



Coordinating Committee

Date:	Monday, 23 February 2015
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RELEVANT AUTHORITIES (DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS) REGULATIONS 2012, INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary or and / or any other relevant interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when the item is reached.

Members are reminded that they should also declare whether they are subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered at this meeting and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 68)

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 3, 18 and 23 September, 2 and 15 October, 12 November, 2014 (all attached) and 12 February, 2015 (to follow).

3. CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2014/15 (Pages 69 - 84)

4. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORTS (MONTH 9) 2014/15 (Pages 85 - 120)

The Revenue Monitoring and Capital Monitoring Reports (Month 9) which were considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 10 February, 2015 are attached for Members' information.

5. **REVIEW OF THE FUTURE COUNCIL BUDGET OPTIONS SCRUTINY PROCESS (Pages 121 - 124)**
6. **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 125 - 136)**
7. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 1)**
8. **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The public may be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

RECOMMENDED:

That in accordance with section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The public interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

9. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 2)**

POLICY AND PERFORMANCE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 3 September 2014

Present: Councillor M McLaughlin (Chair)

Councillors	P Doughty	KJ Williams
	P Brightmore	J Williamson
	A Leech	T Anderson
	C Muspratt	W Clements
	W Smith	M Hornby
	M Sullivan	S Williams

12 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Blakeley and P Gilchrist.

13 **COUNCILLOR WALTER SMITH**

The Chair wished Councillor Smith Happy Birthday for the previous day.

14 **CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RELEVANT AUTHORITIES (DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS) REGULATIONS 2012, INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS**

Councillor S Williams declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda Item 8 – Financial Monitoring Update as there was a reference to the scheme to rebuild Foxfield Special School and he was a governor at that school.

15 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 July 2014 and the Minutes of the Special meeting of the Committee held on 7 August 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.

16 **FUTURE COUNCIL UPDATE**

The Chair informed that there had been a meeting held immediately before this meeting of the Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Group Spokespersons of the four Policy and Performance Committees to discuss the Future Council initiative

and to consider options on how it could be scrutinised by the Committees. It had been proposed that the Committees adopt an approach of Task and Finish Groups to look in detail at the Budget Proposals and savings priorities etc. in the same way as the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee had done during the previous year. Proposals had also been made on help needed and when and how often these Task and Finish Groups would meet. These proposals had been broadly agreed by the Members who had attended the meeting.

It was proposed that the suggestions to scrutinise the Future Council initiative would be considered by each of the Policy and Performance Committees during the next cycle of meetings that began next week.

A Member queried the secretarial support and backup that would be required for this important piece of work and was informed that it was the intention that the Scrutiny Support Officers would provide it.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) this Committee supports the proposals, set out above, as the approach to be adopted to scrutinise the Future Council initiative and the 2015/16 budget proposals etc.; and**
- (2) the notes of the meeting of 3 September 2014 held between the four Policy and Performance Committee Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Group Spokespersons be circulated to all Members of these four Committees for information.**

17 **INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION PROGRESS REPORT**

The Strategic Director – Transformation and Resources introduced a report by the Head of Legal and Member Services which set out the progress made and tasks undertaken in implementing the transition to Individual Electoral Registration (IER) which had begun in June 2014. The Strategic Director drew out the key points as follows:

- The shift to IER involved transferring the registration process from the current property-based system to a new process whereby individuals were responsible for registering themselves. This process was being directed by the Cabinet Office with local authorities having to ensure compliance with a national implementation timetable. The work to transfer to the IER register was now formally underway towards a publication date of 1 December 2014.
- A scrutiny review had been completed in the autumn of 2013 which had considered the potential impact of IER on Wirral and the Council's preparedness for this transition. The outcome of this review was reported to the Committee at its meeting on 15 January 2014. (Minute

No. 30 refers.) It had been noted that the Council's test run in August 2013 for the transfer had been above the national average. One of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review was that this report be presented to the Committee so that it could monitor the IRR implementation process.

Members then asked a number of questions which were answered as appropriate by the Strategic Director. It was noted that:

- The onus was on the individual voter to register, it was not a household responsibility. Members could direct people to the Electoral Registration Section and One Stop Shops.
- People who were not on the Electoral Register would find it harder to obtain credit, so this could be seen as a motivator to register.
- There was some confusion over the question of opting out. Some Merseyside Local Authorities had slightly amended their documentation in the light of this but this was against the guidance provided by the Electoral Commission. The Council's present stance was that it did not intend to distribute any further clarification regarding this, in an attempt to avoid confusion.
- Considerable work had been carried out within the wards to identify those most at risk. In general terms they were in the most deprived wards. As a consequence, targeted actions had been agreed for these wards.
- Voters may have to make a positive decision to opt out of data being seen on the Register. The Strategic Director would check this out and inform all Committee Members of the outcome.
- Members of the Committee would receive a ward by ward progress update produced in chart format.
- Members of the Committee would each receive a copy of the Scrutiny Review Report which the Committee had produced in the previous year.
- Each of the Council's four Constituency Committees had received a report and asked questions on IER.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the report be noted.

18 **DECISION MAKING BY CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEES - A REPORT ON PROGRESS**

The Corporate Equality and Cohesion Manager introduced a report of the Head of Neighbourhoods and Engagement which detailed the progress made so far in respect of the decision-making process of the Council's four Constituency Committees that had been established in October 2013 and included Article 10 of the Council's Constitution – Constituency Committees.

The Committee noted that every Member of the Council was a member of one of the Constituency Committees, each Committee had co-opted a community representative(s) as a member(s) without voting rights and each one was evolving in a different way and had produced a detailed handbook on how it operated. The Committees met on a quarterly basis, in the presence of the press and public. The purpose of these new Committees was to further empower Members, as leaders of their communities, to maximise public resources in their local areas and increase community resilience within neighbourhoods to encourage greater independence.

It was expected that the implementation of the Council's Future Council programme would result in the devolution of more decision-making to Constituency Committees wherever it made sense to do so. Members would further inspire communities to come together to uncover the right solutions to address local need and improve residents' quality of life. They would deliver this role through leading on the development and delivery of Constituency Plans and by identifying the main priorities for improvement in the Constituency area. The aim was for the Committees to eventually be able to commission services and activities with devolved Constituency Budgets in accordance with the Council's new Commissioning Strategy which was in the process of being developed. It was considered that this approach would not just deliver more cost effective services. It would also deliver better outcomes for local residents.

