

## WIRRAL PLAN REFRESH – KEY PRIORITIES: 6 MONTH REVIEW

The diagram below summarises the 11 ‘Big Ticket Items’ for 2022 – 23 that were identified in the Wirral Plan, as key priorities for the year. An update to determine progress against these items has been provided in detail in the tables below and will be utilised to inform the development of the refreshed Wirral Plan.

### BIG TICKET ITEMS



### PROGRESS UPDATE

#### Driving forward regeneration

##### High-level progress update

- The Council submitted its Local Plan for examination on 26th October 2022. This is a major milestone in setting the new spatial policy for the Borough. Inspectors have been appointed and the hearings will begin on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023.
- LeftBank Programme Board has been set up to coordinate funding and ensure delivery against the timescales associated with the funding sources.
- Government awarded Wirral Council funding through its New Development Corporation Competition Programme to identify options for the delivery of the regeneration programme in Birkenhead.
- Town Deal funding awarded to a range of projects including the Wirral Waters Sustainability Hub.
- Wirral's UK Shared Prosperity Fund Phase 1 Investment Plan (UKSPF) was submitted to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.
- Work has also been underway to deliver against the projects. Key highlights include: Start on site of the new offices in Birkenhead Town Centre, construction underway at Wirral Waters for the 500 new apartments at Millers Quay, the Hythe office has opened, and tenants secured, designs progressed for the new Birkenhead market.
- Eureka! Science + Discovery Museum opened 11<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at Seacombe.
- A number of masterplans have been progressed, focusing on; Marine Promenade area of New Brighton, Liscard Town Centre, Woodside, Seacombe Corridor, Hind Street and Hamilton Park.
- Business Support Service: Our Business Support Service has worked with 783 businesses to date this year, offering a wide range of support. Some of our highlights include working with the world's first UN

**2030 hub to support a local business to develop and introduce a Carbon Neutral Plan, supporting a local business with a relocation with an investment of £200k to support growth activity, and supporting a local business in their efforts to scale up.**

- **Work has also continued to deliver and progress housing and regeneration projects. Key highlights include:**
  - **175 households in Wirral have benefitted from improved energy efficiency measures through programmes supported by the Council and via National Grant programme funding secured. A further 157 are underway and due to complete which will result in more homes being thermal efficient and warmer.**
  - **Number of new affordable homes completed up to 25<sup>th</sup> November 2022 total 95, with a further 183 units started on site so far.**
  - **First phase of Redbridge Quay low carbon, modular homes completed at Wirral Waters in December 2022.**
- **Wirral Ways to Work Programme: The Worklessness Support Service, part of the wider Wirral Ways to Work Programme is delivered by Involve Northwest and provides personalised employment support. In the 12 months to October 2022 this service has engaged with 911 residents, supporting 531 into employment, education and training.**

### **Supporting narrative**

The Council submitted its Local Plan for examination on 26th October 2022. This is a major milestone in setting the new spatial policy for the Borough. The first Hearings will start on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023 with the adoption of the plan in early 2024.

A large-scale Regeneration Delivery Plan is currently under development to set out the project phasing and prioritisation of the regeneration programme. The Plan will sit alongside the Regeneration Finance Strategy. The Regeneration Delivery Team, working alongside the Regeneration PMO, is delivering on tranche 1 programmes (Birkenhead Waterfront, Central Birkenhead, Dock Branch Neighbourhood, Hind Street and Wirral Waters), which are a priority because of funding deadlines, and 4 tranche 2 programmes (Seacombe, Northside, Cleveland Street Neighbourhood (formerly Britannia) and Scotts Quay), which will be set out in the Delivery Plan. The delivery of regeneration in New Ferry is also being progressed. The Delivery Plan will be finalised early in 2023. A wider version of the Delivery Plan will follow that will look at the delivery of Wirral's wider regeneration programme across the Borough including Liscard.

To support the regeneration of the LeftBank the Council has critically attracted external funding from public sector sources (Future High Streets, Town Deal, Levelling Up, as well as from LCRC and Homes England) to support private sector investment. In addition, a LeftBank Programme Board has been set up to coordinate funding and ensure delivery against the timescales associated with these funding sources.

At the same time the Government awarded Wirral Council funding through its New Development Corporation Competition Programme (NDCCP) thereby enabling work to take place to identify the most appropriate delivery model for this programme. The development of a business case is being progressed collectively with DLUHC with a focus on identifying what works best for the locality. A fundamental principle has been that any delivery model should be locally led, reflect and inform the Council's Improvement Plan and be part of that improvement journey – a One Place One Plan approach.

