

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Phil Davies
CABINET PORTFOLIO	Leader of the Council
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Eric Robinson, Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

1. COUNCIL PLAN: 2020 VISION

Council will meet on the 13th July to debate and consider a new Council Plan for Wirral. I am proud as Leader of Wirral Council to have led the development of an ambitious plan which will deliver the following priorities:

- Wirral is a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected, every child gets a good start in life and older residents are respected and valued
- Wirral is a place where employers want to invest and businesses thrive
- Wirral has an attractive and sustainable environment, where good health and an excellent quality of life is enjoyed by everyone who lives here

We can only deliver these priorities by working with our partners, local businesses and our communities. Over the next five years we will face significant reductions in our budget and will have to identify savings of approximately £120 million. However, by the end of this Plan, in 2020, the Council will still be investing £200 million a year into improving the lives of Wirral residents and we need to be creative and think differently about how the Council can achieve improved outcomes through working with others.

It is essential that we use the combined power and influence of the whole public sector in Wirral; with total investment estimated to be in the region of £2 billion every year. Over the next few weeks I will be meeting with our partners to discuss these priorities and those of our partners, in order that we can develop a Wirral Plan that maximises our collective resources to make a real difference to the lives of our residents and communities.

2. COMBINED AUTHORITY

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

The Annual General Meeting of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority took place on Friday 19th June 2015 where I was re-elected as Chair. I am delighted to continue in this role and lead the region in driving forward our ambitions to grow the City Region economy.

The Combined Authority has now been up and running for over a year, and I welcome the progress and achievements made in collaborative working during this first year.

Setting up the Combined Authority in April 2014 was a significant step for the City Region, and has enabled us to build up a firm basis for partnership working, and to move forward with discussions on devolved powers and funding

There have been a number of successes during our first year of operation, including progress in the following:

Strategic Transport plans and projects – including input to the Northern Transport Strategy which has the aim of radically improving connectivity across the Northern city regions, to accelerate growth, as part of the Northern Powerhouse agenda;

Economic Development - The City Region welcomed the agreement of £262m Liverpool City Region Growth Deal in July to support economic development and provide the conditions for further business growth. Further Local Growth Funds of £31.6m were allocated to the City Region in January 2015 for 2016/17 in respect of capital investment funds, business growth funding and low carbon capacity funding;

In September 2014, the City Region agreed a City Region approach to Inward Investment which is now being implemented and developed by the individual local authorities and the LEP;

Employment and Skills - Through the work of the Employment and Skills Board, delivery has commenced on the innovative Youth Employment Gateway Programme, designed to support young people into work. Another key achievement has been the process for allocating the £41m of Skills Capital Funding which the City Region received as part of the Local Growth Deal in July 2014. Projects are now being recommended for approval and further strands of activity are currently being managed;

Housing and Planning - The Housing and Spatial Planning Group is moving forward collaboratively and has overseen the endorsement and monitoring of the delivery of the Local Investment Plan for housing.

The Combined Authority created the provision to facilitate Associate Membership, and subsequently welcomed Warrington and West Lancashire Councils as Associate Members during the year, helping us to build strong strategic collaboration across our wider economic area.

3. WIRRAL WATERS ENTERPRISE ZONE

Work continues on the development of an investment plan for the Enterprise Zone. The two live projects- the new Wirral Metropolitan College campus and Tower Wharf- are currently on site. The fund will utilise the business rate uplift generated by first phase developments in Wirral Waters into supporting key catalyst projects that will drive economic growth and employment.

4. PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Council now has in place a Property Development Framework that enables support for key development projects where viability remains a problem. This framework is designed to unlock development and projects will be considered on a case by case basis. The first project supported by the fund is expected to go live in late summer 2015.