

COVID 19 TACTICAL CO-ORDINATING GROUP**DATE: 25 JUNE 2020**

DECISION REQUEST / PROPOSAL	Wirral Summer Coastal Plan 2020 (COVID19)
DECISION PROPOSED BY	Neighbourhood Services Cell - Andy McCartan
SERVICE AREA AFFECTED	Neighbourhood Services
IDENTIFIED CRITICAL SERVICE Y/N	N

PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS NOT A COMMITTEE REPORT AND SHOULD OUTLINE ISSUES IN BRIEF FOCUSING ON KEY INFORMATION

1. DECISION SUMMARY**TCG is asked to:-**

- a) Note the information contained in this report regarding the implementation of a Coastal and Parks / Countryside plan for Wirral designed to manage the anticipated rise in visitor numbers to Wirral Coastal, Parks and Countryside areas as a result of restrictions imposed by the COVID19 pandemic.
- b) Support and ratify the implementation of the plan for a 12 week period
- c) Note the financial implications to the effect of circa £477k against COVID19 budgets should the plan run for the proposed duration

2. INFORMATION AND INTELLIGENCE – SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES AND WORKFORCE SUMMARY

In recent weeks Wirral has seen large numbers of visitors to its Coastal locations - New Brighton and West Kirkby and Parks and Countryside areas. These visitors are both local and non-local and have resulted in significant difficulties with existing car parking and waste management infrastructure and capacity being overwhelmed; unacceptable and anti-social behaviour including selfish and aggressive attitudes, large-scale gatherings and organised parties; fires as a result of barbeques, discarded litter and arson; and increased tension between residents and visitors including urination and defecation on land and property. Other popular coastal and outdoor locations across England have experienced similar issues

The current issues are often experienced at these locations on “busy weekends” in the summer-months; but have been amplified due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

and during the prolonged periods of fine weather. The COVID-19-related impacts include reduced staffing capacity for Council and partner services; closure of some facilities; closure of workplaces and schools effectively extending the weekend throughout the week; and heightened public anxiety due to concerns about spread of the virus.

Locally, these issues have increased since government announcements easing aspects of COVID-19 “lockdown”, such as extending the travel-distance and time allowed for exercise and leisure. Visitor numbers may also have been increased due to the continued “lockdown” in Wales, preventing people traveling to popular visitor locations there. The expected reopening of pubs and restaurants from 4 July 2020 could also compound the existing problems.

This plan has **NOT** been established to “encourage” visitors to Wirral’s Coast and Parks / Countryside areas. The plan recognises that the behaviours of residents and visitors has changed as a consequence of the COVID19 pandemic, and as such the plan **HAS** been established to manage behaviours, control local environmental quality and anti-social behaviour, and provide insofar as is possible a “safe environment” for those who do choose to visit these areas.

Consequently, all communications surrounding the plan will continue to promote stay at home and social distancing messaging in the interests of “Keeping Wirral Well”. There is therefore no single Communications Plan that will run across the summer period but rather any communications will retain key corporate and national messages whilst being flexible enough to respond to localised issues and challenges.

Likewise, this document does not propose a single approach but a plan that is fluid and responsive and subject to close communications with partner agencies.

The key themes of the plan to note are:

- The implementation of additional Waste and Environmental facilities – additional waste containment and additional cleansing
- The imposition of restricted parking and traffic management zones in New Brighton
- Increased co-ordination of activity and intelligence between WBC and partner agencies – Merseyside Police, MFRS, RNLI etc and increased WBC presence at key points through Community Patrol e.g. slipways etc
- The restrictions on vehicular access to New Brighton Dips
- The reinstatement of a limited number of Public Toilets for emergency and medical use
- The provision of a dedicated Duty Senior Manager from Neighbourhood Services every weekend

3. RISK ASSESSMENT / H&S AND STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTING DECISION

N/A

4. WHAT POWERS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED

- **What are the legal powers/duties to be exercised in implementing the proposed decision?**

The Experimental Traffic Order has been made under Sections 9 and 10 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

