



## Policy and Resources Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday, 13 September 2023</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>6.00 p.m.</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Committee Room 1 - Birkenhead Town Hall</b>

**Contact Officer:** Dan Sharples  
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PLEASE NOTE: Public seating is limited therefore members of the public wishing to attend are encouraged to arrive in good time.

Wirral Council is fully committed to equalities and our obligations under The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. If you have any adjustments that would help you attend or participate at this meeting, please let us know as soon as possible and we would be happy to facilitate where possible. Please contact [committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk)

This meeting will be webcast at  
<https://wirral.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

## AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**
- 2. APOLOGIES**
- 3. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

- 4. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 16)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings held on 12 July 2023 and 27 July 2023.

## **5. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

### **5.1 Public Questions**

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 Noon, Friday 8 September 2023 to the Council's Monitoring Officer (via the online form here: [Public Question Form](#)) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10.

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your question by the deadline for submission.

For more information on how your personal information will be used, please see this link: [Document Data Protection Protocol](#)

### **5.2 Statements and Petitions**

Notice of representations to be given in writing or by email by 12 Noon, Friday 8 September 2023 to the Council's Monitoring Officer ([committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk)) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 11.1.

Petitions may be presented to the Committee if provided to Democratic and Member Services no later than 10 working days before the meeting, at the discretion of the Chair. The person presenting the petition will be allowed to address the meeting briefly (not exceeding three minute) to outline the aims of the petition. The Chair will refer the matter to another appropriate body of the Council within whose terms of reference it falls without discussion, unless a relevant item appears elsewhere on the Agenda. If a petition contains more than 5,000 signatures, it will be debated at a subsequent meeting of Council for up to 15 minutes, at the discretion of the Mayor.

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your statement/petition by the deadline for submission.

### **5.3 Questions by Members**

Questions by Members to dealt with in accordance with Standing Orders 12.3 to 12.8.

## **6. DEPARTMENT FOR LEVELLING UP, HOUSING & COMMUNITIES SIMPLIFICATION PATHFINDER PILOT (Pages 17 - 26)**

## **7. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 27 - 36)**

## **Policy & Resources Committee Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference for this committee can be found at the end of this agenda.

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## POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 12 July 2023

Present: Councillor P Stuart (Chair)

Councillors J Robinson JE Green  
J Williamson H Cameron  
P Gilchrist S Mountney  
EA Grey L Rennie  
A Davies P Cleary  
S Powell-Wilde H Gorman  
T Jones J Bird

### 13 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting as well as those watching the webcast.

### 14 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

### 15 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interests and to state the nature of the interests.

The following interests were declared:

Councillor Angie Davies	Personal Interest in item 10 'Edsential Draft Annual Business Plan Review and Options' as a school governor.
Councillor Jean Robinson	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Item 9 'Wirral Growth Company Accounts' as a Director of Wirral Growth Company.
Councillor Jeff Green	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Item 9 'Wirral Growth Company Accounts' as a Director of Wirral Growth Company.
Councillor Pat Cleary	Personal Interest in item 10 'Edsential Draft Annual Business Plan Review and Options' as a school governor.
Councillor Paul Stuart	Personal Interest in Item 6 'Strategic Asset Disposals' as his place of employment, 6 Manor Road, Wallasey was proposed for disposal.
Councillor Phil Gilchrist	Personal Interest in item 10 'Edsential Draft Annual Business Plan Review and Options' as a

	school governor which used Edsential services.
Daniel Sharples	Personal Interest in Item 6 'Strategic Asset Disposals' as a Trustee of Wirral Foodbank which occupied units within Wirral Business Centre which was proposed for disposal.

## 16 MINUTES

Councillor Helen Cameron outlined that her comment regarding benchmarking the Council's risk appetite was not specific to Treasury Management and made under item 9 '2023/24 Budget and Budget Monitoring Processes' instead of item 10 'Treasury Management Annual Report 2022-23'.

**Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2023 be approved as a correct record, subject to the comment made regarding benchmarking the Council's risk appetite being included under minute item 10.**

## 17 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair reported that two public questions had been submitted.

The first question was from Philip Barton to the Chair which set out the desire for Tranmere Tunnels to become a tourist attraction as part of Phase 2 of the Birkenhead Dock Branch initiative, of which Holborn Square was a key site for. The questioner sought the deferment of the disposal of Holborn Square until options for disposal by Community Asset Transfer or purchase following a community share issue had been fully explored.

In response, Councillor Paul Stuart outlined that Holborn Square would be offered as an investment opportunity and sold subject to any leases existing at the time of disposal, therefore there was still an opportunity for Tranmere Tunnels Volunteer Ltd and the Birkenhead & Tranmere Community Benefit Society Ltd to set out their proposal.

A supplementary question was asked on whether there was support to continue working with the two companies to deliver Tranmere Tunnels as a community led project. Councillor Stuart responded the project would be considered as part of the asset disposal process.

The second question was read out on behalf of Sarah Hewitson which sought the payment of the Real Living Wage for staff employed by Edsential as a company partly owned by Wirral Council.

In response Councillor Paul Stuart advised that the Council encourages Edsential to pay the Real Living Wage as a shareholder, but that it does not

procure services directly from the company and the schools that commission services have the ability to influence their providers in this respect. He further outlined that the shareholders had provided significant financial support to the company in the form of loans but could not subsidise the company on a day-to-day basis due to subsidy control regulations.

## 18 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

The Chair reported three members of the public had registered to make statements.

Percy Hogg spoke in relation to Item 6 'Strategic Asset Disposals' encouraging the Committee to ensure that the Community Asset Transfer for Bromborough Civic Centre and Library could continue to completion.

Phil Simpson spoke in relation to Item 6 'Strategic Asset Disposals' and outlined concerns regarding some of the site for disposal due to the open space implications but urged the Committee to support the disposal of most assets to protect the Local Plan process.