The Committee was informed that Priority Task and Finish Groups (consisting of both Elected Members and Co-optees) had been established by the Constituency Committees to prioritise budget expenditure and in accordance with any set criteria.

Members noted that it was intended that each Constituency Committee would present an annual report capturing its key achievements etc. to the Council.

Members then asked a number of issues which were responded to as appropriate by the Corporate Equality and Cohesion Manager. It was noted that:

- The report did not address decisions and delegated decisions.
- The Public Service Board had been established to look at how services could work together to deliver the best outcomes for residents. Its membership included Chief Officers from across the public service areas who were the strategic drivers. There were also Local Public Service Boards attended by Neighbourhood Officers, Constituency Managers and representatives from Police, Fire, Magenta Living etc. They discussed their priorities, how to share resources and looked at collaborative working to resolve resident's issues. These were not public meetings but it was considered that it would be helpful for Members to know what was being discussed.

- The Constituency Committees were looking at Neighbourhood Plans and needed to “join up work with the Planning Team”.
- Initially the Council’s Constitution states that the Constituency Committees may refer recommendations back to the Executive.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the progress of the decision-making process of Constituency Committees be noted; and**
- (2) the Committee will now undertake a short piece of work in relation to decision-making including delegated decisions.**

19 **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT**

The Strategic Director – Transformation and Resources introduced a report by the Director of Public Health and Head of Policy and Performance which updated the Committee in relation to the current performance of the Council against the delivery of the Corporate Plan as at 31 July 2014. The report translated the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan into a coherent and measurable set of performance outcome measures and targets. Members were invited to consider the detail and highlight any issues. Appendix 1 to the report contained the Corporate Plan Performance Report (31 July 2014/15).

The Committee was aware that Corporate Plan performance was monitored on a monthly basis against the parameters agreed as part of the business planning process (e.g. RAG tolerance levels). Some indicators were only available on a quarterly basis, in line with the availability of data. Heads of Service responsible for the delivery of targets must complete an exception report and delivery plan for all indicators which were under performing (e.g. red RAG rated indicators).

Members noted Appendix 2 to the report which contained the Exception Report/Action Plan for NHS Health Checks – Take up and Appendix 3 which contained the Exceptions Report/Action Plan for Performance Appraisals completed.

As the Head of Public Health was not in attendance at the meeting the Strategic Director offered to obtain full responses to any issues raised and relay them back to Members.

Members then asked a number of issues which were answered as appropriate by the Strategic Director. It was noted that:

- The Council had failed to meet its target in respect of Performance Appraisal but there had been an improvement in recent months. The Chief Executive had sent out a note that day to remind Senior Officers

of their obligations to meet the target set and provide staff with the correct level of support. Allowances needed to be made for seasonal workers but overall there was room for considerable improvement.

- Performance Appraisals were not being used as any kind of indicator that people should be either in or out of work.
- The staff were not avoiding Performance Appraisals not meeting the target was because of other work pressures
- Officers would provide a response to questions about Health Checks including how these were funded, why performance information from GPs was not comprehensive and why checks were not available from other health providers.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the contents of the report be noted; and**
- (2) the Strategic Director – Transformation and Resources be requested to circulate a response to the questions about the Public Health Exception Report on Health Checks.**

20 **FINANCIAL MONITORING UPDATE**

The Chief Accountant introduced a report which had been considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 7 July 2014. The report detailed the Monitoring position for Month 2 (ending 31 May 2014) and attached to it were two separate Appendices for Revenue and Capital.

The Chair informed the Committee that, as part of the report was now subject to a call-in and there would be a meeting of this Committee on 18 September 2014 to consider the called in key decision, she would not be allowing any Members' questions on Public Health Spend.

The Committee then considered Appendix A to the report on Revenue and the Chief Accountant answered Members' questions as appropriate. Issues raised included:

- The legislation change in respect of carbon reduction.
- Ongoing work had continued to improve debt collection and resolve outstanding debts and currently the balance outstanding was £22,054,513 compared to last year which at the end of May 2013 was £26,461,856. This reduction was very pleasing.
- There was £11m of old debt.
- The suggested growth reductions were pretty good.

The Committee then considered Appendix B to the report on Capital and a Member asked who paid GPs to carry out health checks? The Chief Accountant undertook to find out and inform all Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the report and its Appendices be noted.

21 **WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

A report by the Chair of the Committee updated Members on progress made in delivering its Work Programme and the wider Scrutiny Work Programme including the activities of the other three Policy and Performance Committees.

Members were reminded that at its meeting held on 2 July 2014 the Committee had agreed that the Chair, Vice- Chair and Group Spokespersons would meet to discuss potential items for its Work Programme. (Minute No. 4 refers.) This approach had also been adopted by the other three Policy and Performance Committees. It had also been acknowledged that, in the short term, Member and officer capacity should be retained for the scrutiny of the Council's budget options arising from the Future Council Programme. Following this Members should consider reviews around Constituency Committee Decision Making (elsewhere on the agenda) and Cumulative Impact Policy.

The Committee was informed that this meeting had taken place on 17 July 2014 and as well as discussing potential items for its Work Programme had reviewed items that were proposed/outstanding from the previous Municipal Year. A summary of the main points arising from the discussion was set out in the report.

Subsequently, it had been proposed that the following items outstanding from last year could be covered either at Committee meetings or through a single 'workshop' session later in the Municipal Year:

- Review the content of the wider Scrutiny Work Programme;
- Quality Assurance of previous Scrutiny Reviews to promote good practice; and
- Review the consistency of developing recommendations arising from Reviews.

It had also been proposed that a further outstanding item from last year, to review the implementation and impact of Universal Credit should be deferred in line with the implementation timetable. It had been suggested that any review under this heading might better come under the remit of the Transformation and Resources Committee.

Further Work Programme meetings had been scheduled with the Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Group Spokespersons of the other three Policy and Performance Committees and it was intended that the feedback from these meetings would be reported to each Committee in the next cycle of meetings

in order that Work Programmes could be approved. As these meetings were after this Committee's meeting it was not possible to take a collective overview of the wider Work Programme now. It was, therefore, proposed that this review be undertaken by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Group Spokespersons of this Committee at their next meeting.

To ensure that the Committee was able to reflect on any emerging topics or activity proposed by the other Policy and Performance Committees, it was further proposed that the remaining two Committee meetings of the Municipal Year (in January and April) be re-scheduled to come last in those two cycles of Policy and Performance meetings. It was anticipated that this would allow the Committee to take a more reflective overview in co-ordinating the wider scrutiny programme.