- **What are the legal implications of the proposed decision on other parts of the Council, bodies and communities?**

N/A

- **What duties have been had regard to in coming to the recommendation?**

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty on the Council to keep land and highways in its ownership free from litter and refuse and to take steps to ensure that such land is kept “clean”

5. IDENTIFICATION OF CONTINGENCIES OR OTHER OPTIONS

- **Include details of any alternative options that were considered viable in developing and proposing the recommendation/decision and state why they should now be rejected.**

Do Nothing – Rejected on the basis that one hot weekend in May has already seen overwhelming use of our Coastal and Countryside areas. Visitor numbers to Wirral Coastal, Parks and Countryside areas as a result of restrictions post lockdown are only expected to increase as the economy reopens, weather improves and as we enter into school holidays.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (APPROXIMATE / PROJECTED)

- **What value of budget is being requested?** £ 477,071.48. A full financial breakdown of activity is provided in **Section (k) of the Appendix to this report**. Approximately £100k of this expenditure will be capitalised.
- **How long will it be for?** 12 Weeks
- **What funding pot is it coming from (specify where COVID specific)?**
COVID 19 Budget
- Name of Finance Officer involved in decision: Sarah Cox

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- **Any other matters taken into consideration and worthy of noting**

DECISION PRESENTED TO TSG ON	Date
DECISION OF TSG	APPROVED

APPENDICES

Please use this Section to provide supporting information or documentation on the development of additional H&S related information required to support decision and for consultation with unions/staff (N.B. Supporting Documentation can be embedded within each of the areas below)

a) Risk Assessments – Provide details / copies of all appropriate

Risk assessments exist for those services already delivered e.g. waste, cleansing, highways etc

A separate RA will be completed as part of the decision process for the reintroduction of public conveniences

b) Public Health & Infection Control Considerations

Public Health and ICM will be completed for the reinstatement of Public Conveniences

c) PPE / ICM requirements have been considered

Public Health and ICM will be completed for the reinstatement of Public Conveniences

d) Testing

N/A

e) Other Guidance Available

WBC has been liaising with other Regional Coastal Authorities in developing this Coastal Plan. Other LA's both regionally and Nationwide have experienced similar challenges to WBC and consequently have began implementing their own similar response.

f) Asset Management Considerations

Asset management implications will be completed for the reinstatement of Public Conveniences

g) Public Safety

The rationale for the implementation of this plan is to support public safety and all existing and subsequent messaging will support this objective

h) Communications Plan

A dedicated Communications plan has been developed to support activities and interventions across the summer period

i) Training Requirements

There are no training requirements associated with this Coastal Plan

j) Timetable and Review Process

The impacts and implications of this Coastal Plan and accompanying decision will last for 12 weeks with a weekly review process between officers and appropriate Elected Members

k) Finance Breakdown

Coastal Plan - Summary of costs for 12 Weeks		Expenditure
Waste and Environment		£195,484.24
Parks and Green Space		
Park Maintenance Staff	£39,200.00	
Park Workshop Staff (Estimated)	£2,004.60	
Community Patrol - From beginning August to allow time to recruit (Agency would need to be utilised if Community Patrol cover required sooner costs of which are not included here)	£95,371.64	
Rocks to act as barrier to discourage parking at Dips in New Brighton (To be Capitalised) - Estimate	£100,000.00	
Total Parks and Green Space		£236,576.24
Toilets		£24,300.00
Highways		
VMS Sign - £125 Delivery & £480 per week from 22/05/20-31/08/20 - 15 weeks	£7,325.00	
Lane Closure - East Parade for pop up cycle lane	£1,380.00	
Cones for pop up cycle lane £250 per week (04/05/20-31/08/20) - 17 Weeks	£4,250.00	
Line Painting	£7,384.00	
		£20,339.00
Signage		
16 A2 Toilet Signs	£372.00	
Handwashing - Costs to be confirmed (not needed now)	£0.00	
		£372.00
Total Coastal Plan Expenditure		£477,071.48