

Appendix 3: Detailed responses from partners

Name	Role / Organisation	Response Reference
John Robinson	Chairman, Wirral Investment Network	A1
Peter Naylor	Co-Chair, WHCC	A2
Bruce Lister	Regeneration Manager, Lovell Partnerships Limited	A3
Louise Reece Jones	Co-Chair, Wirral Family Forum	A4
Neil Dutton	Development Manager, Federation of Small Businesses	A5
Kathy Doran & colleagues	NHS Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral	A6
Neil Scales	Chief Executive & Director General, Merseytravel	A7
Chris Allen	Chief Executive, Forum Housing	A8
Kathy Dumbell	Riverside Housing	A9
	Older People's Parliament	A10
Pauline Cocker	Trustee, Wirral Change	A11
Bob Mottram	Wirral Investment Network	A12
Ian Campbell		A13
Karen Livesey	Business Development Manager, VCAW	A14
Stephen Johnson		A15
Mary Quigg	Arena Housing	A16

Response A1 – John Robinson, Wirral Investment Network

Thank you for the opportunity to review Wirral Council's Draft Corporate Plan.

Having read through the draft I feel it is very detailed and very comprehensive and I do not have any additional comments to make.

I wish you and the Council good luck in its implementation.

Regards

John Robinson
Chairman
Wirral Investment Network

Response A2 – Peter Naylor, Co-Chair WHCC

Hi Jim
Many thanks for this – It all seems very sensible and appropriate.

Kind regards
Pete
Co-Chair WHCC

Response A3 – Bruce Lister, Lovell Partnership Limited

I have reviewed the Council's draft Corporate Plan and there is not much I could add or would wish to change. Clearly, as one of the Council's preferred housebuilder/developer partners, there is much we can do to help deliver this Plan; particularly in respect of good quality, affordable homes, carbon reduction and obviously employment, training and skills - all of which we are already actively engaged with on the Wirral.

Kind regards.

Bruce

Bruce Lister
Regeneration Manager
Lovell Partnerships Limited,

Response A4 – Louise Reece Jones, Co-Chair – Wirral Family Forum

Overall the plan looks good but as a carer and co chair of the Wirral family forum and also an exec member of the Wirral carer's association it is disappointing that carer's have not been mentioned in their own right. We would like Wirral council to make a commitment to Wirral carer's to ensure carer's needs are assessed and identified and that carer's have a voice for them selves not just about the person they care for.

We would further more request that Wirral council make a commitment to the Wirral family forum for parent carer's and the Wirral carer's association for carer's. We have worked hard at representing carer's throughout the Wirral on many different issues and also playing an important role commissioning services for children with disabilities. We strive to continue to work in partnership and therefore should feature of the corporate plan Thank you for your time

Best wish's
Louise Reecejones
Co-chair the Wirral family forum
Chair small steps parental support.

Response A5 – Neil Dutton, Federation of Small Businesses

6 January 2012

James D Wilkie
Chief Executive
Town Hall
Brighton Street
Wallasey
Wirral
Merseyside CH44 8ED

Dear Jim,

Draft Corporate Plan

All best wishes for New Year, I hope you had a great Christmas.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the draft Corporate Plan.

The FSB broadly welcomes the corporate plan and is pleased to see the continuing commitment to business support and job creation.

We feel strongly that the various initiatives put in place since the start of the downturn, such as The Think Big Investment Fund, The Business Investment Grant and The Wirral Apprentice are to be applauded, and we have long been fully supportive of the work of the Invest Wirral team. We look forward to continuing our strong and important relationship with the Council and urge the Council to ensure the services and initiatives currently in place continue to be fully resourced to allow Wirral businesses to grow, employ and prosper.

If we were to make one suggestion, we would welcome inclusion in the Plan of a commitment to awarding contracts for council services and goods to Wirral businesses.

Thanks once again for the opportunity to respond.

Kind regards,



Neil Dutton
Development Manager, Federation of Small Businesses

Response A6 – Kathy Doran and colleagues, NHS

In the context of partnership working, it would be good to see some direct reference to the NHS Operational Framework priorities. There is also no mention of the JSN Assessment and Plan which has to be agreed towards the end of the summer..

