



A report produced by the  
**Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Key Regeneration Projects workshop

March 2020 Final Report

DRAFT



challenge outcomes  
pre-decision examine report  
public impact residents  
review call-in support  
overview influence engage  
value-for-money task&finish  
oversight recommend

**Scrutiny**

## Contents

Workshop Overview .....	3
Presentations.....	3
Recommendations.....	4
Attendance .....	5

DRAFT

## Workshop Overview

This workshop was requested by the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Director of Regeneration and Place to give members of the Committee the opportunity to gain an insight into the current regeneration projects, and to provide an overview of the first Wirral Growth Company Partnership Business Plan.

Given the cross-cutting nature of the workshop, the chair agreed to invite the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to attend.

Confidential papers were sent out in advance, so members of both committees had an opportunity to view the draft cabinet report, business plan and business cases.

The session focused on:

- Wirral Growth Company
- Site Development Plans
- The Principles and Financial overview of WGC Business Plan
- And the recommended funding route for Birkenhead Commercial District

## Presentations

Members received a comprehensive presentation from the Director of Regeneration and Place, as well as representatives from MUSE. Also, in attendance were the Assistant Directors for Regeneration and Inward Investment, and Finance and Investment.

The presentation included slides on Wirral's approach to regeneration and provided information on the ongoing Local Plan and Wirral Growth Company. It also provided visual guides to the Moreton sites (Foxfield and Pasture Road Sites) and the redevelopment of Birkenhead Town centre.

Members were then presented with slides on the various funding options, which complimented the financial information that had already received.

## Members Questions

**Q.** One member felt that the indicational profit was front loaded and queried the prophet phasing for Birkenhead. They were interested in the profit profile over time and the risk profile.

**A.** Finance assured they could provide the profit profile, and the Member was assured that demand for office space has grown in the Wirral, but not supplied.

**Q.** A query was raised regarding proposals for a Hotel within Birkenhead Town Centre and whether there had been any interest from Large Chains.

**A.** Members were advised that it was still at an early stage, but an increase in a student population, as well as an incremental plan to reinvigorate Birkenhead as a commercial, leisure and residential hub means that there is confidence that the interest will be there

**Q.** Sustainable transport was queried, with members interested in knowing if this was being considered.

**A.** It was confirmed that this will play a bit part of the regeneration process, but there would need to be consideration as to what would be the best mode of transport for Birkenhead.

**Q.** Members also queried the Building Research and Environmental Assessment Method Assessment Method (BREEAM) for buildings and asked if it would be possible to achieve an 'Outstanding' assessment, rather than 'Excellent' which is what developers are aiming for.

**A.** It was noted that the 'Outstanding' assessment is usually only gained by bespoke buildings and would not be feasible financially, and the environmental impact between the two assessments is negligible.

**Q.** The possible relocation of Birkenhead Market was questions, with Members wanting assurance that existing traders would be included within the development.

**A.** Consultation with traders will be starting shortly and moving premises can be done quickly to minimise disruption. A FAQ sheet will be developed for ward members. Ideally, any new market facility will be bespoke and have the facilities in place to cater for all trades.

Further questions were raised regarding Council premises, and Members reiterated the need to be open and transparent. Further information was requested on Profit Phasing, Council Tax and NNDR which officers agreed to supply.

## Recommendations

Members of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee Business O&S Committee on 27th November 2019, Committee resolved that:

**"a workshop be convened to review the Wirral Growth Company Partnership Plan and associated Business Cases and, if necessary, the feedback report to Cabinet be approved by the Chair and party spokespersons".**

Further to the workshop held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2020 Members of the Business and Environment Overview and Scrutiny committee have had sight of the financial papers, plans and draft cabinet report for WGC and have received copies of the presentation.

The Chair and Party Spokespersons of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee are satisfied with the information received and endorse the report going to cabinet on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020, with the recommendation that members receive regular updates from the Director of Place and Regeneration and have sight of further plans and financial documents as they progress.

## Attendance

### Councillors

Cllr Dave Mitchell  
Cllr Phil Gilchrist  
Cllr Steve Hayes  
Cllr Brian Kenny  
Cllr Helen Cameron  
Cllr Steve Hayes  
Cllr Pat Cleary  
Cllr Karl Greaney  
Cllr Tony Norbury  
Cllr Jo Bird

### Officers

Alan Evans (Director for Regeneration and Place)  
Sally Shah (Assistant Director for Regeneration and Housing Growth)  
Daniel I Kirwan (Assistant Director for Finance and Investment)  
Mike Horner & Jonathan Ashcroft (Muse Developments)  
James Dair (Avison Young)  
Anna Perrett and Alexandra Davidson (Scrutiny Officers)