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# APPENDIX: STRATEGIC REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

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## STRATEGIC THEMES

This appendix sets out the series of strategic themes which will guide the development of our key investment opportunities. The themes will support the delivery of physical, economic, social and environmental change in a co-ordinated and cohesive way and deliver wider regeneration.

The Wirral Strategic Regeneration Framework provides the context for delivering the Growth Plan outcomes including existing and new initiatives that will accelerate delivery of physical, economic and social change in a co-ordinated way.

It enables a twin track approach by setting out the ambition and opportunities for development and investment in key spatial areas whilst also providing a series of strategic themes which will guide and support that development and deliver wider regeneration.

The following strategic themes have been identified:

- High Quality Housing
- Employment, Skills and Economic Development
- Transport connectivity
- Digital connectivity
- The Tourism and Culture offer
- Sustainable development
- A high quality environment
- Healthier lifestyles
- Safer Neighbourhoods

## HIGH QUALITY HOUSING

### INTRODUCTION

Access to good quality housing is a crucial component of strong and sustainable communities and maintaining and developing sustainable housing markets is at the heart of the SRF. The framework also seeks to maintain, and where appropriate, increase levels of choice in the market whilst protecting the character of our successful neighbourhoods.

Ensuring that Wirral has a sufficient range of high quality housing via new build and the existing stock together with a wide choice of housing tenure is a fundamental factor in delivering place shaping and our ambitions for growth and regeneration. Wirral's draft Core Strategy's spatial vision recognises that the focus of new development and investment will be on improving and regenerating the Borough's existing urban areas. This includes ensuring that the housing market offer within the East of the Borough competes on a more equal footing with outlying residential areas. Wirral is a borough of sharp contrasts, with many affluent and attractive residential areas alongside areas of high deprivation and the SRF reflects the Wirral Plan in providing a framework through which this gap can be closed.

As part of the Combined Authority, work is taking place to deliver the LCR Strategic Housing Employment and Land Market Assessment and this, together with ambitious One Public Estate activity, will provide further opportunities for site acquisition and development as well as options for delivery models that will ensure that our assets are aligned to our economic and housing growth plans.

### KEY ISSUES

The draft Core Strategy recognises that to meet national policy requirements there is a requirement for significantly more homes to be built over the next five years than have been built during the last decade. This is in part due to previous regeneration programmes, such as Housing Market Renewal, which saw a high level of demolitions as well as improvements to social housing stock taking place.

As a result Wirral's Housing Strategy published in July 2016 reflects the need to build more homes to meet our economic growth ambitions and sets a target of 3,500 new homes by 2020, with 1,000 of these being at Wirral Waters. New housing will need to reflect a range of housing types and tenures so that it integrates into the existing communities whilst also reflecting the need for more family homes, single person accommodation and extra care facilities for Wirral's ageing population. This is supported by Wirral's Housing Market Assessment.

A number of sites have been identified for new housing development and a wider review of potential development options is currently under way to support the delivery of these new homes. This includes sites within our four key spatial focus areas where it is recognised that a significant residential population is highly important for the successful functioning of town centres and in particular the sub regional centre of Birkenhead. Within Birkenhead our aim is to provide more homes for families, workers and students to establish a high value market for retail, restaurants and entertainment and contribute to the general level of activity within the town centre. The challenge is to increase market confidence in the town centre for the provision of a wide range of housing types.

**WIRRAL'S HOUSING STRATEGY**

Our [Housing Strategy](#) has been informed by ongoing consultation with key partners, residents and stakeholders and is based on a strong evidence base. The priorities to be achieved through this strategy and associated plans are:

- Building more homes to meet our economic growth ambitions
- Improving the quality of housing available to our residents
- Meeting the housing and support needs of our most vulnerable people to enable them to live independently

**ACTIONS**

We are establishing a dedicated housing growth team to support private sector and Registered Provider partners to accelerate development and we have reconvened Wirral's Strategic Housing Partnership.

Completion of our Employment Land Study, taken alongside our Housing Market Needs Assessment, will support the wider review of development sites to support the delivery of new homes within key sites across the borough.

We have secured Housing Zone status within the following areas – Wirral Waters, Rock Ferry, Moreton and Bromborough . These areas will be a focus for accelerated delivery of new homes, but there are other areas of opportunity and scale which will be delivered alongside our housing zone work.

New building in the borough will also be supported by key activities to improve the borough's private rented housing offer, creating a housing market that is flexible and of a quality to meet a variety of needs.

New homes and improvements to existing stock will support the provision of a high quality built and natural environment and reflect a distinct sense of place.