The Committee noted that outstanding recommendations from its previous scrutiny reviews were limited to those from the review into the Council's preparation for Individual Electoral Registration (IER) reported to it in January. The transfer to IER had been included on the agendas of the recent cycle of Constituency Committee meetings to ensure borough wide promotion of this change to arrangements for electoral registration. Also, in line with a further recommendation of that Scrutiny Review, a report on progress implementing IER was included as an item elsewhere on this agenda. (Minute No. 17 refers.)

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the proposals set out above in respect of the Committee's Work Programme be agreed;**
- (2) the proposal to re-schedule the Committee's meetings later in the Municipal Year to follow the meetings of the other three Policy and Performance Committee meetings be agreed; and**
- (3) the Committee notes the progress made to date on the development of the Council's Constituency Committees but would like to examine the issue of decision-making and future planning in more detail and will, therefore, add it to its Work Programme for consideration by a Task and Finish Group.**

POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Thursday, 18 September 2014

Present: Councillor M McLaughlin (Chair)

Councillors P Doughty M Sullivan
P Brightmore KJ Williams
A Leech J Williamson
C Muspratt W Clements
W Smith S Williams

Deputies: Councillors D Elderton (in place of C Blakeley)
B Berry (in place of T Anderson)
G Ellis (in place of M Hornby)
D Mitchell (in place of P Gilchrist)

22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and asked if there were any apologies. The Committee Services Officer informed the meeting that there were a number of deputies present for Committee Members who were absent. (See the list above).

23 CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RELEVANT AUTHORITIES (DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS) REGULATIONS 2012, INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS

Members were asked to consider whether they had 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.

Members were reminded that they should also declare whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

No such declarations were made.

The Chair asked the Head of Legal and Member Services to give advice on the matter of signatories to the call-in notice sitting on the Committee.

The Head of Legal and Member Services informed the Committee that although being a signatory to a call-in notice did not preclude a Member from

sitting on the Committee hearing the call-in they would need to be mindful of pre-determination and bias. Simply supporting a call-in did not necessarily amount to a member accepting the reasons had been made out and proven. A call-in notice was essentially confirmation that there was a prima facie case to review how the Executive decision in question had been reached; and did not amount to the settled view of the member(s) supporting the call-in.

Councillor Mitchell informed the Committee that he was deputising on the Committee for Councillor Gilchrist and was there with a clear and open mind.

24 **CALL-IN OF A DELEGATED DECISION - CABINET MINUTE NO. 27 - FINANCIAL MONITORING 2014/15**

In accordance with the procedure previously agreed by the Committee, the Chair referred to the decision of the Cabinet relating to the Financial Monitoring Report 2014/15 Month 2 in respect of part 5 of the resolution (Cabinet Minute 27 (7/7/14) refers).

The decision had been called-in by Councillors S Kelly, C Carubia, P Gilchrist, P Williams, C Blakeley, D Mitchell and P Hayes on the following grounds:

“To disagree with paragraph (5) of minute 27 (Cabinet 7th July 2014) - changes to Public Health grant funded projects identified in Annex 4 of Appendix A listed as “Health Outcomes Fund - Efficiencies and Stopping” Having regard to Cabinet’s decision of 10th October 2013, which noted that progress and spend would be monitored by The Public Health Department on a regular basis, no information on the impact on the previously agreed outcomes for each project that it is proposed to curtail or stop was placed before Cabinet on the 7th July prior to making the decision. Particular areas of concern -

- (a) Forest Schools - The Forest Schools project has had 727 children from 14 schools attending so far with plans for 6 schools to take part from September. This decision will mean a reduction of participation of 50% of early years children able to take part and a reduction in children able to attend from schools from 30 to 15 per class. This results in schools being treated differently part way through the programme
- (b) Healthy Homes - Fewer homes will be able to benefit from grant assistance in bringing houses up to acceptable healthy standards. The decision will mean, based on the average cost of cosyhomes grants processed to date of £2,564 a reduction in help for 21 households Cabinet should not therefore approve the changes to the projects identified in Annex 4 of Appendix A until Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee has had an opportunity to scrutinise in full the impact on the agreed outcomes for each project affected.

Monitoring information by the Public Health Department should be made available to the Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee to enable them to properly advise Cabinet, in due course, of the impact of the proposed reductions to enable a fully informed decision to be taken about each project.

With regards to the funding for the Forest Schools and Healthy Homes projects Cabinet is urged to reconsider its decisions and restore the original level of grant funding so that the projects can build on the levels of participation and uptake as originally envisaged.”

The Committee was invited to consider the decision that had been made and determine, in the light of evidence to be presented, the most appropriate course of action. The Committee had no power to overturn a Cabinet decision, or to substitute its own decision in place of the original. The options open to the Committee in this case were:

- to take no further action, in which case the original decision shall take immediate effect and may be implemented;
- to refer the decision back to the Cabinet Member for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of the Committee’s concerns.

The Head of Legal and Member Services advised that the third option detailed within the call-in procedure was not applicable given the nature and arguments presented during the call-in.

Explanation of the Call-In by the Lead Signatory, Councillor Stuart Kelly

Councillor Kelly provided a brief explanation of the call-in, he stated that the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism and Culture had reported on the success of Forest Schools in her report to Council on 14 July, 2014 and that two schools were making Forest Schools part of their intervention methodology after seeing the positive effects. The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Engagement had stated in his report to Council on 14 July, 2014, that the ‘Housing Standards Team were successful in securing Public Health Outcomes funding to extend the Healthy Homes project into the Community NHS Trust until 1 April 2015 to help reduce health inequalities.

He referred to an email from Lisa Newman on the impact of the Healthy Homes budget being cut and a reduction in help to up to 21 households assuming the average grant was given. Some of the Health Outcomes Fund had been capitalised and the Healthy Homes project was already in the capital programme so why not seek to capitalise revenue.

He expressed concern at the impact of the £35,000 cut to the Forest Schools programme and that schools were now being asked to select 15 children

rather than 30 per class. It was a matter of fairness because those going earlier in the programme would have been able to send 30 but now schools could only send 15.

Explanation of the Decision Taken by the Cabinet – Councillor Phil Davies – Leader of the Council

Councillor Phil Davies reminded the Committee that these were both time limited projects for 2013/14 and 2014/15. Both of which had to have public health outcomes. He outlined the selection process for all the projects which after having been agreed were reviewed to see whether a project still required all the funding. This was done at the time of making significant savings due to Government cuts and then the report was taken to Cabinet in July.

