

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## CABINET

12 APRIL 2012

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b><i>LONDON 2012 OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY</i></b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b><i>ALL</i></b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b><i>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</i></b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b><i>CLLR LESLIE RENNIE, CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, TOURISM AND LEISURE</i></b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	NO

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on the progress made in planning activities for the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay (OTR) visiting Wirral on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The Council is marking and supporting the visit of the Torch relay by:

- Assisting all agencies in the safe passage of the Torch through Wirral
- Organising a series of Olympic related events focussed on Birkenhead Park
- Encouraging as much participation in the Olympic related events with a focus of engaging with children and young people

2.2 The Olympic Torch Relay (OTR) is one of the strongest links between the modern Olympic Movement and the ancient Olympic Games, and is considered by many to be the second most important communications tool after the Games themselves.

2.2 Wirral in conjunction with the other Merseyside LA's made a bid in March 2010 to the London Organising Committee of the Olympic & Paralympic Games (LOCOG) to receive the Olympic Torch Relay (OTR) in its Borough. Notification of our success was received in June 2011 but due to the requirements of LOCOG, the process generally has been subject to a strict Non-Disclosure Agreement until public announcement. This agreement remains in place for a number of matters relating to commercial rights (of the 3 principal sponsors) and security.

2.3 The scope of the OTR event is considerable and includes:

- Olympic Flame arrives in UK on 18 May 2012
- OTR starts 19 May 2012
- Travels across the UK for 70 days (the final 7 days in London)
- Involves approximately 8000 torchbearers
- Overall aim of the route of the OTR is for it to travel within 1 hour of 95% of the population
- There will be an evening celebration every night of travel
- The evening event on 1<sup>st</sup> June will take place in Liverpool

2.4 Some key Olympic related dates are:

- OTR duration: 18 May – 27 July 2012
- OTR visits Wirral – Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012
- Olympic Games: 27 July – 12 August 2012
- Paralympic Games: 29 August – 09 September 2012

### **3.0 PREPARATION FOR THE EVENT**

#### **3.1 Wirral Community Task Force (WCTF)**

3.1.1 As required under a LOCOG agreement, Wirral established its WCTF in September 2011. The Health, Safety & Resilience Manager was designated the Council's Lead Officer for the OTR event and chair of the WCTF. Due to the restrictions of the Non-Disclosure Agreement regular updates were provided via a series of briefing notes to the Leader of the Council.

3.1.2 The WCTF is a multi-agency working group and is made up of representatives from the following partner agencies and Council service areas – Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, Traffic Management, Public Relations and Community Engagement, Event Safety, Leisure, Parks & Countryside and schools. It is a working group of representatives who have agreed to provide support services for the OTR event. A sub-group has also been established to concentrate on the programme of sports and activities taking place within the Park.

#### **3.2 The Route**

3.2.1 Street-level detail of the route of the event was prescribed by LOCOG and was communicated under the terms of the Non-Disclosure Agreement and there was no opportunity to impart wholesale changes to it. The route follows the heritage trail across Birkenhead and is a proven route in that this route was used for the Marathon in 2011.

3.2.2 The OTR event is due to arrive on Wirral from the Wallasey Tunnel between 5.30 pm and 6.00 pm on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012 having started the day in Bolton. It will travel via Duke St, Park Rd Nth and into Birkenhead Park via Ashville Rd. It will proceed along Park Drive and exit Birkenhead Park via the Grand Entrance on Park Rd East. It will travel onto Claughton Rd and into Hemingford St and on into Conway St and then left into Argyle St. It will turn right into Hamilton Sq and then left onto Hamilton St and pass in front of Birkenhead Town Hall. It will continue around the Gyrotory and on into Woodside ferry terminus where it will board a Ferry and depart across to the Pier Head and the evening celebration at Liverpool.

#### **3.3 Focus of the Celebration**

3.3.1 As a result of the OTR event only being on the Wirral for approximately 1 hour, it was vital that a geographical focus of the visit be provided. This would allow as many people to converge to celebrate this event and also offer the opportunity to provide a location whereby the many community groups could display their activities.

3.3.2 In celebration of the OTR a comprehensive itinerary of Olympic related events is being organised to take place in Birkenhead Park. The celebration has a focus on engaging with children and young people and Birkenhead Park will be positioned as 'the' place to go and watch the OTR procession. Events in the park will begin at 1.30PM with sports and activities for schools (closed for the public). The schools' event will shut down at 4.00PM when open access sport and activities take place for the public from 4.00PM until 6.00PM with people encouraged to 'have a go' prior to the OTR reaching the park.

3.3.3 An important factor of the OTR will be the legacy of the event and in offering a schedule of so many sports and activities for the public to participate and engage in, it is hoped that a number of the participants will continue their engagement long after the OTR has left.

### **3.4 Media Management**

3.4.1 The media management for the OTR is largely led by LOCOG with support from the Government Olympic Communications (GOC) who are the Government's Olympic body. The Councils Press Office will support the GOC and the OTR communications 'machine' both in the lead-up to and during the visit of the Olympic Torch.

3.4.2 LOCOG are to officially announce the details of the actual routes and details of the Torch Bearers on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012. To coincide with this information being released there is a planned photocall at Birkenhead Park, where the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member and the Mayor of Wirral will be in attendance.

3.4.3 It is intended for event information to begin to be released to the public on the [wirral.gov](http://wirral.gov) website from March 19<sup>th</sup>. This information will include:

- Olympic Torch FAQ
- Details of events in the Park
- Details of Local Torchbearers
- Business Continuity Advice
- Advice for residents living along the route
- Traffic and Transport information including parking information
- Details of the event at Woodside
- Appeal for 'good news' stories.

3.4.4 This information will continue to be updated right up to the event itself.

### **3.5 Event Safety**

3.5.1 A comprehensive event safety plan is being drawn up for the OTR visiting Wirral. This event safety plan is being prepared in conjunction with all partner agencies and based on the advice contained within the LOCOG Planning Guide.

3.5.2 Initially it is intended to invite employees from across the Council to volunteer to marshall the event. It is estimated that we will require up to 50 Marshalls and if there are insufficient volunteers from within the Council's workforce we will widen the invitation to volunteers and community groups.

#### **4.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

4.1 Safety will always be our top priority, so the event safety plan will provide risk control measures based on the input and agreement from partner agencies and LOCOG guidance.

#### **5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 There are no other options as a result of this report.

#### **6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 There is no need for consultation as a result of this report.

#### **7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

7.1 Many voluntary community and faith groups have been informed of the opportunity to participate in the event.

#### **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

8.1 All resources will be provided from within existing resources and budgets.

#### **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

#### **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(b) No because there is no relevance to equality.

#### **11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no carbon reduction implications as a result of this report.

#### **11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no planning and community safety implications as a result of this report.

#### **12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

12.1 That the report be noted.

#### **13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

13.1 To inform Members of the plans being made to celebrate the Olympic Torch Relay visiting Wirral.

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**APPENDICES**

*None*

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

*None*

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>