

WIRRAL PLAN 2020: ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

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FOREWORD

“It is absolutely clear: the 20 Pledges we committed to back in 2015 are making an impact. This Annual Review demonstrates how.”

It is now three years since we first created the Wirral Plan – the first ever shared set of priorities and goals which the Council, the private, public and voluntary sectors committed to own and deliver together.

Since then, the progress we have made in many areas has been nothing short of remarkable. Wirral residents are beginning to benefit from integrated NHS and social care services, we have launched a unique joint community safety service with Merseyside Police and, in perhaps the most ambitious and entrepreneurial move in the history of this borough, we have formed Wirral Growth Company, which will create more than 3,000 new jobs for our residents in the next three years.

We know we still have challenges to overcome, but it is clear we are making a huge difference to residents' lives and we should be proud of our achievements. We are becoming more imaginative, more creative and more commercial in our thinking as we continue to find ways of doing more with less.

We made a commitment when we first agreed this Plan to report back to Wirral residents – to keep residents informed, and give open, honest appraisals of our progress so we can be held to account on the promises we made.

I am proud to report more than 3000 jobs created, 1305 new businesses, 1600 new homes, and more than 2400 homes improved or brought back into use. These successes would not have been possible without the strength of our Partnership in Wirral – all public agencies working together to make this borough a better place to live.

We're also continuing to get 'the basics' right, and in the past twelve months we have recycled more than 40,000 tonnes of household waste, we have helped more than 20,000 residents with adult social care services, supported 156,239 residents through our One Stop Shops and resurfaced many miles of road, filling 266 potholes along the way. I am delighted we have been able to commit to replacing all 27,000 streetlights in the borough with modern, energy-efficient, environmentally friendly LED lighting.

It is absolutely clear: the 20 Pledges we committed to back in 2015 are making an impact. This Annual Review demonstrates how.

Through reading this document you will see how every member of the Wirral Partnership has made an impact in improving the lives of residents. You will see the benefits of our major integration and joint working, and you will see concrete evidence about how working towards our shared goals – the 20 Pledges – we are making Wirral a better place. The report highlights and celebrates the many achievements of which we are rightly

proud, but it does not shy away from those areas where challenges persist and where we still need to improve and focus more attention.

I am proud of the progress we have in our children's services, following a very challenging time. Every member of the Wirral Partnership has played a part in making sure our most vulnerable children and families are safe and supported.

Strong new leadership, extra social workers with improved supervision and support is leading to services which are much better equipped to cope with the unprecedented levels of demand following 8 years of austerity. Ofsted have been extremely complimentary on our progress so far, and have been helpful and clear in guiding the next stages of our plans.

This coming year is crucial to the long-term future of our borough. In the coming weeks and months we will be holding public debates on huge regeneration and development proposals. We'll also be consulting on housing through our Local Plan, as we try to find ways of meeting Government housing targets while protecting the unique beauty of Wirral. It's vital every Wirral resident makes their voice heard in these debates and helps shape what our borough looks like in the future.

To make sure all residents are able to influence local decisions, tackle issues in their own communities, engage with public

services and play an active role in their neighbourhoods, the Wirral Partnership is launching 'Wirral Together' – a programme which will change how every public agency in Wirral goes about its work.

Wirral is a collection of close, connected and thriving communities. Often, these communities identify things to improve – or issues to fix – and set about putting them right themselves. These communities deserve more help, more support from the local services set up to support them.

That is what Wirral Together is about. Helping local communities come together, and improve our borough for everyone who lives here.

As I have said time and again since 2015, the Wirral Plan is our contract with the people of Wirral; my personal pledge to every Wirral

resident is to continue to spend every day working to make Wirral a better place.

I am proud of our performance this year. I encourage you to read this document and see for yourself how the Wirral Plan is changing and improving our borough for every resident.



A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "P.L. Davies".

Cllr Phil Davies

Leader of Wirral Council and Chair of the Wirral Partnership

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2015, Wirral's public services were in a very different place. There was no shared vision for the borough, no shared priorities, limited partnership working and no integrated services. Services were reactive, struggling to adapt to modern needs while facing up to huge funding reductions and rising demand.

The Wirral Plan began to change this picture. It created, for the first time, a joint vision for the borough, combined with a shared set of goals which would be achieved. It brought every public service in Wirral together, working towards delivering joint outcomes for local people, where resources and expertise could be shared and public money could go further.

It was an ambitious agenda. It set out 20 Pledges to transform Wirral, and the lives of its residents, during a time of unprecedented change and uncertainty within the public sector.

The Plan is now at its half-way stage. The next few sections of this document are the report card: they show you just what has been achieved towards the 20 Pledges since first agreeing them in 2015. It gives real-life examples of where a difference is already being made and it tells you what will be done next.



90%

OF SCHOOLS RATED 'GOOD OR OUTSTANDING' BY OFSTED



20,000

PEOPLE SUPPORTED WITH ADULT SOCIAL CARE



1341

PEOPLE HELPED TO STOP SMOKING



3000
JOBS CREATED

1305
NEW BUSINESSES
IN WIRRAL



£147 MILLION  **OF NEW INVESTMENT**



2400

HOMES
IMPROVED



266

POTHOLES
REPAIRED



27,000

STREETLIGHTS
TO BE REPLACED



“

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.

Ensuring the most vulnerable among us are safe, and feel safe, is perhaps our most important responsibility. We will work across Council and agency boundaries to promptly identify and tackle problems before they develop.

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Social Care Integration

In June 2017, Adult Social Care services including social workers, social care assessors, occupational therapists and reablement officers transferred from Wirral Council to Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust. This means that Wirral is one of a handful of places in England to have begun a ground-breaking journey towards truly integrated health and care provision.

Since the transfer in June 2017, the new joined up and seamless service has performed well, and the feedback from commissioners, staff and local Wirral residents has been positive.