In November 2022, Eureka! Science + Discovery Museum opened its doors bringing a new world-class attraction to Seacombe as part of Wirral's transformational regeneration programme along the Left Bank of the River Mersey. This has brought an attraction of national significance to the Wirral waterfront, with the exciting ambition to be the UK hub of science and discovery for young people attracting c.190,000 visitors a year. With content co-created by local young people and businesses, this will help to create the next generation of innovators, encouraging young people's aspirations via arts and creativity for them to explore and interpret broad science-based themes linked to key economic growth sectors.

Worklessness Support: Wirral is benefitting from the upcoming City Region Eurovision event. As part of the planning for this, the City Region hosted a Eurovision Jobs fair on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 which was attended by 43

Businesses and approximately 1,500 people looking for employment and volunteering opportunities. On the day 63 jobs were offered, including 3 Wirral met students who were offered their first ever job. From a local perspective Wirral's Employment Support Service, ReachOut engaged with over 50 Wirral residents and 20 Wirral employers. Wirral Met College actively promoted the Eurovision opportunities to all students and in excess of 50 students attended the event. Feedback from the day was extremely positive, and 32 of the students who attended now have volunteer positions secured.

## Community wealth and inclusive growth

### High-level progress update

- **A Community Asset Transfer Policy has been adopted and is encouraging the set-up of community-based organisations and cooperatives in the local community.**
- **In 2022/23, eleven different assets were considered for potential community asset transfer with positive outcomes agreed for six assets and two currently being developed.**
- **Community wealth building is at the heart of our regeneration:**
  - **Planning agreements as part of Left Bank developments have been reviewed to secure social value through employment and skills agreements.**
  - **Innovative methods to increase meaningful community engagement in project/masterplan designs have been developed.**
  - **Work with the Public Health Team and Community, Voluntary and Faith (CVF) sector is continuing to increase the range and scope of volunteering opportunities.**
- **The Council is working in partnership with anchor organisations in Wirral and across the City Region to focus on Procurement and Fair Employment to embed social value across supply chains to generate economic and social value; apprenticeships for care leavers and employment opportunities.**
- **Wirral Community Health & Care (WCHC) has become the first NHS organisation to obtain the Level 1 Quality Mark for Social Value.**
- **Wirral Met College is working with us to support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, ensuring access to employment and training for young people.**
- **We know that the Climate emergency means we have to build a sustainable inclusive economy. We have the natural and technological assets to be leaders in the green industrial revolution in Wirral and across the region. Mersey Tidal is one key example, where we are building the case for a globally significant asset that will help the country in moving to predictable, alternative, and long-term energy.**

### Supporting narrative

#### **Community Asset Transfer Policy:**

Wirral's Community Asset Transfer (CAT) approach is giving local people and community groups greater control in the future of their area and enabling local groups with the chance to own or manage community buildings, such as community centres or village halls. It encourages a stronger community spirit by bringing people from different backgrounds together to work towards a shared goal.

In March 2022, Policy & Resources Committee adopted an updated Community Asset Transfer Policy. The Policy directly supports Wirral's Community Wealth Building Strategy by encouraging the setup of community-based organisations and cooperatives in the local community and underpins our ambition to enable communities to become more independent, financially self-sufficient and shape public assets to run them in ways that are beneficial to them. In 2022/23, eleven different assets were considered for potential community asset transfer with positive outcomes agreed for six assets and two currently being developed. One asset is in progress for commercial let and three assets are progressing through business plan stage. In addition, as part of the Assets Strategy other assets are being considered and agreed for transfer to other organisations that are not specifically community organisations. As the asset transfer function moves into business as usual, further assets will come forward to be recommended for transfer.

Policy and Resources Committee on 9 November 2022 agreed the Council's Asset Strategy 2022-27 and this includes priorities for Asset Transfer and Community Asset Transfer.

### **Community Wealth & Regeneration:**

The Council is continuing to improve outcomes for residents through regeneration ensuring they benefit from sustainable transport networks, improved access to employment and training opportunities, better housing/living environments, and access to the latest technology through full fibre digital network roll out across the borough. The Regeneration Service is also putting Community Wealth at the heart of activities, supporting the Council's ambition (as outlined more broadly in the Community Wealth Strategy), to ensure that more of the wealth that is both held and generated in Wirral is retained and controlled locally and flows into the hands of local residents. This will be achieved through: using planning agreements as part of our developments at Left Bank to secure social value through employment and skills agreements; developing innovative methods to increase meaningful community engagement in project/masterplan designs; and working with our Public Health Team and VCF sector to increase the range and scope of volunteering opportunities.

