuring value for money and making the most of our existing assets and highways capacity. In addition, installations of CCTV (close circuit television) cameras have facilitated increasing opportunities to oversee and monitor the transport networks, and aided more effective and efficient management of transport when and where necessary.

At a local level Intelligent Transport Systems are being implemented in accordance with the Merseyside ITS Vision. This approach to developing an ITS strategy includes the following elements:

- Stakeholder consultation;
- ITS Vision;

- Network Inventory;
- ITS inventory;
- ITS package;
- ITS deployment plan.

The investment, expansion and collaborative use of intelligent transport systems are essential to address the network management duties of the Traffic Management Act and make the best use of existing assets.

The ITS tools that will be provided to manage the network efficiently include:

- SCOOT/UTMC – (including facilities for cyclists and bus priority);
- Common database (UTMC Complaint);
- Variable Message Signs (for both strategic and car park signing);
- Journey time monitoring;
- Air quality monitoring;
- Asset Management systems;
- Select Vehicle Detection (SVD);
- COMET.

These tools will enable:

- Strategy management – assisting operators in alleviating expected and unexpected traffic incidents;

- Automatic responses to events on the network;

- Route Journey Time Management – providing current journey times for predefined routes;

- Definition of day types using a calendar which stores traffic profiles and predictions;

- Data files to be exported for analysis off line;

- Map interfaces which can locate equipment items and incidents accurately on maps and allow strategies to be run directly;

- Live links to other systems including the Highways Agency QMISS database which is updated at 15 minute intervals;

- Exchange of data and travel information between systems.

10.3 Variable Message Signs

Wirral has recently invested in the development of an Enhanced Message System (EMS)/Variable Message System (NMS) strategy as an effective means of communicating with highway users to inform route choice, thus assisting them to make best use of the available highway capacity. Depending upon the message database it can provide information on a wide variety of events/incidents/roadworks to appropriately influence travel behaviour, with the primary function being to deliver early traffic information so that motorists can divert from their chosen course if necessary. This will be an integral part of the UTMC system. They will also have a secondary role for special events, major incidents, environmental requirements and carrying road safety messages.

Wirral Council have a total of 23 variable message signs located in the borough. Most recently Wirral and Merseytravel introduced variable message signs within the two Mersey Tunnels and on their approach roads linking the M53. The system interfaces the VMS with cross boundary authorities. The scheme is primarily related to the safety of drivers and better communication with users.

The variable message signs introduced on the inner cordon of the Town Centre play an important role in relaying information to drivers. The signs are used to inform motorists of various key messages, such as traffic information, incidents, events, coastal protection and road

safety messages. There are proposals to introduce a further 6 VMS in the town centre area through planning and regeneration.

The Variable Message and Car Park system will give Wirral a fully UTMC compliant system with a link to the corresponding system in Liverpool. Merseytravel is preparing a detailed scheme for the introduction of comprehensive Variable Message Signs within the two Mersey Tunnels and on their approach roads. The system will interface with VMS on adjacent highways. The scheme is primarily related to the safety of users and better communication with users. The in-tunnel signs will display pictorial images as well as words, in line with developing European standards.

10.4 Car Parking Management

The Council's Parking Policy and Strategy is available to view online or download from the Council's website, this document will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it continues to complement and secure delivery of parking policy dependant strategies linked to government legislation, the LTP and other local policies. The policy encompasses both off-street and on-street parking and provides a framework for parking management within the Borough. It is proposed that an ITS system will be developed to complement the parking provision within Birkenhead to direct visitors to appropriate parking provision within the town and reduce unnecessary traffic movements and congestion.

10.5 Vehicle Activated Signs

VAS are road signs that light up to warn drivers of a hazard, typically a speed limit or hazard near a school. The signs are activated if drivers travel above the speed limit, or too fast for local conditions, focusing the driver's attention back to the required speed. Research shows that VAS are effective in reducing drivers' speeds and casualties resulting from inappropriate speed.