Jim Cadwallader spoke in relation to Item 6 'Strategic Asset Disposals' and outlined the importance of Holborn Square to the Tranmere Tunnels community project and sought support from the Committee to explore a Community Asset Transfer of the site to Tranmere Tunnels Volunteers Ltd.

The Chair reported that there were no petitions submitted.

## 19 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

The Chair reported that no questions by members had been submitted.

**With the consent of the Committee, the Chair altered the order of business.**

## 20 **2023/24 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING FOR QUARTER ONE (THE PERIOD TO 30 JUN 2023)**

The Director of Finance introduced the report which provided an update on the progress of the Capital Programme 2023/24 at the end of June 2023. It recommended that the Committee agree the revised 2023/24 Capital Programme of £87 million which took account of re-profiling, virements, additional funding requirements and grant variations identified since the Capital Programme was formally agreed on 27th February 2023 and revised via the Capital Outturn 2022-23 report.

Members discussed the additional capital resources for the litter bin programme and sought further information on the overall cost required to fund

the whole programme. An update was sought on the delivery of the Regeneration programme, where it was confirmed that a report was due to be considered by the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee in September.

**Resolved – That**

- (1) Council be recommended to approve the revised Capital Programme of £87 million for 2023/24, including the virements of budget referred to in Appendix C of this report.**
- (2) Council be recommended to approve the additional funding for the schemes referred to in section 3.7, with proposed extra funding from a variety of sources, new borrowing required from the Council, revenue contributions and the repurposing of previously agreed Council borrowing.**

21 **2023/24 BUDGET MONITORING FOR QUARTER ONE (THE PERIOD TO 30 JUN 2023)**

The Director of Finance introduced the report which set out the financial monitoring information for the Council as at Quarter 1 (30 June) of 2023/24 and sought approval of an increase to the revenue budget by £2.000m due to increased Council funding and the allocation to the budget areas detailed in the report. It was reported that there was increased funding of £2m due to Business Rates Section 31 grant and that this funding had been proposed to be allocated to budgets where the budget pressure was permanently recurring and would therefore prevent the requirement for future mitigations.

Following concerns raised regarding the estimation of receipt of government grant funding, the Director of Finance advised members that the forecasting was being reviewed to assist in achieving a more accurate income prediction. It was agreed that a meeting of the Finance Sub-Committee would be arranged for September 2023 to consider the budget position in further detail.

**Resolved – That**

- (1) the Directorate forecast adverse position of £3.618m presented at Quarter 1 be noted alongside the proposed mitigation to reduce the shortfall.**
- (2) Council be recommended to approve that the Revenue budget be increased by £2.000m due to increased Council funding, detailed in paragraph 3.25 and allocate to the budget areas detailed in Table 2.**



**(3) the progress on delivery of the 2023/24 savings programme at Quarter 1 be noted.**

**(4) the forecast level of reserves and balances at Quarter 1 be noted.**

## 22 **WIRRAL GROWTH COMPANY ACCOUNTS**

Councillors Jean Robinson and Jeff Green left the room and took no part in the debate due to a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the item.

The Director of Finance introduced the report which sought the approval of the 2021 (retrospectively) and the 2022 accounts for Wirral Growth Company Limited Liability Partnership (WGC) following the approval of the accounts by the WGC LLP board.

The Committee discussed the role of Policy & Resources Committee in approving the accounts and the use of the profit from the company. Concerns were raised regarding the oversight of the governance of the company, where officers advised that the Internal Audit team were reviewing the governance of Council-owned-companies. This would be reported to the Audit and Risk Management Committee, but members were advised that Policy and Resources Committee could be provided with further information to consider the role of the company and that this would be added to the work programme.

### **Resolved – That**

**(1) the Wirral Growth Company LLP accounts for year ending 31st December 2022 be approved.**

**(2) the Wirral Growth Company LLP accounts for year ending 31st December 2021 be approved retrospectively.**

## 23 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chair introduced the report which provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and review its work across the municipal year. The Chair brought members' attention to items for future consideration and matters outside of the Committee where it was noted that a number of the requests for information had been circulated.

Following a discussion on the contents of the work programme, it was proposed that a workshop be held to consider the Council's risk appetite alongside oversight of the risk register. It was further proposed that the Committee review the response from Link following Council's resolution to write to the organisation to progress the development of Banking Hubs.

The Committee discussed the request for an extraordinary meeting of Policy & Resources to consider the Community Asset Transfer of Brackenwood Golf Club sooner than September. It was moved by Councillor Helen Cameron, seconded by Councillor Paul Stuart that an extraordinary meeting of Policy & Resources be arranged to consider the Community Asset Transfer of Brackenwood Golf Club. The motion was voted upon and agreed by assent. It was therefore –

**Resolved – That**

- (1) the work programme be noted, subject to the inclusion of the additional items discussed under this and previous items.**
- (2) an additional meeting of Policy and Resources Committee be arranged to consider an item on the Community Asset Transfer of Brackenwood Golf Club.**

24 **MINUTES OF SENIOR OFFICER AND APPOINTMENTS STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Senior Officer and Appointments Staffing Sub-Committee held on 15 March 2023 be noted.**

25 **STRATEGIC ASSET DISPOSALS**

The Director of Regeneration and Place introduced the report which provided a list of property assets which formed a programme of proposed disposals over the coming years. The report followed the approval of the Asset Strategy by the Committee on 9 November 2022 and the directive of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to meet the capitalisation directive.

The Committee discussed the report and concerns were raised regarding the process and the role of Policy and Services Committees in declaring assets surplus to requirements. The Committee was reminded of the urgency in raising capital receipts to pay off the capitalisation directive to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities within the recommended timeframe, as well as the requirement to dispose of land to support the delivery of the Local Plan and the need to satisfy the Independent Panel of the Council's intent to make timely and strategic decisions.

