



COUNCILLOR
ANN MCLACHLAN

CABINET
5 SEPTEMBER 2016

WIRRAL PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE:
2016/17 QUARTER 1

Councillor Ann McLachlan, Cabinet Member - Transformation, Leisure and Culture, said:

“The Wirral Plan was created to change people’s lives for the better: our 20 Pledges are a series of outcomes we committed to deliver which combined will have a huge impact, improving the quality of life of our residents.”

“Developing the Plan, agreeing it with our Partners and getting unanimous approval at Council were all important steps – now it is all about delivery. We promised Wirral residents we would be open and honest with them about our progress and this report is an important part of this process.”

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides a progress update in the delivery of the Wirral Plan for the 20 Pledges. It focuses on key activities carried out in Quarter 1 (April to June 2016) and the progress being made. More detailed performance data and information related to all Pledges is reported to the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

This report affects all wards within the borough. It is not a key decision.

Performance Highlights – Quarter One

Delivery of the Wirral Plan is driven by all partners working together with residents to make a difference. The points below provide some examples of where interventions and work commissioned towards the 20 Pledges is driving improvements in the lives of Wirral residents:

One of our ambitions is to help more people with disabilities find work. There has been a 9.5% increase in the number of people with disabilities in employment since the Wirral Plan was agreed, and that is in part due to the innovative work being done by the Wirral Partnership and Wirral Evolutions - the Council-owned company providing day services to vulnerable adults. The employment rate for disabled people in Wirral is now greater than the North West average and we will continue to seek significant progress in helping people with disabilities to live more independent lives.

The Council continues to work well with Wirral Chamber of Commerce and local businesses on a range of economic and employment issues. We are seeing greater job opportunities for Wirral residents being delivered with an increase in the employment rate of 3% compared to the start of the Wirral Plan, and an increase in the number of new jobs created compared to the same period last year. Wirral also remains the fastest growing tourism economy in Merseyside with an 8% increase in visitor numbers resulting in an additional £31million being spent in our visitor economy compared to the previous year.

I am also delighted progress is being made in ensuring Wirral's neighbourhoods are safer, with a 2% reduction in the total number of crimes compared to this time last year. The council is working at a local neighbourhood level with partners including the police, local residents groups and the business community to ensure crime reduction resources are focussed where and when there is greatest need.

Reports of anti-social behaviour are also declining with a 13% reduction in the number of incidents reported to the police compared to the same period last year. This drop in anti-social behaviour is testament to the success of the Plan's approach to integrate Police and Community Support Officers with the borough's Community Patrol and Anti-Social Behaviour Officers into one team.

The Wirral Partnership has agreed a new approach to give victims of Domestic Violence greater confidence to report incidents and this approach has seen a successful increase in reporting compared to the same period last year. Meeting our pledge of zero tolerance to Domestic Violence relies on a joint approach with partners and communities working together to tackle domestic abuse in all its forms, and we are grateful for the efforts and work carried out by numerous partners across Wirral on tackling this worrying issue.

The Wirral Plan sets a target for all children to be educated in schools rated good or better by Ofsted by 2020. Encouraging progress is being made, with six schools being upgraded from 'requires improvement' to 'good' during the first quarter. Today, 9 out of 10 primary school pupils and 8 out of 10 secondary school pupils in Wirral attend a school which is rated at least 'good'. The Council continues to work alongside teachers and educators to make sure every school is supported to improve and to ensure we continue providing young people with an excellent education.

The Council has appointed 6 'Future in Minds' workers as part of a new initiative to support young people who may be experiencing mental health issues, Our early-years' service has also entered into a partnership with Job Centre Plus to run a programme helping new parents get back into the employment market.

Tackling the problem residents faced in finding appropriate housing is also a key goal of the Wirral Plan. We are on track to achieve our target of bringing 1,250 empty properties back

into use by 2020 and at the time of writing, 388 empty properties have been identified, improved and brought back into use. 760 other properties have also been adapted or improved to help vulnerable people live with greater independence.

Issues such as dog fouling remain a high priority for our residents. A new enforcement policy was launched in May 2016 and has immediately delivered positive results. Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued to irresponsible dog owners in the first quarter equal the total number issued in the whole of the previous year. Coupled with our continued clampdown on littering, where 2631 FPNs were issued in this quarter, these results show the Council and its partners are serious about protecting our environment.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Cabinet Members are requested to note the content of this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure Cabinet Members have the opportunity to review the progress of the delivery of the Wirral Plan.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Wirral Plan was agreed at a meeting of the Council in July 2015, creating a long term vision for the borough and a series of 20 Pledges which would be delivered by 2020. This report provides Cabinet with an update on the progress towards those pledges and therefore no other options were considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 This report provides a summary update of progress in delivering the Wirral Plan. Performance of the Wirral Plan is monitored by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Wirral Plan Partnership Delivery Group.
- 3.2 A Wirral Plan Performance Management Framework has been developed to ensure robust monitoring arrangements are in place. Information available to these groups each quarter include a Wirral Plan Overview Report and detailed reports associated with each Pledge are available for review which are developed through partnership work at Pledge Steering Groups.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are none arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are none arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 There are none arising from this report.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The priorities in the Wirral Plan and underlying pledges were informed by a range of consultations carried out in 2015 and 2016 including the Wirral resident survey.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Wirral Plan equality impact assessment can be found at:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2014-15/chief>

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APPENDICES

REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	22 February 2016
Cabinet	8 October 2015
Cabinet	9 July 2015