### **Social Value & Health:**

The Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care System set an expectation in 2021 that all NHS organisations within the ICS footprint set out their approach to increasing social value by applying for the ICS-specific Social Value Business Charter Mark. Wirral Community Health & Care (WCHC) has gone further by becoming the first NHS organisation to obtain the Level 1 Quality Mark for Social Value. Social value measures have been applied in local authority contracts for many years and are reflected in a number of WCHC's contracts. There is a clear expectation that social value is now also reflected in contracts let by NHS organisations.

## **Continue to implement Health and Social Care reforms Tackling health inequalities & improving mental health**

### **High-level progress update**

- **The Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which is the overarching strategy to reduce inequalities and improve health outcomes on a population-level, was adopted by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and has since been shared with a range of key committees and groups across Wirral. An Implementation Group has been tasked with ensuring progress across the following 5 priorities:**
  1. **Create opportunities to get the best health outcomes from the economy and regeneration programmes.**
  2. **Strengthen health and care action to address differences in health outcomes.**
  3. **Ensure the best start in life for all children and young people.**
  4. **Create safe and healthy places for people to live that protect health and promote a good standard of living.**
  5. **Create a culture of health and wellbeing, listening to residents and working together.**
- **Reducing inequalities has been embedded in all priorities within the Wirral Place Based Partnership 2022/23 Operational Plan.**
- **Greater partnership working between the NHS and anchor institutions to focus on the 'causes of the causes' of health inequalities.**
- **Wirral Place Group has been established to deliver the 'Core 20 Plus 5' programme.**
- **Cheshire and Wirral Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Alliance has been established to design and deliver community mental health transformation.**
- **Other Wirral strategies have been developed that are contributing to tackling health inequalities and improving mental health e.g. Sports and Physical Activity Strategy.**

### **Supporting narrative**

Reducing health inequalities is a key national and local priority. Tackling health inequalities is high on the national agenda, with Government recently publishing a set of mutually reinforcing reforms:

- The Health and Care Bill and reforms to the health and care system
- Health and Social Care Integration: joining up care for people, places and populations
- The Adult Social Care reform white paper
- Reforms to the public health system

This national focus is replicated at a local level, with a strong commitment and desire among local leaders to

reduce avoidable health inequalities. The Wirral Place Based Partnership is committed to ensuring reducing health inequalities becomes a golden thread embedded within all actions. A strategic commitment to tackling health inequalities is also at the heart of the Wirral Plan, with the goal to improve healthy life expectancy and reducing the demand on health and care services.

NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, the ICB for Cheshire and Merseyside, came into being on 1 July 2022 during their inaugural Board meeting (meetings now being held in public and on a monthly basis). These arrangements are statutory under the provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2022. The ICB will be responsible for implementing the overall NHS strategy in Cheshire and Merseyside, assigning resources, securing assurance, and ensuring partners that the right activities are focused on securing the best outcomes for our communities. Integrated care is delivering better outcomes and experiences for residents, patients, and service users.

Integration will involve providers collaborating, but also entail integration between commissioners, developing pooled budgets between the Council and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside. This will build upon and strengthen the existing relationships and approaches in Wirral.

Wirral's Place Based Partnership will drive a culture towards greater collaboration and joint working and build upon what partners have already worked hard to develop over the years. Governance arrangements will continue to develop over time, with the potential to develop into more formal arrangements as working relationships and trust increases. The first meeting of the Wirral Place Based Partnership Board took place in October 2022. The Wirral Place Based Partnership Board will also incorporate Wirral Council and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside's NHS Act 2006 Section 75 and other joint decision-making arrangements through a Joint Strategic Commissioning Board Sub-Committee.

Whilst there are considerable health and economic challenges, nationally and globally, that we must withstand it is an exciting time for Wirral. We have a unique and timely opportunity to make a big difference.

The programme of regeneration in the borough is one of the biggest in Europe and will create a world class standard of economic opportunity, digital connectivity and growth for Wirral and our residents. The new Integrated Care System offers an opportunity to further improve health outcomes through stronger collaboration between health services and partners.

During 2022 we have continued to lead collaboration and the relationship between partners and with residents has never been stronger being underpinned by a plan for Wirral which aims to drive inclusive economic growth as well as improving services for health and social care, families, the environment and housing.

One example of this is Extra Care Housing. This is a priority set out within the Wirral Plan and the Wirral Housing Strategy. Extra Care Housing is housing that is designed with the needs of frailer older people in mind and with varying levels of care and support available on site. People who live in Extra Care Housing have their own self-contained homes, their own front doors, and a legal right to occupy the property. Extra Care Housing is also known as very sheltered housing, assisted living, or simply as 'housing with care'. It is a popular choice among older people because it can provide an alternative to a care home.