A 100-day plan to address immediate priorities and to achieve its aim of a safe transfer has been completed, followed by stabilisation and ultimately opportunities for transformation. The Trust successfully delivered this plan whilst delivering strong performance and an improved user experience.

Between June 2017 and March 2018 the Trust received over 31,000 social care contacts from local residents and provided holistic social care support to over 20,000 people. It also introduced one single telephone number to make it easier for local residents and professionals to access services and advice.

Working closely with key partners across the system including Wirral Council, the Acute Trust, GPs, mental health services, care providers and local community services, the Trust has seen the percentage of people it supports who remain at home 91 days after a hospital admission rise to 85% (the national average is 82%) and an increase in the number of hospital admissions being avoided.

It has also reduced the number of care home placements being made by 12%, (supporting people to live at home whenever possible) and delayed hospital discharges fell from 6.4% in June 2017 to 1.3% in February 2018.

Here are some very important words from staff and most importantly the Wirral citizens we are committed to support.

Staff in the new service have said:

"I feel we have been welcomed with open arms and are considered a valuable asset to the Trust"

"Relationships with health colleagues have improved significantly"

"I do feel this is already encouraging better integrated team working across therapies, nursing, and social care"

"I feel proud to be a member of Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust and thank them for the warm welcome and support received. I look forward to what the future unveils"

Wirral residents benefitting from the service have said:

"I was pleased that I didn't get passed from pillar to post and that I had 1 worker to deal with, thank you as it has reduced the stress"

"The simple things like putting my clothes on was a struggle but now I have had a STAR service, they worked with me and I can now do it again with aids to support me"

"It was a really good service; I had visits from enablers, office staff and Occupational Therapists, who all ensured I was able to manage"

"My mum came out of Hospital and as a family we took care of her over the weekend, her first care visit was last night and the team have been just absolutely brilliant. This is all new to us and we were desperate to get Mum home. Once again, thank you so much for all your help and the advice and information you gave me"



The Hive

Wirral's version of Sport England's 'This Girl Can' campaign has launched with an exclusive party welcoming 30 teenagers who will be its official ambassadors.

This Girl Can in Wirral campaign is aimed specifically at girls aged 13-16 after research showed 85 Wirral Youth Zone, named by young people as 'The Hive', is a purpose-built facility for the borough's young people aged 8 – 19, and up to 25 for those with disabilities.

The Hive is managed by OnSide, a charitable trust which runs purpose built, modern youth facilities all across the UK, and was created through a Council-led partnership of organisations across the Region.

Open just over a year, the Hive has already attracted thousands of members and is having a huge impact on the lives of young people throughout Wirral. This is Dean's story.

"Dean is 23 and lives at home with his parents. Dean struggled in primary school due to coordination issues. For example, he struggled to tell the time, tie his laces, had problems with sequences of numbers such as times tables.

He moved to Wallasey school (senior school) and started to struggle due to high levels of anxiety. Over the next two years Dean received therapy through CAMHS and eventually received a diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome.

Dean continued to struggle at school and the decision was made for him to be home schooled. Dean had been expected to

gain high grades in a number of his gcse's however, because of everything that had happened during senior school Dean gained 2 gcse's in English and history. He returned to the sixth form to study health and Social care qualifications however 2 months before completion of the qualification he had to leave because of the severity of his anxiety. Dean became agoraphobic and was housebound for 2 years. He lost most of his school friends and became very isolated.

Dean eventually got support from Wirral MIND who supported him in a number of ways. His support worker would take him out, support him with shopping and helped him develop coping strategies. His confidence continued to grow to a point where Dean felt he could challenge himself further.

Dean started on the Get a Job course in Jan 2018. On day one he managed to introduce himself and explain about his social anxiety. The group were very supportive which helped Dean's confidence grow. Each week Dean continued to get involved in everything he was challenged with. He was brilliant on residential, getting involved in all activities and was a real team player. Dean shone on the Mock interview day impressing the interviewers and showing a real passion for work especially care work.

Dean decided that he wanted to continue with his Health and Social care commitment as he wants to support and work with other people who have additional needs. We worked together on an application for a support worker role and Dean was asked to attend an interview. I was delighted to hear from Dean that he had been offered a position working part time for the company.

Dean is a great example of someone who has worked hard to overcome barriers to achieve their goal. The Get a Job course has not only helped Dean gain employment, it has increased his confidence and communication skills and he has gained new friends who he now socialises with. He has had the confidence to go back on to Facebook and has started to get in touch with his old school friends."

The Hive offers activities, classes and social events all year round. For more information please visit thehiveyouthzone.org



PEOPLE PLEDGES



90%

SCHOOLS RATED **GOOD OR OUTSTANDING**



20,000

PEOPLE **SUPPORTED WITH ADULT SOCIAL CARE**



1341

PEOPLE **HELPED TO STOP SMOKING**

People want services tailored to meet their individual needs. They expect services which help them in their individual circumstances, and which have an impact in improving their lives.

This is exactly what we are delivering. Every organisation in the Wirral Partnership is working together to improve the lives of children, families and older people in the borough. We are seeing an impact in many areas already.

Older People live well

Older people in Wirral are now, for the first time, benefitting from completely integrated NHS and social care services. This means people no longer have to navigate complex systems to access the support they need, they no longer have to tell their personal story to various social workers, NHS staff, community nurses and doctors. They work with one person to understand their needs, who then works to make sure they are met. It is a simpler, easier and better service for every resident, as one told us recently: "I was pleased I didn't get passed from pillar to post and that I had one person to deal with, thank you as it has reduced the stress."

