

CABINET

Monday, 2 December 2013

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	P Davies (Chair)	Finance
	Councillors	G Davies P Hackett AER Jones C Jones B Kenny AR McLachlan H Smith T Smith	Neighbourhoods, Housing & Engagement Economy Central and Support Services Adult Social Care Environment and Sustainability Governance and Improvement Highways and Transportation Children and Family Services

Apologies Councillor C Meaden

107 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

108 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7 November 2013 be approved as a correct record.

109 CORPORATE PLAN 2014 - 2016

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report by the Chief Executive which provided Cabinet with a refreshed Corporate Plan for the period 2014-2016 for consideration and for referral to the Policy meeting of Council on 2 December 2013.

The Corporate Plan for 2013-2016 had been agreed by Council on 5 March 2013 following extensive consultation with residents, partners and other stakeholders.

The Corporate Plan provided the organisation with a clear vision, set of priorities and was the basis on which a performance framework would be developed to monitor progress towards the defined objectives. The report also contained the current financial position of the organisation for the same period.

A supplementary report had also been circulated following the all Member event on 27 November, 2013 at which Members had scrutinised the Corporate Plan 2014 – 2016. This report provided feedback from the event and requested that Cabinet consider and approve the proposed amendments to the Corporate Plan as detailed in appendix 1 to the supplementary report.

Councillor Phil Davies, referring to two comments he had that morning received from Councillor Gilchrist, stated that he was happy for these to be included as amendments to the Plan in the Regeneration and Environment section.

Councillor Ann McLachlan commended the wide ranging consultation process which had taken place on the Plan and highlighted the fact that the medium term financial strategy provided an overview of the Council's financial position and the strategy required to operate within the funds available.

RESOLVED: That

Cabinet, having considered the contents of the Corporate Plan and Financial Position Statement as provided at Appendix 1 of the report and, taking account of the feedback from the elected Member event, approves the Corporate Plan 2014 – 2016, incorporating the amendments detailed in Appendix 1 to the supplementary report. Also to be included, the following amendments to the Regeneration and Environment section:

'This year we will:

- Maintain a focus of road safety particularly around our schools**
- Develop alternative models for regeneration, including local asset backed vehicles, which will enhance employment opportunities through working with private sector partners'**

The Corporate Plan, as amended, be referred to the Policy meeting of Council on 2 December 2013 for adoption.

110 DRAFT COMMITTEE CALENDAR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014/15

A report of the Strategic Director of Transformation and Resources recommended draft dates for Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings for the municipal year 2014/2015. The proposed draft calendar was set out in Appendix A. The report also described various issues that were taken into account in compiling it.

All Members' attention had been drawn to the proposed calendar and taking into account the two comments which had been received, it was -

RESOLVED: That

Cabinet recommends that the draft calendar of meetings, attached as Appendix A, be approved by Council, subject to the following amendments:

- **Cabinet – 10 July move to Monday 7 July at 5.00pm**
- **Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee – 30 September move to Thursday 18 September**

and, unless amended prior to 11 March, 2014, be confirmed as the calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2014/15.

111 WIRRAL CORONER SERVICE

Councillor Adrian Jones introduced a report by the Strategic Director – Transformation and Resources, which provided details of interim changes to the Wirral Coroner Service arising from the retirement of HM Coroner for Wirral, Mr Christopher Johnson, on 31 December 2013.

The Council, in conjunction with the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor / Ministry of Justice, had a legal obligation to ensure that the Wirral Coroner Area had in place effective coroner service arrangements that were adequately resourced.

Mr Johnson had a legal obligation to ensure that the role, responsibilities and duties of HM Coroner for Wirral were undertaken and discharged fully. This included providing appropriate interim arrangements during any period of absence or annual leave.

With regards to the position following Mr Johnson's retirement (post 31 December 2013), normally a recruitment exercise would be undertaken by the Council for a Senior Coroner for the Wirral Area to be appointed. However, it was a long established policy that the issue of amalgamation is first considered before a permanent Senior Coroner appointment is made.

Until the issue of amalgamation was addressed, the Council was required to put in place appropriate interim arrangements to ensure that an effective coroner service was maintained after Mr Johnson retired.

In considering the interim options available to the Council, discussions had also taken place with Liverpool City Council and their Senior Coroner, Mr Andre Rebello. Mr Rebello was highly regarded and also operated a very effective Coroner Service. Mr Rebello and Liverpool City Council had confirmed that they would be willing to provide interim support to the Council in relation to Wirral's Coroner Service until such time that a permanent Senior Coroner appointment was made.

The Council was required to appoint Mr Rebello as the Council's Assistant Coroner, along with his five assistant coroners, from 1 January 2014 until such time that the Council addressed the issue of amalgamation and appointed a permanent Senior Coroner. The consent of the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor would be required before the appointments could take effect.

With some minor amendments to the recommendations, which were explained by the Head of Legal and Member Services, it was then -

RESOLVED: That

Council is recommended to:

- (a) Subject to the consent of the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor being given, appoint Mr André Rebello as Assistant Coroner and lead for the Wirral Area, from 1 January 2014 until such time that the Council addresses the issues of amalgamation of the Wirral Coroner Area and a permanent Senior Coroner is appointed to cover the Wirral Coroner Area;**
- (b) Subject to the consent of the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor being given, appoint Nicholas Reinberg (Senior Coroner for Cheshire,), Alan Wilson (Senior Coroner for Blackpool), Simon Holder (Barrister), Anita Bhardwarj (Solicitor), Martin Fleming (Solicitor), David Lewis (Solicitor), as Assistant Coroners for the Wirral Area from 1 January 2014 until such time that the Council addresses the issues of amalgamation of the Wirral Coroner Area and a permanent Senior Coroner is appointed to cover the Wirral;**
- (c) Authorise the Strategic Director for Transformation and Resources (or his nominee) to put in place all necessary arrangements and enter in such agreements required to ensure effective interim arrangements for the Coroner Service as outlined in this report.**
- (d) Authorise the Strategic Director for Transformation and Resources (or his nominee) to undertake all necessary steps required to address the issue of amalgamation of the Wirral Coroner Area with another Coroner Area as required and in accordance with the directions of the Chief Coroner and Ministry of Justice as outlined in this report.**