This will contribute significantly to the shift required from residential and nursing care placements to community-based living and will reduce the proportion of adult social care expenditure for people aged 65+ on residential / nursing care, enabling the Borough to reinvest valuable resources into other services.

Using the SHMA (Strategic Housing Market Assessment) analysis alone, the need is for an additional aggregate development of 145 units of extra care and/or sheltered housing each and every year between now and 2037. If the strategy is to reduce the dependence on residential care in favour of specialist housing that supports people in their own homes for longer, it is suggested that this is still a conservative estimate. For the Wirral 2021-26 plan it is suggested that 725 new units of Extra Care Housing and sheltered housing be developed by 2026. The recent success of Poppyfields Extra Care scheme in Saughall Massie offering 78 one and two bedroom flats during a pandemic is testament to what can be achieved in a challenging climate.

Another example of successful collaboration is the Wirral Combatting Drugs Partnership (CDP). This is a nationally mandated forum, bringing together a wide range of key stakeholders, including leaders from Police, Probation, NHS, drug use treatment and recovery services, the Voluntary and Community Sector and local

authority teams. An early priority for the Partnership is to develop lived experience membership.

The CDP leads and co-ordinates work to reduce drug-related harms in Wirral and consists of a Strategic and a Delivery group. The CDP will oversee grant allocations from central Government to tackle drug-related harms as part of the National Drug Strategy which have been confirmed for 23/24. The Wirral Drugs Strategy will be delivered by the Combatting Drugs Partnership (CDP) in Summer 2023. It will serve as the framework for future work tackling drug-related harms in Wirral, against which progress will be reported annually.

Wirral's Health and Wellbeing Strategy has recently been developed by the Health and Wellbeing Board, which is a collective of local organisations including the Council, NHS, Healthwatch, the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority, Merseyside Police, the Department for Work and Pensions and Wirral Metropolitan College.

Building on the range of achievements so far, the strategy focusses on the additional gain we can achieve for our residents by identifying innovative ways of working together to address wider population health outcomes and address deep-seated inequalities. The strategy priorities are aligned to the ambitions of the Wirral Plan, along with the recommendations of the evidence-based "All Together Fairer" Marmot team report for Cheshire and Merseyside. It is also a key part of the vision for the Integrated Care System, that has a duty to work closely with the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Significant background work has also been undertaken to ensure that the Community Mental Health (CMH) Transformation programme meets the ambitions of the NHS Long Term Plan and most importantly local population needs. The programme involves the work of many organisations (and patients and carers too) wanting change for others. Cheshire and Wirral Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Alliance is the coproduced name and subsequent 'branding' that has been co-produced by all members of the partners working together in Cheshire and Wirral to design and deliver community mental health transformation.

In addition to local partners, we have also taken on learning from other areas and organisations undergoing CMH transformation. Examples of this are:

- Implementing the Dialog plus outcomes framework developed by East London Foundation Trust
- Developing a primary care mental health system with advice from Cambridge and Peterborough and Coventry and Warwickshire Transformation partnerships
- Developing a voluntary sector alliance based on advice from colleagues in Somerset, Newcastle, and Durham
- Developing our engagement project with information and ideas from Manchester, Leeds, and Newcastle transformation programmes.

The Council also has a number of other strategies that are currently being delivered that are contributing to tackling health inequalities and improving mental health. These include:

- Health Inequalities Strategy
- Sports and Physical Activity Strategy
- Domestic Abuse Strategy

## Health protection & living with Covid-19

### High-level progress update

- **Re-established the multi-agency Wirral Health Protection Board which is responsible for the oversight of health protection arrangements in Wirral and providing assurance to the Health and Wellbeing Board that there are safe, effective, integrated arrangements and plans in place across the borough to protect the health of the population.**
- **Partnership work has been undertaken to develop a Wirral Health Protection Strategy 2023-2027. An effective local approach to health protection is vital to improve health and wellbeing, protect the local economy, and reduce health inequalities. The Strategy sets out our collective approach to ensuring we have a resilient health protection system in Wirral to protect people from infectious diseases, environmental hazards and ensure we are prepared for future emergencies.**
- **The Wirral Health Protection Service within the Public Health Team is fully established and ensures a continued sustainable local approach to living with COVID-19 and to build on existing partnerships/working relationships developed during the pandemic.**
- **Activity is underway to assess ventilation within Council buildings and ventilation. This includes:**
  - **Building/ventilation surveys completed**
  - **Phased installation programme of CO2 monitors**
  - **Natural ventilation is being maximised where possible.**

### Supporting narrative

Wirral's multi-agency Health protection Board has been successfully re-established. The Health Protection Board is chaired by the Wirral Director of Public Health and is a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board, consisting of partners from UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Integrated Care Board (ICB), Environmental Health, NHS England (NHSE), Local NHS Trusts, Health and Social Care, Emergency Planning and Public Health.