**HOUSING AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

- Residential sites supporting investment and regeneration
- Accelerated delivery of new homes to revitalise our town centres and waterfront opportunities
- Public realm improvements driving business growth and access to employment
- Using our parks, coast and open spaces for leisure, arts and tourism activities - Open Golf championship, Mersey River Festival of Light

## EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### INTRODUCTION

The City Region's Growth Strategy recognises that the success of the area is intrinsically linked with its ability to attract and retain workers with the right skill sets to meet the current and future needs of business. As a result the Combined Authority through its Employment and Skills Board has created a Skills Commission to work with businesses, learners and education providers to oversee a Skills Strategy for commissioning our locally devolved Adult Skills budgets.

Wirral is already a growing economy - closing the productivity gap with the North West, and a proactive and responsive approach to local skills provision is a core component of the SRF. It is vital in attracting investment and supporting business growth, as well ensuring that local residents are able to benefit from that growth.

We are already seeing existing businesses expand and grow and we have completely redesigned our Business Support Service to bring in investment and commercial expertise. Delivered by Wirral Chamber of Commerce the service will provide a strong offer to businesses including support for start-ups, growth, sector networks, relocation and workforce development.

We have responded to opportunities by linking the LCR Skills for Growth Advisors with the Wirral Business Growth Hub Advisors in order to provide businesses with potential access to funding and bespoke advice on skills. In addition our strong inward investment offer is promoted through a city region approach to maximise its impact.

### KEY ISSUES

The council is committed to providing suitable employment locations across the borough to accommodate the needs of indigenous businesses and supporting inward investment to Wirral. A flexible supply of employment land is needed to meet the demands and economic and commercial challenges that the economy faces and the council is therefore reviewing its employment land supply to ensure that we have a fit for purpose supply, in the right locations.

An LCR wide Strategic Housing and Employment Land Market Assessment (SHELMA) will identify the future need for employment land, across the City Region and at district level based on the LEP's latest Growth Strategy projections. The Wirral Employment Land and Premises Study Update, which was commissioned in January 2017, will re-assess the adequacy of the Borough's existing supply of employment land and premises alongside the findings of the SHELMA. When it comes to allocations in a future site-specific Local Plan, priority will be given to sites that are 'market ready' for development, able to accommodate the priority sectors identified above and which provide employment and training for people in areas of greatest need.

Areas within Wirral such as the Wirral International Business Park and the adjoining A41 corridor already provide successful and growing employment locations with a broad range of accessible jobs. We are working with our partner Peel Holdings to bring forward sites within our Wirral Waters Enterprise Zone and see these areas as opportunities to enable our economically active workforce to increase.

We have already seen key capital investments into the Borough to support skills development such as Wirral Metropolitan’s College new Campus for the Built Environment at Wirral Waters, their STEM centre and the North West College of Engineering. We know more is needed and we are working with our partners, including the Universities, to realise major new skills infrastructure projects including Phase 2 of the Maritime Knowledge Hub and a Manufacturing Technology Catapult Centre.

In spite of the presence of employment centres across the Borough and beyond, inactivity rates remain high and many employed residents are in lower paid jobs. These factors have a considerable impact on household income and we are delivering a £6.5m Ways to Work programme to help people access training and employment.

We have a commitment to ensuring that our young people are ready for work. Our emerging Schools Strategy will ensure that we build on existing high quality education

provision and raise levels of achievement across the borough so that our young people have learning experiences which support them into employment. This includes raising the aspirations of our young people and ensuring access to a range of opportunities. This could involve apprenticeships, vocational training and employment or higher education.

**WIRRAL GROWTH PLAN**

Ensuring that there are greater job opportunities within the Borough and that workforce skills match business needs are two of the key pledges within the Wirral Growth Plan.

To take these forward the Growth Plan sets out that we will work with partners to increase the number and range of jobs and reduce unemployment. We will also closely align the provision of training offered with the skills businesses will need to develop and grow.



**KEY GROWTH SECTORS**

- The Maritime Knowledge Hub project will deliver innovative and cost saving solutions through the co-location of businesses and HEI researchers
- Energy – use of physical assets and skills to attract investment – Dong Energy O&M base, business parks on the A41 to support Cammell Laird and the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre in the civil nuclear sector
- Increase the value of the digital and creative sectors - development of applied technologies linked to the Wirral Waters EZ offer and maritime sector
- Major visitor economy attraction – Eureka – maximising links to Liverpool linked to shaping new places and spaces

## ACTIONS

We will seek to develop further skills initiatives with the Universities in order to provide higher level skills in our key growth sectors – reflecting the [LCR's Skills for Growth Agreements](#).