Following a debate, the Committee agreed to consider the long list of assets and dispose of those where there was unanimity. After considering each asset, it was –

**Resolved – That**

**(1) the following assets be declared surplus to requirements and the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to consider and determine any responses or objections to the sale of any of these assets which is considered to be open space as defined by Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972; and progress and conclude sales of the assets on the best terms reasonably possible:**

**Oaklands Outdoor Centre, Llanwryst  
29 Seaview Road, Liscard  
129 – 131 Laird Street, Birkenhead  
Land at Pearson Road, Tranmere  
Seacombe Library, Liscard Road, Seacombe  
Units 10/12/14 Kelvinside, Seacombe  
Arrowe Hill Facilities Management Store, Woodchurch  
Eastham Youth & Community Centre  
Coronation Gardens (Café), West Kirby  
Albion Street Lifeguard Station, New Brighton  
Hamilton Building, Birkenhead  
Dee Lane Kiosk, West Kirby  
Marine Technology Park, Tranmere  
Manor Road 6, Wallasey  
Former Liscard Municipal Offices and adjacent Car Park  
Fender Way Former Scout Hut, Beechwood  
Price Street Car Park, Birkenhead**

The Committee then considered each asset where members had requested for information or discussion prior to a decision, beginning with those where the discussion could take place within the public session.

The Committee considered the disposal of Holborn Square given the representations made by Tranmere Tunnels Volunteers Ltd (TTVL) and the Birkenhead & Tranmere Community Benefit Society Ltd (BATCBS) and were of the view that the groups should be given time to make a bid for Community Asset Transfer. It was raised that a timeframe should be put on the process to ensure the delivery of the Community Asset Transfer process or otherwise in a timely manner.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Pat Cleary, it was –

**Resolved – That**

**(2) Holborn Square be referred to the relevant Policy and Services Committee to consider the potential for a Community Asset Transfer.**

The Committee then considered Bebington Town Hall, Annexe and car park (site of the former) where the case was made that it would be a preferable site

for extra care housing. On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Phil Gilchrist, it was –

**Resolved – That**

**(3) the site of the former Bebington Town Hall, Annexe and car park be declared surplus to requirements and the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to consider and determine any responses or objections to the sale of the assets which is considered to be open space as defined by Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972; and progress and conclude the sale following exploration of the potential for extra care housing.**

The Committee considered Bedford Place Cleared Site & Amenity Open Space where concerns were raised over its disposal. It was moved by Councillor Pat Cleary and seconded by Councillor Jo Bird that the matter be referred to the relevant Policy and Services Committee for further investigation. The motion as put to the vote and fell (3:12).

On a motion by Councillor Jeff Green, seconded by Councillor Angie Davies, it was –

**Resolved (12:3) – That**

**(4) Bedford Place Cleared Site & Amenity Open Space be declared surplus to requirements and the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to consider and determine any responses or objections to the sale of the assets which is considered to be open space as defined by Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972; and progress and conclude the sale on the best terms reasonably possible.**

The Committee considered The Carrs Agricultural Land, Meols and felt that its disposal was contrary to the Council's determination to protect greenspace.

On a motion by Councillor Jean Robinson, seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, it was –

**Resolved – That**

**(5) The Carrs Agricultural Land, Meols be removed from the asset disposal list.**

The Committee considered the proposed disposal of Clare Mount Specialist Sports College, Moreton, where it was felt that site contributed to the Playing Pitch Strategy. It was moved by Councillor Pat Cleary, seconded by Councillor Harry Gorman, that Clare Mount Specialist Sports College,

Moreton be referred to the relevant Policy and Services Committee for further consideration. The motion was put to the vote and fell (4:11).

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, it was –

**Resolved (11:4) –That**

**(6) Clare Mount Specialist Sports College, Moreton be declared surplus to requirements and the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to progress and conclude the sale on the best terms reasonably possible.**

It was felt by the Committee that the outstanding sites could not be determined within the public session. On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Angie Davies, it was –

**Resolved – That under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.**

The Committee considered the remaining sites and discussed their potential disposal in detail. During the exempt session, it was –

**Resolved – That**

**(7) (12:3) the land at Ditton Lane, Moreton be declared surplus to requirements and the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to progress and conclude the sale on the best terms reasonably possible.**

**(8) the Land at Old Clatterbridge Road, Bebington be declared surplus to requirements and the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to consider and determine any responses or objections to the sale of the assets which is considered to be open space as defined by Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972; and progress and conclude the sale on the conditions set out by the Committee.**

**(9) Wirral Business Centre, Dock Road, Wallasey be declared surplus to requirements and the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to progress and conclude the sale on the conditions**

**set out by the Committee.**

- (10) (11:4) Bromborough Civic Centre be declared surplus to requirements and the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to consider and determine any responses or objections to the sale of the assets which is considered to be open space as defined by Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972; and progress and conclude the sale on the best terms reasonably possible.**

Having arrived at three and a half hours since the commencement of the meeting, on a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, it was

–

**Resolved (9:6) – That the meeting continues beyond 3.5 hours in duration.**

## 26 **EDSENTIAL DRAFT ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN REVIEW AND OPTIONS**

The Director of Finance introduced the report which invited the Committee to consider and review the Draft Annual Business Plan submitted by Edsential CIC setting out the current position of the company, its view of the immediate future and steps that it proposes to take to continue trading successfully and compliantly. The report sought approval for the Director of Finance to negotiate any detailed changes to the draft Annual Business Plan and present an agreed version for approval by Policy and Resources Committee.

Following a discussion, it was moved by Councillor Jo Bird, seconded by Councillor Pat Cleary, that the officer recommendations in the report be agreed, with the inclusion of an addition resolution ‘that the Council, in consultation with the other shareholder, request Edsential to prioritise the payment of the Real Living Wage within the overall benefits package for employees, and to present options to the shareholders to this effect in the future.’

The Chair sought the input of the Director of Finance on the implications of the motion, where he advised if both shareholders insisted that the Real Living Wage was paid, Edsential would likely have to change their pricing structure accordingly. To ensure the business remained in a solvent position, the costs would need to be passed onto schools who could potentially look elsewhere for those services, potentially leading to the decline of the business.

The motion was then put to the vote and fell (4:11).

