

COUNCIL

16 OCTOBER 2017

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 INCREASE INWARD INVESTMENT

I would like to start my report to Council with an update on the ongoing recovery effort in New Ferry. While it is clear this area has been left forgotten and ignored by the Government – despite the best efforts of part of this Council – the people of New Ferry can rest assured that we remain committed to their community.

Exciting regeneration proposals have been produced, led by ideas and aspirations from local people and businesses, and we are currently consulting with residents on the outline proposals before we submit our business case to kick-start the regeneration of the area. More information about the ongoing consultation can be found in [Wirral View](#), in the [Wirral Globe](#) and the [Liverpool Echo](#).

In September we saw yet more evidence of Wirral's growing attraction to high quality investors, businesses and attractions. I am incredibly excited by the potential of the national children's museum – 'Eureka!' – opening a new facility in Seacombe. Nationally recognised, with millions of visitors, the 'Eureka!' development would bring jobs, economic growth and a huge number of visitors to Wirral's waterfront, as well as providing a fantastic facility for our young people.

I will be doing everything possible in the coming months to make this development a reality. The details of the planned 'Eureka!' development are also available in [Wirral View](#), in the [Wirral Globe](#) and the [Liverpool Echo](#).

During October the Cabinet agreed a new Strategic Regeneration Framework for Wirral. This is the document which will underpin and guide all of our efforts to drive economic growth in the borough over the coming years. The Framework will also help the ongoing development of the Wirral Growth Company, which as Members are aware has been through a procurement process recently. I am delighted with the level of response so far, and hope to be able to make a positive announcement on the creation of the new company before the end of the calendar year.

2 GREATER JOB OPPORTUNITIES

It has been another very promising period for Wirral's economy. Highlights for the quarter include an increase in Wirral's employment rate and a continued decrease in the number of people claiming out of work benefits; clearly demonstrating our pledge to improve job opportunities for our residents and drive business growth is making progress.

Our Ways to Work and Health Related Worklessness Programmes is driving unique approaches to community engagement, including the launch of community campervan, Penny the Job Coach, who is travelling around local neighbourhoods, offering employability advice and guidance and enabling local residents who are out of work to get on board to learn new skills; and the growing success of our network of 'community connectors' out and about daily, door-knocking and reconnecting individuals with their neighbours and local services to tackle social isolation.

3 WORKFORCE SKILLS MATCH BUSINESS NEED

We have seen initial success in two major skills infrastructure funding applications in the Combined Authority Strategic Investment Fund process. The Advanced Engineering Skills Factory and Maritime Knowledge Hub will support our current and future workforce to develop the most up to date, relevant industry led skills, enabling competitive growth in our key sectors.

4 THRIVING SMALL BUSINESSES

The new Wirral Business Support Service launched during the summer, bringing commercial skills and expertise to assist local businesses in a huge range of areas.

Working with our colleagues at Wirral Chamber of Commerce, small businesses in Wirral can now access expert support in every area of their business.