The Wirral Health protection Board has worked collaboratively to develop a Wirral Health Protection Strategy 2023-2027. The agreed vision is to continue protecting people and communities in Wirral from the impact of infectious diseases and environmental hazards in order to improve health and wellbeing, protect the economy, and reduce health inequalities. With the aim Wirral has a high-performing health protection system that works effectively with local, regional, and national partners. The Strategy sets out how through taking a preventative and proactive local approach and identifies the following priority areas for action:

- Ongoing COVID-19 response, including being prepared for new variants;
- Strengthen infection prevention and control;
- Reduce the impact of antimicrobial resistance (AMR);
- Reduce vaccine preventable diseases amongst adults and children;
- Strengthen preparedness, resilience and response to outbreaks, major incidents and emergencies;
- Reduce health harms from climate and environmental hazards;
- Reduce the harmful impact to health of Tuberculosis and blood-borne viruses, including Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV.

In response to this, Wirral's proposed Health Protection Service will ensure a continued sustainable local approach to living with COVID-19, ensuring future resilience through maintaining capacity that is flexible and adaptable to local needs as required. This will ensure we have sufficient, dedicated local resources and an ability to manage increased demand, for example, as new waves of the pandemic emerge and at key points in the calendar e.g., winter.

The Service will contribute to the delivery of the Wirral Health protection Strategy and Wirral Plan aims, in particular 'Active and Healthy Lives', supporting Wirral residents and communities to live safely with COVID-19 and protect the health of communities from infectious diseases and environmental hazards.

In addition, with regards to Council buildings and ventilation, activity is currently underway to ensure continuity of service to many and varied requirements for the Local authority from office-based use to public realm services. Numerous building surveys have been and are continuing to be carried out to reassess earlier ventilation surveys, to ensure current statutory guidance is being implemented to reduce the risk of viral infection transmission indoors. A phased installation programme of CO2 monitors in buildings is also being progressed and all available existing natural ventilation is being maximised.



## Continue to redesign a wider health and neighbourhood model & Responding to local needs

### High-level progress update

- **Work is underway to redesign a wider health and neighbourhood model, based on a 'bottom up' approach to deliver more targeted support to local areas.**
- **A multi-agency Steering Group is being established to develop a proposed neighbourhood model.**

### Supporting narrative

Tackling health inequalities is a priority both for the NHS and the Integrated Care Board and also for Wirral Council. The proposed neighbourhood model will enable the implementation of the priorities within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and also the Wirral Plan. It will also reflect the priorities within the currently draft Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB) Strategy. Developing a neighbourhood model is a priority work programme of the Wirral Delivery Plan.

The proposed model is to adopt a neighbourhood care model and a 'bottom up' approach. Each neighbourhood will have a core group, chaired by a local community champion, with representation from across their neighbourhood, their health and care providers and local councillors. This group will be supported by Council and ICB managers who will provide population health dashboards to each neighbourhood and support with adopting a quality improvement methodology to their work. Each neighbourhood will agree their own particular priority for addressing their health inequalities using their population health dashboard and also local intelligence. The focus will be on prevention and the wider determinants of health.

## Supporting residents with the cost-of-living crisis

### High-level progress update

- **Health and Wellbeing Board is taking strategic responsibility for the borough's response to cost-of-living challenges given the need for a borough-wide response (regular reports are now going to P&R Committee).**
- **A Cost-of-living Action Group has been established to respond to strategic and operational issues being reported by residents and officers delivering front line services.**
- **Three-point Communications Plan (along with cost-of-living branding) has been developed to signpost residents to the range of support available across the borough from a wide range of partners.**
- **We continuing to work with partners on Warm Hubs and have developed a directory of community, voluntary and faith sector organisations and groups providing warm hubs which has been mapped in Infobank and is updated weekly.**
- **A Cost-of-Living Partnership Summit took place on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022, which brought together partners to discuss the cost-of-living crisis in Wirral and what more could be done to support residents.**
- **The Economic Growth Team is aiming to mitigate the impact on businesses and the employment market. The team is working closely with the LCR Growth Hub and our Public Health Team to monitor the impact of the cost-of-living rise on the local economy, coordinate relevant interventions wherever possible and eligible through national funding streams, and manage any immediate requests for support from other Cost of Living workstreams.**

### Supporting narrative

There are several schemes in place to support residents with the cost-of-living challenge including both local and national schemes. These include the Government Fuel Rebate scheme, DWP fuel payments, Council Tax Reduction and Hardship schemes, Discretionary Housing Payments and the Household Support Fund funding streams. This is enabling a range of support to residents such as fuel top-ups; and additional support to enable as many people as possible to stay warm for longer.