The Forest Schools project had exceeded its original target of 660 participants fairly early on with over 700 taking part by the end of year 1. Because it had started late and exceeded its target it was asked if money could be saved. Experience had also showed that the children got more out of the project if they were in smaller groups and that was why the reduction from 30 to 15 per group was made and he did not accept that the original objective of the project had been affected.

The Healthy Homes project had exceeded its target with over 220 healthy homes visits and a successful bid for £289,000 of capital funding, this project was effectively delivering all of its outcomes.

Both projects were delivering through prudent financial management without anybody losing out. It would be a real concern if the original budgets were restored as he was not confident that the projects could deliver anymore if the funding was restored. He requested that the Committee should confirm the decision of Cabinet.

The Chair then agreed that as two of the witnesses had been called by both the lead signatory of the call-in and the Cabinet Member they be called only once to provide evidence / information to the Committee.

Evidence from Call-In Witnesses

Mary Worrall, Senior Manager Parks and Countryside Services

Mary Worrall outlined the project to the Committee, which had started in November, 2013 as a pilot scheme. The original intention was to start the project in October, 2013, although approval had not been given until October. Up to now 727 children had taken part from 14 schools. Schools had aspirations for a whole class to take part though as the project had progressed it had become clear that children benefitted more on a one-to-one level and this was best achieved through a group with an optimum size of 15.

There had been an underspend in the first year of £18,000 and so this had been deducted for the second year.

The Committee then asked Ms Worrall some questions and her responses included the following comments:

- There had been input from the Rangers on the best size of a group to get the maximum benefit.
- Lessons had been learnt from the first year that smaller groups did benefit more.
- The early years team had supported two events for the project.
- She outlined the original intended outcomes and also the contributions made from schools which ranged from £200 for subsidised schools up to £1,650 when schools had sent more than 15 children.
- With a two year pilot the project was well on its way to achieving its objectives and she outlined the qualitative measures which also formed part of the outcomes.
- By the end of the two years up to 23 different classes would have been held.

Lisa Newman, Senior Manager Housing Strategy

Lisa Newman outlined the healthy homes project which had run for a number of years and which had secured public health outcomes funding up to April 2015. It was run as a single assessment process with the Housing Standards Team working alongside health partners.

The Committee then asked Ms Newman some questions and her responses included the following comments:

- Significant progress had been made working with partner agencies and they had made commitments as to the way referrals were undertaken.
- There were a wide range of household compositions accessing the grants from older people to younger people with mental health problems.
- She confirmed that the Housing Standards Team had been consulted on the proposed cut to funding in May 2014 and had been asked what the potential impact could be.
- The number of assessments carried out was ahead of the target.
- The Team could potentially achieve the higher target of providing up to 24 loans and grants.
- The capital programme funding would be sufficient to address any shortfall.
- There was £289,000 of funds unallocated with 72 people on the waiting list, although that was not to say there wouldn't be an increase in the number of applicants in the winter months.

- Forecasts of the numbers to be helped were based on figures for the previous years and even with the reduction in funding all those currently assessed would be able to receive loans / grants.
- If all the funding was used up other avenues of funding sources would be looked at and reported to Members.

Evidence from Cabinet Member's Witness

Kevin Adderley, Strategic Director Regeneration and Environment; Fiona Johnstone, Director of Public Health / Head of Policy and Performance

Kevin Adderley stated that the Cosy Homes scheme had been around a number of years and that the Forest Schools project was a relatively new initiative.

The Chief Executive Strategy Group had been reviewing all the Public Health Outcomes Funding because of the budget situation and what each project was trying to achieve. They had agreed that as there had been an £18,000 underspend on the Forest Schools project in the first year, funding could be reduced by a further £18,000 on the undertaking that there was no reduction in outcomes. The Cosy Homes or Healthy Homes project was funded through both the Public Health Outcomes Funding and the capital programme and the reduction was based on the fact that there were capital programme monies available. He was comfortable with both these projects that there would be no impact on what was trying to be achieved.

The Committee then asked Mr Adderley some questions and his responses included the following comments:

- Every Public Health Outcomes Funding project was reviewed, some were chosen to continue and others to stop.
- The recommendation was that these two projects should absolutely continue because of their excellent work and that they would be able to deal with a reduction in their funding.
- There was no need to capitalise the Cosy Homes fund because capital funding was available.
- They were all private sector homes that received grants and he was confident that all those that came forward and were suitably assessed could be helped.

Fiona Johnstone gave an outline of the Public Health Outcomes Funding and stated that a panel, consisting of the Portfolio Holder, Chief Executive and Director of Public Health, had met to review all the Public Health Outcomes Funding projects. Two questions were posed, 'Could we see a clear line of sight between the proposal and a public health outcome?' and 'Whether or not there was a good chance of feasibly delivering the project?' These recommendations had been put forward in October 2013 for a number of

schemes to be included. Projects were reviewed on an eight monthly basis by the Public Health team monitoring progress and financial expenditure.

A number of considerations were made at this review, including, whether there was an opportunity to fund through the capital programme, could efficiencies be made in delivering the project, had the project timing had any impact on the in year spend and were there any legal commitments.

All the projects would be evaluated in May / June 2015 on their outcomes.

The Committee then asked Ms Johnstone some questions and her responses included the following comments:

- No projects had been given extra funding.
- Every project had had a written assessment before any decision to reduce funding.
- The decision to reduce funding was taken if a project could be undertaken more efficiently and not as a way to change any outcomes.

Summary of the Lead Call-In Signatory, Councillor Stuart Kelly

Councillor Kelly, in summing up, stated that the ring-fenced grant ought to be spent on public health outcomes. Forest schools had been a victim of its own success. He suggested that if 15 was the optimum size for a class to benefit from the project then why not have two classes of 15. With regard to Healthy Homes, although the Housing Standards Team had been resourceful in finding funding there must be more homes in need of intervention. The reduction in funding had nothing to do with next year's budget but rather the stability of this year's budget.

Summary of the Cabinet Member, Councillor Phil Davies

Councillor Phil Davies, in summing up, stated that as these two projects had effectively achieved their original outcomes having underspent, it was sensible to make the savings. These decisions had been taken against the backdrop of savage Government cuts in the Council's budget. He did not believe that if the budgets were restored the funding could be spent by April 2015. He would like to see the two projects continue although the money should be forming part of the Council's mainstream budget.

The funding reductions were based on prudent financial management and he asked that the Committee endorse the Cabinet decision.