The Partnership has also vastly improved how it works with older people in every community in Wirral – reducing social isolation, running community outreach and helping older people stay active and independent for longer. The 'Door Knock' programme which was launched – where volunteers and Partnership staff visit homes all across the borough – has worked with almost 6,000 people, referring almost 500 into services and support they would not otherwise have benefitted from. Also helping older people all across our borough is the Age Friendly programme, where businesses in Wirral are demonstrating their support for older people by offering them free use of their facilities to rest, get a drink or use the bathroom.

A great deal of work has been carried out to enhance the service provided to bereaved families. The Bereavement Team at Wirral University Teaching Hospital has transformed the service over the past two years and in August 2017 the team won the Rosa Parks Award with the Fab Academy.

This coming year, the Partnership will focus on making sure older people feel safer and healthier in Wirral – reducing social isolation, tackling anti-social behaviour, promoting healthy lifestyles and committing Wirral to becoming a ‘dementia-friendly borough’.

Children are ready for school

Almost 70% of young children are now reaching a ‘good’ level of development by age 5: this is the highest ever level in Wirral, higher than the regional average and significantly higher than the start of the Wirral Plan (62%). It is testament to the work of every public agency in the borough, but there is still more to do.

Our focus is on continuing to improve what support parents and young children can receive. We will particularly focus on making sure children from disadvantaged backgrounds access the services available to them, and on making sure as many women as possible access professional maternity services at the right times.

Maternity services in Wirral are second to none, with a recent CQC survey highlighting Wirral University Teaching Hospital Trust provides some of the best services in the country. CQC stated that Wirral Women and Children’s Hospital was one of only two hospitals in the country to perform ‘better than expected’ in four core areas of care.

Expectant mums in Wirral now have access to a new team of midwives dedicated to women choosing to have their babies at home or in the ‘pop up’ birth unit at

Seacombe Children’s Centre. The new service is part of the local response to recommendations made by the 2016 National Maternity Review, ‘Better Births’, which set out a clear vision of achieving safer, more personalised and more family friendly maternity services.

Young People are ready for work and adulthood

We are currently seeing the highest number of young people in Apprenticeships since 2012, with businesses and public agencies all across Wirral investing in their future workforce. Combined with the fact that 90% of schools in Wirral now being rated as ‘good’ or better by Ofsted, it is clear the work of the Wirral Partnership is having a major impact on the future career prospects of young people in Wirral.

Wirral Young Chamber’s initiative is bridging the gap between education and employment locally. It’s a simple, straightforward and direct initiative that benefits both young people and local businesses. Currently delivering into 22 Wirral schools the Young Chamber programme consists of an innovative and exciting programme of activities. Young people can chair debates on current affairs with speakers from local business. Get the chance to ‘go behind the scenes’ at John Lennon airport or Typhoo tea and gain invaluable advice on the transition from education to employment.

We are focussing work now on making sure vulnerable young people, particularly those in care, are given intensive, tailored

support to ensure they get the most out of their education. Every looked after child now receives a Personal Education Plan, and we are working with each child individually to make sure their attendance and school performance is as good as it can be.

Vulnerable children reach their full potential

The pace of improvement within social care services for children is steadily improving, with Ofsted in their recent monitoring letter commenting that Wirral was making progress and highlighting their view that ‘experienced and knowledgeable social workers and managers respond to all contacts in a timely way’.

This most recent inspection follows news from autumn 2017, where Ofsted found progress in all areas they reviewed, including a ‘reinvigorated’ approach to working with Care Leavers. The services provided for children and young people now benefit from a new leadership team, a new approach to performance monitoring and social work practice, and a relaunched recruitment and retention package to attract and retain the best quality social workers.

All members of the Wirral Partnership are working to support vulnerable children, with every major public agency in the borough – including representatives of primary, secondary and special schools – working together on a joint approach to make sure all services are as well designed, targeted and monitored as possible.

Reduce child and Family Poverty

Representatives from every agency in the Wirral Partnership are working together to develop new solutions to support families in need throughout the borough.

A recent development is the Seacombe Lives programme, which provides one-to-one support and advice, and community group Wirral Environmental Network hosted community events with free food and refreshments. The Seacombe Lives programme now uses Seacombe Library as a community hub 2 days per week, providing residents with free, personal support.

There is clear evidence that reducing worklessness and improving the skills and opportunities for parents and young people is critical in linking economic growth and poverty reduction.

People with disabilities live independently

More people with disabilities in Wirral are now employed than ever before, which is testament to the work delivered by all agencies involved and particular organisations such as Wirral Metropolitan College, whose supported intern scheme goes from strength to strength.

Over the course of this year, the number of people in receipt of personal budgets – and therefore able to direct and commission their own personal care and support – has more than doubled.

There has been a significant increase in the employment rate for people with a disability or long term condition, and targets were exceeded in relation to the quality of life for people with long term conditions and the proportion of people who feel supported to manage their condition.

It is also extremely positive to report that Wirral residents will soon benefit from an integrated, all age disability service – meaning that disabled people in Wirral will be able to access seamless, joined up care from Wirral Council and NHS bodies.

Zero tolerance to domestic violence

Wirral organisations supported the recent ‘Reclaim the Night’ march through Liverpool, which saw hundreds of women march through the City Centre from Derby Square through to the bombed out church.

Movements like #MeToo and Time’s Up have shown that the collective power of women’s voices can have an impact in changing perceptions and attitudes towards domestic violence, and all agencies in Wirral are working together to deliver improvements in the services and support available to families.

Almost 30 new Peer Mentors have been recruited to provide intensive support to domestic abuse victims, and Wirral University Teaching Hospital is also investing in its own staff to increase its ability to support people in this area.



Wirral is a place where employers want to invest and businesses thrive. We must seize the opportunities before us, and work hard to create new ones to transform Wirral's economy for this generation and the next.

We will focus on Wirral's priority growth sectors to promote and grow jobs in the visitor economy, advanced manufacturing, maritime and renewable energy sectors. We will work with our partners to deliver these ambitions for Wirral and ensure our plans are both economically and environmentally sustainable.