To ensure residents are aware of this support, a three-point Communications Plan has been developed which aims to showcase and signpost the support available across the borough from a wide range of partners, not just the council. The Plan focuses on: Resources/ signposting for immediate/crisis support, increasing the level of help available and reducing further hardship.



The content of the communications plan will be led by insight work and will promote partner interventions and local, regional, and national policy updates. Given the wide and varied stakeholder group, it is suggested that this is presented as a visual element – not a brand, but more of a ‘stamp.’ This will build on the already established Health & Wellbeing brand of ‘Keep Wirral Well’ and incorporate a cost-of-living strapline.

We are also continuing to work with our partners on Warm Hubs, including the NHS, Police, Fire Service, Community and Faith Sector groups, to establish buildings that can be accessed by residents during the winter months to keep them safe and warm. This includes the production of a directory of community, voluntary and faith sector organisations and groups providing warm hubs – mapped in Infobank and updated weekly, £1.2m of COMF (Contain Outbreak Management Funds) funding made available to the Community Voluntary and Faith sector to support cost of living challenges and can be used to support operation of warm place and libraries being advertised as warm hubs (subject to a review of aforementioned building ventilation which is currently in progress).

A Cost-of-living Officer Action Group has been established to respond to strategic and operational issues being reported by residents and the organisation. In addition, the Health and Wellbeing Board is taking strategic responsibility for the borough’s response to cost-of-living challenges due to the need for a borough wide response and Policy & Resources Committee have received update reports throughout the year (in response to their request for regular updates at the extraordinary meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022).

A Cost-of-Living Partnership Summit also took place on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022 which brought together partners from across the borough to discuss the diverse range of activity that partners are collectively working on to support our residents and businesses with the cost-of-living challenge. A number of actions were identified and agreed by partners to take forward and another Summit will be organised in the New Year to focus specifically on the cost-of-living impact on businesses.

### Continue Children’s Services Improvement: Prevention Framework

#### High-level progress update

- **A Joint Targeted Area Inspection of the multi-agency response to children and families who need help in Wirral took place from 12 to 16 December 2022. The inspection was positive, with key headline findings outlined below.**
- **A multi-agency Prevention Steering Group has been established and will provide support to those wishing to apply a preventative approach to services.**
- **A newly commissioned Early Help Alliance has been implemented. Since launching on 4<sup>th</sup> April 22, the Family Toolbox has had over 3,000 unique users viewing over 19,000 pages in its first month.**
- **Prevention programmes in other areas are being progressed.**

#### Supporting narrative

##### Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI)

A JTAI of the multi-agency response to children and families who need help in the Wirral, took place from 12 to 16 December 2022. Headline findings included:

- Children and families are benefiting from a broad/well-coordinated range of family support and early help services that make a positive difference to their lives.
- Cohesive leadership and healthy challenge have enabled the partnership (police, health agencies and the local authority) to develop a strong and effective early help offer to children and their families.
- The partnership has a strong, shared, and often innovative, vision for early help that has been communicated well to their own staff and in which they have also engaged community and voluntary groups, in particular through the Early Help Alliance. This work is underpinned by a commitment to ‘doing with’ rather than ‘doing to’ children and families and by a good understanding of local need.
- Agencies’ strategic and financial investment in early help is helping to ensure that services are increasingly effective at identifying and tackling need at an early point before risk escalates for children and they need more intensive and costly intervention.

Further work will continue to focus on further developing the early help offer (particularly for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities), ensuring effective coordination of multi-agency plans and greater

coordination of early help between education providers and the wider partnership.

### **Prevention Framework**

In taking a preventative approach to policy making and planning, Wirral Council has committed through its Prevention Policy and Framework to improving, for its residents and businesses, quality of life, health, wellbeing, and the economy. Wirral Council is committed to:

- Support partners and communities to work together, as equals, to tackle the biggest issues and risk factors that have a negative impact on health and wellbeing across Wirral.
- Build connections and strong communication across partner agencies and services, driving and enhancing collaboration.
- Support the coordination and creation of a positive eco-system within which individuals and families can thrive.
- Creating a Wirral which is flourishing, active and green.
- Embedding its approach to prevention through a co-productive approach with local communities-only by coming together will we create solutions that will truly help people in Wirral to achieve their goals and aspirations.