We will work with our partners to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics skills through innovative engagement projects and the delivery of STEM Higher Level Apprenticeships.

We are putting in place programmes that are based on detailed insight into the needs of those residents furthest away from work. In partnership with Public Health colleagues, we are addressing those needs through a pioneering new programme that tackles the deep social isolation that our community researchers found in some of our neighbourhoods.

We are commissioning the delivery of an Enterprise Hub to support higher levels of innovation and entrepreneurial activity amongst our residents. This includes the provision of incubator facilities at 'The Sheds' put in place by Wirral Chamber of Commerce.

We will work with our major employers such as Unilever, Cammell Laird, Typhoo and Bristol Myer Squibbs to promote knowledge transfer partnerships utilising expertise from our universities, colleges and small business community.



## SKILLS

- New infrastructure projects such as the Maritime Knowledge Hub and the Manufacturing Technology Catapult centre will deliver 21st century skills in applied technologies
- Devolution is delivering responsive adult skills training through the Skills for Growth Fund – responding to growth sectors, supporting Wirral's businesses
- Projects to support residents with creative and innovative ideas are delivering new skills
- Young people are being encouraged to develop skills in the digital production sector - supported by work spaces and business services

## TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY

### INTRODUCTION

Wirral benefits from a good transport network within the Borough together with strong city region, national and international links. It is well served by a range of transport types including bus, road, rail, ferry and walking and cycling routes. However, ensuring that our communities are well connected is essential for the Wirral economy and efficient, well maintained and accessible transport networks that meet the current and future transport needs of businesses and residents is a critical factor in supporting economic growth.

A key aim for transport in Wirral is to create a network that delivers good accessibility for a range of users from across the Borough and beyond and which enhances the sense of place for residents, businesses and visitors.

In this respect high quality public transport underpins economic growth and a key part of delivering that quality is through a greater reach of the bus network alongside the on-going upgrading of the buses.

The investment taking place through Merseytravel's bus strategy is beginning to deliver that change and is supported by a programme that seeks to change travel behaviour to increase the usage of public transport.

In addition the Merseyrail network is one of the most extensive in the UK and there is strong year on year growth in its usage which is forecast to grow still further.

The SRF has been developed within the context of the Wirral Transport Strategy and the [LCR Transport Plan for Growth](#) and it will provide the broad framework through which investment in transport projects can be prioritised. This will ensure that we maximise the benefits from the city region transport investment in terms of public transport improvements, infrastructure works, demand management measures and behavioural change initiatives.



## KEY ISSUES

Within the East of the Borough the current and future development proposals for Wirral Waters together with the Council's aspirations for regeneration in the east of the borough such as Birkenhead Town Centre, Woodside and the A41 corridor require a co-ordinated approach to developing a transport network that will support investment and growth. This approach is critical to ensure that there is a prioritised programme of transport projects linked to development plans and the draft Core Strategy Local Plan for Wirral reflects the importance of these networks for Birkenhead and Wirral Waters.

The delivery of the Hoylake Golf resort also requires investment in appropriate transport infrastructure including the provision of new physical links and this is reflected in the Council's pipeline of projects identified as a priority for city region funding.

Improving connectivity to employment and regeneration sites is critical in connecting people and communities to the opportunities in and around their neighbourhoods reflecting the Wirral Plan vision of promoting equity as well as growth. In addition to road links and public transport provision, the promotion of safer and better connected pedestrian and cycle routes is a fundamental part of delivering the outcomes within the Wirral Plan. Car park provision is a requirement of new developments and is seen as an important part of any regeneration plans for the Borough. Wirral's car parking strategy reflects the need to support the long-term viability of the Borough's commercial and shopping centres whilst also encouraging the greater use of public transport and the use of facilities such as Park and Ride sites.

## THE WIRRAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

[The Wirral Transport Strategy](#) has been developed to support the delivery of the Wirral Plan outcomes and includes the following priorities:

- Keep traffic moving safely and efficiently
- Reliable and affordable public transport
- Encourage healthy active travel
- Inclusive integrated transport that meets resident needs

The Council's Car Parking Strategy contains ten clear objectives and supporting principles which reflect a range of issues including:

- That the pressures on the Borough's retail and commercial centres are many and varied and the economic sustainability of each of the centres needs to be considered when reviewing any changes to the car parking strategy
- Parking facilities should be accessible and located in such places as to meet the needs of users of shops and commercial premises.



## ACTIONS

We will improve transport links to key employment and regeneration sites through continued investment in improved road and public transport networks. This will include the development of a strategic transport framework for East Wirral to ensure transport investment supports regeneration and growth proposals and opportunities in Wirral.