On a motion moved by Councillor Jeff Green, seconded by the Chair, it was –

**Resolved (11:4) – That**

**(1) option 5 as detailed within the report be endorsed to allow Edsential CIC to continue to trade in the manner proposed in the Draft Annual Business Plan.**

**(2) the Director of Finance be authorised in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance and, so far as is practicable, with appropriate representatives of Cheshire West and Chester Council to agree and approve the content of the Annual Business Plan.**

**27 COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - WOODCHURCH LEISURE CENTRE**

**Resolved – That the matter be deferred to a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee to be arranged as soon as possible after the meeting.**

**28 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Resolved – That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.**

**29 HIND STREET DELIVERY**

The Director of Regeneration and Place introduced the report.

**Resolved – That the recommendations as detailed in the report be approved.**

**30 EDSENTIAL DRAFT ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN REVIEW AND OPTIONS - EXEMPT APPENDICES**

**Resolved – That the exempt appendices be noted.**

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# POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 27 July 2023

Present: Councillor P Stuart (Chair)

Councillors J Robinson S Mountney  
P Gilchrist L Rennie  
EA Grey H Gorman  
A Davies J McManus (In  
T Jones place of S Powell-  
JE Green Wilde)  
H Cameron C Cooke (In place  
of P Cleary)  
A Onwuemene (In  
place of J Bird)  
GJ Davies (In place  
of J Williamson)

## 31 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting as well as those watching the webcast.

## 32 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received by Councillors Jo Bird, Pat Cleary, Sue Powell-Wilde and Janette Williamson.

Councillors Chris Cooke, Amanda Onwuemene, Julie McManus and George Davies were in attendance as substitutes.

## 33 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No declarations were made.

## 34 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair indicated that one public question had been submitted in advance of the meeting.

David Allen spoke on behalf of Wirral Archaeology Community Interest Company and outlined the significance of Brackenwood Golf Course as a site in the search for the location of the Battle of Brunanburh. His question was should the golf course be transferred to Brackenwood Community Golf Ltd, could a clause be included in the transfer to allow suitable access for archaeological investigation.

In response, the Chair outlined his recognition that the site was potentially vital for the location of the Battle of Brunanburh and that he intended to ask officers to explore how appropriate rights of access for archaeological investigations could be retained should the transfer be agreed.

### 35 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

The Chair indicated that three members of the public had registered to make a statement in advance of the meeting.

Christine Smalley spoke in relation to item 5 'Community Asset Transfer – Brackenwood Golf Course' as a local resident who used Brackenwood Golf Course as a place to walk her dog. Christine spoke of the biodiversity and wildlife on the site and the work volunteers had undertaken to keep the course fit for purpose during 483 days of uncertainty. Christine outlined that she felt there was an abundance of pitches nearby and urged the Council to transfer the site for the benefit of the local community.

Keith Marsh spoke in relation to item 5 'Community Asset Transfer – Brackenwood Golf Course' and outlined the support that Brackenwood Community Golf Ltd had received locally and internationally for the proposed transfer. Keith thanked officers for their hard work in supporting the group through the process and thanked the volunteers who had worked passionately, professionally and with tenacity to protect the land for the local community.

Robin Clarke spoke in relation to item 5 'Community Asset Transfer – Brackenwood Golf Course' and spoke of the members of Brackenwood Golf Club and the various reasons why local people chose to be members of the club for social, community, health and wellbeing reasons, urging the Committee to consider those people and transfer the site.

The Chair placed on record his thanks to the public speakers for their passionate speeches.

### 36 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

The Chair reported that no questions by members had been received.

### 37 **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - BRACKENWOOD GOLF COURSE**

The Assistant Director of Special Projects introduced the report of the Director of Finance which set out the proposed transfer of Brackenwood Golf Course to Brackenwood Community Golf Limited based on the Heads of Terms set out in the report. It was reported that the proposal included an improved rental offer and the provision of two mini 5-a-side pitches and four full size playing pitches, as opposed to two full size pitches as detailed in the report.

The Committee discussed the proposal in detail and considered the wider provision of playing pitches within Wirral, urging officers to encourage schools with existing facilities to make them available for community use to contribute to the Local Plan. The Committee further discussed the feasibility of the pitches at Brackenwood and the promotion of biodiversity on the site.

Members around the table placed on record their thanks to the volunteers at Brackenwood Golf Club for their ongoing maintenance of the site, the detailed information shared with members to aide their decision and the polite but determined, tenacity of the volunteers to progress the transfer. On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, it was –

**Resolved (unanimously) – That**

**(1) the Committee agrees to the transfer of Brackenwood Golf Course to Brackenwood Community Golf Limited (BCGL) on the basis of the Heads of Terms set out in the report, noting the improved rent offer and the required provision of two mini 5-a-side pitches and four full-size playing pitches and also subject to appropriate provision made in the lease to enable appropriate access to be made for archaeological investigation.**

**(2) the intent to transfer is advertised as the asset is public open space. If no objections are received, then delegated authority be given to Director of Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to proceed to transfer the identified land. To note that if objections are received then the matter will return to Committee for consideration as set out in paragraph 5.8.**

## 38 **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - WOODCHURCH LEISURE CENTRE**

The Chair reported that several members had indicated that they wished to discuss the content of the exempt appendices. Therefore, on a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Angie Davies, it was –

**Resolved – That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds it involves the likely**

**disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.**

The Assistant Director of Special Projects introduced the report (of the Director of Finance) which set out the proposed Community Asset Transfer of Woodchurch Leisure Centre to Woodchurch Wellbeing.