The Chair then opened the matter for debate.

A Member suggested that this was a classic example of officers working efficiently in difficult circumstances.

Other Members suggested that the public health money was not part of the Council's budget problem as it was ringfenced and should be left alone.

Having carefully considered the options open to the Committee it was moved by Councillor Doughty and seconded by the Chair, that –

“This Committee congratulates the officers on the successful implementation of these projects and their prudent financial management and that as a result of questions asked and evidence presented the decision of the Cabinet of 7 July, 2014 on Financial Monitoring 2014/15, be upheld.”

It was then moved as an amendment by Councillor Clements and seconded by Councillor Elderton, that –

“This Committee congratulates the officers on the successful implementation of these projects and their prudent financial management and that the Committee refers this matter back to Cabinet asking that this ring-fenced money be retained for the projects that need it.”

The amendment was put and lost (6:9)

The motion was put and carried (9:6)

Resolved (9:6) –

This Committee congratulates the officers on the successful implementation of these projects and their prudent financial management and that as a result of questions asked and evidence presented the decision of the Cabinet of 7 July, 2014 on Financial Monitoring 2014/15, be upheld.

POLICY AND PERFORMANCE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 23 September 2014

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	M McLaughlin (Chair)
	Councillors	P Doughty C Blakeley P Gilchrist W Clements M Hornby A Leech W Smith
		KJ Williams S Williams RL Abbey (In place of P Brightmore) J Crabtree (In place of J Williamson) G Ellis (In place of T Anderson) H Smith (In place of M Sullivan) I Williams (In place of C Muspratt)
<u>Deputies</u>	Councillors	R Abbey (in place of P Brightmore) J Crabtree (in place of J Williamson) G Ellis (in place of T Anderson) H Smith (in place of M Sullivan) I Williams (in place of C Muspratt)
<u>In Attendance</u>	Councillors	Paul Hayes (Lead Call-In Signatory) Chris Meaden (Cabinet Member)

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and asked if there were any apologies for absence. The Committee Services Officer advised the Committee that apologies had been received from Councillors Anderson, Brightmore, Muspratt, Sullivan and Williamson. Each had nominated a deputy, who would be shown in the attendance record.

26 CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RELEVANT AUTHORITIES (DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS) REGULATIONS 2012, INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS

Members were asked to consider whether they had 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.

Members were reminded that they should also declare whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

At the request of the Chair, and in response to a question from a Member, the Head of Legal and Member Services gave advice on the matter of signatories to the call-in notice sitting on the Committee. He commented that although being a signatory to a call-in notice did not preclude a Member from sitting on the Committee hearing the call-in they would need to be mindful of pre-determination and bias. Supporting a call-in did not amount to a member accepting the reasons had been made out and proven or that one Member had reached a settled view.

Councillors Blakeley and Ellis declared their interest in the call-in of Cabinet minute 37 by virtue of them being signatories to the call-in notice.

Councillors Hornby and W Smith declared a personal interest by virtue of them being former members of the armed forces.

Councillor Meaden, in attendance as Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture declared a personal interest by virtue of her daughter being a former member of the armed forces but resided abroad.

Councillor Doughty declared a personal interest by virtue of his father being a former member of the armed forces who had subsequently died of his injuries.

27 **CALL-IN OF A DELEGATED DECISION - CABINET MINUTE NO. 37 - TRANSFORMATION OF LEISURE SERVICES SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES PRICING STRUCTURE**

In accordance with the procedure previously agreed by the Committee, the Chair referred to the decision of the Cabinet (minute 37 (7 July 2014) refers), related to the Transformation of Leisure Services Sports and Leisure Facilities Pricing Structure.

The decision had been called-in by Councillors Paul Hayes, Les Rowlands, Leah Fraser, Geoffrey Watt, Jeff Green, Tom Anderson, Stuart Kelly, Chris Blakeley, Bruce Berry, Gerry Ellis and Pat Williams, on the following grounds –

1. The decision made by Cabinet to cut the free services we offer to veterans of HM Armed Forces is contrary to the Council's previously stated commitment to support those who have been willing to make the ultimate sacrifice in defence of our freedoms.
2. The decision was not subject to any meaningful consultation, if at all.
3. The Cabinet (in the five minutes it took to 'debate' this item or in the Agenda documents) had no regard as to how the Council would identify a 'disabling' injury: what the criterion would be or who or what would adjudicate thereupon.
4. The Cabinet failed to have sufficient regard to the fact that many veterans of HM Armed Forces would suffer from mental rather than physical injuries, a characteristic of which will often be an unwillingness

to discuss or disclose this injury, thereby discriminating against those afflicted by such injuries.

The Chair explained the call-in procedure and indicated that the Committee was invited to consider the decision that had been made and determine, in the light of evidence to be presented, the most appropriate course of action. The Committee had no power to overturn a Cabinet decision, or to substitute its own decision in place of the original. The options open to the Committee were –

- to refer the decision back to the Cabinet Member, setting out in writing the nature of the Committee's concerns;
- to refer the matter to the Council – only where the Committee believed that the decision was outside the policy framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget. The procedures in those rules had to be followed prior to any such referral;
- to take no further action, in which case the decision would be upheld and take immediate effect and may then be implemented.

Explanation of Call-in by the Lead Signatory – Councillor Paul Hayes

Councillor Hayes provided a brief explanation of the call-in and he commented upon the importance for the Council to honour the principles of the armed forces military covenant. He expressed a view that the free use of leisure facilities was a token of the Council's support for the armed forces community and suggested that there had been insufficient evidence presented to the Cabinet upon which to base its decision. He commented also that it had not been made clear how the process would be administered and there was no criterion in relation to how injuries, both physical and psychological would be disclosed and adjudicated upon, particularly where there may be an unwillingness to discuss or disclose injury.

Explanation of the Decision taken by the Cabinet Councillor Chris Meaden (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport & Culture)

Councillor Meaden recognised that the call-in centred on an emotive area and that there was a clear need to ensure that the use of leisure facilities was equitable and fair. So as not to disadvantage those who could not afford to pay, a number of concessions were available. However, the Cabinet had recognised that those who could afford to pay should do so and the decision had been taken primarily in order to more effectively target resources and prevent abuse or misuse. She referred to instances of people who had joined the TA for a week, and been dishonourably discharged, then being entitled to a free leisure pass. It was also important to recognise that the package of support offered in Wirral remained one of the most extensive concessions to current and former armed forces personnel in the region and she asked that the Committee support the decision taken by the Cabinet.