We will maximise the potential of the [Liverpool City Region Bus Strategy](#) within Wirral by working with the LCR Bus Alliance. We will also work in partnership with Merseytravel to deliver a marketing and communications programme to help change the perception of bus travel for new and existing bus users.

We will support the delivery of the [long term rail strategy](#) by Merseytravel and use the

re-opening of the Merseyrail network following major repairs as an opportunity for re-branding so as to emphasise the scale, coverage and accessibility of the system.

We will deliver transport schemes that cover all modes of transport including cycleways and pedestrian links. Wirral Waters schemes include the development of a number of active travel corridors and routes and we will develop a city region Local Journeys strategy to support access to key destinations, such as New Brighton.

We will also encourage the adoption by businesses of travel plans designed to change travel behaviour in favour of the uses of more sustainable and healthy modes such as buses, trains, cycling and walking.



**TRANSPORT**

- Prioritising key schemes to support investment through the East Wirral transport study – linking our key regeneration sites
- Promotion of existing assets – the connectivity of Birkenhead to central Liverpool – 3 minutes on the train
- Devolved funding supporting priority schemes – Hoylake Golf Resort, Wirral Waters
- Using digital technology to deliver transport solutions for access to work, education and leisure

## DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

### INTRODUCTION

A digital strategy for Wirral is critical to ensure that the Borough remains competitive as a location for businesses to grow and to attract new investment.

[Wirral's Digital Strategy](#) commits to ensuring that technology and infrastructure in the Borough is modern, fit for purpose and allows our businesses to succeed and compete in global markets. This approach includes harnessing digital technology to create efficient and seamless services that respond to our residents and businesses expectations as to how public services should be delivered or accessed. Our aim is to create a truly connected Wirral through enabling our businesses and every resident to access services online in as simple, accessible and seamless format as they are in person.

Many cities are investing in advanced fibre connectivity and it is important that Wirral is not left behind in this area. We recognise that every business will need to be connected to global markets through high speed and reliable broadband. We are working to increase internet access and high speed connectivity so that our businesses can increase their performance, profitability and ability to invest and grow. In conjunction with this we are exploring opportunities to create a 'smart city' for Wirral to ensure that our key retail and business areas are fully connected with each other and with the world. It is our ambition to create a borough and an economy which is truly digital enabled, so that every Wirral business, regardless of sector or size, is able to use digital technologies to expand their horizons and grow.

### KEY ISSUES

We want to maximise the opportunities contained within the Government's current [Digital Economy Bill](#) which includes plans for a broadband Universal Service Obligation as a safety net for those residents and businesses with poor connectivity. This aims to ensure that all residents and businesses have access to 21st century digital connectivity. We wish to work in partnership with commercial operators who have the obligation to extend coverage as we have a clear overview of the areas' digital connectivity needs.

Technology is changing the way the world operates and transforming the way we live our everyday lives; in terms of how we communicate, buy goods and access services. Digital inclusion is therefore a key priority to ensuring that all residents and businesses are equipped with the skills to live in a modern world. We know that for some groups within Wirral and in some of our neighbourhoods there are significant concentrations of digital exclusion. We need to address this and ensure that all people regardless of age or ability are supported to develop the digital skills that businesses want and have the confidence to be able to utilise digital platforms to start their own business.

Wirral has a vibrant and growing digital and creative business sector and some strong and dynamic business networks. We want to enable these sectors to grow by supporting the creation of information, networking and business opportunities to local companies, through harnessing new and innovative ways to connect businesses, entrepreneurs and public organisations by utilising online platforms such as social media and digital marketplaces.

## WIRRAL DIGITAL STRATEGY

The strategy's aim is for Wirral to become a truly digital borough, where businesses and residents are connected to each other, services and the world. The priorities [this Strategy](#) will work to are:

- Connected People: every resident with the ability and the skills to get the most out of technology to improve their lives.
- Connected Business: every business benefiting from market-leading technology infrastructure, helping them to open up new markets and compete globally.
- Connected Services: every public service joined up, integrated and available online in a way which makes it simple and accessible to get support online.

## ACTIONS

We want to enable our businesses and places to be at the forefront of the digital revolution and we will ensure all businesses have access to superfast broadband and are supported on the specific advantages of digital connectivity and superfast connections.

We will work with Wirral Chamber of Commerce to use information data to tailor our business support offer and to review our processes and systems to make sure we interact with businesses using digital technology in ways which best suits them.