A multi-agency Prevention Steering Group has been established and will provide support to those wishing to apply a preventative approach to services. This group will also promote the need for, and establishment of, wider preventative programmes.

Some practical examples of how the Council has been taking forward its preventative approach in Children's Services include the impact of Wirral's Early Help and Prevention Service, which is evidenced in performance data over the last 3 years (January 2019 to January 2022). Most notably, there has been reduced demand for children's social care, which has been accompanied by increasing numbers of early help episodes, thus indicating that more children, young people, and families are now successfully being supported outside of the statutory system.

A newly commissioned Early Help Alliance has also been implemented. Family Toolbox has been instrumental in facilitating a shift in behaviours. The Toolbox gives access to a wide variety of supportive experiences for example online resources, one to one family coaching, grassroots activities, and group support. Since launching on 4<sup>th</sup> April 22, the Family Toolbox has had over 3,000 unique users viewing over 19,000 pages in its first month.

Prevention programmes are also underway and delivering outcomes in other Directorates. These include:

- **PAUSE** - The programme will work with women who have experienced repeated pregnancies that result in children needing to be removed from their care. This will involve the Local Authority and other partners working together to implement an integrated, intensive and systemic model of support tailored to meet women's needs.
- **Drive** - Drive will improve the lives of victims/survivors by working with high-risk, high-harm perpetrators of domestic abuse to challenge and change their behaviour. This will involve a multi-agency panel having oversight of all cases and working together to apply disruption tactics whilst the Case Manager undertakes an intensive behaviour change programme.
- **We Can Talk About Domestic Abuse** - We an additional provision of subject expertise and advocacy to work alongside Social Workers to improve the experience of families affected by domestic abuse. Team includes 3.0 FTE Domestic Abuse Practice Professionals, 3.0 FTE Domestic Abuse Family Advocates, 1.0FTE Team Manager and 1.0 FTE Project Officer. The project is being evaluated by Manchester Metropolitan University.
- **Cradle to Career** - A place-based, collective impact project which aims to improve the life chances of people within the North Birkenhead community, with a specific focus on educational aspiration and attainment.
- **Family Nurse Partnership** - A home-visiting programme for first-time young mums to support a healthy pregnancy, improve child development and health outcomes, and increase family aspiration. Women are recruited onto the programme early in pregnancy and support can be provided until the child is two years of age.
- **ADDER** – Building on this, Wirral Drugs Strategy and new investments to tackle drug-related harms: whole

system approach with collaboration from criminal justice, Council, health and community partners to tackle drug related harms.

- **Get Real Programme** - A bespoke, intensive employability programme for care leavers aspiring to access employment and overcome their personal barriers. The programme is delivered by a Wirral based education provider, Eutopia Project, alongside officers from the Council 14-19 Team.
- **Ways to Work** - Supports young people and adults who are unemployed and have multiple barriers to positive participation. Each participant is supported by a designated coach who will undertake an initially assessment and provide a tailored package of support leading towards employment, education and / or training.

## Continue our environment & climate emergency response

### High-level progress update

Key priority actions were identified for action in 2022/23 to ensure the Council continues the trajectory to keep pace with the carbon budget and meet the net zero target by 2030. These have been outlined below alongside progress made to date:

- **Implement the recommendations and action plan following a detailed audit of the Council's response to the environment & climate emergency declaration - Recommendations from internal audit have been put into a management plan and are being implemented.**
- **Establish a Green Fleet Strategy for the Council – The Green Fleet Strategy is currently in draft form and a Green Fleet Manager post has been established.**
- **Develop an Electric Vehicle (EV) strategy for the borough. This has now gone out to tender.**
- **Establish a decarbonisation plan for building emissions and create a 'project pipeline' to enable funding bids - Tree planting season is underway for 2022/23 with the aim of planting over 21,000 trees. I-trees survey has completed field collection data from over 200 survey sites and household surveys to collect cultural and social value data. The Pollinator strategy has also been approved by ECE&T Committee.**
- **Increasing communication and engagement from residents and communities through a Climate Emergency Communications Strategy - A Community Climate Engagement Strategy is in draft. Proposals have gone to Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for a one stop volunteering hub utilising the UK Shared Prosperity Funding. This will incorporate a community climate champion element, as well as grants for community sustainability projects.**
- **Become a Silver award carbon literate organisation & Increase awareness and action from internal staff - A further 44 staff have attended carbon literacy training and 2 staff members have been trained to deliver the courses in-house to reduce costs in 2023/24. There is also more information available on Flo for staff and a monthly Climate Literacy newsletter.**
- **Increase accountability through a public facing ECEAP (Environment and Climate Emergency Action Plan) introduction and progress report - The ECEAP public facing report has been developed and will be published online.**

### Supporting narrative

Wirral Council declared an Environment and Climate Emergency through an all-party resolution in July 2019. This committed the Council to develop an Environment and Climate Emergency Action Plan (ECEAP) in response to the declaration.