The Chair welcomed the witnesses who had been nominated to give evidence to the Committee and thanked them for their attendance. She advised that, having heard their submission, the procedure then allowed for Members of the Committee to ask relevant questions.

Evidence from Call-In Witnesses

Mr K Hannigan and Mr E Denmark

The Chair requested Mr Hannigan and Mr Denmark to state the nature of their interest in the call-in and whether they themselves were currently afforded free use of the Council's leisure facilities.

Both gave a brief overview of their military service and provided an insight as to the nature of their physical and mental health following discharge. Both had enjoyed the benefits of free access to the Council's leisure facilities and commented upon the benefits of sport and physical exercise to combat tension and depression, which were common amongst armed forces veterans. They believed that the Council had reneged on its promise to honour the spirit of the military covenant and expressed the view that the free use of leisure facilities was more vital for ex-servicemen and women, as those currently serving had access to state of the art facilities provided by the military.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Denmark indicated that he would be eligible for free leisure access on account of his injuries. However, Mr Hannigan had found the proposed change to be confusing and was uncertain as to his entitlement.

Evidence from Cabinet Member's Witnesses

Clare Fish – Strategic Director – Families and Wellbeing

Damian Walsh – Head of Sport and Recreation

Mark Camborne – Senior Manager – Health, Safety and Resilience

In response to a request from the Chair to provide a context to the Cabinet decision, the Strategic Director provided an overview for the Committee as to how the current policy had been developed.

A number of questions were asked of the witnesses and their responses included the following –

- The proposal was not predicated solely on the requirement to deliver savings or maximise income, but also to ensure that the Council had a fair and equitable scheme for Wirral residents and that its free use was targeted more effectively. The report of the Strategic Director to Cabinet had stated that it was not proposed to make leisure facilities unaffordable to those for whom price was a genuine barrier to access.
- Officers had recognised the latent effects of psychological trauma, suffered by many armed forces veterans who, in many instances had chosen previously not to disclose matters related to their mental health. Assessments of eligibility could have regard to the War Pension Scheme, Army Pension Scheme, Discharge Papers or a medical certificate provided by a GP. The requirement to provide medical evidence of such a mental health condition could also have the benefit of issues being highlighted with medical practitioners.

- Reference was made to the work with armed forces veterans that was being undertaken by the All Military Members Organisation (AMMO), who had indicated a willingness to be involved in the administration of the proposed new policy, insofar as it affected current and former armed forces personnel. Details of meetings held with AMMO would be circulated to all Members of the Committee.
- Evidence of abuse of the concessionary scheme could be provided upon request and it was hoped that the involvement of AMMO in leisure facilities bookings would help prevent such abuse and ensure that access to the scheme was restricted to persons living in Wirral.
- A breakdown was provided of those serving and former armed service personnel who had registered for the concession for free use of leisure facilities and the Strategic Director gave an indication of the numbers who may not qualify under the new policy. It was not possible to give a definitive answer as to the cost of leisure passes to those who may be not qualify, as it would be dependent upon their individual circumstances and the type of leisure pass they required.
- There was not expected to be any additional cost associated with the introduction of the improved and more effectively targeted scheme and it was confirmed that those who did not qualify under the new policy would be given access to a discount of up to 25% on the corporate Invigor8 membership.
- The proposed policy complied with the Council's Equality Policy and was also in accordance with the spirit of the Armed Forces Covenant, it being about treating those in the armed forces equitably, rather than more favourably than others in society.

Tina Buckley – All Military Members Organisation (AMMO)

At the request of the Chair, information was provided to the Committee upon the work of AMMO, which provided a 'one-stop shop' for armed forces veterans and provided a variety of advice and assistance. The organisation currently worked with 72 people suffering with post traumatic stress disorder and a further 31 people who had suffered a range of physical injuries. In response to a question from a Member, Ms Buckley confirmed that AMMO was a Wirral-based organisation that was able to provide effective engagement with its members to identify their eligibility and the type of leisure access they required. She expressed a view that to avoid confusion as to eligibility, a clearly understood criterion was essential for the success of the revised policy.

Summary of the Lead Signatory – Councillor Paul Hayes

Councillor Hayes thanked the Committee for its consideration of his call-in. He commented that the meeting had been productive but indicated that service users remained unaware of the full impact of the Cabinet's decision. He expressed a view that if the revised policy had not been driven by the need to

achieve savings, then the existing scheme should be retained, with action taken to prevent the abuse indicated by officers. He objected to veterans of the armed forces being required to disclose details of their mental health and believed that retention of the existing policy would ensure that we complied with the military covenant. Accordingly, he requested that the decision be referred back to the Cabinet for further consideration.

**Summary of the Cabinet Member
Councillor Chris Meaden (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport & Culture)**

Councillor Meaden re-affirmed that the key driver for the revised pricing policy was the need to deliver a more targeted approach to the offer of concessions to specific groups of people, resident in Wirral, for whom price was a genuine barrier to access. It aimed to stop abuse and misuse of the concession scheme and preserved the Council's commitment to the provision of affordable and accessible facilities. Due regard was paid to the military covenant and, she made it clear, following discussions with Mr Hannigan and with Council officers, that he would continue to be eligible for free access to leisure facilities, in view of the nature of the psychological trauma that he had shared with the Committee.

Having due regard to the evidence considered by the Committee, she asked that the Cabinet decision be upheld and the Strategic Director – Families and Wellbeing be authorised to implement the revised pricing policy.

Committee Debate

In opening the matter for general debate, the Chair asked, in view of the considerable scrutiny of the Cabinet decision and the need to avoid unnecessary repetition, that final comments be kept brief. Views expressed were that –

- there was a need to address the abuse of concessionary passes that was evidenced by officers;
- the fraudulent use of free leisure passes should have been addressed, rather than denying access to some former members of the armed forces;
- those who currently had the benefit of free use but would not qualify under the new policy would be given access to a discount of 25% on the corporate Invigor8 membership

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked those members of the public and Council officers who had given evidence and she outlined the options that were now available to the Committee, having considered the evidence provided.

She expressed a view that the reasons for the call-in had not been substantiated and that the Cabinet decision did comply with the spirit of the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Military Covenant. Despite formal consultation not being required, she referred to the extensive discussions with

officers, Members and wider stakeholders, as highlighted in the Cabinet report. The scrutiny process had addressed concerns regarding the adjudication of disabling injuries and she believed that the Cabinet had had sufficient regard to issues of the psychological as well as physical conditions which affected some armed forces veterans.