Wirral Growth Company

WIRRAL is set to enjoy unprecedented levels of regeneration, as new Council joint venture Wirral Growth Company brings forward proposals which will see thousands of jobs created over the coming months and years.

The Council's cabinet have appointed urban regeneration specialists Muse Developments as its partner after an exhaustive selection competition. Throughout 2018, WGC will begin consultation and engagement with local residents and businesses on how to drive regeneration of various sites across the borough – including Bebington, Birkenhead, Bromborough, Moreton and Seacombe in the first phase – to build new homes, commercial, retail and leisure developments, bringing thousands of new jobs to the borough as well as boosting property values and attracting further investment.

Under the proposals agreed by Cabinet, all the profits from the developments will be split 50-50, with the Council's share providing income to be reinvested in delivering front-line services.

Councillor Davies said: "Three years ago, this administration set our 2020 Pledges. We said we would create thousands of new jobs, attract 100s of millions in new investment, and provide good quality housing and protect and improve Wirral's attractive local environment. Through Wirral Growth Company we will deliver as promised on our pledges – I am incredibly excited about this opportunity and the future for Wirral."

Since launching the search for a joint venture partner at MIPIM (a global property conference) in March 2017, officers have been working to identify a suitable partner to meet the Council's growth ambitions.

Last year more than 100 developers, investors, construction firms, architects and planners came to see the opportunities available in Wirral and participate in soft market testing of the Wirral Growth Company proposal.

“Potential partners were taken by the quality already on offer in Wirral and new opportunities offered by Woodside’s dramatic river views, the majesty of Hamilton Square, the beach towns and villages dotted across the borough” said Cllr Davies.

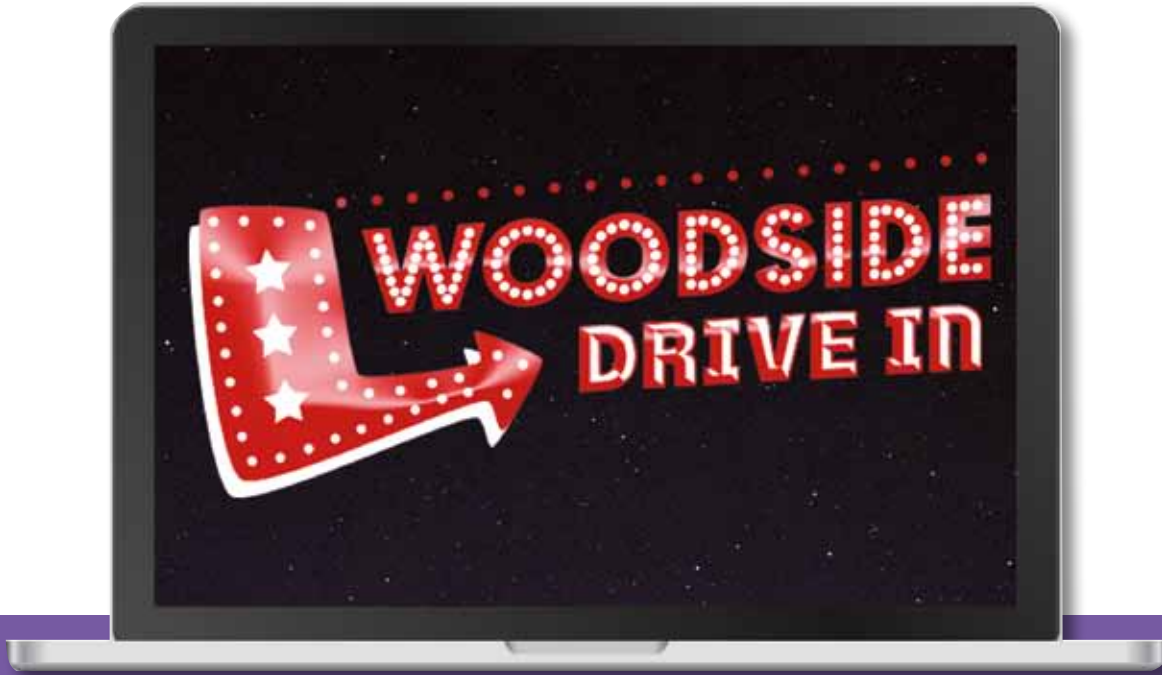
Cllr Davies stressed the importance of ensuring Wirral Growth Company also makes sound commercial sense for the Council.

“Too often,’ he warned, “local authorities sell land or assets to private speculators or developers, and beyond those initial land value receipts, take no benefit from any development that follows.

“Similarly, other than through the limited planning controls at its disposal, Councils relinquish any influence over the speed, purpose and quality of what does or doesn’t ultimately get built.

“With the deal being proposed, we will have full involvement in every development decision, we will benefit from the economic growth any regeneration creates and, as a 50-50 joint venture, we will benefit from the profits the development delivers – money the Council can reinvest in front line services our residents rely on.”

Residents who are interested in learning more about Wirral Growth Company should visit www.wirralwellmade.com website for more details, or join the conversation on @wirralwellmade twitter account or wirralwellmade facebook page



The Woodside Drive In

An “authentic drive in cinema” experience is coming to Wirral this summer – starting with classic retro movie Grease.

Woodside Drive In opens next Friday, June 1, and will be Wirral’s first and only open air, drive in cinema.

Harking back to the 1950s it will also feature roller skating waitresses, “Kiss Cam”, a cash prize bingo, and American themed food and drink and mouth-watering desserts provided by “the incredible” Mr Tee.

The scheme has been supported by Arriva North West whose land is being used and Wirral Council as part of its work to support local business and entrepreneurs.

Wirral Council leader Phil Davies said: “As part of the long term plans for regeneration, Wirral Growth Company is developing a

series of pop up events, ‘meanwhile’ uses and festivals, starting with Wirral’s first drive in movies at Woodside.