Following a debate on the matter, it was –

**Resolved (unanimously) – That**

- (1) Committee notes and concurs with the key objectives set out in the business plan.**
- (2) Committee is minded to support the Community Asset Transfer of Woodchurch Leisure Centre to Woodchurch Wellbeing with capital funding up to a maximum of £330,000 and to that effect will issue a letter of intent accordingly.**
- (3) Such a letter is subject to:**
  - a. Receipt of additional grant funding by Woodchurch Wellbeing to match Council capital contribution of £330k plus 20% revenue costs by Friday 27 October 2023.**
  - b. Receipt of a revised business plan by Friday 27 October 2023 for consideration by Policy & Resources Committee on 8 November 2023.**



## POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 13 September 2023

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT FOR LEVELLING UP, HOUSING &amp; COMMUNITIES SIMPLIFICATION PATHFINDER PILOT</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLACE</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks Member approval to take part in a Simplification Pilot delivery model known as a “Pathfinder” as established by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The Council have been selected and formally invited to join the pilot scheme.

In April 2023 DLUHC proposed a Simplification Pilot to streamline the delivery of 3 local growth funds (external grants) overseen by them. The funding streams in question are Towns Deal, Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) and the Council’s Levelling Up Round 1 (LUF1) allocation, all of which are administered by DLUHC. The Pilot will allow the council to amalgamate the three funds into one large regeneration fund and only one claim will be completed each quarter instead of three separate claims. It also revises the spend deadline for all funds to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 – at the moment the Future High Streets Fund must be spent by March 2024 and Levelling Up by March 2025. Currently there is significant pressure on the Future High Street Fund to spend all the grant by next March and the Council faces a high risk of clawback if this deadline is not met.

The pilot will also enable more flexibility to transfer money between the projects funded by these three funds as they will all be considered as being funded by one grant pot. Governance of the pilot will be the responsibility of the local authority, and this will be set out in a separate Investment Plan, which will also present the outputs to be achieved by the pilot. The investment plan will be taken to Policy and Resources committee as a separate document in time to meet the DLUHC deadline.

This report will contribute to the Wirral Plan with regards to delivering a prosperous, inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations.

Through the successful delivery of the regeneration projects it will benefit the delivery of a cleaner, greener borough which celebrates, protects and improves the environment and urgently tackles the environmental emergency and contributes to

making safe and vibrant communities where people want to live and raise their families.

This is a key decision due to the value of the combined funding allocations covering 2 or more wards.

The report primarily impacts on the Birkenhead and Tranmere, Bromborough Ward and Seacombe Ward, however the successful implementation of individual projects have implications for all Wards.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

The Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to:

1. Accept the invitation to participate in the pilot.
2. Authorise the Director of Regeneration and Place to enter into the Pathfinder Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance.
3. Delegate to the Director of Regeneration and Place management of the future change control process if required, up to a limit of £1.5m. Any changes above that amount will be taken back to committee. Change controls would be submitted to DLUHC as part of the ongoing monitoring of the pilot. Any changes above £5m will require DLUHC to approve them.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 The benefits for the Council of the simplified Pathfinder over the current, separate funding arrangements are important and provide greater operational efficiencies. It would bring multiple benefits for the project delivery process and comprise greater levels of flexibility, reducing the administrative burden of delivering three parallel programmes, as well as extending the completion date for all three funds to March 2026. It will also enhance the level of local decision making and funding monitoring and management, as well as other critical operational efficiencies as detailed in this report.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 The Council have been invited to join the “Pathfinder” scheme and for the reasons detailed in this report this is the recommended option. The Council could take the option of declining the offer but if the council decided not to join the pilot there will be significant pressure to spend the Future High Street Fund grant by March 2024 or there is a risk of clawback, withheld funds or reputational damage on some of this funding if it remains unspent.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Council has been successful in securing various external funds to deliver our ambitious and transformational plans, as set out in the Birkenhead 2040 Framework 20-year plan. Three of these funding streams originate from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) including Future High Street Fund, Town Deal and Levelling Up Fund 1 Birkenhead secured for four key regeneration programmes:

- Future High Street Birkenhead - £25,581,010
- Future High Street New Ferry - £3,213,523
- Birkenhead Town Deal - £25,000,000
- LUF1 Birkenhead - £19,648,872

Total funding across the 3 different streams = £73,443,405

- 3.2 The combination of funding for overlapping and adjacent schemes brings about a number of challenges, in particular with regards to procurement, monitoring & evaluation and delivery timescales. Working closely with the Council since the submission of funding bids though to project development and delivery onsite, it has become clear to DLUHC that their offer of multiple funding streams and the associated monitoring of them has brought about significant challenges where the projects form part of a wider programme with shared objectives.
- 3.3 In April 2023 DLUHC proposed a simplification pilot to streamline the delivery of 3 local growth funds administered by them. The funding streams in question are Towns Deal, Future High Streets Fund and the Council’s Levelling Up

Round 1 allocation. For clarity, the simplification pilot does not include the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's £9.7m Levelling Up Fund Round 1 allocation covering Argyle Street, administered by the Department for Transport.

3.4 Following consultation and engagement with officers, DLUHC have invited the Council to take part in the pilot delivery model known as a simplified 'Pathfinder' Pilot. The delivery model that will be tested by DLUHC is built around the following principles:

- A single aggregate allocation replacing three programme allocations
- A combined set of outcomes
- A streamlined reporting process
- A simplified change request process
- A single point of contact within DLUHC for any queries about funding or the pilot

3.5 Local authorities currently in receipt of funding from all three of these DLUHC funding streams are eligible to participate in the pilot and Wirral Council is one of only 10 local authorities to have been invited to participate. The pilot is not mandatory, but DLUHC are keen to work with eligible local authorities to understand how the pilot could successfully work in different local contexts and for wider priorities.

3.6 The benefits for the Council of the simplification Pathfinder Pilot over the current, separate, funding arrangements are as follows:

- The pilot will provide the Council with greater levels of flexibility that can be used to speed up delivery of key projects by moving money between projects where required.
- Reducing the administrative burden of delivering three parallel programmes will enable the council to adopt a more efficient approach to project delivery. The three funding streams will all share a completion date of March 2026. Currently the end date for FHSF is March 2024, LUF1 is March 2025 and Town Deal is March 2026. This will give more time and flexibility to deliver on complex and interdependent projects across the three funding streams, ensuring they are aligned and can be delivered with maximum benefit as opposed to prioritising projects to meet spend deadlines.
- The Council will benefit from an enhanced level of decision making; a lighter touch arrangement to the change control process will be introduced with a new threshold level. Currently most changes require individual Project Adjustment Forms to be completed and approved by DLUHC. Under the Pathfinder the Council will only need to seek approval from DLUHC if it is making a 'material change' to the Investment Plan. 'Material change' has been defined to be a move of least £5m to a different intervention theme or moving at least £5m between projects in the same intervention theme.