Upon advice the Chair confirmed that the option to refer the matter to the Council was not available.

It was moved by Councillor M McLaughlin and seconded by Councillor P Doughty –

“That Cabinet minute 37 – 7 July 2014 (Transformation of Leisure Services Sports and Leisure Facilities Pricing Structure) be upheld”.

It was moved as an amendment by Councillor Blakeley and seconded by Councillor Mike Hornby –

“That this Committee, having heard evidence this evening, stands unconvinced that any potential saving (the achievement of which remains dubious) made by implementing the decision at paragraph 3 of the Cabinet report, outweighs the harm this decision will do to Wirral’s reputation as an Authority which takes seriously its duties under the Military Covenant and as an Authority that does all it can to actively uphold and advance the Covenant.

Therefore, this Committee urges the Cabinet to reconsider its decision and restore the free Leisure Passes to all the veterans of Her Majesty’s Armed Forces.”

The amendment was put and lost (6:9)

The Substantive Motion was put and carried (9:6)

Resolved (9:6) (Councillor Blakeley voting against) – That Cabinet minute 37 (7 July 2014) – Transformation of Leisure Services Sports and Leisure Facilities Pricing Structure, be upheld.

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COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Thursday, 2 October 2014

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	M McLaughlin (Chair)
	Councillors	P Doughty M Sullivan J Williamson T Anderson
		W Clements S Williams P Gilchrist
<u>Deputies</u>	Councillors	D Roberts (in place of A Leech) R Gregson (in place of P Brightmore) H Smith (in place of W Smith) J Crabtree (in place of J Williams) R Abbey (in place of C Muspratt) L Fraser (in place of C Blakeley) B Berry (in place of M Hornby)
<u>In Attendance</u>	Councillors	Paul Hayes (Lead Call-In Signatory) Tony Smith (Cabinet Member) Phil Davies (Witness)

28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and asked if there were any apologies for absence. The Committee Services Officer advised the Committee that apologies had been received from Councillors Leech, Brightmore, Muspratt, W. Smith, J. Williams, Blakeley and Hornby. Each had nominated a deputy, who would be shown in the attendance record.

29 MARK DELAP

The Chair referred to the recent and sudden death of Mark Delap, Principal Committee Officer, for this Committee and the Committee stood in silent tribute to Mark's memory.

30 CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RELEVANT AUTHORITIES (DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS) REGULATIONS 2012, INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS

Members were asked to consider whether they had 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.

Members were reminded that they should also declare whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

At the request of the Chair, and in response to a question from a Member, the Head of Legal and Member Services gave advice on the matter of signatories to the call-in notice sitting on the Committee. He commented that although being a signatory to a call-in notice did not preclude a Member from sitting on the Committee hearing the call-in they would need to be mindful of pre-determination and bias. Supporting a call-in did not amount to a member accepting the reasons had been made out and proven or that one Member had reached a settled view.

Councillors Clements, Berry, Gilchrist and Anderson declared their interest in the call-in of Cabinet minute 44 by virtue of them being signatories to the call-in notice.

Councillors S. Williams declared a personal interest by virtue of him being a Governor at Foxfield School and a signatory to the call in.

Councillor Crabtree declared a personal interest by virtue of his granddaughter who previously attended Stanley School and by virtue of his employment in an educational setting.

31 **CALL-IN OF A DELEGATED DECISION - CABINET MINUTE NO. 44 - OUTCOME OF THE LYNDALE SCHOOL CONSULTATION**

In accordance with the procedure previously agreed by the Committee, the Chair referred to the decision of the Cabinet relating to Outcome of The Lyndale School Consultation (Cabinet Minute 44 (4/9/14) refers.)

The decision had been called-in by Councillors P. Hayes, J. Green, P. Gilchrist, L. Fraser, P. Williams, S. Williams, C. Blakeley, E. Boulton, G. Ellis, J. Hale, A. Hodson, K. Hodson, L. Rowlands, A. Sykes, B. Berry, C. Carubia, W. Clements, S. Kelly, D. Mitchell, G. Watt, D. Elderton, T. Anderson, M. Hornby, C. Povall, L. Rennie, T. Smith, P. Cleary and A. Brighouse on the following grounds:

1. The Independent Consultant appointed to comment upon the options for Lyndale School was appointed unilaterally by the Local Authority, with no consultation with the Governors or Parent's of Lyndale School.
2. The Independent Consultant's report was not commissioned prior to the consultation and was published once the consultation had closed,

therefore not allowing any proper or adequate scrutiny of the aforementioned report.

3. Cabinet had prepared, prior to the meeting, a typed and printed recommendation which was moved by Cllr Tony Smith and agreed unanimously by attending members of the Cabinet. It would therefore seem that Cabinet's decision had insufficient regard to the presentations made at the Cabinet meeting, including the articulate and highly persuasive contributions from parent representative Zoe Anderson.
4. Education, Health and Care Plans are currently being drafted in respect of all pupils who attend the Lyndale School. In order for Cabinet, the Independent Consultant, or indeed the wider public, to have sufficient information to decide whether or not these pupils could continue their education at alternative schools the aforementioned plans should have been published prior to the opening of the consultation.
5. A series of questions raised by Governors and Parents of the Lyndale School to the Local Authority where not answered adequately or at all, so as to hinder the Governor's and parent's ability to fully respond to the consultation process.
6. The consultation meetings, although described as 'generous' by the Independent Consultant, where flawed, insofar as the Chair was an council officer and could not reasonably have been seen as independent given officers previous recommendations to Cabinet. Additionally no minutes of these meetings where published but rather 'high level notes' which were not conducive to the principle of a full and open consultation.
7. Owing to the above the Cabinet could not have made a properly informed decision as to whether the proposals met the SEN Improvement Test.

The Chair explained the call-in procedure and indicated that the Committee was invited to consider the decision that had been made and determine, in the light of evidence to be presented, the most appropriate course of action. The Committee had no power to overturn a Cabinet decision, or to substitute its own decision in place of the original. The options open to the Committee were

- to refer the decision back to the Cabinet Member, setting out in writing the nature of the Committee's concerns;
- to refer the matter to the Council – only where the Committee believed that the decision was outside the policy framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget. The procedures in those rules had to be followed prior to any such referral;

- to take no further action, in which case the decision would be upheld and take immediate effect and may then be implemented.

Prior to consideration of the item, the Chair asked all Members of the Committee to introduce themselves for the benefit of the public present.