As dementia (sufferers and carers) is a major focus in the OF, some specific recognition of this might be appropriate.

Best wishes
Gillian

Personally I think there is a missed opportunity in the Health and Well-being section on p 11 to reference the Council's new responsibilities in respect of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the key partnership which needs to be established with CCGs as well as public health

best wishes

Kathy Doran
Chief Executive

NHS Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral

Response A7 – Neil Scales, Merseytravel



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Your Ref:
Our Ref: NS/495/CAP*

Tel DL: 0151-330 1101
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Date: 05 January 2012

Jim Wilkie
Chief Executive
Wirral Council

By email: jimwilkie@wirral.gov.uk

Dear *Jim*

Wirral Corporate Plan

Thank you for your email of 22nd December with regards to your *draft* Corporate Plan.

I would broadly support the aims of the plan, and welcome the references to access to employment and skills but would suggest that the following would reinforce the importance of good transport provision:-

- *Foreword (page 5)*
In respect of the paragraph referencing poverty, I would add that poor access to opportunities; fresh food and services are also contributors to well-being.
- *The destination (page 7)*
"A thriving society, with plentiful accessible employment opportunities..."
- *Health and Wellbeing (page 11)*
I would suggest it would help to mention the pilot cycle scheme, and the linkages to road safety.
- *Child Poverty (page 11)*
An additional bullet – "We will work with transport partners to ensure that poor transport choices do not prevent people from accessing the services and opportunities they need".
- *Neighbourhood Plans (page 12)*
This section needs a direct reference to the third Merseyside Local Transport Plan, and other work around the LDF for identifying the transport needs of local communities.

Cont/.....



Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority and Passenger Transport Executive
Chief Executive & Director General - Neil Scales
Director of Resources - Jim Barclay • Director of Corporate Development - Liz Chandler
Director of Customer Services - Frank Rogers • Director of Integrated Transport - Alan Stilwell



- *Your economy – our goals (page 15)*
I welcome the inclusion of the requirement for the provision of sustainable transport, but would add that it should also be affordable and accessible. I would also suggest that where possible, the aim should be to create opportunities where transport provision is already adequate.
- *Your family (Adults) – our goals (page 19)*
A link to independent travel training would be appropriate, given that you (Wirral) have already invested much time in this area.

I hope that these comments are of use to you and should you need any clarification, please let me know.

In the meantime, all the very best for 2012, I am sure it is going to prove a challenging year.

Regards,

Yours sincerely



Neil Scales
Chief Executive & Director General

Response A8, Chris Allen, Forum Housing



caa-l beed-120105-aj.let

5th January 2012

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Dear Lucy

Re: Corporate Plan

Here are my comments on the above.

I think the layout is clear; the content is really positive and forward looking.

Specific Positives for me from the Leader of the Council's Foreword

(page 5)

We have a unique opportunity to make that change. The Public Health role is moving from the Health Service to Local Authorities which will allow us to work very closely together, using all our joint facilities and infrastructure, to tackle some of the most challenging problems which mean that gap stubbornly resists any attempt to narrow it.

(page 5/6)

But this is something we all have to agree on. Preventing things happening is usually not visible. If we are successful, and there are no problems to point at, people may well ask what we are spending the tax payers money on. If we change our priorities to release more money into early detection and prevention activities, there may be other areas that have to manage on less than before, which won't be popular.



Patron: Right Reverend Keith Sinclair, Bishop of Birkenhead

Chairman: Mr. C. Diaké

Chief Executive: Mrs. C.A. Allen

Birkenhead Forum Housing Association Ltd. A Charity incorporated as an Industrial and Provident Society under the reference number 19269R.
Registered with the Tenant Services Authority / TSA, the Regulator of Social Housing - L1289. Affiliated to NHF.
Registered office: 2nd Floor 84 Market Street, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 5HB
Members of: Housing Ombudsman Service Social Housing Pension Scheme



2.

(page 6)

We will need to be absolutely clear what we are doing, and why, and we will need real, hard evidence to back up what we are doing. No more decisions based just on anecdotes! If we don't have the evidence, then we will need to set up pilot schemes which can be properly analysed and evaluated first, before we move into a larger arena.

