

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

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| REPORT OF | Councillor Angela Davies |
| CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR | Jobs & Growth |
| CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER | Paul Satoor – Corporate Director for Business Management |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

A THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMY

Wirral Growth Company is preparing plans to drive unprecedented regeneration across our borough, starting with developments in Moreton, Bromborough and Birkenhead. This Partnership, a 50/50 deal with Wirral Council and Muse Developments, is the most entrepreneurial and ambitious programme we have ever embarked upon.

The Partnership will be formally incorporated imminently, which will be followed by an extensive public consultation exercise on the new developments. We will start with Birkenhead Commercial District, as we take steps to revitalise and reinvigorate the centre of Birkenhead. Residents, community groups and businesses will all have an opportunity to shape the future of Birkenhead Town Centre.

At the heart of this thriving Birkenhead town centre will be a commercial district which includes Grade A office space, a new market and retail options, and an improved leisure centre. Creating a vibrant commercial district will attract new businesses to Birkenhead, provide space for existing Wirral firms to grow, and also offers the opportunity for our borough's largest employer, the public sector, to consolidate its real estate and office requirements in line with One Public Estate policies.

The new Birkenhead Commercial District will attract an investment of up to £150m. Our ambitions for Wirral Growth Company are anchored in our desire to see economic, social and environmental opportunities increase for Wirral residents and businesses. The employment and apprenticeships that this investment will generate are vital for local people.

Members will be aware that part of our ambitious plans for the new Birkenhead will see us redevelop the area currently occupied by the Vue Cinema and the Europa Pools Leisure Centre. The Council has recently signalled its commitment to this regeneration through purchasing the freehold on the Vue site, which was

agreed by Cabinet in 2018. You can read more about this in the [Liverpool Echo](#) and [Wirral Globe](#).

Members will also be aware that we have recently retaken the leasehold of Birkenhead Market, ensuring we are able to take control of the site and deliver a new market for Birkenhead, which becomes a visitor attraction in its own right. Read more about these developments in the [Wirral Globe](#).

I want to update Members on the excellent performance towards our Pledge targets in this area. Just a few of the outstanding results are provided for Members below:

- The European funded Ways to Work Programme reaching a significant milestone having supported over 5,000 residents since April 2016 with over half of those engaged securing employment or training so far.
- A significant improvement in the key performance indicator for workforce skills in Wirral, with the National Employer Skills Survey finding that Wirral businesses reported some of the lowest levels of skills gaps in the City Region.
- A continued focus on business growth with Wirral Chamber providing support to over 200 businesses so far this financial year and supporting over 80 new business starts.