



# Wirral Economic Strategy - Consultation Summary

A Report by Hatch  
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# Contents Page

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<b>1.</b>	Consultation Process	1
<b>2.</b>	Consultation Results	2
<b>3.</b>	Feeding into the Revised Document	9

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An aerial photograph of a city waterfront. In the foreground, there are several large, classical-style buildings, including one with a prominent dome. A large river or harbor flows through the middle ground, with a ship moving across it, leaving a wake. The background shows a dense urban area extending to the horizon under a clear sky.

# 1. Consultation Process

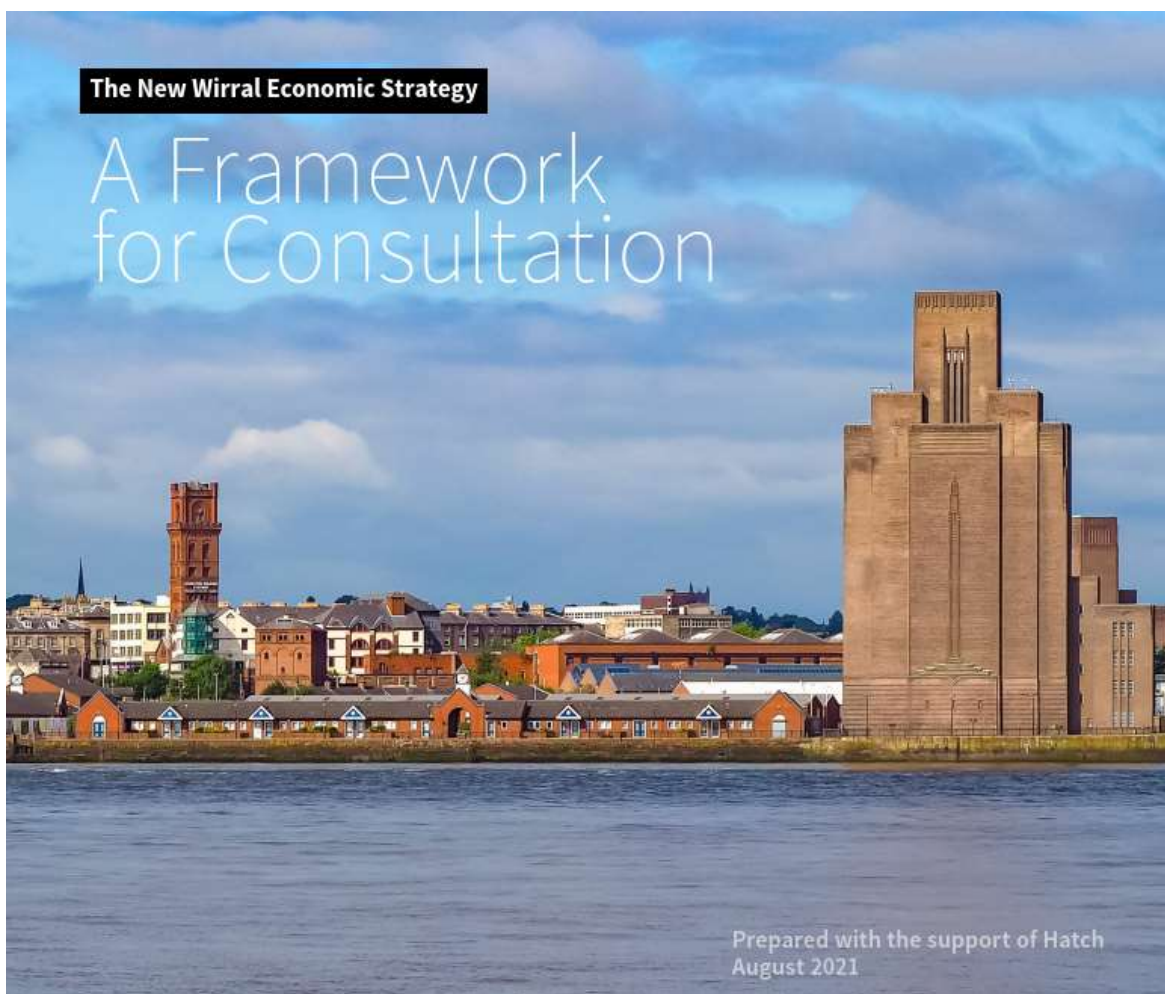
# Consultation Process

## Online Survey

1.1 As part of the development of the Wirral Economic Strategy an online consultation survey was **launched on Wirral's Council's 'Have Your Say' platform** for four weeks between 25<sup>th</sup> August - 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021. The survey received over 30 responses. The 'Wirral Proposed Framework for Economic Strategy' **document** formed part of the survey ([found on the Council's website](#)). The document set out;