A Member requested that questions and answers during proceedings be recorded for the purposes of the Minutes.

Explanation of the Call-In by the Lead Signatory, Councillor Paul Hayes

Councillor Hayes provided a brief explanation of the call-in and thanked the Committee for taking the time to consider further the Cabinet's decision of 4th September in regards to The Lyndale School.

He explained how incredibly emotive the issue of potential school closures was and highlighted the emotions which were further heightened upon consideration of this particular school.

Councillor Hayes indicated that The Lyndale School was not just any primary school; it was a school which provided a loving and caring environment for children who had the most profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). So acute and extensive were the needs of the 21 children currently the school that Eric Craven, a former independent expert commissioned by Wirral Council, described them as being PMLD Plus.

Councillor Hayes commented that during the course of the evening the Committee would hear much about funding bands, PMLD, CLD (Complex Learning Difficulties) which was undoubtedly an extremely complex issue but asked the Committee to try and not become blinded by the science, and not fall into the trap of allowing confusion and contradicting opinions to lead them to the default position of "officer's know best". Councillor Hayes commented that it was to the Council's great detriment, that adopting this position did a deep disservice to residents.

Councillor Hayes urged the Committee to test the witnesses called and have some foresight and consideration to its irreversible impact. He asked that as a Council, should it really be seen as inflicting this arduous process upon families who determinedly struggle day to day with an unimaginable and ever present worry about their child's health whilst at the same time juggling those daily tribulations we all suffer but which pale into insignificance in comparison.

Councillor Hayes indicated that the parents of The Lyndale School did not want special treatment; they did not want to be cast above others. All they were asking for was that their children are safe and happy in a loving learning environment which suited their needs and which improved the quality of their

lives. He further commented that this basic right was afforded to them by The Lyndale School and parents and Governors would evidence that any other option was simply an inadequate imitation of the fantastic 'Lyndale' family they had painstakingly created.

Councillor Hayes concluded by commenting that he hoped that Members retreat from the entrenched position of any political group and instead re focus on a commitment he knew all members possessed - a commitment to the borough; a commitment to preserve all that is good about it and it was surely this commitment that would lead the Committee to urge Cabinet to think again.

**Explanation of the Decision taken by the Cabinet
Councillor Chris Tony Smith (Cabinet Member for Children & Family Services)**

Councillor T. Smith indicated that on the 4th September a decision was taken by Cabinet to publish notices to close The Lyndale School. This difficult decision was taken for a number of reasons.

He indicated that Cabinet had given careful consideration to the representations made on the 4th September and gave further consideration to the options contained in the Cabinet Report put before it. In considering its position and the subsequent decision Cabinet listened very carefully to the representations made by parents of the school.

The options considered arose over months of discussion and debate about future provision and how support for children with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties could be provided. During the course of the consultation new options emerged which were also fully considered.

Cllr Smith provided the Committee with a definition of PMLD which he had used within his professional life.

Cllr Smith stated that a lengthy public consultation was carried out by officers of the Council which included six public meetings. These meetings, at different times and venues, were intended to provide maximum opportunity for the public and all the school communities to make representations, comment and to raise concerns about the proposals put forward and the options contained within the consultation document.

This wide consultation allowed members of the public, professional bodies, parents, schools, governors and many others to respond to the Council with their views.

The process was open and transparent with officers of the Council questioned and challenged about the proposals. Officers of the Council met with people

who wanted to discuss the proposals in more detail and officers responded to many letters and other representations throughout this period.

He believed that every effort was made to consult as fully as possible. Some Members of Parliament also made their views known along with Members of the Council.

Many Members took opportunity to visit the five primary and secondary schools supporting children and young people with Complex Learning Difficulties including those children with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties.

He acknowledged the time and commitment of the parents of children attending The Lyndale School who were vigorously involved in the process and respected their determination to present such a strong advocacy for their children.

He indicated that in considering all the factors, he took into account that the Council had a responsibility to manage the efficient use of resources and finances. This would sometimes mean that difficult and unpopular decisions needed to be taken.

The Lyndale School was recognised as a good school for the pupils it supports. However, there had been concerns about the falling numbers of pupils on roll for a number of years, and this along with the changes in Future National Funding Arrangements had given cause for concern about the future viability of the school.

Councillor T. Smith gave a view that the Council must now grasp the nettle on the question of the future of this school which had been in doubt for too long. He stressed the need to end the uncertainty for the parents, any future parent, the staff and the wider community. He gave a further view that Wirral's high quality primary and secondary schools had the capacity to provide for the current children of The Lyndale School. A final decision on the future of The Lyndale School was yet to be made and formal statutory consultation required to be undertaken.

At this point the Committee were shown a short video in relation to The Lyndale School.

The Chair welcomed the witnesses who had been nominated to give evidence to the Committee and thanked them for their attendance. She advised that, having heard their submission, the procedure then allowed for Members of the Committee to ask relevant questions.

The Chair agreed that Ms Lynn Wright, Independent Consultant who had been called by the lead signatory of the call-in and Cabinet Member that she be called only once to provide evidence /information to the Committee.

Evidence from Call-In Witnesses

Ms Dawn Hughes, Ms Emma Ledbetter, Ms Zoe Anderson – Parent Governors

Q. The parents report had been circulated to all members of the Committee, which highlighted the needs of the 21 children at The Lyndale School, what are the major concerns of parents regarding their child's medical, care and educational and emotional needs?

A. The needs of the children had started to be addressed at the start of the consultation; however this was not completed prior top the consultation ending. No medical evidence or statements had been collated to date. The children attending The Lyndale School did have complex needs and were medically vulnerable, some needing ventilators, oxygen and were completely immobile. The children were categorised in Band 5 because of their recognised needs and vulnerabilities. The children can't tell a person if they are unhappy or unwell, without the level of expertise of the staff at The Lyndale School who knew the children, the children would not be able to attend school. There were no children with PMLD at Stanley School and only a small number attended Elleray Park, and although the staff were trained educationally they were not trained medically.

Q. SEN Test – what has been put in place ready for the children at Stanley and Elleray Park Schools?

A. Both Stanley and Elleray Park Schools need extensive building work to their existing sites to accommodate the children from The Lyndale School. Discussions had been held with the Director of Children's Services regarding the need for a sensory environment and we had been assured that this would be replicated and provisions made at both school sites. The children at The Lyndale School need both a sensory and quiet space and as some of the children utilised wheelchair bikes, neither school have the appropriate space and had totally different environments to The Lyndale School. