

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. GREATER JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Health Related Worklessness

Wirral's Health Related Worklessness Programme has commissioned ethnographic research to gain vital insight and a greater understanding of the barriers faced by residents who are workless as a result of their health. The Council has now completed a procurement exercise for delivery of the following 'first steps' services from February 2017.

- Community Connectors: Delivered by Involve Northwest this service will provide 13 Community Connectors working with 1885 residents from selected wards in the east of the borough to tackle social isolation and promote active inclusion to provide mental health/wellbeing benefits and lead to greater readiness for work.
- Non-Medical Therapeutic Recovery Service: Delivered by the Spider Project this service will have a specific focus in Birkenhead and will support 150 residents to manage and improve their mental health/wellbeing and their readiness for employment via a personalised service that includes a range of interventions including creative and physical activities.

Wirral Ways to Work Programme

In March 2016 Members were informed that funding had been secured to support adults and young people into employment as a result of a successful Liverpool City Region Combined Authority application to the European Social Fund Programme. Wirral's local delivery model includes a combination of in-house delivery of the Wirral ILM programme and three contracted services, the Worklessness Support Service, Youth Employment Gateway and Careers Information Advice and Guidance Service. Following procurement the Council awarded contracts in July and performance to date is as follows:

- There have been 200 participants engaged on the programme and 20 participants have since moved into employment, education or training as of the

31st August 2016, which marks the end of the last claim period and a month and a half of the delivery of the programme.

2. INCREASE INWARD INVESTMENT

Birkenhead and its Waterfront

A Regeneration Advisory Board has been established for Birkenhead and its Waterfront, to help drive and shape Birkenhead's fantastic potential. Through this work, the Council is setting a clear vision for the future of Birkenhead and its assets to ensure that we grow the aspirations of the town centre and maximise the waterfront location at Woodside. This is being supported by a programme of strategic acquisitions and investments. In addition, key development opportunities are being delivered in and around Birkenhead, building on the successful developments on the A41 including the Light box and Turbine park, which are providing new and modern industrial parks to facilitate the growth of our businesses.

Trade and Inward Investment

A joint Wirral / Liverpool civic and business delegation visited cities in South West China in late October. The trip built on contacts made through the Liverpool China Partnership and the IFB 2016 and has led to new export opportunities for Wirral businesses together with investment interest linked to the city region's Devolution Deal and the Borough's Enterprise Zone.

3. VIBRANT TOURISM ECONOMY

River of Light display

The River of Light firework display, delivered in partnership with Liverpool City Council on the River Mersey, attracted an estimated 50,000 visitors to Wirral and included animations to attract families at both Birkenhead and New Brighton. Feedback from those who attended is that the event was enjoyed by many, although there are some areas that have been identified to improve the event in future years. The event's economic impact to the borough is currently being evaluated.

Visitors to Wirral

A Wirral Visitor Research Study took place last year and has resulted in over 1,500 face-to-face & web surveys including current & potential visitors and stakeholder feedback. Key findings include 93% of current visitors would recommend Wirral as a visitor destination; 92% are likely to return; 91% are interested in its coast & countryside and 85% are interested in the borough's culture & heritage. In addition, 69% of potential visitors are inspired to visit the peninsula for its quality food & drink offer. This detailed insight, and importantly those barriers to attract more visitors to the borough, will inform the development of the new Wirral Tourism Strategy and annual implementation plan from April 2017.

Hoylake Golf Resort

On 7th November, Cabinet approved the signing of the Hoylake Golf Resort Framework Development Agreement along with additional fees to take the project to the next stage- which is the preparation of the Funding and Viability Plan expected to

be submitted in early 2017. Once that has been assessed a further report will be presented to Cabinet on the project. This is an important step in the process of delivering the golf resort.