- Why a new Economic Strategy for Wirral
- **The story of Wirral's Economy**
- Vision, Objectives and Principles
- Priority Actions
- Next Steps

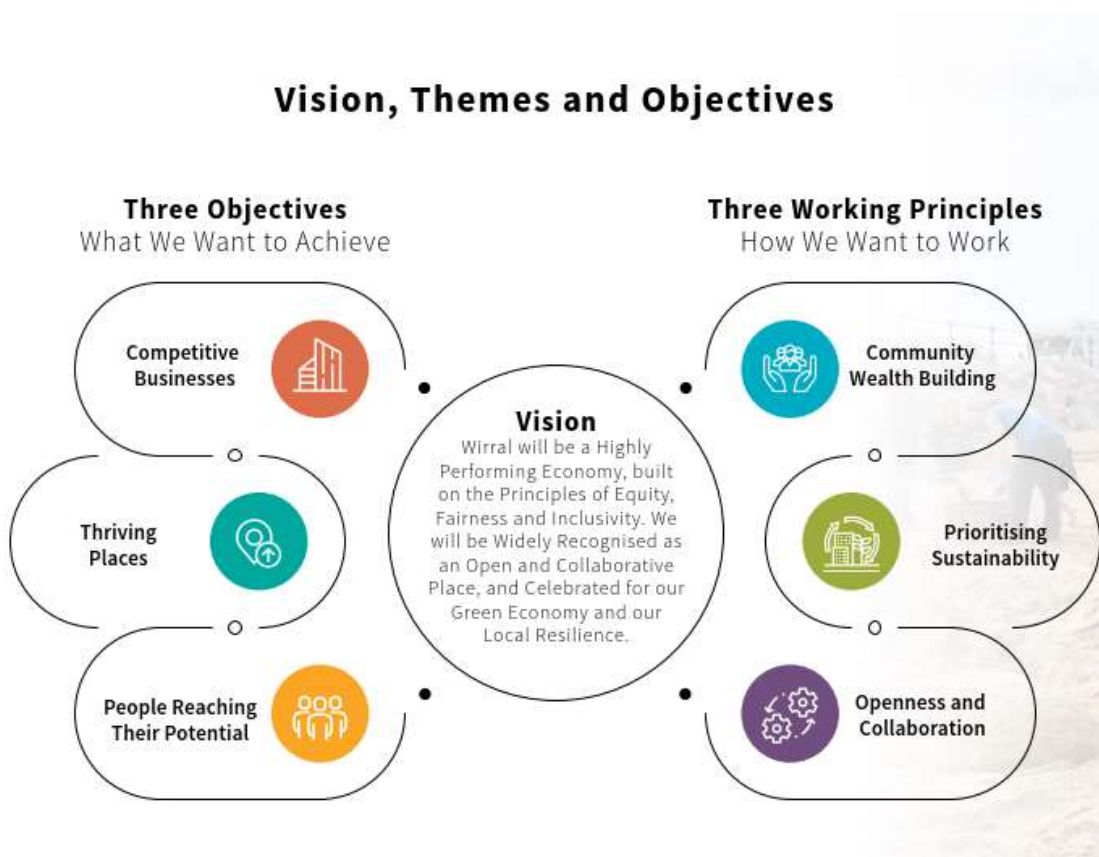
Figure 1.1 A Framework for Consultation



Source; Hatch 2021

- 1.2 The online survey asked the following questions.
- What makes you proud of Wirral?
  - What do you see as the main strengths / weaknesses in Wirral?
  - What do you see as the main opportunities in the borough?
  - What do you see as potential threats to the borough?
- 1.3 The online survey also gathered feedback on an initial Vision statement, set of Objectives and set of Principles as shown below.

Figure 1.2 Vision, Themes and Objectives



Source: Hatch, 2021

- 1.4 The online survey was completed by the SEND and Wirral Youth Voice and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Youth Voice. The Wirral Youth Voice covers ages 11-19 and the SEND Youth Voice extends to those aged 25 with additional needs. Their feedback will be highlighted in this report.