Within the Liverpool City Region the sector has a significant economic presence with an employment base of some 26,000 people across 3,500 business units. Businesses will be targeted with a Digital Makeover to identify opportunities and challenges, and to implement digital equipment and processes to improve systems, increase effectiveness and reduce costs.

We will develop digital entrepreneurship skills with young people to use digital tools to build business opportunities including business planning and learning how to sell ideas.

We will procure a customer access platform that will support improvements to customer services across all access channels making it easier, faster and more efficient to do business with the Council.

## TOURISM AND CULTURE: THE OFFER

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism and culture today is much more than specific events or attractions and is inextricably linked to growth in the local economy.

Wirral is a key destination; its unique character and picturesque coastal and countryside offer are unrivalled, with Wirral's attractive scenery acting as a magnet to visitors. Wirral boasts the fastest growing visitor economy in the Liverpool City Region and this is driven by an outstanding tourism offer that combines our leisure, cultural and heritage assets. The SRF recognises that both culture and the visitor economy are important factors in contributing to local economic growth, developing local talent, creating jobs and developing skills. Local strategies for taking forward culture and the visitor economy are therefore reflected in the physical development proposals that will be progressed through the SRF.

The emerging Wirral Visitor Economy Strategy identifies the need to promote and grow the borough's tourism offer through attracting new visitor markets and making the best use of our heritage, leisure and cultural assets to drive tourism, the associated creation of jobs and increase revenue for Wirral's visitor economy.

There is a more proactive and co-ordinated approach being taken by a range of partners in this area and this will assist, not only in positioning and profiling Wirral as a strong tourism destination, but will also drive economic activity. The SRF will provide the framework within which infrastructure projects including accommodation development can be co-ordinated with wider investment proposals.

There are a range of opportunities for Wirral that are generated through the further development of the borough's visitor economy. Research indicates that key areas for growth include a targeted increase in day visitors, together with the overnight stay and business markets.

There has been a total increase of 25% in visitor numbers and 39% in related spend since 2011 in Wirral. This has already resulted in an additional £113.4 million of spend within local visitor economy during the same period. This can be increased even further through partnership, product development and strategic marketing to achieve the Wirral Plan Pledge of £450m of tourism revenue by 2020.

## KEY ISSUES

We have already begun to revitalise the tourism offer on the East of the Borough through better linkages, and hosting events in areas such as Hamilton Square and Birkenhead Park, together with making use of both banks of the River Mersey for attractions such as the River of Light, International Guitar Festival and Mersey River Festival. However, there is the opportunity to do much more and the SRF must provide the structure within which the unique Wirral waterfront, with its stunning panoramic views of the Liverpool skyline, can contribute far more to the growth of this sector.

We recognise the need to strengthen the quality and diversity of the current offer. Whilst we know that there is low awareness of Wirral's wider tourism offer from the recent research conducted, there are strong links to the North West leisure and corporate markets highlighting that there is great potential for growth.

We will ensure linkage with the Borough's cultural offer and Culture Strategy to ensure that partners and key organisations in arts, cultural & creative industries work together to deliver exciting and unique opportunities that support growth and maximise the contribution to the local economy.

## WIRRAL'S CULTURE STRATEGY

[The Culture Strategy](#) aims to ensure that more people are able to enjoy the wide range of leisure, culture and sporting opportunities on offer across Wirral and to ensure that strategies for leisure, tourism and growth complement each other.

The priorities addressed by the strategy are:

- Develop creative partnerships and a cultural events programme to promote arts, culture and heritage in Wirral
- Increase resident and visitor participation in Wirral's arts, culture and heritage offer to promote its educational, social and wellbeing benefits
- Promote Wirral on the global stage as part of the LCR to attract world class arts, culture and heritage events and exhibitions
- Maximise the contribution of the arts, culture and heritage to the local economy

## ACTIONS

We will host further events with the wider city region such as the annual River of Light; The Giants in 2018 and The Walker Cup at the Royal Liverpool Golf Club, Hoylake in 2019.

There is a clear economic impact of such events. For instance the Liverpool Giants in 2015 resulted in spend of some £46m into the local economy with some 300,000 visitors attracted from outside the City region.

Wirral's unique venues and vast open spaces will be utilised and promoted to deliver blockbuster events that build on Wirral's brand as a tourist destination and celebrates the Borough's distinctiveness. This will enable us to attract more visitors from both within the region and from across the UK as a whole.

We also have the ambition to increase the number of businesses operating within the sector – further linkage of the Visitor Economy Network with the Wirral Chamber of Commerce will enable better engagement and a stronger, more focussed business support offer.

