

Cabinet
12 April 2012

384 GREEN GROWTH IN WIRRAL

A report by the Director of Regeneration, Housing and Planning followed the Scrutiny Review of Green Growth in Wirral, produced by The Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which acknowledged the importance, vibrancy and potential of the 'Green Economy' to create enterprise, jobs and help Wirral to become environmentally sustainable. The report set out proposals to develop the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review in order to respond to the needs of Wirral businesses and therefore, to stimulate economic growth and create new jobs for the residents of Wirral

The report sought Members' approval for a range of policy options designed to enable businesses in Wirral's 'green economy' to set up, grow and maintain competitiveness.

The report complemented Wirral's Investment Strategy, which set future priorities for the economy in the borough. The Strategy proposed an increased emphasis on developing a number of key growth sectors that would build on existing local specialisms and would offer the most growth potential. Two of the proposed growth sectors were Offshore Energy and the Low Carbon sectors.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Cabinet agrees that Officers should develop and implement a co-ordinated and robust business support service for businesses in Wirral's green economy in order to enable job creation, enterprise development and investment in the borough, as set out in the report;**
- (2) Cabinet agrees to the formation of a Green Economy Officer Working Group to support the development of Wirral's Green Economy and to the implementation of the reports recommendations;**
- (3) update reports be provided to the Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or successor committee) on the potential of Enterprise Zone to provide development opportunities in green sectors;**
- (4) an Invest Wirral Business Forum be developed to allow for the creation of a standalone green (environmental) cluster group, which will provide members from all sectors with a number of online services, including a directory of green product and service providers, provide a sense of identity for the sector and provide clear information and improved signposting to support services for businesses that engage in 'green' business activities;**
- (5) during the forthcoming Municipal Year (2012/13), the Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or successor committee) be encouraged to invite a minimum of two leading Wirral companies in the green sector to meet the Committee to further explore the problems and opportunities currently faced by those companies;**

- (6) an awareness raising event take place in September 2012 aimed at raising awareness of the products and services provided by the local green economy; (The event is an opportunity for Wirral Council to publicly display its commitment to supporting this sector);**
- (7) Corporate Procurement be requested to ensure that all potential suppliers are made aware of environmental and sustainable procurement policies;**
- (8) the Creation of Wirral Green Skills Growth Fund to unlock barriers to workforce skills in the green sector until 31 March 2013 be agreed;**
- (9) a minimum of 24 apprenticeship opportunities be ring-fenced for green growth businesses within the next round of the Wirral Apprentice Programme;**
- (10) the Green Growth Officer Working Group is to undertake further detailed research, into existing training services and explore the feasibility of a Council operated database of green skills;**
- (11) the Green Growth Officer Working Group be requested to undertakes further detailed research, exploring the feasibility of a Council backed green accreditation scheme; and**
- (12) the Green Growth Officer Working Group be tasked to compile a report for the Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or successor committee) that explores the rationale for creating a green growth cluster of businesses either in a geographical location (a Green Business Park) or by association in various locations across Wirral.**