10.6 COMET

The COMET database is the key component of a modern integrated traffic control centre. COMET provides co-ordination across all traffic control systems, allowing operators to control and monitor the network more easily, while delivering meaningful, timely and accurate information to the travelling public.

At the heart of COMET is a UTMC common database providing access to all traffic management related information and the ability to control and manage a wide range of different systems. COMET provides unprecedented levels of strategic control to effectively manage traffic and transport in the urban environment.

10.7 Emerge

Emerge is an online mapping tool, developed to enable local authorities to make the data held in COMET available to the general public over the internet so that they can check which car parks have parking spaces available. Although Wirral Council do not use this software, it is a took which may be considered in the future.

10.8 Select Vehicle Detection

Merseytravel are currently conducting trials with Select Vehicle Detection (SVD) to allocate capacity priority to bus-based public transport at certain signalised junctions, typically along existing and proposed Quality Bus Corridors (QBCs). Journey times can be determined and displayed on variable message signs.

10.9 Bus/Ambulance Priority

The UTC system incorporates a Bus Priority facility, which can extend the green period beyond its normal maximum time to allow a detected bus through or alternatively recall the green signal to a bus approach. Bus detection can be carried out by either fitting a small device on each bus, called a TAG or Transponder, or by using special detection equipment, which requires nothing on the bus.

This priority facility has also been fitted to Wirral's Ambulance Service vehicles to improve response times on emergency calls. The UTC system also assists fire emergency vehicles on calls from the central Birkenhead Fire Headquarters.

10.10 Journey Time Monitoring

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) is a mass surveillance method that uses optical character recognition on images to read the licence plates on vehicles. ANPR is used by various police forces and as a method of electronic toll collection on pay-per-use roads, and monitoring traffic activity such as red light adherence in an intersection.

ANPR reads vehicle registration marks and compares them against a series of databases, for example Police National Computer, Driver Vehicle Licence Authority DVLA) and local hot-lists. If a match occurs, appropriate police action by way of interception, of further intelligence gathering can be taken. We will look to use this data from ANPR cameras along with the DfT's ITIS. APNR installation in the future may focus on our person delay indicator routes.

Merseyside Police currently have ANPR cameras located across the Borough including A540 Chester Road, M53 Junction 5 and Merseytunnel approaches.

We will look to use this data from ANPR cameras along with the DfT's ITIS data and other traffic counts sites across the city o develop a model of traffic on our roads.

10.11 Camera Enforcement

Camera enforcement is considered a critical element of the toolkit available to us to ensure the effects of congestion are minimised.

Camera enforcement is already used on Merseyside as part of the Merseyside Road Safety Camera Partnership with the aim of improving road safety by speed awareness and enforcement.

We are already considering the enforcement of bus lanes, recently enacted under the TMA. As further powers are enacted relating to moving offences, we will certainly consider the feasibility of these. Coming on stream are:

- Box junctions
- Banned turns
- Prohibition of stopping

10.12 Sharing of Information

The benefits of a centralised database of information displayed graphically are numerous and being able to share this formatted information makes it more tangible and easier to understand. the benefits of a centralised GIS database service are given below:

- Improved co-ordination of works in the highways
- Easier to Understand Data using graphical representation
- Simple and Centralised Data Storage
- Reduced/shared data management costs
- Improved Decision Making Process
- Reduce need for paper maps
- Faster and more flexible reporting/distribution
- Speed up 3rd Party Communications – "One Stop Shop" for information
- Improved Customer Service

Currently there are a number of discrete systems being used by key stakeholders, ranging from purpose built complex databases to simple spreadsheets. These systems have been developed normally in isolation to answer a specific issue and contain a vast amount of duplicate and often out of date information . The duplication of holding information in a number of separate databases leads to the obvious duplication in entering and maintaining the

information with all the associated direct costs not to mention the indirect cost to performance. In addition to the costs of maintaining multiple databases, the risk of data becoming corrupted or becoming out of date due to changes in circumstances, data entry error, etc increases exponentially. Work is currently undertaken to identify all sources of information with the ultimate aim of allowing these separate systems to be able to “talk” to each other.