The SRF will provide the framework to consider how the planned development within Wirral Waters, Birkenhead and other sites can best drive new markets for tourism, for instance the new Visitor Economy Strategy recognises the opportunity to bring more day and multi-day conferences to Wirral through capitalising on the peninsula's close proximity to Liverpool, Cheshire and North Wales. Through promoting and hosting business meetings and events we will attract regional markets to Wirral and generate more returns from this sector.

We will identify opportunities to build on Wirral's vibrant creative sector to further grow this sector and attract new businesses and individuals to locate in the Borough. This is reflected in the SRF's place shaping profiles which identify potential physical locations for this sector.

It is only by taking full advantage of the assets and opportunities within the Borough, that Wirral will be able to succeed in an increasing competitive marketplace, in order to achieve the Wirral Plan tourism and culture pledges by 2020.



### TOURISM

- Building on our culture and heritage to deliver a thriving new music culture – events, festivals
- Better use of our assets to support the growth of the creative sector
- Working with partners across the city region to enable our creative and diverse cultural industries to develop with new facilities such as an independent music venue
- Delivering innovative events to showcase and re-position Wirral – The Giants, Wirral's Year of Culture (2018) and the Walker Cup (2019)
- Maximise use of sports facilities and venues – Tranmere Rovers – for events, promoting healthier lives and skills development

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. [The National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) states that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that this is a golden thread that should run throughout decision making. It identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental and states that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life.

### KEY ISSUES

The Council is committed to supporting sustainable development and growth across the borough.

Policy CS1 of the emerging Core Strategy Local Plan states that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. The Council will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

We will ensure that sustainability is at the heart of all future developments and we recognise the need to ensure consistent levels of urban design across the borough to achieve sustainable development credentials.

### WIRRAL'S CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND EMERGING CORE STRATEGY LOCAL PLAN

The Council's emerging local plan and the [Climate Change Strategy](#) reflect the commitment to supporting sustainable development and growth. This will be achieved by supporting:

- Sustainable transport
- High quality built and natural environment
- Encouraging health and well being
- Energy efficiency and carbon reduction
- Sustainable urban design
- Meeting community and social needs

These factors underpin the key principles of the growth strategy and will be embedded in future regeneration schemes and developments. A key factor in achieving sustainability is:

- Developing resilient communities, places where people want to live and work both now and in the future
- Places which meet the diverse needs of residents and communities, which are sensitive to their local environment and positively contribute to health and wellbeing
- Areas should be safe and welcoming to all, well planned and seek to provide a flourishing economy and good services for all.

Wirral's Climate Change Strategy sets out six aims for substantially cutting climate pollution associated with Wirral namely:

- Reduce demand for energy and make Wirral more energy efficient
- Generate and source more of our local energy needs from 'Renewable' sources
- Use more sustainable modes of transport, more fuel-efficient vehicles and less polluting means of getting around
- Reduce the indirect negative impacts that our decisions have for climate pollution in Wirral and elsewhere
- Identify the risks and vulnerabilities from expected changes and bring forward plans and actions to limit negative impacts and improve resilience
- Build capacity for action by strengthening local networks and partnerships and by developing wider awareness and education Initiatives

## **ACTIONS**

**Sustainable transport:** Reducing dependency on the car and providing safe and efficient access to public transport and cycling and walking routes will be crucial to creating a good quality environment where people want to work, live and play. We will future proof transport needs into new developments and ensure they are planned for in emerging strategies.

We will support high quality employment: Creating and supporting new and growing employment opportunities through the Council's growth sector priorities and through our key regeneration areas. The Council is committed to providing good quality, well paid jobs for residents in an environment which can attract and sustain businesses.

We will develop a network of high quality neighbourhoods: This driver provides the social and community emphasis of creating and sustaining a network of high quality neighbourhoods. The Council will support this through seeking to create attractive neighbourhoods which attract and retain people with skills and aspirations to flourish and grow, providing links from successful neighbourhoods to areas of need. The Council will drive high quality housing and environmental design into new urban neighbourhoods to support the growth aspirations of the Council.

This will be achieved by working successfully with the private sector to promote sustainable growth and development through collaborative working and where appropriate joint ventures and partnerships.

## A HIGH QUALITY ENVIRONMENT

### INTRODUCTION

The environment is one of the major influences on a person's quality of life, impacting on their physical, mental and social well-being. Good design and a healthy, unspoiled physical environment are not only about the aesthetic improvement of our environment, but also about improved quality of life, equal opportunities and economic growth.

Within Wirral we have worked hard to ensure our countryside and coast are of the highest standard. Wallasey Beach has been awarded a Blue Flag which is the gold standard for beaches and brings international recognition. In addition we now have 24 Green Flags for our parks - the most in the North West region.

