

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Pat Hackett
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Economy
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

1. HOYLAKE GOLF RESORT

The Council is undertaking a competitive dialogue procurement process for the Hoylake Golf Resort. There has been an encouraging response from national and international companies to the initial stages of the process. Bidders are now being evaluated and shortlisted for the next stage of the process. It is intended to identify a preferred partner by June 2014.

2. BIRKENHEAD TOWN CENTRE

A lock out agreement is now in place with Neptune Developments and they have started work on a master plan for the town centre which they hope to complete within the next twelve months.

3. NEW BRIGHTON

Neptune Developments are due to commence work shortly on the residential development adjacent to the Floral Pavilion and planning permission has just been given for an Iceland store in the Marine Point development. Discussions are on-going regarding improvements to the promenade and also with the owners of a number of privately owned sites about future developments.

4. WIRRAL WATERS

Significant progress continues to be made on Wirral Waters – and in particular progressing projects within the Enterprise Zone. Following successfully securing £8m of Local Infrastructure Funding, an additional £36m of funding bids have been submitted to catalyse early stage development along Tower Road (East Float) and the Mobil site (West Float). For the latter, Peel have contracted Technical Demolition Service (TDS), a Birkenhead based firm to clear the site of existing buildings and structures, making the site much safer. Work is anticipated to finish early 2014. It is anticipated that a number of funding decisions will be made in the next six to eight weeks.

5. OFFSHORE WIND

Progress has been made in delivering the Council's sector based strategies, particularly in relation to Offshore Wind. The Council has committed £832,000 of its £5m Regional Growth Fund Offshore Supply Chain development programme. This is committed against 4 projects, in total creating and securing almost 120 jobs. More projects are being developed into the pipeline. Work also continues to develop the Marine Innovation Campus to support the Offshore Wind sector. ERDF resources that have been secured for promoting key sectors in Wirral will be deployed on a series of high profile targeted campaigns for Offshore Wind and Automotive.

6. INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL FOR BUSINESS

A number of projects are being progressed to secure events for Wirral during the period of the IFB. It is hoped to create a Wirral hub for manufacturing events in West Float and to focus on automotive sector and low carbon events.

7. REGIONAL GROWTH FUND

In addition to the Offshore Wind RGF programme, officers have built a steady pipeline of general business growth projects with one project being approved by Cabinet and two more being considered at Cabinet on the 10th December (worth a total of £890k for in excess of 245 new jobs). Officers are working with two private sector organisations who are considering applications for RGF round 5 (closing date 9th December).

8. LCR GROWTH PLAN/ NEXT EUROPEAN PROGRAMME

Work is being progressed with local authority partners on the Growth Plan for the Liverpool City Region and also the next European programme. Wirral's key projects are being promoted as appropriate. The Growth Plan is a key component of the development of the Combined Authority for the Liverpool City Region.

9. MERSEYSIDE BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Wirral works with LCR partners to deliver a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funded business support programme that enables Invest Wirral to offer companies access to specialist advice services. Wirral outperforms the rest of the LCR partnership, already achieving programme targets with over 12 months of the programme still to run. This follows an independent report from PWC in November which noted significant economic performance in Wirral, showing it the best in the North West and amongst the top three seen in the Country.

10. MERSEY DEE ALLIANCE (MDA)

Wirral continues to play a significant role in the Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA), supporting lobbying for key transport projects and other key projects. I will take the MDA chair in 2014.