

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET (SELECTION MEETING) – 12 MAY 2009

APPOINTMENT OF PANELS, STATUTORY/ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES; AND MISCELLANEOUS APPOINTMENTS

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to enable the Cabinet to review the continuing need for various panels, advisory committees and working parties, and to appoint members and named deputies to serve on those (including the statutory committees and panels) that are to be retained in 2009/10. The membership of the various bodies in 2008/09 is set out in the Appendix.

2. Statutory Committees and Panels

The following statutory committees and panels, all of which have full delegated authority, were retained during 2008/09, and, where appropriate, the minutes of these bodies were submitted to the relevant overview and scrutiny committees for information.

2.1 CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

The Children's Services and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been reviewing the various bodies associated with this portfolio, primarily with a view to ensuring that the best use is made of members' and officers' time. It is likely that a report will be submitted to the June meeting of the Committee, which may result in recommendations for the Cabinet. This applies also to the bodies referred to in paragraph 3.1 of this report.

(i) Complaints Panel (School Curriculum and Related Matters)

To hear and determine complaints about curriculum delivery in schools and related matters as required by statute.

(ii) Education Staff Panel

(1) In relation to schools not subject to a scheme of delegation, to hear and determine appeals arising out of the procedure for the dismissal of teachers as contained in the regulations governing their appointment and conditions of service.

(2) To determine appeals by teachers against proposals to dismiss made by the Director of Children's Services under the Education (Teachers) Regulations 1993, or as subsequently amended or re-enacted.

(iii) Headteacher Appointments Panel

To participate in and approve the appointment of headteachers of schools not subject to a scheme of delegation.

(iv) Parental Appeals Panel

To consider, as part of a statutory review process, appeals against decisions by the Local Authority (or the Governors of voluntary or aided schools) concerning the allocation of places in primary and secondary schools, and decisions by governing bodies concerning the exclusion of pupils.

The Parental Appeals Panel is drawn from a “pool” of lay members or members with experience in education (but councillors are ineligible to serve).

(v) Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (SACRE)

SACRE is responsible for advising the local authority on matters concerning the teaching of religious education and collective acts of worship; it decides on applications for determination of cases in which requirements for Christian collective worship are not to apply; and may require the local authority to review its agreed syllabus

(vi) Wirral Schools Forum (Funding Consultative Group)

The Forum makes recommendations in respect of the allocation of funding for schools, in particular the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) received from the DCSF. Any changes to the distribution formula for DSG, plus any additional specific funding proposed by the local authority, must be approved by the Schools Forum. With recent changes in the composition of the Forum, the Council's three representatives act only as observers.

(vii) School Admissions Forum

The role of the Forum is to consider local admission arrangements and seek agreement on how to deal with difficult admission issues in consultation with admission authorities.

(viii) Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board

This has a variety of responsibilities including to co-ordinate services for children and young people; to identify the needs of Wirral children and young people in terms of the five outcomes in the Children Act 2004; to determine the strategies required to improve the outcomes for children's well-being; to make recommendations to the Council and other partner organisations with respect to the measures that are needed to improve children's well-being; and to recommend joint commissioning strategies and, where appropriate be responsible for pooled budget arrangements.

(ix) Adoption / Fostering Panels

As part of a wider membership, to determine applications for the adoption and for the fostering of children.

2.2 HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

(i) Housing Review Panel

(1) To consider and determine requests made by individual tenants in accordance with the provisions of Section 129 of the Housing Act 1996 for a review of the Authority's decision to seek an order for possession.

(2) To consider and determine requests made by a person or persons in accordance with the provisions of Section 202 of the Housing Act 1996 for a review of certain decisions made by the Authority in relation to homelessness.

(3) To consider and determine requests made by a person or persons in accordance with Section 164 of the Housing Act 1996 for a review of the Authority's decision either to remove or not to place that person's or persons' name(s) on the housing register.

(ii) Unified Waiting List Management Advisory Board

To consider appeals from applicants who consider they have been unfairly treated or unfairly excluded from the waiting list, having exhausted the Steering Group appeals procedure.

3. Advisory Committees and Working Parties

- 3.1 The following is a list of advisory and consultative bodies that were retained or created in 2008/09 to assist the Cabinet and overview and scrutiny committees in their work. The Cabinet may wish to make appointments directly to some or all of them, or alternatively, to ask the relevant overview and scrutiny committee to express a view as to whether all of these bodies need to be retained or whether their role could be undertaken by the O & S committee itself. For those bodies that are retained, it is suggested that they report to the relevant committee or O & S committee.