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for those living and working in Wirral by raising aspirations for excellent design. Well-designed homes and neighbourhoods create better and healthier places to live and build strong communities; they can reduce crime, make people feel safe and provide homes that maintain their value. Good-quality, well designed public spaces help create healthy communities, desirable properties, increase professional productivity and can revitalise run-down neighbourhoods.

The Strategic Regeneration Framework will look to ensure that the principles of good design are applied across new development in the borough.

### KEY ISSUES

The council will ensure a consistent approach to high quality design which is fit for purpose and location. Setting the principles and actions to address this will help drive investment and give developer confidence to the approach which the council is taking.

National policy requires local authorities to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes based on the defining characteristics of the area.

We will ensure the quality of design of buildings and spaces is a fundamental factor in securing sustainable physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration within the borough. It should be used to protect or enhance local distinctiveness, improve the environment and the conditions in which people carry out their daily lives.

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Emerging Core Strategy Local Plan Strategic Objective 5- Environmental Quality - aims to ensure that new development will preserve and enhance locally distinctive characteristics and assets which make Wirral a healthy and attractive place to live, work and visit. Draft Core Strategy Policy CS43 proposes that all new development will be expected to enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the area in which it is located and relate well to surrounding property and land uses and the natural and historic environment.

In addition Wirral's Leisure Strategy includes a commitment to encouraging more residents and visitors to enjoy the wide range of leisure, culture and sporting opportunities including accessing Wirral's Parks, coast and green open spaces. Wirral has a range of fantastic natural leisure assets and many of our parks, beaches and open spaces have won national awards.

## ACTIONS

We will aim to safeguard and enhance local identity and character and ensure that all new development that comes forward will enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the local area.

We will promote innovative thinking and quality design: Innovative building designs which present exciting, contemporary and thought provoking solutions will be encouraged for developments. This could take the form of new mixtures of uses, innovative building materials which promote sustainable and strong design principles. Enhancing existing high quality or unique elements of buildings should where possible be retained, if this is not possible new, statement architecture will be promoted.

We will promote high quality public realm, Public realm needs to be well designed and integrated into the surrounding area and building form to ensure that a new urban fabric is created to link existing and new development together. High quality public realm also plays a critical role in creating a place through green and blue infrastructure provision. Public realm should be appropriate to the place and location within the borough and should be used to maximise connectivity and sustainability.

To maximise the potential of our parks, beaches and open spaces. We will develop our country parks as national tourist attractions and further enhance these assets by preparing a plan for each of the country parks. We will use our natural leisure assets to increase the number and variety of events held in Wirral, including festivals and local activities for the benefit of all our residents.

Access for all: We will ensure all new developments and proposals enable access for all to be embedded into the design and concept of the movements and flows to, through and from the area. It will need to ensure that other sustainable transport infrastructure is well integrated into the streets, buildings and place.

We will promote successful relationships between public and private space, to create successful and engaging developments and incorporate a balance of both public and private amenity space. Public space should be available to be utilised by all with a mix of day and evening uses available.

To promote quality, choice and variety we will create a balance between quality and commercial viability can be a challenge. However the Council believes that a strong sense of quality and variety must exist in developments to capture the sense of place and diversity of Wirral. Without this we will lose our distinguishing features and create places with a lack of ambition, style and distinction which will be reflected in the type and mix of schemes and occupiers which chose to locate here.



## HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES

### INTRODUCTION

Our ambition to grow the local economy and to expand and diversify employment opportunities is integral to our commitment to improve the health of Wirral residents. We will utilise growth, development and strategic planning opportunities to maximise health outcomes so that Wirral residents will be able to contribute to, and benefit from, sustained prosperity, decent employment and a good quality of life. This will also enable our economically active workforce to increase in order to maintain a sustainable and balanced population as people live longer.

We also recognise the importance of creating sustainable places that give people the opportunity to live healthy, active lifestyles and which improve health. This includes developing good quality housing, providing access to community and healthcare facilities; creating Active Travel opportunities and well-maintained, safe open spaces for physical activity and food growing. Quality public realm can also have a significant positive effect on people's mental well-being.

A healthy workforce is fundamental to economic growth. We have been working with a number of key local employers to ensure that as well as robust health and safety policy and practice, there is a holistic approach to employee wellbeing. The Strategic Regeneration Framework will look to ensure that these principles are inherent to those of the partners we work with.

### KEY ISSUES

Ensuring that there are opportunities to increase access to quality employment and that places are developed in ways that enable residents to stay healthy.