This will give the benefit of encouraging better cross team working and sharing of information. Wider use GIS systems and the sharing of information will create in effect a “One Stop Shop” for information. The sharing of information with emergency services, the public and other stakeholders should allow for a well informed decision making process and must follow on after internal developments have progressed.

In parallel to our own internal actions, it is advisable to consider alternative options available in the market place for providing this “One Stop Shop” for information.

10.13 Confirm

Confirm provides capabilities for asset management, maintenance, planning and service delivery by monitoring a portfolio of assets (Highways Bridges & Structures, NRSWA Notices for Street Works, Property, Parks and Play Areas, Refuse Collection and Waste Management, Trees and Street Lighting) and allowing a more informed decision making process. Maintenance, refurbishment, acquisitions, disposals and day-to-day operation and management are all made more effective.

There are four main Modules within Confirm which are used to facilitate the co-ordination of works, these are:

Enterprise Maintenance Management System handles the portfolio of assets under one system and Confirm can offer links from this system into others such as contractors and customer relationship factions. These systems all link to GIS and the internet for the exchange of information. Standard and ad hoc reporting tools allow information within the system to remain easily accessible.

Highways Maintenance Management System is designed for the maintenance management of all highways and engineering assets including street, structures and street lights. It also includes a comprehensive NRSWA street works system.

10.14 CRM

Our Customer Relations Management System (CRM) enables Wirral to fulfil its customer facing responsibilities relating to traffic management, infrastructure assets and waste management services. The system is located in a purpose centred Call Centre at Cheshire Lines and agile officer working enables paperless activity in dealing with matters from beginning to end. The Streetscene finder is on www.wirral.gov.uk or 0151-606-22004.

10.15 MVM 2020

MVM is a search tool for planning and development use and acts to automate land searches. This allows for long term planning information rather than events and ad hoc road closures.

There is a need to ensure constant updates are made to the system and consider introducing new procedures to ensure accurate up to date project information is passed to the MVM updater to be loaded onto the system.

This system will shortly be updating to “M3” which remains essentially the same as existing MVM but with better links to improve sharing of information and cross-working.

10.16 Council’s Web Site

For more information please visit www.wirral.gov.uk.

11.0 THE FUTURE

11.1 Regeneration

The scale of regeneration in Wirral now and in the future presents an opportunity for Wirral to review how it is managing traffic on its roads.

As well as co-ordinating what is happening on our roads and managing existing traffic through the infrastructure we have introduced or are proposing to introduce, we are also trying to effect a culture change in people in how they make their transport choices. There are various documents detailing how we plan to achieve this, including our LTP and this document.

We do recognise though that in reducing congestion and minimising delay on our roads, a culture change in the way we work and live our ways be needed beyond just those activities that directly affect the highway. The improvements in technology have meant the growth of home or tele-working resulting in less people travelling on our roads. This type of behavioural change is likely to increase in the future, however, it is likely to be more than offset against increased car usage for leisure purposes and short journeys.

It is recognised that more innovative changes may be explored in the future to achieve what we want to. It is well known that the school run accounts for about a fifth of traffic on our roads in peak hours. Much in the same way flexible working means that the times that workers go to and leave work are staggered; staggering school times may improve conditions during peak times. Of course, we are trying to encourage modal shift away from the private car on the school runs.

The rate of regeneration in Wirral is unprecedented and what is working now on the highway may be not appropriate in a few years time. It is for this reason that we need to have regular reviews not only of our network but how we are doing things, ranging from signs and road markings to re-engineering processes. This is where monitoring is important to firstly establish a base-line and then to monitor how well we are doing, what has gone well and what hasn't.

It is clear that Wirral management of the network will need to further strengthen what are good relations with our partners as well as forging new ones.