3.1 CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

(i) Youth and Play Service Advisory Committee

To support and monitor the youth and play services provided by the local authority and other agencies and to make appropriate recommendations.

(ii) Virtual School Governing Body

This acts as the governing body of a virtual school, whose roll comprises all of the children that are looked after by the local authority, with particular emphasis on improving their well-being, educational attainment and attendance.

At its last meeting, the Governing Body agreed to establish a working party to review its terms of reference and membership, with the aim of strengthening its role, and report back to the next meeting (in June).

(iii) Headteachers and Teachers JCC

To meet with headteachers' and teachers' representatives to discuss educational issues.

(iv) SEN Advisory Committee

To advise the Council on any future plans for the development of special educational needs provision in the borough.

(v) Wirral Schools' Music Service Consultative Committee

To represent the views of key stakeholders in the Music Service; to act as a forum for the continuing development of the service; to offer recommendations to the Director of Children's Services; to inform and be accountable to the local authority; and to uphold the right of all young people in the borough to have the opportunity of access to quality music-making activities

3.2 CORPORATE RESOURCES

(i) Members' Training Steering Group

To advise on the preparation of the annual programme of training for Council members and on individual applications to attend courses.

(ii) Members' Equipment Steering Group

To review IT equipment provision for members.

3.3 CULTURE, TOURISM AND LEISURE

(i) Birkenhead Park Advisory Committee

To advise the Council on all issues relating to and affecting Birkenhead Park, and in particular on the regeneration project.

(ii) Hilbre Island Nature Reserve Management Committee

To manage the nature reserve and to make appropriate recommendations for its preservation and maintenance.

(iii) Heritage Champion

Role: to join up policy between departments and ensure the historic environment is taken into account in the development of all the Authority's policies and forward strategies; to identify opportunities for the Authority to use the historic environment in the pursuit of its wider corporate objectives; and to help promote the local historic environment and promote its development.

(iv) Parks and Countryside Service Options Group

3.4 HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Anti-social Behaviour Partnership Body

This has an advisory role on matters of tackling anti-social behaviour (covering awareness, prevention, enforcement and resettlement); promoting the Government's Respect Action Area agenda; overseeing the co-ordination of allied and related services across the Borough; and promoting good practice in the fields of anti-social behaviour and community safety.

3.5 REGENERATION AND PLANNING STRATEGY

(i) Birkenhead Town Centre Consultative Group

In view of the complexity of matters relating to the development of Birkenhead town centre and the pace at which certain issues might evolve, it was felt useful to have a consultative group at which elected members could inform and be informed by officers as negotiations progressed.

(ii) Telecommunications Working Party

To give detailed consideration to issues relating to telecommunications development and to assist in the preparation of a supplementary planning document on the subject as part of the Local Development Framework.

3.6 SOCIAL CARE AND INCLUSION

(i) Advocacy Panel

[Terms of reference]

(ii) Adult Services Reference Group

To advise on the future provision of adult services.

3.7 STREETSCENE AND TRANSPORT SERVICES

Highway Maintenance and Engineering Works Working Party

For the purpose of consultation in relation to procurement arrangements for highway maintenance and engineering works contracts.

4. Financial and Staffing Implications

4.1 There are no financial or staffing implications arising out of this report.

5. Other Implications

5.1 There are no implications arising out of this report in terms of equal opportunities, ethnic minorities, the elderly or the disabled; nor are there any direct human rights, community safety, social inclusion, LA21 or planning implications.

6. Local Member Support

6.1 This report has no implications for specific wards, except insofar as it contains some ward-related appointments.

7. Background Papers

7.1 The only background papers used in the preparation of this report were Council and Cabinet minutes and internal departmental records.

8. Decisions Required

8.1 The Cabinet is requested:

- (1) to appoint members and named deputies, as necessary, to serve on the statutory committees, panels and other bodies identified in paragraph 2 above (including Chairs);
- (2) to make appointments to advisory committees, working parties and consultative groups identified in paragraph 3 above (or, alternatively, to seek the views of the relevant overview and scrutiny committees concerning their retention);
- (3) to confirm that, where appropriate, the minutes of the statutory committees and panels, advisory committees and other bodies be submitted to the relevant select committees for information, with any matters requiring an executive decision being referred to the Cabinet as necessary;
- (4) to note the current constitution and membership of the Parental Appeals Panel.

Bill Norman
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