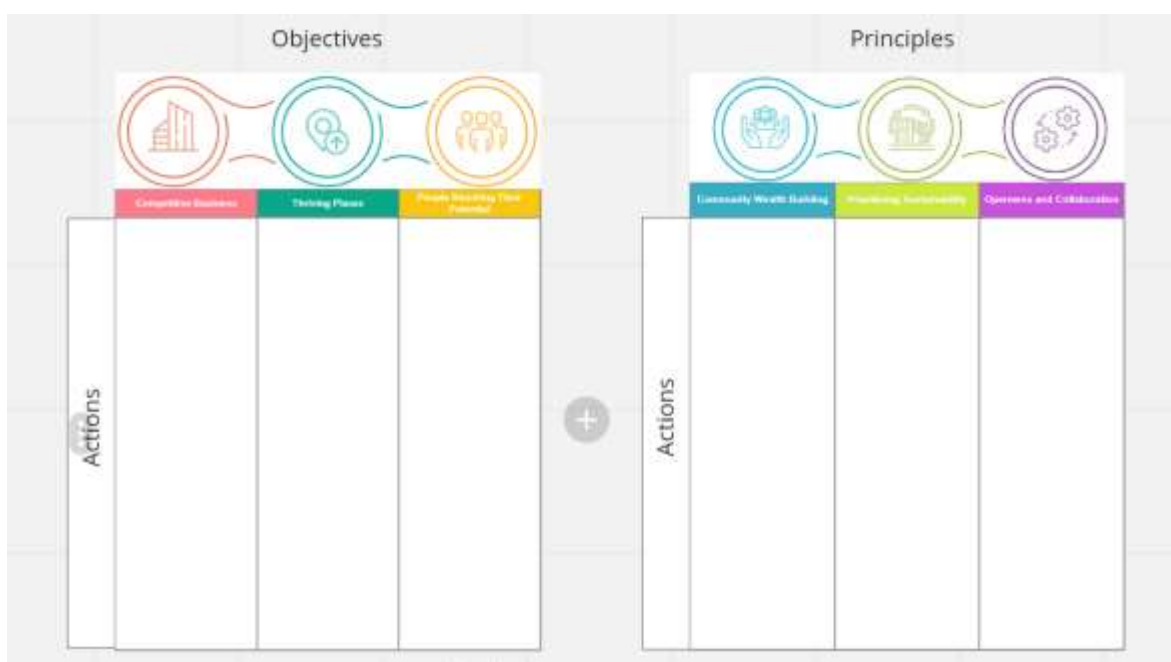
## Stakeholder Workshops

1.5 As well as the online survey a range of stakeholder workshops were held virtually over Microsoft Teams with the aid of the Miro Whiteboard feature. Approximately 35 stakeholders attended the workshops, these included.

- NHS Clinical Commissioning Wirral
- Mersey Dee Alliance
- Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
- Rockpoint Leisure
- Homes England
- Community Action Wirral
- Make CIC
- Ion Development
- Magenta
- Wirral Metropolitan College
- Department for Work and Pensions

1.6 The workshops gave stakeholders an opportunity to feedback on the Vision, Objectives and Principles. Stakeholders had the opportunity to suggest action plans that were already underway, in the pipeline or more aspirational. The use of Miro Boards allowed stakeholders to collaborate when developing action plans or feeding back on Vision, Objectives and Principles.

Figure 1.3 Miro Board Snapshot



Source: Hatch 2021

An aerial photograph of a suburban neighborhood, showing rows of houses and streets. A semi-transparent orange rectangular overlay is centered over the middle of the image, containing the text "2. Consultation Results" in white. The background shows a mix of residential buildings, trees, and open fields under a clear sky.