- The Council will have greater ability to make decisions locally about moving smaller amounts of funding (less than £5m) between projects in the funding portfolio. The flexibility to manage and determine projects and spend profiles locally is welcomed and will assist where opportunities arise and cost increases impact on project delivery.
  - The current Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) variances across the three funding streams bring a number of limitations to certain projects. This issue is most evident in the FHSF programme, which places the most reliance on a threshold BCR and is a particular issue for areas with low land values and significant viability gaps. We have been verbally notified that BCR will not be a key assessment requirement within the new pathfinder programme and there is no reference to BCR in the guidance notes from DLUHC.
  - A combined set of outcomes and outputs, covering the full portfolio of activity that will be delivered using the aggregated funds, will replace the three separate reporting templates currently required to monitor and evaluate projects. DLUHC will track delivery of the interventions across the portfolio as opposed to a project-by-project basis. A streamlined reporting mechanism involving one three-monthly Red, Amber, Green (RAG) report - a risk report focusing on spend and progress - and one six monthly delivery report will simplify the process of monitoring and evaluation, enabling both the Council and DLUHC to more accurately measure the benefits of the projects which have shared objectives.
  - A range of indicators will also feed into the evaluation of the Pathfinder pilot which will be conducted centrally by DLUHC. Delivery insights gathered through this evaluation work will inform the design of future government funding programmes.
- 3.7 An Investment Plan will need to set out how the Council will use the funding and include high-level information on the projects as well as an aggregate set of outcomes and outputs selected from the Investment Framework. The Plan must include a forecast for the amount of funding that will be invested each year across the identified interventions. This will be a separate document and will be taken to ERH Committee and Policy and Resources Committee within the permitted timescales by DLUHC.
- 3.8 This Investment Plan is essentially the reset point for the three current regeneration programmes. DLUHC has been clear however, that there is an expectation that the key activities, overall budgets, outputs and outcomes originally promised across all three funds will remain relatively consistent.
- 3.9 The Investment Plan will set out proposals for governance and assurance issues. An existing assurance framework prescribed by DLUHC is already in place and was established in 2020 to provide advice on the Towns Deal fund – the Town Deal Board. The Town Deal Board includes the Leader and some local councillors (the chair of ERH committee and a Birkenhead Green Party councillor), and also a number of stakeholders (Wirral Met College, DLUHC, job centre plus, as well as representatives of local community groups) and as private sector representatives including the chair. The Council is required to establish a consolidated governance structure which will oversee the total

portfolio of projects for the Simplification Pilot. The Council has the flexibility to set out how a consolidated governance will work for the pilot area and will include an overview of the chosen approach in the Investment Plan. Whilst there is no direct instruction to the Council, DLUHC have advised that the Pathfinder pilot would benefit from building on the positive role of Town Deal Board to date.

- 3.10 The proposed Board will have no decision-making power but will exercise strategic oversight over Pilot activity. The Investment Plan will consider the role of the Town Deal Board and how it might be reconstituted or expanded into the consolidated governance structure to give stakeholders the framework to exercise strategic oversight over the portfolio.
- 3.11 The Investment Plan will require consultation with stakeholders, including the existing Town Deal Board, elected members, local MPs and senior council officers. The Investment Plan will require approval from the S151 officer prior to submission. This will take place before it is taken to Committee for approval.
- 3.12 A single Memorandum of Understanding will replace the agreements in place for the three funding streams.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This pilot delivery model is designed to deliver operational efficiencies and to extend the delivery deadline for all associated regeneration projects funded by Future High Street Fund and Levelling Up Fund, which have deadlines of March 2024 and March 2025 respectively, to March 2026. These deadlines increase the risk of clawback or withheld funds with regards to their challenging delivery timetable. Extending the deadline will mitigate this risk. There are no additional financial implications of joining the Pilot when compared to managing the three separate funds.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 It is proposed that a single Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will replace the agreements in place for the three funding streams. Full consideration will be given to any associated legal implications both for the Council and in any external Grant Funding Agreements with third parties. At this stage there are no known legal implications arising that would influence Member's decision making regarding the recommendations of this report and it is recommended that the signing of this MOU is delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Place and the Director of Law and Governance.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 As detailed in the background to this report there are operational efficiencies arising from the combined governance of the Pathfinder pilot as only one monthly claim will be submitted and reporting to DLUHC will be less frequent.

However the compilation of the claim will still require the same level of resource by pulling together information from all the projects within the pilot.

- 6.2 Management of the extended Pathfinder Pilot board, if it is established, will require the same level of resource as the existing Towns Deal Board.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 All specific project and programme risks, which remain unchanged by entering into the pilot, are captured in individual risk registers and reported to the Regeneration Project Management Office on a monthly basis. They are also highlighted at the Regeneration Portfolio Board and reported to the Investment and Change Board. A sub-committee of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee was established in June 2022 and the remit of this group is to be extended to manage progress and risks for the overall regeneration programme. Entering into the pilot will mitigate a number of risks around spend deadlines and therefore project delivery but will not impact on other individual project and programme risks.
- 7.2 There are potential risks to project delivery arising under the current funding parameters, given the spend deadlines and the ability to deliver successful schemes in time to meet these deadlines. The three funding streams will all share a new completion date of March 2026 which will allow more time for project delivery. Currently the end date for FHSF is March 2024, LUF1 is March 2025 and Town Deal is March 2026. Joining the pilot will result in the spend deadline for all three funds being March 2026.
- 7.3 Entering the pilot will give more time and flexibility to deliver on complex and interdependent projects across the three funding streams, ensuring they are aligned and can be delivered with maximum benefit. The current arrangement exposes the Council to the possible clawback of significant grant allocations to the detriment of local regeneration projects and the benefits they potentially could have brought to Wirral by imposing earlier deadlines for spending the funding. For example, projects are progressed in some cases due to spend deadlines where a better approach would be to time project delivery to maximise the benefits to be achieved by those projects. If the council decides to join the pilot the risk of underspend or clawback will be significantly reduced compared to the current arrangement.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The Investment Plan will require consultation with stakeholders, including the Council Leader, elected members including the Policy and Resources committee, MPs and the existing Town Deal Board. The Investment Plan will be presented to SLT and will require approval from the S151 officer prior to submission.
- 8.2 Existing successful governance structures will be utilised, building on the positive local role of Town Deal Board to provide an overview of the chosen

approach in the Investment Plan. It will have no decision-making powers but will exercise strategic oversight and advice over pilot activity.

- 8.3 Full consideration will be given to build upon the successful use of “BirkenEd’s Place”, the “Have Your Say” web site and other social media platforms to keep people informed as the project development design and implementation stages proceed. This is no different to the existing arrangement with the three separate funds.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.
- 9.2 There are no direct Equality implications arising specifically from this report and no change from the individual Equality requirements of the three individual funds. However each individual project will address any implications arising to ensure no protected groups are adversely impacted by the implementation of regeneration activities as part of their normal considerations.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 None directly arising from this report however the regeneration schemes impacted do have climate change resilience measures and Biodiversity Net Gain proposals at the core of their designs and objectives to mitigate impacts.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Community Wealth Building reorganises local economies to be fairer and stops wealth flowing out of communities. Striving for a prosperous and inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations, the Council’s aims to create an economy that benefits all of our residents and one which keeps money within Wirral. The Council’s Community Wealth Building Strategy is a key part of how this is achieved and makes a major contribution to improving the economic, social and health outcomes of the borough.
- 11.2 The projects within the Pathfinder Pilot programme will ensure that more wealth is invested and stays within the Borough. A number of the projects are being developed by local community interest companies which will help build a more resilient local community and support community organisations. Future procurement exercises will build the wealth of our local communities where we will strive to maximise social value activity through creation of local

employment/ training opportunities and local labour/spend to maximise the Wirral pound.

- 11.3 Having more flexibility in delivery aspects ensures that community wealth benefits are more likely to be realised.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** **Damian Cooke** Birkenhead Regen Portfolio Lead  
email: Damiancooke@wirral.gov.uk,

## **APPENDICES**

None

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Simplification Pathfinder Pilot: Technical Guidance, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/simplification-pathfinder-pilot-technical-guidance/simplification-pathfinder-pilot-technical-guidance#:~:text=This%20stand%2Dalone%20pilot%20will,in%20partnership%20with%20local%20authorities>

**Letter to Paul Sator, Wirral Council Chief Executive, from DLUHC dated 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 – Funding Simplification Pathfinder Pilot**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

To provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, including making decisions on policies and co-ordinating spend not reserved to full Council, and to maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets.

To provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a 'whole-council' view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management, which includes responsibility for a decision which is deemed significant in terms of impact on the Council's revenue or capital.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Levelling Up Fund – Officer Decision Notice</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022</b>
<b>A Town Deal for Birkenhead – Approval of Full</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>

<b>Business Cases (Tranche 2) – Officer Decision Notice</b>	
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<b>Future High Street Fund – Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee</b>	<b>4th March 2021</b>
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## POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 13 September 2023

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>CHAIR OF POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

The Policy and Resources Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which are within the remit of the Committee.

It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Policy and Resources Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy & Resources Committee is recommended to comment on and note the proposed Policy and Resources Committee work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 To ensure Members of the Policy and Resources committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 Various formats for the workplan were explored. The current format is open to amendment to match the requirements of the committee.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The work programme should align with the priorities of the Council and its partners. The programme will be informed by:

- (i) The Council Plan
- (ii) The Council's transformation programme
- (iii) The Council's Forward Plan
- (iv) Service performance information
- (v) Risk management information
- (vi) Public or service user feedback
- (vii) Referrals from Council

#### **Terms of Reference**

The Policy and Resources Committee has two main areas of responsibility, which is to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, including making decisions on policies and co-ordinating spend not reserved to full Council, and to maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets.

The Committee is charged by full Council to:

- (a) formulate, co-ordinate and implement corporate policies and strategies and the medium-term financial plan (budget), which includes responsibility for any decision:
  - (i) that relates to such matters to the extent that they are not reserved to full Council;
  - (ii) on any cross-cutting policies that impact on other committee areas;
  - (iii) on policy matters not otherwise allocated to any other committee; and
  - (iv) to determine any dispute or difference between committees;
- (b) provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a 'whole-council' view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management, which includes responsibility for a decision:
  - (i) that has a major impact on a number of Council services or on the Council as a whole;



- (ii) on any virement between Budget funds (revenue) requested by a Committee or officer in excess of **£500,000**;
  - (iii) on any virement between Budget funds (capital) or any amendment to the Capital Programme requested by a Committee or officer in excess of **£500,000**;
  - (iv) regarding land and property including major acquisition and disposals, which includes reserved decision making concerning any purchase, sale or transfer of a value in excess of, or likely to exceed, **£500,000**; unless the Committee has delegated this function in relation to a specified area or business plan as the Committee may determine.
  - (v) regarding companies or limited liability partnerships including acquisition and disposals; and
  - (vi) which is deemed significant in terms of impact on the Council's revenue or capital (to be determined by the Head of Paid Service and/or Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Leader);
- (c) without limiting the generality of responsibility for cross-cutting policies (at (a) above), lead on behalf of the Council:
- (i) in matters concerning relationships with HM Government, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and other major public and non-public bodies;
- (d) appoint Council representatives as required;
- (e) nominate councillors and other persons to outside bodies; and
- (f) undertake responsibility for developing and monitoring the enabling corporate services, including, finance and investment, project support and risk management, strategic procurement and commercial strategies, ICT, property and asset management, human resources and organisational development, law and governance, communications and public affairs, emergency planning and business continuity.