“This is a great example of young people with a fantastic idea who we have been able to help make a reality.

“I hope people will support this and make it the success it deserves to be.

“Wirral has an amazing line-up of events planned this throughout the summer and the whole year and this is the kind of attraction which can only add to the growing sense that Wirral is a place people want to be and want to visit.”

Located opposite Woodside bus station the cinema is in a high walled, closed-in, spot. Coming up over the summer the organisers have lined up some of the best cult and

classic movies of the last 30 years, projected onto our massive 13 meter screen.

As well as speakers around the site the movie soundtrack will be sent out through the airwaves, so customers can tune in their car sound systems for a truly immersive movie experience.

As customers arrive they will be provided with a menu, and to order food and drink simply turn on your car's sidelights and one of the roller skating waitresses will arrive to take your order.

And you don't need to be a driver to join in - there is a lawn at the front of the site and those on foot will be given a comfy lounger so you can sit back, relax and enjoy the movie.

More details are on the website <https://woodsidedrivein.co.uk/>



BUSINESS



3000

JOBS CREATED



£147 MILLION

OF NEW INVESTMENT



1305

NEW BUSINESSES
IN WIRRAL

Wirral is thriving. We are a key element of a vibrant, energetic City Region which is driving huge economic growth, prosperity and opportunity for all residents.

We are seeing huge momentum at Wirral Waters, with commercial, residential and care complexes coming forward and, through Wirral Growth Company, this Council has launched the biggest public sector led regeneration programme in the UK. It is a truly exciting time for our borough, and we have seen huge successes this past year.

Greater job opportunities in Wirral

Wirral Growth Company will create 3,000 jobs, through the biggest programme of regeneration even seen in this borough. Since it has been agreed that jobs, work and contracts created by WGC will be targeted at local firms and workers, residents will see many opportunities to develop their careers in the coming months.

This is combined with outstanding performance in this area since the launch of the Wirral Plan. Since 2015, we have seen 3,122 new jobs created in the borough and – at 72.6% - our employment rate is at its highest level since 2014.

People who have been unemployed long term are benefitting from the £6.5m 'Ways to Work' programme, which has supported almost 2,000 people back into work or training; and the pioneering Households Into Work programme is in place across the Liverpool City Region helping families find work, improve their employability skills and increase their aspirations.

Increase inward investment

Investment in Wirral is thriving. More than £107 million has been invested into projects and businesses in Wirral since the start of the Wirral Plan, not including the investments taking place right now through new proposals at Wirral Waters and the huge developments forthcoming from Wirral Growth Company.

Almost every week we are seeing new developments come forward – new homes, retail and commercial schemes are being planned in every corner of our borough. These developments are concrete proof of the huge confidence in Wirral and the Liverpool City Region as a place to invest and do business.

In Wirral Waters specifically, we have seen recent announcements for new residential, care and office developments on the site. These developments provide further proof of Wirral's growing importance in the Northern Powerhouse.

Thriving small business

Our target at the start of the Wirral Plan was to support 250 new businesses to open their doors in the borough. Since 2015, this target has been achieved five-times over, with 1,305 new businesses starting trading since the 20 Pledges were launched.

These businesses are supported by the UK's fastest growing Chamber of Commerce, who are providing expert, tailored support through a Business Support Service which has been designed to provide bespoke advice, guidance and help to every employer in Wirral.

Retailers and businesses in the borough have also been supported by the work of the Birkenhead Business Improvement District (BID) team. Key to the Birkenhead BID has been its core values of safety & security, a clean & attractive Birkenhead, supporting its businesses, together with positive marketing & promotion.

The BID has added support to the town through activities which have taken place and which will continue during 2018. This has included initiatives including the installation of alleygates, clean-ups, new litter-bins, and introducing a utility savings scheme offer to potentially reduce business energy bills.

The Town Hosts have been visible in helping locals and visitors to Birkenhead feel welcome, and this was particularly noticed when the Summer Be In Birkenhead Festival was held, a hugely successful event which attracted thousands of people to Hamilton Square to enjoy a family day of fun. The coming months offer more promise with regeneration plans for Woodside, Hamilton Square and the Birkenhead Town Centre, all which will also support the work and ambitions of Birkenhead BID initiative in making the area an attractive place for business, retailers, culture, visitors and its residents.

Workforce skills match business need

A new Skills Strategy is in place across the Liverpool City Region, which will allow for people from every borough to access new, tailored training to meet the business needs of our local economy and employers. Again throughout the Liverpool City Region, the Skills for Growth programme is up and running, providing employers with advice and support to help upskill their current and potential workforce. In Wirral, 245 employers are working with the scheme and 178 have been provided with grant support totaling more than £175,000.

The Wirral Apprentice programme continues to perform well, with 49 new positions within 39 companies created in just the past year. Major capital investments into facilities such as the Wirral Met STEM Centre, Engineering College are allowing many residents get the skills they need to build a positive career.

We will also work with our partners to realise new major skills infrastructure projects, including the Maritime Knowledge Hub and the Manufacturing Technology Catapult Centre.

Vibrant tourism economy

For the first time ever, the Giant Spectacular will cross the Mersey to Wirral in October 2018. Liverpool's Dream – the final part of the Giants story in our region – is expected to attract up to 1 million visitors to our region as part of a huge event. This is just one aspect of a new programme of events and activities taking place throughout the year, through the Imagine Wirral programme.

The schedule will conclude with the third firework display on the Mersey waterfront. In 2017, the River of Light festival attracted almost 100,000 new visitors to the Wirral events and gave the local economy a boost of more than £1.1 million.

Wirral Chamber of Commerce are driving a new approach to attracting visitors to Wirral, working with all businesses and employers in the tourism sector to promote Wirral extensively.