## 2. Consultation Results

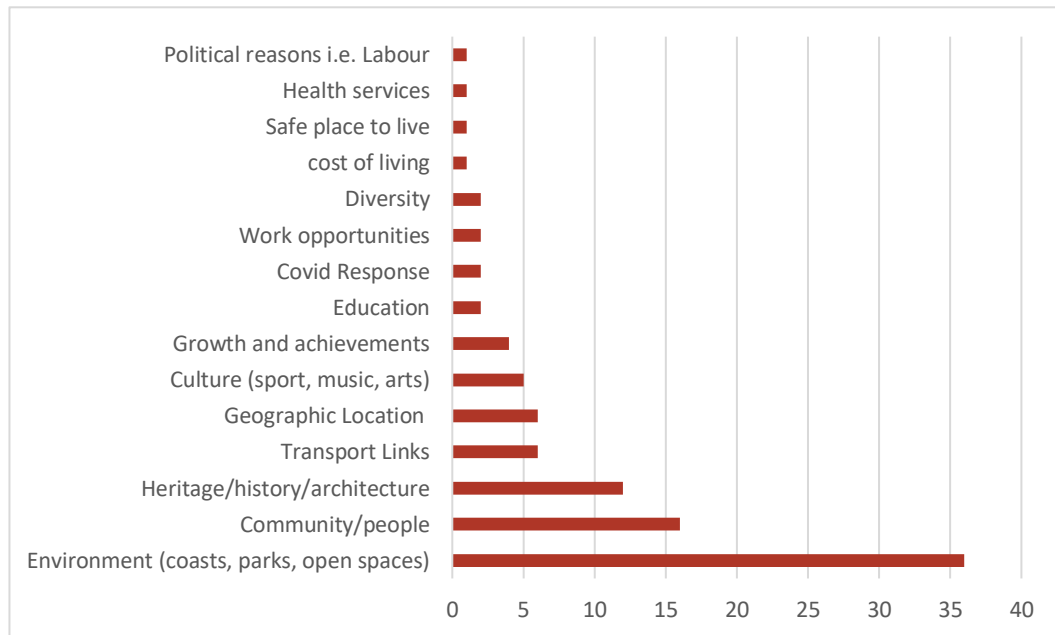


## 2. Consultation Results

2.1 The results from the online consultation and the workshops have been summarised in the following section. The full survey questions can be seen in Appendix 1.

### Outstanding Aspects

Figure 2.1 Outstanding Aspects within Wirral

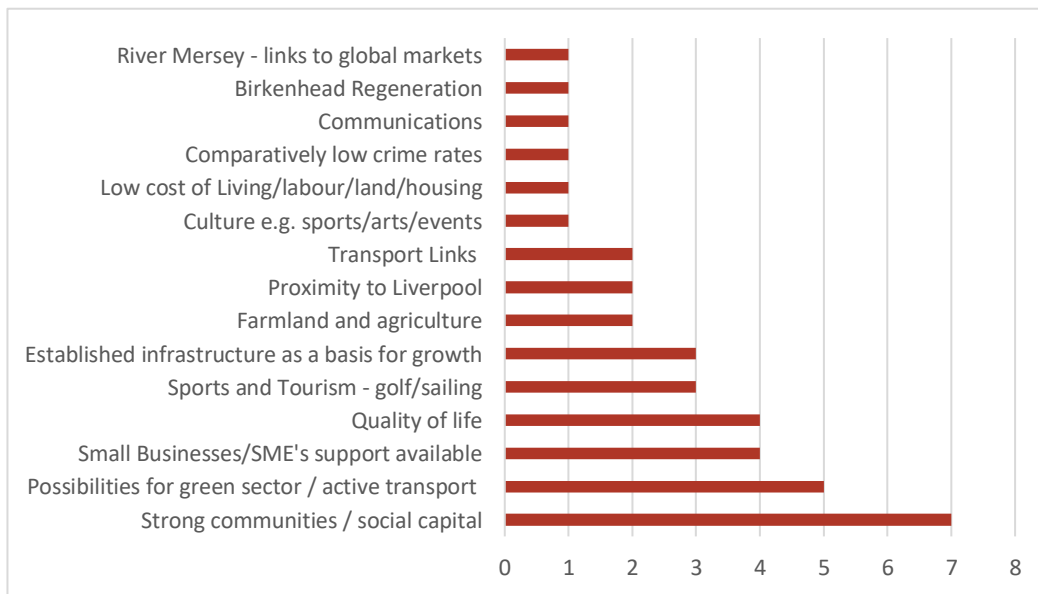


Source: Hatch, 2021

2.2 Figure 2.1 above highlights what consultees considered makes them 'Proud of Wirral'. The range of environments/green space was by far the highest scoring strength. This was followed by 'the sense of community' and the 'heritage assets' found in Wirral.