(page 6)

This does not apply only to new initiatives. We have been criticised by the District Auditor for taking decisions to let contracts without having sufficient detailed information and costings in place about our own activities to allow us to prove that an external contract will provide better value for money. From now on we will make sure that the right information is collected and evaluated on all the Council services so we truly demonstrate we are providing value for money for the Council Tax Payer. At a time when resources are limited this is more important than ever.

(page 6)

Well right now everyone involved in driving Council activities forward is being put through the equivalent of an advanced driving course. The formal name is a Corporate Governance Review. The aim is to make sure that the basic rules and procedures which govern the way the Council runs, (a kind of Local Authority Highway Code), are brought up to date, and are understood and followed by everyone. That bad habits which have become standard over a period of time are eradicated and replaced with good habits, and that the whole process eventually becomes as automatic to staff and councillors as changing gears becomes to an experienced driver.

General Observations

I wouldn't go so far as to say the bullet points and tables are a wish list as I do believe the journey mapped out is one the Council genuinely want to embark on but...

3.

There is nothing in the 'How', where are the specifics? Do they exist in other supplementary documents within the Council? I would need to be assured of this before 'signing off' my support for the Corporate Plan. Is there a Performance Management Framework that picks up the goals and monitors delivery of them? Who else apart from Council staff can be involved in this?

In all the positive script written, especially for example 'Wirral is now amongst the best in the country for the numbers of eligible people using personal budgets.....' does the Council have real evidence of outcomes rather than inputs to prove these claims? My point is that we can all say 100 people are signed up but what are they getting that is different?

In some of the tables specific use is made of different sectors e.g. Voluntary, Community Faith/Independent when referring to actions to be taken. I think that where one sector is named it might just as easily be applied to the other as well and vice versa. Please will you look at this?

'High quality, cost effective', is frequently mentioned and I'm sure everyone would agree with this but a note of caution, sometimes there are tensions between quality and cost and if cost is a deciding factor in commissioning that may be to the detriment of quality.

The document is light on the words 'consultation' and 'collaboration', however you may believe this is implied. If these words were more liberally used throughout the document, I would be more content that this was not the Council doing things in isolation.

Specific Observations

1. I would have liked to have seen mention of the Director of Public Health role in the script, particularly the advice, expertise and knowledge held which would be called on and fully utilised.
2. I would have liked to have seen mention of how internal Council services 'bidding' to be commissioned included in their bids full cost recovery in order not to have an advantage over other non Council bidders.

4.

3. I don't understand (page 12), Investment Strategy, first bullet point in respect of 'increasing the competitiveness of our people, places and businesses', is this jargon? Can you say it more simply?

4. (page 16) Children and Young People sixth bullet point. In respect of 16-18 year old NEETS, how aware is Wirral Borough Council of the current contract negotiations in respect of the Connexions service? Given that Halton lead the negotiations on a Liverpool City region basis. Can Wirral Borough Council ensure that what they wish to see delivered to meet the Corporate Plan objectives are resourced?

Lucy these are my personal (?hard-hitting!) reflections and observations. I would be pleased to discuss them further if required. I would also be pleased to be part of a Community Task Force which helped the Council to 'keep on course'!

Kind regards



Chris Allen
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Response A9 – Kathy Dumbell, Riverside Housing

We have read through the Corporate Plan and found objectives to be clear with an emphasis on current delivery for which we fully support.

Kind regards

Kathy

Response A10 – Older People’s Parliament

Response of Wirral Older People’s Parliament to the council’s draft Corporate Plan.

The aspirations voiced in the introductory letter of the Leader, Steve Foulkes, and the Vision of the council cannot be challenged. The Journey, in order to move towards achieving the vision is where doubts begin to arise. How can these laudable aims begin to be realised, when they have failed to be implemented systematically in the past? The existing council structures drew serious criticism from the CQC and the Klonowski Report, so we cannot rely on the old systems to implement the changes needed. What has changed, apart from the loss of a quarter of the workforce? We – the public – need to know, in order that we can have confidence in the future.

Part of the journey is stated as listening to local residents and communities, and one of the stated values is welcoming public involvement. Our response is to suggest that all council departments and policy working groups should automatically have residents involved. If the ideas of the public were incorporated from the start of a discussion, some of the serious problems of the past would be avoided. Examples which spring to mind are the asset reviews and the future of many in-house services. If resident involvement were to be “structured into the council” our organisation, which has hundreds of older residents with a wealth of experience and wisdom, (as well as time and energy) could recruit and train individuals to step into these roles. We recall the formation of the Task Forces in 2010 - groups of informed mainly lay people, often from third sector organisations. Variants of this idea could become part of the structure of the council. On the same theme of public involvement, we are very concerned that Area Forums are apparently being discontinued. At their best, these have been an excellent forum for involvement.

We are somewhat concerned that the “Peer Review”, apparently by another council, would in reality be part of a “bureaucratic brotherhood” or a

“concerned helpmate”. We need to know that what the council is implementing is working towards all the stated objectives in a way that provides best value for money for residents.

Members raised a number of specific issues in discussing the draft corporate plan; many of these may relate more directly to the departmental plans that will develop from it. However, as indicated above, we believe that there is little or no opportunity to comment in this way about these more detailed and specific plans and we have, therefore, taken this welcome opportunity to express our views on these issues here.

1. We are pleased with the reference to a “learning society” and older adults retraining or improving qualifications. What about people who want to learn something new without seeking a formal qualification? Fees for courses are usually out of reach of a pensioner.
2. We are concerned about safeguarding vulnerable adults. We feel there is a need for more lay input here, and a need for a publicly available report at least twice a year, about the work of the Safeguarding Board and the situation in the Wirral. (We assume that this also needs doing in the field of child abuse)
3. There are some excellent aims for improving services to the vulnerable and their “Carers”. Could we see a specific target of doubling the number of carer’s assessments over the three years of the plan?
4. There is too little reference to “Dignity” in the way all individuals, particularly the vulnerable, are treated. We would like this concept to be totally integrated within every council department at every level. Better involvement with the public would assist this.
5. We would particularly ask that the newly arrived Director of Adult Social Services leads the council in its determination to communicate better with residents. Over the five years of the existence of the Older People’s Parliament, we have worked with three Directors of DASS, and they have all been approachable. (Much more so than other departmental heads!) We hope that our new Director can lead his

colleagues in the concept of incorporating the voice of users and others in the policy making.

6. We note that you intend to ensure that services commissioned from the third sector are value for money and appropriately targeted. In the past we have many first hand accounts of unthinking year-on-year funding without monitoring or reassessment of need. How do you plan to do this with a smaller workforce and more out-sourced services?
7. The Neighbourhood plans focus a lot on helping people feel safe, and on reducing antisocial behaviour. Can we repeat our suggestion to Frank Field, that the existing, under-funded and under-staffed Homewatch scheme could be expanded to have the council working closely with the police force and each and every small neighbourhood in the borough to improve community safety and well-being.
8. A major plank of the care plan for adults is the wish to provide every possible help and support for people to regain independence. This ideal is not questioned. However, reports suggest that the HARTS service, and in recent months the STAR service which has replaced it is too rigid. The likely explanation is that staff training does not encourage sufficient flexibility and common sense. (eg users are regularly told by staff that such an action is not permitted for staff, and the user MUST perform the task himself. There appears to be no humanity or recognition that each client is at a different stage of recovery). Perhaps we are making a plea for more training, and more encouragement of initiative and common sense.
9. The ideas of no 8 above can be extended to all areas of direct service or commissioned service. How often do we see jobs – road maintenance, bin emptying, construction, gardening slowed down by ridiculous demarcation rules.

January 11th 2012.

Response A11 – Pauline Cocker, Wirral Change

We agree that we want a healthy and prosperous Wirral where the well being of every resident matters. Cllr Steve Foulkes mentions “ Prevention is better than cure that is the journey---“this can be seen as a Value for Money option as it is much more costly to pick up the pieces of unsafe neighbourhoods.

THE DESTINATION OUR VISION FOR WIRRAL is a good opportunity to publicise Wirral’s commitment to Equality, Diversity and Respect. Wirral’s commitment to recording all Hate Crimes and Incidents with their partners in the Hate MARAC (soon to be launched) and the effect that these can have on residents” living safely in their area” Wirral Change can work in partnership with WBC and other Organisations in EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING, CARING AND STRESS FREE LIVES.

THE JOURNEY under ASB include Hate Crimes and Incidents. Evidence is recorded on IAMF and can be verified by talking to Police CYPD and Community Safety Team as well as other partners.

Wirral Change can work in partnership with WBC and other organisations in PUBLIC HEALTH , HEALTH AND WELL BEING (Health Inequalities in Children and Young People) RESIDENT AND COMMUNITIES PRIORITIES AND ASB AND HATE CRIME AND INCIDENTS.

TRAVELLING SAFELY under “ set up a Council Policy Unit” perhaps representatives from all Diversity strands should be consulted on all policies. It could also be seen to be Best Practice in The Equality and Diversity Strategy.

Wirral Change can work in partnership with WBC and other organizations with this.
OUR VALUES

Wirral Change can work in partnership with WBC and other organizations to help with “ BEST INTEREST OF RESIDENTS, SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT, PUBLIC INVOLVMENT, EFFECTIVE CONSULTATION AND REACHING MARGINALISED AND VULNERABLE GROUPS”

HEALTH AND WELL BEING under HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES - - Looking at the impact of Hate Crimes and Incidents, particularly in schools , on the Mental health of victims who are often very isolated in their schools.

Wirral Change can work in partnership with WBC and other organizations with this.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS----under “ we will listen to what local residents and communities --- “ We suggest an additional forum to the Area Forums--- An Equality and Diversity Forum with a budget, top sliced from all the Area Forums . All the representatives and residents of all the Diversity strands could come together and decide how they want the funding to be spent. This will re balance the in equalities that currently exist in Area Forum funding and could be seen as Best Practice.

Wirral Change can work in partnership with WBC and other organizations with this.
INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Wirral Change can work in partnership with WBC and other organizations in getting BME and other marginalised and disadvantaged residents into employment (we have a good track record in this and have usually exceeded our targets). Encourage these residents into Social Enterprises therefore increasing the number of BME businesses in Wirral

YOUR ECONOMY WBC recognizing and supporting local BME businesses and the part they play in the local economy. Supporting victims of Hate crime and incidents that regularly occur in this sector.

YOUR FAMILY: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE. Under “ We promise to deliver services to give children best possible start in life”---- Early Intervention Grant, through Birkenhead Sure Start, could provide Specialist Wirral wide nursery provision(already free to parents)to all BME pre school children to ensure that they could speak and understand English and therefore ensuring that they were “school ready”.This will prevent the need for limited English Lanuage support to individual pupils when they start school.Look at providing through ,Wirral Change a “ Homework Club” for children and parents(particularly those with no or very limited English). Support school victims of Hate Crimes and Incidents to prevent Mental Health problems in later life.All these measures could be seen as Best Practice in Equality and Diversity.

Wirral Change in partnership with WBC and other organizations can put these ideas into practice.

YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD; Under----“ reducing ASB and ensuring that people feel safe in their neighbourhoods --“-- Hate Crime and Hate incidents under all the diversity strands need to be taken more seriously. Wherever the victims are moved to in the Borough they are still likely to suffer from these distressing occurrences. If we are serious about residents “ feeling safe” we must all work together , with WBC taking the lead and being a Borough that positively promotes Equality, Diversity and Respect.

YOUR COUNCIL ; Under----“ Well skilled workforce”-----There should be a commitment to ensure the workforce reflects the community in all the Diversity strands with a clear strategy as to how this will be implemented.There also needs to be a system where Councillors could consult all the groups that represent the Diversity strands, in order for them to understand what it is like to be “different” . perhaps the Council can take up the old Community Relations mantra of “Different but Equal”!Under ---- “Council services fairly and transparently”---- Developing, consulting on and implementing the Council’s Equality Scheme, must be more meaning ful to all those groups that share protected characteristics in order to truly shape services and to be part of the monitoring process. Again this could be seen to be Best Practice in Equality and Diversity.

Wirral Change in partnership with WBC and other organizations can put these ideas into practice.

After the recent sentencing of two of the people responsible for the Racist murder of Stephen Lawrence the Prime Minister is reported as saying that Racism still exists in this country, let Wirral be a beacon in making Equality and Diversity and Respect part of it’s Corporate Plan.

Wirral Change is willing to meet with your representatives to discuss these issues further.

Response A12 – Bob Mottram, Wirral Investment Network

jim

i don't really recognise this as a corporate plan - its more of a series of slogans and exhortations grouped together in a reasonably coherent fashion. tellingly there are no numbers apart from dates, ages and page numbers!

it would not pass muster within a corporate environment and fails to follow the traditional model of 'where are we now, where do we want to be and how do we get there'.

given the proper regard for peer review i suggest that you look at the tameside version which is a much more competent piece of work in every way - content and presentation.

see <http://www.tameside.gov.uk/corporateplan>

where part one does at least quantify some of the strategic objectives and part 2 covers 'where we are now' in an open fashion.

hope this helps

best regards

bob

Response A13 – Ian Campbell

Dear Mr Wilkie,

I am responding with comments on Wirral Council's draft Corporate Plan.

I am impressed by the scope of the Plan and very pleased to see the emphasis on public health, on the need to reduce health inequalities, and on the basing of decisions on clear evidence.

I would like to suggest that the draft Plan is amended in order to adopt the recommendations contained in the document "Take action on active travel" which was written by the Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH), and endorsed by 110 other organisations (see http://www.adph.org.uk/files/ourwork/policies/Take_action_on_active_travel_2010.pdf). The main message of this is

"We call on ministers, civil servants, local authorities and all involved to make a big shift now: invest heavily in walking and cycling, and recreate an environment where children can play in the street and adults lead an active life" (page 2).

In particular, I would suggest the following changes to the draft Plan.

(1) Page 7, headed "Our Vision for Wirral": I suggest adding a further bullet point:

"A healthy society where daily physical activity is the norm, and where children and adults can walk or cycle safely to schools, to work and to reach leisure activities."

(2) Page 11, headed "Health and Wellbeing": I suggest adding a further bullet point.

"We will act to bring about a population-wide shift from sedentary travel to walking and cycling". This is the recommendation (top of page 3) of the ADPH and other organisations in the document mentioned above.

(3) Page 16, headed "Your Family: children and Young People": 7th bullet point (on activities for children and young people): I suggest adding:

"and make walking and cycling safer and more attractive".

(4) Page 18, last right hand box. I suggest adding:

"through better diet, and increases in walking and cycling".

(5) Page 22, second right-hand box (on carbon footprint): I suggest adding:

"and promote a switch from cars to walking and cycling".

(6) Page 22, 5th right-hand box (on highway network): I suggest adding:

"and 20mph or lower speed limits" (fourth ADPH recommendation on page 3).

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Campbell

Response A14 – Karen Livesey, Voluntary and Community Action Wirral

VCA Wirral comments on the Corporate Plan consultation are as follows:

- Within the journey section it would be good to see a reference to their commitment to working in partnership with stakeholders to achieve better outcomes for local people and ensure they are value for money. In light of the LSP review and recommendation to keep some structure around this, should this be referenced?
- Having some sort of reference to communicating with partners and the public. This is a fundamental task that is always brought into question and seems to cause the most problems during times of change.
- Volunteering and the benefits to neighbourhoods and local employment has not been referenced. The infrastructure contract provides an element of volunteering support of which Wirral Council will be funding for the next three years so it would be beneficial to

highlight this as an important activity and be endorsed. Would Wirral Council be willing to lead the way with employee volunteering and set an example by allowing staff to participate for a set amount of time per month; which would improve staff skills and understanding (Your Council)

I hope they are helpful.

Kind Regards

Karen Livesey

**Karen Livesey
Business Development Manager
Voluntary & Community Action Wirral**

Response A15 – Stephen Johnson

Dear Mr Wilkie,
I write having read the draft of the corporate plan with great interest.

Themes that stand out in my mind are business friendly, promoting employment and quality of life for residents.

I hope that in future the council can promote these three in a less competing way. Particularly I would like to see the presumption in favour of the residents where the night time economy is concerned.

I say this as a resident who has directly suffered from the councils planning and licensing processes which have lead to our family home being made virtually uninhabitable because of the "not our job" attitude to "prevention is better than cure"

My family now has five bars (the last licensed only a few weeks ago) within 40 meters of our property where there were none only five years ago. In each case any responsibility to protect residents through planning and licensing guidelines have been ignored because the living conditions for residents have always been over ridden by the needs of local "business" and in any case we are also always told that our rights are "protected" by someone else such as Environmental Health who themselves have a list of excuses as to why they can not act.

I spend all of my income locally on goods and services so I personally improve the employment prospects of local residents. I also commute to manage a business employing 40 people in a highly skilled environment in the knowledge industry. I have two autistic spectrum children at home and look after my farther who has had a series of strokes and I accept that life isn't fair. But I find that frequently I can't even get regular

sleep because the bars near my family home keep me awake at night so I'm too tired to drive to work. Wirral has traditionally been a place to live, commuting to work and bringing back wealth. That doesn't work if one can't sleep and frankly we can't all work in bars as I was told to do by the Jobcentre recently. Someone needs to add value to something not just re-sell alcohol.

Obviously I am focusing on one localised issue but that issue effects my daily life.

What I would like to see as a change in the councils practises is accountability. Each employee needs to actively ensure that they do not pass on or create potential problems for other departments to deal with. The current culture allows council officers to hide behind layers of processes where no individual will take responsibility.

I work in a world of design for six sigma process improvement where everyone works to drive out issues at source. In every dealing that I have with the council I see waste and creation of issues rather than prevention. It would be nice to think that your administration could change this by empowering staff to make a difference and really drive the "prevention is better than cure" ethos as you suggest.

Yours faithfully

Stephen Johnson

PS well done on supporting Wirral Waters, good infrastructure is what businesses look for after the tax breaks and well educated local workforce, I just hope that the national grid can handle the load.

Response A16 – Mary Quigg, Arena Housing

Thank you for sending the draft corporate strategy.

I was pleased to note how closely it fits in with our business plan and would be interested to work with WBC in a number of areas.

I also believe that with the merge of Arena and Harvest groups the new company (Your Housing Group) there is an opportunity to use the resources of both LCH and the new parent company to address the challenges in Wirral.

My recent discussion with Brian (Chief Executive for Arena and the designate CEO for the new company) has been about our aspirations for growth in Wirral and he is keen to offer support to LCH. - we have been discussing an elderly village and training centre project in Wirral, jointly funded by both organisations. We are keen to take the good practice and successes within Leasowe into the areas we now manage on behalf of the group. Both organisations are financial strong and are keen to strengthen our asset base in Wirral.

I would be keen to work with the local authority to assist in the delivery of the objectives within the draft corporate strategy and would be happy to talk to Jim (with the parent CEO and LCH Board) to look at opportunities and projects which would mutually benefit all parties.

The new parent company is currently developing community governance structures and are keen to work with stakeholders and residents at a neighbourhood level. LCH will be the group lead for Wirral.

As you know I have been liaising with the local authority and other agencies over the past two years under our "Unity in our Community" brand to move towards neighbourhood planning which would see a reduction in revenue costs for the local authority and promote community cohesion - LCH have a strong community base - recently shown with the National Grid incident - we are flexible and have a very good relationship with the local authority - and have the support of the ward councillors - I would be happy to develop this relationship further and believe that this draft corporate strategy could be a great opportunity for Leasowe Community Homes, our new parent company (which will have over 30,000 units across the North) and the local authority.

As a registered charity our commitment in Leasowe has been wider than providing good quality housing; we are committed to training and creating job opportunities, working with social enterprise companies. We have always promoted local employment, using local contractors, WBC asb team and work with our partner Wirral-based RSLs to provide the best possible services for Wirral residents. Our objectives mirror the draft corporate strategy.

Perhaps we could arrange a meeting with Brian, Jim and LCH Board to discuss how we could assist the local authority in delivering the corporate objectives.

Speak to you soon

Mary

Mary Quigg
Managing Director
Leasowe Community Homes