

Appendix B



Economy Regeneration and Housing Committee

Contents

A. Introduction and 2023-24 Budget Summary	Pg 1
B. Service Area Summary Narratives	Pg 2
C. 2023-24 Subjective and Objective Budgets	Pg 7
D. 2023-24 Approved Savings	Pg 8
E. Capital Budgets	Pg 9
F. Reserves	Pg 11

A. Introduction and 2023-24 Budget Summary

Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee 2023-24 Budgets

This Committee is responsible for formulating the Council's planning policies and for the Council's housing policies and statutory functions, development projects and growth and the economic development of the Borough.

The tables below breakdown and explain the financial resources available to the Committee in 2023-24

Revenue Budgets

Revenue Budgets are the monies the Council allocates for its day-to-day expenditure. It is the amount of money the Council requires to provide its services during the year.

TABLE 1 2023/24 Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee Budget

Objective	Budget
	£000
Regeneration	1,064
Housing	5,779
Asset Management & Investment	4,754
Planning and Building Control	1,199
Special Projects	119
Local Plan	400
Committee Budget	13,315

B. Service Area Summary Narratives

1.0 Regeneration

1.1 Regeneration Delivery is about people, place, economy and environment - creating places where people want to live and which encourage healthy, active lives. Wirral has a range of area-based regeneration programmes, predominantly along the Left Bank of the Mersey. These programmes have a focus on creating new housing, employment space, vibrant town centres, leisure and tourism attractions, while also renewing existing neighbourhoods. Low-carbon, active travel and movement strategies are integrated into these programmes.

Key themes which run through Wirral's regeneration include high quality urban design, addressing climate change and increasing biodiversity, and the importance of art, culture and heritage in creating beautiful places that people are proud of.

1.2 Economic Growth

Area based regeneration programmes are complemented by an ambitious economic strategy for Wirral. The Economic Growth Service is responsible for the development and implementation of the Economic Strategy, working with partners to develop the strategies, programmes, and projects to deliver on the three key pillars of the Economic Strategy:

- Thriving Business (business support services, inward investment, sector development, innovation, investment funds)
- Vibrant Places (town centre/high street interventions, place making, wider stakeholder engagement and embedding of economic development within regeneration delivery)

- Inclusive Economy (employment support services, external workforce skills, external recruitment & redundancy support, economic elements of social value & community wealth)

2.0 Housing

2.1 Homelessness The Housing Options Team discharge the Council's statutory duties under Part VII of the Housing Act including homeless assessments and provision of free advice and assistance to all people experiencing or threatened with homelessness, application of legal duties to prevent someone from becoming homeless, provision and management of a portfolio of temporary, dispersed accommodation, securing of suitable accommodation for homeless households who fall into a 'priority need' category' and undertaking of a legally required 'Review' of homelessness in the borough, at least every 5 years and working with partners (including the Combined Authority to shape homeless policy.

2.2 The **Property Pool Plus** service is responsible for discharging the Council's statutory responsibilities under Part VI of the Housing Act, by ensuring that we provide both a policy and a scheme for the allocation of social housing in the borough, and that the policy surrounding the allocation of this is adhered to.

The service therefore undertakes the management and administration of the Council's Choice Based Lettings Scheme and nominations agreements with Registered Providers, management of the housing register, assessment and banding of housing and health and welfare needs as it relates to accommodation needs, provision of advice and assistance to applicants and policy review and development.

2.3 Housing Investment This team undertakes a diverse range of services including:-

- Housing Strategy and policy development at a local and sub regional level, strategically aligning housing programmes with corporate, Wirral plan and Combined/LCR priorities.
- Wirral Housing growth agenda including working with planning colleagues to ensure affordable housing contributions are secured through the planning system, enabling the development of new affordable homes (including specialist and extra care housing) - liaison with Homes England and Registered Provider partners to bring investment into the borough and ensuring housing is placed within wider regeneration programmes.
- Asylum Dispersal, UK, Afghan Resettlement Programmes and Homes for Ukraine response - co-ordinating support and the arrivals process. Ukraine sponsor, accommodation and DBS approvals and provision of

welfare support and collaboration with key partners - CCG, Police, and the CVS.

- Energy Efficiency Programmes including Retrofit – maximising funding opportunities such as ECO and Green Homes and influencing renewal assistance.

2.4 Housing Standards The services within housing standards aim to improve standards of existing private housing stock through a range of interventions, legal enforcement powers and programmes including :-

- Mandatory HMO licensing & Selective Licensing
- Landlord accreditation
- Healthy Homes – signposting key services for vulnerable residents
- Housing standards advice, complaints and statutory enforcement
- Financial Assistance.
- Empty Homes

2.5 Adaptations deliver the statutory Disabled Facilities Grant Programme for adults and children which is supported from the Disabled Facilities Grant determination which is passported through the Better Care Fund. This enables hospital discharge and enables those with disabilities to remain at home and supports independence. This is delivered through a range of specialist technical and support services to enable financial assistance programmes including the Handyperson Service, major and minor adaptations and programme specific projects.

2.6 Supported Housing primarily undertakes the review and commissioning, including regulation of supported accommodation services for homeless people and vulnerable groups. This involves monitoring of demand as this relates to the function of supporting Wirral's homeless service response. This also includes the management and alignment of passported funder including the Rough Sleeper Initiative placements and other Government Homeless specific grants to respond to Government policy at a local level. This service closely aligns to the Homeless Service to enable the Council to meet its statutory duties.

3.0 Asset Management & Investment

Asset Management is a key Council service which manages Wirral's Land and Property Portfolio. Assets fall into two discrete areas (i) operational estate

which ranges from allotments to schools, theatres, leisure, libraries, depots and offices and (ii) non-operational assets which generate income for the Council. Asset valuation is critical to the overall Council budget for accountancy purposes and stands at £507m the Council's MTFP is heavily dependent on sound asset management by way of the successful delivery of our Capital Programmes, Investment Strategies within overarching governance arrangements.

Significant responsibility is placed upon the service for ensuring safety and compliance within the asset portfolio, day to day response for repairs and maintenance whilst investing time to develop business and systems to ensure compliance, information and project management arrangements are robust. Emerging strategies such as Climate Emergency and Sustainability, individual service priorities and Regeneration & Growth are also key activities of the service

The Asset Management & Investment covers a range of services to support the use of the Councils assets, including

- To support the Zero Carbon emissions target through targeted Capital Programme, Estate
- Review and restructure the service and deliver property and asset strategies to align with the Wirral Plan
- Management and energy consumption.
- Deliver the Council's Capital Programme and the Remobilisation of Assets post-pandemic in line with service priorities
- Facilities Management: Complex Management, Cleaning, 3rd party hiring, Safety/Security
- PFI; Contract Management, Change Orders, Finance
- Birkenhead Market; both Operational and Future Developments

4.0 Planning and Building Control

4.1 **Development Management:** deals with all applications and requests for pre application advice submitted to the Council under the Town and Country Planning act including applications affecting listed buildings, Tree preservation orders, development and changes of use. It also deals with discharges of Planning conditions, enforcement of the regulations and provides advice on development affecting heritage assets including conservation areas.

4.2 The Planning budget also includes the staffing costs for the Forward Planning team that are responsible for delivering the Local Plan. The team are also responsible for the statutory services of Neighbourhood Planning and carrying out the annual monitoring of performance against the local plan including housing delivery. In addition they maintain the brownfield register, produce planning policy guidance and provide guidance to Development Management on the interpretation of Planning policy

- 4.3 **Building Control** Implements statutory functions under The Building Act 1984, The Building Regulations 2010, and certain aspects of the Highways Act 1980. Works to building regulations 2010 which sets minimum standards for the design and construction of new buildings and certain types of alterations to existing buildings. Building Control Surveyors assess submitted applications for compliance for approval, undertake site inspections and issue completion certificates.

Building Control competes with Private 'Approved Inspectors' to provide Building Regulations services in a competitive market. Customers are not obliged to use the Local Authority and can choose to appoint a private 'Approved Inspector' to oversee and certify their development if they wish.

The Building Control budget also includes the services provided for Land Charges and street naming and numbers.

- 5.0 **Special Projects** This team is delivering the regeneration of New Ferry and supporting a range of other projects including the Community Land Trust in New Ferry and Tranmere Rovers at the Solar campus in Leasowe.

6.0 **Local Plan**

The Local Plan is our plan for the future of Wirral. It will play an important part in shaping the future of our towns, villages, infrastructure, environment and economy.

The Plan sets out the Council's priorities for development and gives a clear indication on what development will and won't be permitted in your area. The plan covers housing, commercial, retail, public and private developments. The Plan will impact every resident and we encourage everybody to take part in the consultation process.

The Plan has been submitted for examination and is currently undergoing a rigorous assessment at examination prior to adoption. Once adopted it is a statutory requirement to keep the plan up to date.

C. 2023-24 Subjective and Objective Budgets

TABLE 2 2023/24 Economy, Regeneration and Housing Subjective Budget

Subjective	Budget
	£000
Income	-13,296
Expenditure	
Employee	13,204
Non Pay	13,407
Total Expenditure	26,611
Committee Budget	13,315

Table 3 below, provide a further detailed breakdown of the service budgets.

TABLE 3: 2023/24 Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee – Service budgets

	Income (£000)	Employee (£000)	Non Pay (£000)	Committee Budget (£000)
Regeneration	-2,840	2,005	1,899	1,064
Housing	-3,396	4,027	5,148	5,779
Asset Management & Investment	-4,535	4,301	4,988	4,754
Planning	-1,796	2,753	242	1,199
Special Projects		118	1	119
Local Plan	-729		1,129	400
Total	-13,296	13,323	13,407	13,315

D 2023-24 Approved Savings specific to Economic Regeneration and Housing Committee service areas

Table 4 2023/24 Approved Savings Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee

Savings title	23-24 Budget Saving (£m)
One off rental income for partial leasing of Cheshire Lines office space	-0.146
Review of Merseytravel levy budget	-0.122
Capitalisation of salaries (Re-direction of qualifying salaries away from the council's central budget)	-0.085
Re-provision of homeless accommodation and review of community alarm grant	-0.137
Lease income from rental of floors 4 & 5 at Marris House	-0.136
Stand down and disposal of a number of council owned buildings	-0.672
Decommissioning of the Solar Campus site and relocation of teams currently working from the facility.	-0.005
Standing down of Wallasey Town Hall for a 12-month period	-0.400
Redesign and review of contract commissioning for Economic Growth	-0.065
Recharging of staff costs where eligible grant funding is in place for Economic Growth projects	-0.072
Recharging of staff costs where eligible grant funding is in place for Homes for Ukraine Resettlement Programme	-0.593
Review of Housing Support service and Fuel Poverty contract	-0.088
Recharging of costs where eligible grant and fee income is rechargeable within Supported Housing services	-0.060
Increase eligible rechargeable costs for Building Control services	-0.080
TOTAL	-2.661

E CAPITAL BUDGET

Capital budgets are the monies allocated for spend on providing or improving non-current assets, which include land, buildings and equipment, which will be of use or benefit in providing services for more than one financial year.

TABLE 5 2023/24 Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee – Capital Budget

Scheme	2023/24		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Original Approved Budget £000	Revised Budget at 01.04.22 £000	Budget £000	Budget £000	Budget £000	Budget £000
Aids, Adaptations and Disabled Facility Grants	2,889	2,521	0	0	0	0
Birkenhead Regeneration Delivery Fund	15,024	24,034	0	0	0	0
Birkenhead Regeneration Framework	-	315	0	0	0	0
Birkenhead Town Centre Masterplanning & Housing Delivery	265	290	0	0	0	0
Business Investment Fund	585	585	0	0	0	0
Capitalisation of Regen Salaries	1,000	971	984	0	0	0
Clearance	191	191	194	0	0	0
Empty Property Grant Scheme	419	315	310	0	0	0
FHSF New Ferry 21-22	2,685	3,112	0	0	0	0
Future High Streets - Birkenhead	9,579	12,403	0	0	0	0
Housing Infrastructure Fund (Enabling Infrastructure)	-	1	0	0	0	0
Liscard Town Centre Delivery	-	10	0	0	0	0
Maritime Knowledge hub	12,351	12,351	10,650	0	0	0
New Brighton Masterplan for Marine Promenade	40	45	0	0	0	0
New Ferry Regeneration Strategic Acquisitions	118	1,342	0	0	0	0
Office Quarter Building Fit-Out	4,613	5,248	0	0	0	0
Property Pooled Plus I.T System	11	20	0	0	0	0
Birkenhead Market Construction	13,300	13,300	13,950	0	0	0

Hind Street Movement Strategy Project 21-22			0	0	0	0
Strategic Acquisition Fund	3,600	3,567	0	0	0	0
Town Centre scheme - New Ferry	-	5	0	0	0	0
Town Deal Fund - Birkenhead	12,491	15,189	4,620	2,555	0	0
Town Fund B'head	-	53	0	0	0	0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)	109	176	386	0	0	0
West Kirby Masterplan	10	58	0	0	0	0
Wirral Waters Investment Fund	7,000	7,000	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	86,280	103,102	31,094	2,555	0	0

F Reserves

Earmarked reserves are amounts set aside for specific purposes or projects. Please note that approval from the Policy and Resources Committee is required to contribute to or drawdown from these reserves.

Table 6 2023/24 Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee – Reserves

Reserve	Opening Balance £000
Selective Licensing	1,433
Wirral Ways to Work	625
Regeneration and Inward Investment	1,385
Urban Development Corporation Bid	77
Building Control Fee Earning	420
HMO Licence Fees	164
Major Infrastructure Project Development	62
Property Repairs rental income	276
DCLG Empty Shops Grant	41
ERDF 4.2 Match Funding	18
Emergency Maintenance and Work in Default	274
Resettlement Programme Grant	1,786
Homelessness	166
Domestic Abuse Bill Grant	602
Economic Growth	342
Birkenhead Future High Street funding	47
Wirral Growth Company Profit	8,455
Total	16,173