Of particular note are plans under:

- HMRI
- Peel Holdings Ltd
- Neptune
- Birkenhead Town Centre Development

The clear aim of all of this is to reduce congestion and delays thereby keeping all traffic, not just motorised vehicles, moving on our roads. If we don't succeed then it will not be acceptable to those people that use our network and may even detrimentally affect future economic growth. The challenge will be to ensure that the TMA and NMD don't compete with all the other aspirations we have, such as reducing the number of people killed or injured on our roads, but that they all sit seamlessly together.

There will be issues as we strive to discharge our duties under the TMA. This includes resources, both financial and staffing, that we will have to address. This applies just as equally to all of our partners.

11.2 Transport Innovation Fund (TIF)

Despite an unsuccessful bid to the Government for Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) Pump Priming money in 2006, the Merseyside LTP partners continue to explore how the predicted growth in traffic, forecast as a consequence of increased economic activity, could be effectively managed in the future.

A key aspect of this work is the development of a strategic transport model that will predict where congestion will occur and when it will start to affect the economic growth of Merseyside, and enable different demand management measures to be tested.

A key element of TIF is the introduction of some form of congestion charging. Currently, there is no political support for the introduction of such in Merseyside.

Any future bid for TIF will be determined once the “Planning for the Future” project has been completed.

11.3 Road User Charging

The issue of road user charging is very much a contentious one. Whilst the congestion reducing benefits of road user charging have been cited as a success, it is too early to be able to state whether such a measure would be appropriate for Wirral.

As stated in Section 11.2, the feasibility of road user charging will be assessed as part of the Merseyside “Planning for the Future” project.

11.4 Monitoring and Managing Functions to meet National Indicators

A key aspect of future congestion management will be getting support from stakeholders, particularly local businesses. To this end, it is proposed to develop an effective communications strategy to engage stakeholders in the exploration of future economic growth and transport scenarios, including the potential role that road user charging could have.

Due to the timescales involved, it is highly unlikely that such a scheme would be proposed during the LTP2 period.

12.0 ACTION PLAN

Timescale

Short - Up to one year
Medium - Up to three years
Long - Three years and beyond current LTP period

The Network			
Action	**Aim**	**Timescale**	**Progress**
Review Road Classification	Review A and B roads across the Borough to ensure that they are still appropriate for their classification	Short	Draft review is under consideration.
Review Road Hierarchy	Review road hierarchy for Wirral's roads based on level of use and function	Short	Road hierarchy has been established within the LTP. Subject to the agreement of the review of road classifications, the need for a further review may be appropriate before this hierarchy can be realised within projects.
Review traffic sensitive roads	Review the network of traffic sensitive roads, so they remain appropriate for current conditions	Short	Review of traffic sensitive roads to take place once road classification review concluded.
Review traffic regulation orders	Review existing traffic regulation orders to ensure that they are still relevant and amend/remove those that are out-dated	Short to Long	On-going.
Review speed limits	Ensure that speed limits are seen to be consistent and sensible to the public as well as ensuring that the correct limit is in place for the road type and usage	Short to Long	Study will be commissioned in 2008/09. The conclusion of study to be undertaken by 2011, in keeping with the DfT;s deadline.
Primary Direction Signing/Static and JMS	Review Master Signing Plan for Borough to provide clear direction information to drivers so that they can reach their intended destination in the quickest time, taking into account the new developments coming on line	Short to Medium	On-going.
Cycle Network	Develop Wallasey District Cycle Network and implementation programme	Short	On-going.
Other signs and markings	Review signs and road markings to ensure that they are clear, concise, consistent and fit for purpose	Short to Medium	On-going. A strategy is to be developed on how this could be undertaken within existing resources. It is likely that this will concentrate on the major routes, i.e. A and B classified roads, with other minor roads being assessed when resources allow. There is also a necessity to evaluate sites which have a record of personal injury.

Traffic signals	Review signal timings for traffic signalised junctions across the Borough to ensure that they are operating at optimum levels	Short to Medium	A study will be instigated in 2008 to develop a strategy to systematically review signal timings.
Freight routes	Review and development of freight route to guide traffic to relevant destinations	Short	On-going
Person Delay Indicator route	Develop and implement interventions for the routes to reduce and manage congestion	Short to Medium	The Congestion Target Delivery Plan sets out the key issues and proposed interventions for Wirral's congestion corridor. This will require regular monitoring and review.
Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)	Development and adoption of strategies to manage and maintain our transport and highway assets	Short	A TAMP is currently being developed for adoption in 2008.
Investigate the feasibility of a GIS portal to access details of all works and events on the highway network	Provide a "One Stop Shop" whereby both internal and external interests can access up to date meaningful information to assist in co-ordination and forward planning	Short to Long	Exercise underway to identify sources of information across the Council for activities on the highway network.
Investigate feasibility of IT system to disseminate required information	Ensure that all meaningful information held by ourselves and other agencies is collated and made easily available to those that need it	Short to Long	An initial study will be commissioned in 2008 to identify whether there are already suitable IT platforms available or whether a bespoke one is needed.
Implement Car Park Guidance System	Implement variable message and fixed signs to guide drivers to available car parking spaces within Birkenhead Centre car parks	Short	Installation of car park signage will complement regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre by Castlewood Development.
Communicate Network Management Plan across Council and all stakeholders	Ensure that all relevant people are aware of the TMA and NMD, and of the need to successfully discharge our duties. This will ensure that existing working practices will be reviewed in light of our NMD duty, i.e. timing of maintenance routines, meeting times and ensuring locations of those meetings have accessible transport links	Short	On-going.

Provision of travel information	Provide a portal that will allow commuters to make informed choices about their journeys, whether it is by car, walking, cycling, bus, train or ferry. This will complement the travel information already provided by Merseytravel. It is also the aim to provide up to date reliable information on road works and events on the highway network. The aim of this will be to facilitate reliable journey times for commuters and link into the Smarter Choices initiative championed in our LTP.	Short to Medium	Merseytravel already have a portal providing travel information for public transport. We will work with Merseytravel to provide up to date reliable information utilising the infrastructure currently being implemented, i.e. ANPR and CCTV cameras.
Traffic Managers Group	Share best practice	On-going	A Traffic Managers Group has been established for the Merseyside area.
Share Wirral's Network Management Plan with our partners and neighbours, as well as the North West Traffic Managers Group and the other interested parties	To enable that the development of network management plans by our neighbours and partners fit seamlessly and is consistent with our own approach	Short	Our Network Management Plan is to be made available through all avenues, and will be placed on our website.

Enforcement			
Action	**Aim**	**Timescale**	**Progress**
Bus Lane enforcement	To consider the civil enforcement of bus lanes within Wirral	Short to Medium	A feasibility study is to be undertaken to look at the feasibility of enforcement bus lanes within Wirral.
Other moving offences	Undertake feasibility study on the level of resources required to undertake civil enforcement of moving offences allowable under Part 6 of the TMA.	Short to Medium	Dependent on Government legislation through Part 6 of the TMA.
Discussions to set up multi-agency enforcement team	To create a team involving various agencies to target enforcement at priority areas and to be able to react to unplanned events on the highway network	Short to Long	Instigated in 2007 the feasibility of setting up such a team is underway under the Department's Enforcement Plan.
Developer's Manual	Development and adoption of Developer's Manual for commercial developers, planning consultants, community and environmental groups, householders and small entrepreneurs as well as local authority planners and designers. This Manual is intended to act as a "one stop" source of information from the "cradle to the grave" for planning applications	Short to Medium	On-going, led by the Planning Section. Transport and landuse SPD to act as best practice prior to formal adoption in 2009.
Project Management	Develop procedures and processes to ensure that the aims of the TMA are considered in all projects, including buildability, affecting the highway network	Short	On-going.
Highway works	Review NMAG to ensure that all works are co-ordinated effectively on traffic sensitive routes. Develop a co-ordination process for all highway works for the whole network. Develop process to co-ordinate highway works with events taking place on the network	Short to Medium	On-going. Regular meetings commenced in 2007 and meetings are scheduled for every 6 weeks.
Place Traffic Manager on all consultee lists	Place the Traffic Manager as an essential consultee for all planned works and activities on the highway network, including development plans and strategies.	Short	It is the intention that this will be effective in 2008 and link in with NMAG.

Monitoring			
Action	**Aim**	**Timescale**	**Progress**
Review BVPI 100	Review of the Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI 100) that measures the number of days temporary traffic controls or road closures are in place on traffic sensitive streets, to ensure there is consistency amongst the partners in the way it is being measured and to see whether it is feasible to expand the monitoring of these controls and closures to include statutory undertakers works.	Short	On-going.
Develop new performance indicators	Ensure that the new initiatives and strategies that we introduce are working as well as we want them to.	Short to Medium	On-going. Indicators have been set for our Person Delay Indicator routes. Further indicators will be developed as appropriate.
BVPI 165	Ensure all new lowered kerb crossings for pedestrians are implemented to correct criteria	Short	On-going. Of great assistance in the accessibility for disabled persons.
NI 47 and 48 (LAA targets)	To achieve higher quartile rating than that presently recorded	Short to Medium	To co-ordinate all activity so as to have a positive effect on the personal injury accident record for users of the highway network.
Congestion monitoring	Undertake journey time surveys/traffic modelling on principal routes and in other strategic areas, to provide a basis for a model to measure congestion. Utilise CCTV etc to monitor congestion events	Short to Medium	Our Person Delay Indicator has been established. Further work will be undertaken to identify other congestion hotspots throughout the Borough.

Governance / Organisation			
Action	**Aim**	**Timescale**	**Progress**
Executive Member for Streetscene to act as TMA Champion	To ensure widespread support and awareness of the TMA and NMD at a senior level	Short	The implications of the TMA are to be communicated to senior officers across the Council Further awareness initiatives will be on-going.
Contingency Plans	Develop plans to deal with unplanned events that affect the highway network.	Short to Medium	Wirral already has contingency plans to deal with unplanned events with the Emergency Plan and undertakes stringent risk assessment

13.0 Traffic Managers for the Merseyside Local Authorities

Contact Details

Liverpool City Council

Steve Holcroft
Highways Manager
Highways Management
Regeneration
Municipal Buildings
Dale Street
Liverpool L2 2DH

Tel: 0151-233-3000

highways.management@liverpool.gov.uk

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Vic Turner
Head of Transportation & Traffic Services
Department of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Yorkon Building
P O Box 26
Archway Road
Huyton
Merseyside L36 9FB

Tel: 0151-443-2228

vic.turner@knowsley.gov.uk

St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council

Rory Lingham
Assistant Director (Engineering)
Engineering
Wesley House
Corporation Street
St Helens WA10 1HF

Tel: 01744-456000

contactcentre@sthelens.gov.uk

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council

Stuart Waldron
Technical Services Director
Sefton MBC
Balliol House
Bootle
Merseyside L20 3NJ

Tel: 0151-934-4195

stuart.waldron@technical.sefton.gov.uk

Wirral Borough Council

Mark Smith
Head of Streetscene
Technical Services Department
Wirral Borough Council
Cheshire Lines Building
Canning Street
Birkenhead
Wirral CH41 1ND

Tel: 0151-606-2004

trafficmanager@wirral.gov.uk

14.0 Merseyside Traffic Managers' Group

Terms of Reference

1. Oversee the implementation of the Traffic Management Act (the "Act") across Merseyside and co-ordinate input on progressing the Act, and the Network Management Duty (the "Duty") in particular, into the Local Transport Plan/Annual Progress Report process.

2. To review, propose and co-ordinate arrangements for the management of local road networks, the objective being to secure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic within Merseyside and to facilitate the safe and expeditious movement of traffic from and on to neighbouring authority networks. This will have regard to the practicability and other obligations, policies and objectives of the constituent local authorities. Traffic includes all road users: pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorised vehicles, whether engaged in the transport of goods or people.

3. To co-ordinate arrangements for making the best use of existing road space for the benefit of all road users and to consider actions that could be taken to make more efficient use of the network, or that would avoid, eliminate or reduce congestion or disruption and where possible, improve journey reliability.

4. To co-ordinate arrangements for controlling the occupation of the highway by Street and Road Works, special/planned events and other obstructions/incursions that may interfere with the safe and free flow of traffic giving due account to the statutory rights and reasonable demands of those parties needing to enter upon the highway or maintain and upgrade equipment within it.

5. To draft, review and/or determine specific policies, procedures, targets and objectives for improving traffic movement on local road networks with due recognition and consideration being given to the priorities of the National Street Works Highways Group (NSWHG) and the Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee (HAUC). To agree proposals for monitoring the effectiveness of arrangements and actions established to meet the requirements of the Act and the Duty.

6. To review the work and practices of other local traffic authorities in responding to the Act and to implement best practice as appropriate.

7. To establish and maintain working relationships with Traffic Managers in other authorities, the Highways Agency, Government Office North West and with other partners and stakeholders including the emergency services, utilities and bus operators who would have an interest in or be affected by the Act or the Duty.

8. To review all strategies and planning designed to meet requirements of both the Act and Duty to determine their consistency with wider local, regional and national policies and guidance (including Codes of Practice and Best Value Performance Indicators).

APPENDIX B

Criteria for Designation as a Traffic Sensitive Road

(a) at any time, the estimated traffic flow is greater than 500 vehicles per hour per lane of carriageway, disregarding bus or cycle lanes;

(b) it is a single carriageway two-way road, the carriageway of which is less than 6.5 metres wide, having a traffic flow or not less than 600 vehicles per hour;

(c) it falls within an area covered by an order in respect of congestion charges;

(d) is one of which more than 25% of the traffic flow consists of heavy commercial vehicles;

(e) is one on which the traffic flow includes more than eighty buses per hour;

(f) is designated by the local highway authority, as part of its winter maintenance programme, as one requiring the treatment of any part of it with salt or other chemicals when low temperatures are expected to prevent the formation of ice;

(g) is within 100 metres of a critical signalised junction or a critical gyratory or roundabout system;

(h) has a pedestrian traffic flow of at least 1,300 people per hour, per metre width of footway;

(i) is on a tourist route or within an area where international, national or significant major events take place;

(j) is classified an A or B road;

(k) consists of no more than 100 metres of a side street that has a junction with an existing traffic-sensitive street, which was not designated as such solely by virtue of this sub-paragraph.

16.0 GLOSSARY

ANPR	=	Automatic Number Plate Recognition
CCMS	=	City Centre Movement Strategy
CCTV	=	Close Circuit Television
CEO	=	Civil Enforcement Officer
COMET	=	Central Office Management
COPPT	=	Computerised Operation and Processing Parking Tickets
CPE	=	Civil Parking Enforcement
DDA	=	Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
DfT	=	Department for Transport
DPE	=	Decriminalised Parking Enforcement
EMS	=	Enhanced Message System
GIS	=	Geographical Information System
HAMP	=	Highways Asset Management Plan
HAUC	=	Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee
ICM	=	Integrated Corridor Management
ITS	=	Intelligent Transport Systems
KSI	=	Killed or Seriously Injured
LTP	=	Local Transport Plan
MVM	=	Multi-tasking Virtual Machine / M3 = New Version
NLSAG	=	Non-Licensed Safety Advisory Group
NMAT	=	Network Management Approval Team
NMD	=	Network Management Duty
NRSWA	=	New Roads and Street Works Act (1991)
QBCs	=	Quality Bus Corridors
QMISS	=	Quantified Motorway Information Supply System
SAG	=	Safety Advisory Group
SCOOT	=	Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique
SPD	=	Supplementary Planning Document
SVD	=	Selective Vehicle Detection
TCSU	=	Traffic Control Signal Unit
TMA	=	Traffic Management Act (2004)
TTROs	=	Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders
UTC	=	Urban Traffic Control
UTMS	=	Urban Traffic Management and Control
VMS	=	Variable Message Systems