3.2 The Constitution sets out that the agenda of any Committee or Sub-Committee shall only include those items of business that require a decision, relate to budget or performance monitoring or which are necessary to discharge their overview and scrutiny function. Matters not relating to these functions may be dealt with via task and finish groups, workshops and briefing notes at the request of the Committee.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 This report is for information and planning purposes only, therefore there are no direct financial implication arising. However, there may be financial implications arising as a result of work programme items.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, there may be legal implications arising as a result of work programme items.

## 6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no direct implications to staffing, ICT or Assets.

## 7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The Committee's ability to undertake its responsibility to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, make decisions on policies, co-ordinate spend, and maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets may be compromised if it does not have the opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

## 8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Not applicable

## 9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision, or activity.

This report is for information to Members and there are no direct equality implications.

## 10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report is for information to Members and there are no direct environment and climate implications.

## 11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

11.1 This report is for information to Members and has no direct community wealth implications.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Steve Fox, Head of Democratic and Member Services  
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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Policy and Resources Committee Work Plan

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The Council Plan  
The Council's Transformation Programme  
The Council's Forward Plan

Subject History (last three years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Each Policy & Resources Committee meeting	

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# POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

## WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

### DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN BETWEEN OCTOBER 2023 AND JANUARY 2024

Item	Brief Description	Committee Meeting	Lead Departmental Officer
<b>OCTOBER</b>			
Birkenhead Commercial District and Cheshire Lines		October 2023	Director of Regeneration and Place
Future Regenerations Partnerships for Wirral		October 2023	Director of Regeneration and Place
In-Year Budget Position Report for all Policy & Services Committees <b>Non-key</b>	in respect of the in-year position and the anticipated pressures <b>for all areas</b> for future years that are being incorporated within the Medium Term Financial Plan.	October 2023	Director of Finance
<b>NOVEMBER</b>			
Sale of Land at Arrowe Park Road, Upton		November 2023	Director of Regeneration and Place
Pay Policy Statement		November 2023	Director of Resources
Strategic Change Programme		November 2023	Director of Resources
Digital Transformation Partner		November 2023	Director of Resources
2023-24 Budget Monitoring Q2	This report sets out the financial monitoring information for the Council as at Quarter 2 (30 September) of 2023/24.	November 2023	Director of Finance
2023-24 Capital Monitoring Q2	This report provides a summary of the Capital Programme position for the 2023/24 financial year as at the end of June 2023.	November 2023	Director of Finance

External Audit Report Action Progress <b>Non-key</b>	To report progress on the implementation of the Auditors recommendations	November 2023	Director of Finance
Introduction of ERP System <b>Non-key</b>		November 2023	Director of Finance

#### ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Brief Description	Date Requested	Approx. timescale	Lead Officer

#### STANDING ITEMS AND MONITORING REPORTS

Item	Reporting Frequency	Lead Officer
Performance Monitoring	As required	Director of Finance
Financial Monitoring	Quarterly	Director of Finance
Work Programme Update	Every Meeting	Director of Law and Governance

#### WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

Item	Format	Requested	Timescale	Lead Officer
<b>Working Groups/ Sub Committees</b>				
<b>Task and Finish work</b>				
<b>Spotlight sessions / workshops</b>				
Council's Risk Appetite (including Climate Emergency)	Workshop	12 July 2023	October	Director of Finance
Governance of Council Companies	Workshop	12 July 2023	October	Director of Finance/ Director of Law and Governance
Response from Link to	All Member	31 August	October	Director of

the Motion from Council on Banking Hubs	Workshop	2023		Finance/ Director of Law and Governance
<b>Briefing Notes</b>				
Valuation of Assets when transferred to and from the Wirral Growth Company		12 July 2023	October	Director of Finance
Additional Capital Requirements for Litter Bins		12 July 2023	October	Director of Finance, Director of N'Hood Services
Performance Management Policy Update		15 February 2023	October	Director of Resources

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## Policy and Resources Committee – Terms of Reference

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- (a) formulate, co-ordinate and implement corporate policies and strategies and the medium term financial plan (budget), which includes responsibility for any decision:
  - (i) that relates to such matters to the extent that they are not reserved to full Council;
  - (ii) on any cross-cutting policies that impact on other committee areas;
  - (iii) on policy matters not otherwise allocated to any other committee; and
  - (iv) to determine any dispute or difference between committees;
- (b) provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a 'whole-council' view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management, which includes responsibility for a decision:
  - (i) that has a major impact on a number of Council services or on the Council as a whole;
  - (ii) on any virement between Budget funds (revenue) requested by a Committee or officer in excess of **£500,000**;
  - (iii) on any virement between Budget funds (capital) or any amendment to the Capital Programme requested by a Committee or officer in excess of £500,000
  - (iv) regarding land and property including major acquisition and disposals, which includes reserved decision making concerning any purchase, sale or transfer of a value in excess of, or likely to exceed, **£500,000**, unless the Committee has delegated this function in relation to a specified area or business plan as the Committee may determine
  - (v) regarding companies or limited liability partnerships including acquisition and disposals; and
  - (vi) which is deemed significant in terms of impact on the Council's revenue or capital (to be determined by the Head of Paid Service and/or Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Leader);
- (c) without limiting the generality of responsibility for cross-cutting policies (at (a) above), lead on behalf of the Council:
  - (i) in matters concerning relationships with HM Government, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and other major public and non-public bodies;
- (d) appoint Council representatives as required;
- (e) nominate councillors and other persons to outside bodies; and

- (f) undertake responsibility for developing and monitoring the enabling corporate services, including, finance and investment, project support and risk management, strategic procurement and commercial strategies, ICT, property and asset management, human resources and organisational development, law and governance, communications and public affairs, emergency planning and business continuity.