## Strengths

Figure 2.2 Additional Strengths



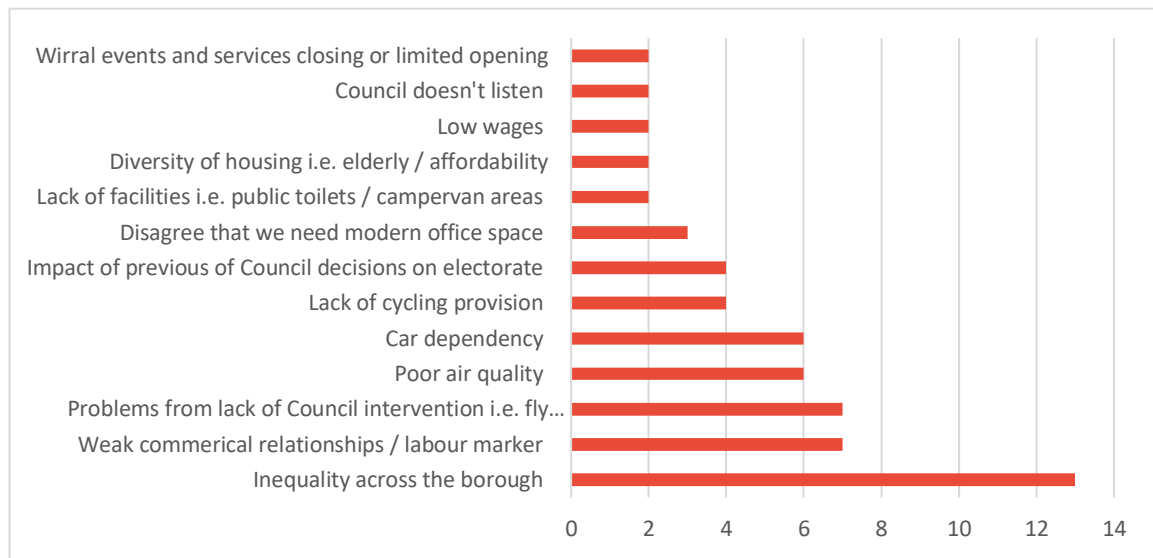
Source: Hatch, 2021

2.3 Participants analysed the strengths section of the proposed economic strategy and had the opportunity to suggest further strengths to be put forward in the document (see Figure 2.2), suggestions included.

- Strong Communities and Social Capital
- Possibility for low carbon, green sector, low energy future (walking, bikes and e-bikes).
- SMEs including support available
- Quality of life

## Weaknesses

Figure 2.3 Additional Weaknesses



Source: Hatch, 2021

2.4 Participants had the opportunity to analyse the weakness section and suggest further weaknesses that should be included such as.

- The inequality across the borough including the maintenance, transport links, education and overall life expectancy.
- Weak commercial relationships / labour market / knowledge drain
- Lack of Council intervention leads to fly tipping, weeds, flood risks, empty shops, buildings and anti-social behaviour.
- Poor air quality
- Car dependency
- Lack of cycling provision

## Vision

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2.5 The Vision included in the consultation report is seen in Figure 2.4 below.

Figure 2.4 Vision for Wirral Strategy



Source: Hatch, 2021

2.6 Consultees were asked if they agreed with the Vision statement. All respondents agreed that Equality, Fairness and Inclusivity should be included in the Vision statement. The significant majority also agreed that themes of Local Resilience and Openness & Collaboration should also be included. A large proportion of respondents agreed that Green Economy should be included, but it needs to be well defined in the document. Similarly, many respondents agreed that the idea of a well performing economy should be included but could be described in a different way.

2.7 The virtual workshops allowed stakeholders to feedback on the Vision. Key points raised were:

- Make the vision more unique to Wirral i.e., environments or resilience of individuals
- Ensure the language of the vision is accessible to all i.e., explain Green Economy
- Incorporate Community Wealth Building
- Include recognition of current challenges
- Include raising the aspiration of young people
- Highlight disparity between East and West Wirral e.g., household income of West Wirral is double East Wirral / child poverty is much higher in East Wirral.

## Objectives and Principles

- 2.8 The Draft Economic Strategy outlined three Objectives and three Principles that underpin the document as outlined in the graphic below.

Figure 2.5 Working Principles and Objectives



Source: Hatch 2021

- 2.9 The overwhelming majority strongly agreed with all three Objectives. The most popular objective was 'People Reaching their Potential' followed by 'Thriving Places' and 'Competitive Business'. Similarly, the vast majority of respondents strongly agreed with all the Principles. The most popular principle was 'Community Wealth Building' followed by 'Prioritising Sustainability' and 'Openness and Collaboration'.
- 2.10 The Stakeholder Workshops gave participants the opportunity to feed back on both the Objectives and Principles. Overall stakeholders wanted to ensure the golden thread between the vision and objectives / principles needs to be as clear as possible. Stakeholders wanted to ensure that objectives / principles were clearly distinctive to Wirral.

### Objectives

- 2.11 The survey and stakeholder workshops provided additional feedback on the Objectives. The suggested changes have been added below;
- *Competitive Business*; needs to be better defined.i.e., does it mean thriving high streets or attracting large businesses. Plus need to show links to successful business examples in the borough.
  - *Thriving Places*; This should include a focus on encouraging people to use their own town centre and build on successful examples e.g. Future Yard. Celebrate both the community of creatives and the uniqueness of the environment, docks, and parks etc.

- Youth Voice Group suggested promoting and celebrating the history of Wirral in a more interactive way.
- *People reaching their Potential*; Consultees wanted to focus on inclusivity and using **economic growth as a means to improve people's lives** and focus on worklessness due to health inequalities.
- Youth Voice Group would like to see greater diversity in college courses for example theatre, arts, technology and gaming. Courses should also focus on **Wirral's** assets i.e., Marine Sciences, Construction and Youth / Community outreach. More needs to be done to help young disabled people to access jobs i.e., help with applications, opportunities to try different jobs and moving away from purely zero-hour contracts. Develop more disabled friendly employers i.e., all staff having autism awareness courses or knowing sign language.

## Principles

2.12 The survey and stakeholder workshops provided feedback on the Principles. The suggested changes have been outlined below;

- *Community Wealth Building*; need to add a full definition for community wealth building. Outline what Wirral has started in terms of Community Wealth Building i.e., taking investment for independents not large corporates. Explain the impacts of sharing the wealth i.e., closing the deprivation gaps. Celebrate the above average density of **'community business', 'social enterprise' and 'socially trading companies'**.
- Youth Voice Group suggested involving local entrepreneurs in regeneration schemes to encourage them to give back to the community. Set up a steering group in each town centre to oversee action plan delivery between different owners. Each group could also contribute to community events i.e., Christmas markets.
- *Prioritising Sustainability*; focus more on a green recovery from the pandemic whilst **outlining Wirral's plans to be** leading test bed for green construction.
- *Openness and Collaboration*; focus on relationship between organisations, between residents and between the Liverpool City Region or Mersey Dee Alliance.



### 3. Feeding into the Revised Document

### 3. Feeding into the Revised Document

- 3.1 The consultation feedback will directly influence the final draft of the document.
- 3.2 The Story of **Wirral's Economy** will now include further strengths such as a Strong sense of Community and Good Quality of Life – it will also outline further the considerable growth potential of the Left Bank. The strategy will better define the Growing Green Energy Sector and outline the range of support available for SMEs. The weaknesses section will better define the inequality between the East and West of the Borough and the risk of knowledge drain to other competitive local boroughs.
- 3.3 The wording of the Vision Statement will be changed to the following;  
*'Vibrant places, where communities and businesses thrive and people choose to live, work and visit. A rebalanced borough that stands out for its achievements on fairness, reducing inequalities and building local wealth. A borough that is celebrated for delivering new and big ideas, working jointly with others and for prioritising environmental sustainability.'*
- 3.4 The names of the Objectives and Principles will now be changed to the following.
- Objectives
    - Thriving Economy
    - Vibrant Places
    - Inclusive Economy
  - Principles
    - Community Wealth Building
    - Prioritising Sustainability
    - Openness and Collaboration
- 3.5 The final document will build upon the actions suggested by respondents under each Objective and Principle.



## Appendix 1 - Wirral Economic Strategy Consultation Online Survey

The survey was launched on 25<sup>th</sup> August and ran until 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021.

1. Tell us about your main connections with Wirral? Tick all that apply
  - a. I live in Wirral
  - b. I have a business in Wirral
  - c. I work in Wirral
  - d. I visit Wirral
  - e. I was born, have lived or have connections to Wirral
  - f. Other (please specify)
  
2. Which features are most special or distinctive about the Wirral economy in your opinion?  
*(Open Ended)*
  - a. Range of businesses on offer
  - b. Number of smaller businesses on offer
  - c. Mix between agricultural and residential economy
  - d. Specific sectors

*Please state the sector.*
  
3. We would like everyone to be proud of Wirral. Tell us what makes you proud of Wirral?  
*(Open Ended)*
  
4. **Please read the analysis on Wirral's strengths outlined in the document. Do you have any further strengths to add or have any comments on the strengths identified?**  
*(Open Ended)*
  
5. **Please read the analysis on Wirral's weaknesses outlined in the document.**  
Do you have any further weaknesses to add or have any comments on the weaknesses identified?  
*(Open Ended)*
  
6. **Please read the analysis on Wirral's opportunities outlined in the document.**  
Do you have any further opportunities to add or have any comments on the opportunities identified?  
*(Open Ended)*
  
7. **Please read the analysis on Wirral's threats outlined in the document.**  
Do you have any further threats to add or have any comments on the threats identified?  
*(Open Ended)*
  
8. **Our proposed Vision statement is: 'Wirral will be a Highly Performing Economy, built on the Principles of Equity, Fairness and Inclusivity. We will be Widely Recognised as an Open and Collaborative Place and Celebrated for our Green Economy and our Local Resilience.'**

The vision statement is made up of five key phrases, which of the key phrases do you most agree with?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
High Performance					
Equity, Fairness and Inclusivity					
Open and Collaborative					
Green Economy					
Local Resilience					

9. Are there any phrases in the Vision statement you disagree with? If yes, please state. (Open Ended)
10. Are there any phrases you think are missing from the Vision statement? If yes, please state (Open Ended)
11. The Vision is underpinned by three objectives: Competitive Business, Thriving Places and People Reaching their Potential.
  - a. The **‘Competitive Business’** objective describes the support needed to grow the business / innovation in the Borough. The objective has a particular focus on increasing the number of start-ups in the Borough. (Insert the Likert Scale as in question 8).

How strongly do you agree with this objective?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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- b. The **‘Thriving Places’** objective outlines the need invest in the spaces people use in Wirral in order protect and increase their popularity for the future. This includes making the network of towns in the Borough fully connected both physically and digitally. (Insert the Likert Scale as in question 8).

How strongly do you agree with this objective?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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- c. The **‘People Reaching their Potential’** objective is that no-one is left behind. It proposes a multi-dimensional approach between schools, colleges, other skills providers, employers and community groups to ensure that all residents are able to meet their full potential.

How far do you agree with this objective?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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12. Do you think anything is missing from this set of three objectives? If yes, please state.  
(Open Ended)
13. Please suggest one overall single action that Wirral Council and its partners, could do to improve competitiveness of businesses?  
(Open ended)
14. Please suggest one overall single action that Wirral Council and its partners, could do to improve to ensure places thrive?  
(Open ended)
15. Please suggest one overall single action that Wirral Council and its partners, could do to ensure residents are reaching their potential?  
(Open ended)
16. There are three underlying working principles that run through all themes, objectives and vision statements in the document. These underlying principles are at the heart of the economic strategy. Any action plans will make reference to these principles.

- a. **Community Wealth Building**  
Put simply, we want 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.  
(Please insert a Likert Scale)

How far do you agree with the community wealth building principle?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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b. Prioritising Sustainability

All our work with businesses, with people and with places needs to be executed in a way that drives forward the ambition of the Cool Wirral 2 Strategy to achieve net zero. (Please insert a Likert Scale)

How far do you agree with the prioritising sustainability principle?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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c. Openness / Collaboration

Wirral would like to be seen as an area that places a premium on promoting integration and connectivity. No longer the “insular peninsula” but rather an area that readily seeks out opportunities and influences from elsewhere. As part of this agenda, we want people and businesses to come to Wirral with new ideas and we will help put them into practice. (Please insert a Likert Scale).

How far do you agree with the openness / collaboration principle?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree / nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	------------------------------	----------	-------------------

17. Do you think anything is missing from this set of working principles?
18. Please suggest one overall single action that Wirral Council and its partners, could do to improve community wealth building in the area?  
(Open ended)
19. Please suggest one overall single action that Wirral Council and its partners, could do to improve to ensure places thrive?  
(Open ended)
20. Please suggest one overall single action that Wirral Council and its partners, could do to ensure residents are reaching their potential?  
(Open ended)



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