Technology and infrastructure

More than £11 million will be invested over the next three years on road safety in Wirral, which will see every street light in the borough replaced with energy efficient, environmentally friendly LED bulbs.

Alongside this, more than £5 million is being invested in improving our highways – resurfacing roads, fixing potholes and making sure Wirral residents can travel safely and efficiently.

A major project was recently completed, as the lifting bridge linking Birkenhead and Wallasey was replaced – a critical link which will allow for quicker, more efficient travel throughout the borough but also, crucially, providing the support for Birkenhead docks to continue to expand.

Assets and buildings are fit for purpose

Our ambition remains to create 'one public estate', where public services from all agencies are available, as much as possible, from the same buildings, co-locating to make sure residents receive the best, most joined up service.

Good progress is being made. There are now fewer buildings, running costs have been reduced, and many more public services are now co-locating and providing integrated services.

In the coming year, much more will be done with services throughout the public sector working closer together, sharing office space and ensuring a more efficient use of land, buildings and public assets.



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Wirral is a place where employers want to invest and businesses thrive. We must seize the opportunities before us, and work hard to create new ones to transform Wirral's economy for this generation and the next.

We will focus on Wirral's priority growth sectors to promote and grow jobs in the visitor economy, advanced manufacturing, maritime and renewable energy sectors. We will work with our partners to deliver these ambitions for Wirral and ensure our plans are both economically and environmentally sustainable.

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The Safer Wirral Hub



Wirral residents are benefitting from more joined up, integrated and well-designed community safety services than ever before, following the creation of the unique Safer Wirral Hub.

The hub, based at the Solar Campus in Leasowe, is the first phase of a new multi-agency service which will deliver an effective, joined up community safety service for the people of Wirral.

A number of Wirral Council teams, Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and other key partner agencies – including some from the third sector – are now working together within the Safer Wirral Hub and already delivering results that are making Wirral an even safer place.

Together they form a partnership, led operationally by Merseyside Police, providing an expert, unified approach to tackling, crime, anti-social behaviour and safeguarding those most vulnerable in our communities.

Cllr George Davies, Wirral Council’s Cabinet lead for Community Safety, said: “Success in building safer neighbourhoods is beyond the ability of the police or the Council alone and requires this stronger partnership approach within and across all partner agencies and communities.

“We know that there was already good joined up working across partners to improve community safety. This development will build on this further due to the integration of council staff and staff from other organisations into policing operations and a new way of directing their work.

"I believe this is a hugely important step. It will help make Wirral safer, it will help tackle the issues our residents tell us are a problem and – even in times of cuts to funding – it is an imaginative and radical plan to deliver a better service to our residents."

The Hub at Solar Campus is the place where activities are co-ordinated through daily briefings across all key agencies. The Hub will also gather intelligence and data for use in planning responses and initiating proactive operations targeting offenders who are exploiting vulnerable members of our community.

In addition, joined-up services also operate within local police stations across the Wirral tied into weekly briefings involving police officers, PCSOs, the Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Community Patrol Officers and the Fire Service.

Police and emergency services have already benefitted from the efforts of officers in the Hub focusing activity on frequent callers, directing resources better and tackling underlying issues behind these frequent calls which will reduce the likelihood of unnecessary calls to the emergency services in the future.

Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner, Jane Kennedy, added: "It's clear that this move to further increase collaboration and combine community safety services on the Wirral is already bringing benefits to people living in the area and is enabling our services to work more effectively and efficiently."

"In this era of austerity, no organisation can afford to work in isolation and this is a great example of how public and third sector agencies can work together to share knowledge, expertise and resources to make our communities safer."



LED Street Light Replacement

More than £11 million is being invested to replace all 27,000 of the borough's streetlights with modern, energy efficient and environmentally friendly LED bulbs.

Cllr Phil Davies explained:

"Following a long-running campaign lead by Cllr Stuart Whittingham, cabinet member for Transport, we are delighted to have secured £4.6m of funding from SALEX to provide 27,000 new LED lamps with remote control dimmers and switches.

"We will also deploy £6m from our Capital Funds to take the opportunity to replace broken and damaged lamp-post columns at the same time, and make a further £750,000 available to repair bollards, damaged signs and other safety features.

"This is the single largest investment in our street lighting and road safety for 10 years."

The Council secured the interest-free funds from SALIX, an independent, not-for-profit company funded by The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, The Welsh Assembly Government and The Scottish Government. Salix works in partnership with The Higher Education Funding Council for England on its Revolving Green Fund.

Cllr Davies continued: "This is another example of the Council delivering on its 20 pledges. We have negotiated an interest-free deal where we recoup the investment through savings made by reducing our energy consumption, having more effective maintenance management, and receiving new grants and payments for using this technology to reduce our carbon footprint."

Cllr. Stuart Whittingham, cabinet member for Highways and Transport, said:

“We know good street-lighting is important for road and community safety, we know it helps reduce crime in our neighbourhoods and it helps make our high streets more vibrant and thriving than they already are.

“This is a Win-Win-Win – Good for Wirral residents and road-users, Good for our already stretched finances, and Good for the environment too.”



ENVIRONMENT



2400

**HOMES
IMPROVED**



266

**POTHoles
REPAIRED**



27,000

**STREETLIGHTS
TO BE REPLACED**

We know how important our local environment is to local people. Living in a safe, clean, well looked after community leads to a better quality of life. We will never compromise on our determination to protect Wirral, and continue to make our borough a fantastic place to live and visit.

This past year has seen many successes, with incredibly successful events, thousands of houses being built or improved, areas cleaned and new, innovative services launched to keep residents safer.

Leisure and culture opportunities for all

More than 1000 events have taken place in Wirral's parks since the launch of the Wirral Plan, ranging from major visitor events through to volunteer led walking and heritage tours.

Wirral's leisure and cultural attractions are extensively supported by an army of volunteers, community organisations and friends groups, who work tirelessly to make sure parks, open spaces, beaches and various attractions in our borough are first rate.

This hard work is consistently recognised with Wirral receiving more Green Flag awards than anywhere else in our region,

and proudly holding its first Blue Flag, for Harrison Drive beach in Wallasey.

Wirral residents live healthier lives

This year we have commissioned many new and improved services to help people live healthier lives, through innovative community funding to working with businesses and linking better with partners.

One superb example of how our work across the Partnership is delivering tangible, positive results is in the rates of smoking across the borough, which has reduced from 18.9% to 15.7% - more than double the national average for improvement. Just in the past year, more than 1300 residents access stop smoking services and were still 'quit' at 4 weeks.

The 'reduce the strength' campaign continues to improve, reducing problem drinking and the associated anti-social behaviour which comes with it. All retailers in Birkenhead Town Centre have now

committed to stop selling super strength lager and cider, and the scheme is now being expanded to areas such as Rock Ferry, Seacombe, Poulton and New Ferry. The new 'Ask Us' information, advice and guidance service has been a huge success, with more than 57,000 people being given free support on a diverse range of issues in just the past year.

Wirral residents are also benefitting from a 'good' service from out of hours GPs, following a recent CQC inspection. Further inspections of the 'core' services provided by the Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust have not been published yet but inspectors have indicated that they found the staff at the Trust to be 'caring, open and with professional and compassionate staff across all clinical and corporate services'.

Community services are joined up and accessible

Making sure residents can access services easily and quickly is vital. It is incredibly frustrating for residents to not have easy access to information, to not be able to quickly and simply contact the council or any public agency to get advice or request a service.

During 2017, the first stage was completed in a major overhaul and improvement in accessing services. The Access Wirral programme will now completely redesign and simplify how residents can access services – from paying a bill, through to asking for a pothole to be filled, applying for a job or becoming a foster carer, all will be available online in a quick and easy method.

Extensive work is being delivered now to transform the way residents can engage with every public service in Wirral. How residents can influence decisions, how they can volunteer, or work with us to tackle issues in their communities, and ensuring local people have an active voice in every decision affecting their neighbourhood will all be improved by the Wirral Together programme, which will be fully launched during 2018.

Wirral Chamber of Commerce are supporting community organisations and volunteers all across the borough, through helping Community Action Wirral expand and improve their services. Community Action Wirral – a key member of the Wirral Partnership – are also providing huge support in connecting organisations and people in the borough. CAW promotes, supports, engages and is involved in voluntary and community work all across the borough.

Good quality housing

All across Wirral, new housing developments are being put forward for consultation and decisions. We are seeing huge interest in Wirral as a place to visit, work and live. Almost 400 new affordable homes were built just in the past year, with another 465 homes already scheduled to start construction in 2018/19.

More landlords than ever are now registered with the selective licensing scheme, which requires them to bring their houses up to a minimum quality standard before they can be put on the market. This scheme is being expanded to new areas now, following

extremely positive feedback from residents. We have also seen more than 800 homes improved, with hazards removed and better facilities installed. We will continue to work every day to ensure Wirral residents have a good choice of excellent quality housing.

Many services and intensive support is also in place to support residents who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless. Redesigned, more targeted support is now in place to help people and a range of organisations across the borough are providing support. Wirral Chamber of Commerce also held a 'rucksack challenge' campaign which led to the donation of more than 500 rucksacks filled with essential items to support homeless people.

Attractive local environment

Litter and environmental crime is a blight on the landscape. Wirral residents said they wanted a zero tolerance approach, which is exactly what has been delivered. More than 5000 fixed penalty notices have been issued to people dropping litter or not cleaning up after their dogs since the start of the Wirral Plan.

Wirral is aiming to be the first place in Merseyside to ban single-use plastics (SUP), such as cups, plastic bottles, straws, food packaging and plastic lids. We have set up a task force of community group representatives and volunteers that meet regularly to drive us towards a SUP Free Wirral. Wirral is blazing a trail in the city region on this issue and will also be reviewing procurement arrangements to

address the purchase and use of SUP as part of our service provision, with a particular focus on provision within schools - single use water cups and drinking straws.

Recycling continues to be a major focus of attention for the borough. Wirral now sends less than 10% of its waste to landfill. The vast majority of our waste is now recycled or converted into green energy to power the national grid.

Work is being done to make sure Wirral reaches its target of recycling 50% of all waste. Wirral public agencies are working to find new ways to make recycling easier for residents and improve current collection arrangements to offer more recycling opportunities, but any changes which will be proposed will be affordable, effective and acceptable to our residents.

Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe

Wirral now has the lowest crime rate per population in Merseyside and is the 3rd lowest within the Home Office defined 'family' of 15 demographically similar areas.

These achievements are testament to the hard work of everyone in the 'Safer Wirral Hub', a unique combined Police/Council community safety service. The Hub, which integrates community safety related services and agencies into a single resource, to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and reduce statutory front line services demands.

Agencies are also working together – under the leadership of Merseyside Fire and Rescue

service – to make sure local people are safe in their homes. As part of a programme of arson awareness home visits and events, hundreds of local families have benefitted from Home Fire Safety checks. As well as supporting residents in their homes, the work extends to community organisations and buildings, with one such project covering Charing Cross Methodist Neighbourhood Centre.

Home to many different community events and activities every day, Merseyside Fire and Rescue led various partner agencies to provide support to improve the building, make it safer, and led the development of a community funded improvement programme.

OUR PRIORITIES

Everyone associated with the Wirral Partnership should be proud of the progress this document has described, and possess a shared determination to continue our improvements and delivery to create the Wirral residents deserve.

This next section of the report explains the priorities for the next twelve months of the Wirral Plan.

Be well run. Wirral residents deserve excellent services.

Every public agency in Wirral is committed to ensuring residents can access the best, most modern, well designed public services possible. We know with continued austerity we cannot continue to deliver what we always have, the way we always have. We have found innovative, effective solutions in many areas already – integrated health and social care, our Safer Wirral Hub and the extremely successful Hive Youth Zone to name a few. We must continue to find these solutions, and make sure every service is designed to meet modern needs.

It is also important we don't forget the simple, every-day services such as street cleanliness, community health care, GP surgeries, education, social care, road maintenance and street lighting which sometimes go unnoticed, but are incredibly important to the quality of life every resident enjoys. We will redouble our efforts to improve the public realm, further improve the health and social care people benefit from and work with residents in every community to ensure their concerns are listened to.

Be commercial, entrepreneurial and make sure every penny counts.

Austerity continues to bite. Public services in Wirral have borne the brunt of huge funding reductions more than most, with more still to come. This makes it ever more important

to make the Wirral Pound go further, and do everything possible to find better value, more creative and imaginative ways of meeting the needs of local people.

Our new financial strategy will ensure we continue to place improved outcomes for Wirral residents at the centre of all we do. Working as a partnership, public services in Wirral will focus on long-term investments in improving the borough, and not on short term, reactive cuts to meet savings targets. The financial strategy for Wirral will ensure we target our resources where they are most needed, root out inefficiency and duplication where it still exists, and deliver more for Wirral residents.

Bringing more money into the borough, to replace and even build on what is being taken away, is also vital. Developments like Wirral Growth Company, which will capitalise on under used land and buildings owned by the public sector and use them to create jobs, homes, new businesses and drive revenue, will help support public services.

We will launch a new programme of work designed to keep more public money in Wirral. Our building community wealth programme will see more major public services keep local spend local – recruiting local people, employing local businesses and ensuring that the benefits of investment in our borough are felt most by local residents.'

Put the customer at the centre of all we do.

Every member of the Wirral Partnership exists to improve the quality of life local people can enjoy. Better health, homes, jobs, education, environment – regardless of the specific role or service, they all exist to improve the borough and the lives of its residents.

We must work together to make sure we can deliver on what residents need and expect. It means focussing on skills, and making sure our residents are equipped to take advantage of the huge opportunities available to them through our growing economy.

It also means delivering a digital transformation of the borough, making sure every resident has easy access to the internet – and the skills to use it – and

ensuring our services are as available and accessible online as they are in person.

It's vital that each and every one of our services is designed around what residents want, and what they need. It should be easy to access services, to work with public bodies, and those residents who want to go further and take action themselves to improve their communities should be encouraged and empowered to do so.

Making sure every Wirral resident feels able and supported to get involved in their local community and make a difference is a key priority for the Wirral Partnership in the coming year. The next section of this report talks about the Wirral Together programme, which is how we hope to make it happen.

WIRRAL TOGETHER

Wirral is a collection of close-knit, engaged and thriving communities. Every day, all across the borough, these communities work tirelessly to improve their local areas: through residents associations, tenants groups, neighbourhood forums and more informal groups of volunteers.

They want to be active, they want to help their neighbours, and keep their area clean. They want to play a major role in community life and in keeping their neighbourhood a place they are proud of.

Too often, bureaucracy and red tape get in their way. The Wirral Together programme is about putting that right. It is about empowering local people to take the community leadership role they want, and provide them with all the support they need to make it a success.

Wirral Together is an informal, co-produced agreement between the Council, its partners and every Wirral resident to work together to create a better borough.

It contains a set of shared goals which we will work to achieve, which have been developed through extensive consultation and conversations with residents throughout the borough. The Council and its partners have committed to what they will do and in return we need residents and businesses to play their part, too.

Wirral Together is about creating a new relationship between public agencies and our residents. It is about changing behaviour, moving to a point where public services are more responsive to local issues and open to new solutions, and where local people are more willing to step up and take ownership for improving things in their communities.

We know we can't achieve all of our ambitions for Wirral alone. We need residents to play their part too. We also know that in the past we have gotten in the way when residents have tried to do just that. Wirral Together is about putting that right. It's about helping us all do our bit to make Wirral a better place, together.

The Wirral Together programme should unlock potential within communities, increasing expertise and capacity within local areas to improve the issues which are most important to our residents.

This spirit of collaboration and community pride is vital to the future of our place.

The logo for 'Wirral Together' features the word 'Wirral' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, positioned above the word 'Together'. 'Together' is written in a large, white, cursive script font. The entire logo is set against a dark blue background.

CONCLUSION

“We are all proud of Wirral. It is a great place to live, to work and to grow up.”

It brings together beautiful, rural countryside with cutting edge technology and it has a cultural and economic history which is second to none.

The Wirral Plan, and the 20 Pledges we have committed to, are about its future. They are about delivering on the promises which have been made to Wirral residents.

We have achieved a lot already, but we know there is still much to do;

- ***We must continue to ‘get the basics right’, and make sure Wirral residents can enjoy the best possible quality of service – from the quality of our local environment, through to the health of our residents, the quality of our public realm and the education and training our residents can receive.***
- ***We must never compromise on our ambitions for Wirral. Through developments such as The Wirral Growth Company, we must aim and achieve high aspirations for our borough and create the jobs, homes and developments which our residents need.***

- ***We will continue to strive for excellence in everything we do - delivering an efficient, well-run set of public services which is modern, flexible and meets the needs of our residents. Our services will be financially sustainable, and we will work as a full partnership to make sure we invest public money in the right areas.***

- ***We will put Wirra residents first – always.***

I commit to ensuring these points are delivered in the coming year.

I am proud of what we have achieved so far, and remain excited about the future of Wirral.



Cllr Phil Davies

Leader of Wirral Council and Chair of the Wirral Partnership

WIRRAL PLAN 2020: ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

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THE WIRRAL PARTNERSHIP