The ECEAP is ambitious and proposes that the Council as an organisation aims to achieve 'net carbon neutrality by 2030'. In doing so it shows leadership and supports progress of decarbonisation across Wirral by 2041 and the Government's legally binding national target of net zero carbon by 2050.

Headline actions that were completed in 2021/22 are:

- Purchase of 'green' electricity.
- Installation of an electric vehicle charging infrastructure pilot project.
- Commissioning of a 'greening the fleet' review to prepare for a transition to low emission vehicles.
- Achieving status as a bronze award carbon literate council.
- Planting of 21,527 trees through community planting sessions.

- Purchase of eCargo bikes to be used for internal deliveries and promote alternative transport.
- Supporting Cool Wirral partners through the facilitation of Cool Wirral partnership.
- Completion of phase 2 of the streetlighting replacement scheme.
- Progress on the Birkenhead Heat Network Project
- Funding acquired to deliver a 'natural curriculum' initiative to teachers in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University.

To build on and maintain this pace, priorities were identified for 2022/23, with key progress points highlighted above.

## Leading Wirral's Partnership

### High-level progress update

- **The Council continues to lead successful partnership working with public, private and community & faith sector partners to improve the borough. Partnership Summit took place on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022, with further Summits being planned during 2023.**
- **A review of Wirral's Strategic Partnership is underway to propose refreshed partnership arrangements in Summer 2023, building on successful arrangements already in place.**
- **Significant progress during 2022 to establish new Health and Care Partnership working - inaugural meetings of the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, the ICB for Cheshire and Merseyside, came into being on 1 July 2022.**
- **Wirral Place Based Partnership Board met for the first time on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022.**
- **The Council is playing a key role in the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, driving Wirral's interests and securing substantial funding to deliver Wirral priorities.**
- **Wirral Chairs the Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA), driving further opportunities to link Wirral, the City Region the wider region and beyond. The MDA is a successful partnership that supports strategic economic growth across North East Wales, West Cheshire and Wirral. Recognised as a single economic sub-region and having a population close to 1 million, the Mersey Dee area is a pivotal location in the UK.**

### Supporting narrative

On 16<sup>th</sup> November, the Leader of the Council chaired a Partnership Summit which focused on the cost-of-living challenge and brought together representatives from partner organisations such as housing, health providers and the fire service to join the community, voluntary and faith sectors to strengthen our working relationships and ensure we are working collaboratively to support our local residents. The aim of the Summit was to learn about existing services and see what more could be achieved by joining up.

All strategic partners committed to build on the Summit and work in collaboration during 2023 on several key joint priorities to improve the borough. In addition to the Summit, a Strategic Partnership Review is underway to consider approaches for how we can successfully lead Wirral's Partnership working.

Partnership arrangements within regeneration are also currently being reviewed to establish a new approach that will better support partnership working to deliver our regeneration programme.

Other partnership arrangements have been developed over the course of the year and are now underway. Inaugural meetings of the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, the ICB for Cheshire and Merseyside, came into being on 1 July 2022 and the Wirral Place Based Partnership Board met for the first time on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022 to bring together representatives of the Council, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, NHS providers and the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector into a forum for NHS Cheshire and Merseyside to conduct its business in Wirral.

Wirral continues to play a key role in partnership working across the sub-region and beyond. As Chair of Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA), there are real opportunities to link Wirral, which sits on the Left Bank of the River Mersey and also with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

The MDA is a successful partnership that supports strategic economic growth across North East Wales, West

Cheshire and Wirral. Recognised as a single economic sub-region and having a population close to 1 million, the Mersey Dee area is a pivotal location in the UK.

There are also some fantastic opportunities to link to wider regional ambitions - Liverpool City Region is home to the fourth biggest port in the UK and the transatlantic hub for the Irish Sea; we are leading the delivery of the Port City Innovation Hub, which is seeking to transform maritime, freight and logistics.

Building on and delivering skills and employment, infrastructure, embedding innovation in our business base, underpinned through our world-leading innovation specialisms increasingly in net-zero capabilities and maritime. These global capabilities will support our competitive advantages and sustain opportunities.