We know that deprivation is higher than average in Wirral and are aware that the main cause of health inequality is living in poverty. This has a fundamental impact on other factors that influence health such as education, living environment, employment and lifestyle. We need intervention across the borough, but with a focus on our communities with the greatest health needs to ensure we reduce these health inequalities to enable our local residents to live healthier lives and contribute to the local economy.

#### Wirral Residents Live Healthier Lives Strategy:

Our health and wellbeing is influenced by many factors – where we live, whether or not we have a job and the lifestyle choices we make. We have identified the following priorities in order to tackle health inequalities and help our residents live healthier lives.

- Reduce the number of smokers in Wirral
- Reduce the impact of alcohol misuse on individuals and communities
- Promote healthy eating
- Support local people to take control over their own health and wellbeing

## ACTIONS

- Deliver the actions within The Wirral Residents Live Healthier Lives Strategy to support the delivery of the Wirral Plan outcomes and the ambitions of the Wirral Growth Plan.
- We are working alongside businesses and local residents to reinvent the high street as a community asset and to meet the changing needs of communities; increasing desirability as a place to live and work, promoting economic regeneration and to improve health and wellbeing. We are starting this work in the following four high streets; Laird Street in Birkenhead, Upton, Liscard and New Ferry.
- We are working with business partners to ensure that good quality employment recognises the importance of holistic health and wellbeing in the workplace.
- We will consolidate the Better Food Wirral brand and implement Better Food Wirral innovation Schemes to increase access to good food, support the local food ecosystem to thrive and enable communities to make better food choices.



## SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

### INTRODUCTION

Community safety is essential to the quality of life of the people in Wirral affecting how people value their neighbourhoods and what is considered to make a neighbourhood a good or bad place in which to live and grow up. Neighbourhood sustainability and the viability of an area can be compromised by both the reality and perception of crime and disorder. This is true for Wirral residents, but it is also an important factor for Wirral neighbourhoods in respect of their potential as locations for business and investment.

Success in building safer neighbourhoods cannot be delivered by the Police or the Council alone and a renewed Community Safety Partnership, the Safer Wirral Hub, will be central to delivering community safety locally. The Safer Wirral Hub will also be working with communities to deliver local solutions, to make people feel safer and ensure the voices of local people are heard.

### KEY ISSUES

Ensuring Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe is the responsibility of all who live and work in Wirral and integrated multi-agency working has already started to show results with the overall crime rate in Wirral continuing to fall. The activities that the Safer Wirral Hub are taking forward, reflect the four priorities outlined in the safer neighbourhoods strategy, and are built on a strong evidence-base of crime data and analysis, feedback from Wirral residents and a clear understanding of what works.

A fundamental feature of the activities is that services are integrated across agencies and communities involved in their delivery. This underpins the approach which aims to combine appropriate enforcement action with preventative and educational work including placing a greater emphasis on activities which positively engage both young people and communities to prevent anti-social behaviour.

Despite the fact that reported crime and anti-social behaviour have continually fallen over the past 11 years residents perception of crime is sometimes at odds with this. Whilst continuing to work towards further reductions in the levels of crime, work also needs to take place to communicate the significant improvements that have been made.

## ENSURING WIRRAL'S NEIGHBOURHOODS ARE SAFE

[This strategy](#) sets the direction for community safety in Wirral for the next few years and identifies the following strategic priorities:

- Build stronger and more confident communities where people feel safe
- Improve community safety by tackling the cause and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Protect the most vulnerable people in our communities
- Deliver greater integration of all partner agencies to achieve a Safer Wirral

## ACTIONS

Introducing the website 'MerseyNow' will enable residents and agencies to access information, including that relating to tackling anti-social behaviour. This provides the basis for encouraging businesses and the voluntary sector to become a part of the solution to tackle the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour.

We will build on the opportunities provided by the recently opened £6m 'Hive' project which is Wirral's first Youth Zone. There have been dramatic reductions in the levels of anti-social behaviour in similar locations across the country where such Zones have been created.

The establishment of the Safer Wirral Hub will join /up services, delivering improved results, making Wirral safer, our communities stronger and our places friendlier and more welcoming.

Targeted interventions will be delivered to raise awareness of hate crime, zero tolerance of domestic abuse and encourage people to report incidents of crime and /or anti-social behaviour. This will support strong and inclusive communities.

We are working across the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to identify future opportunities for delivering services across that wider footprint.

We will have a greater focus on the quality, design and management of the built environment to reduce the level and perception of crime. This can be achieved through applying imaginative design solutions to schemes and developments.

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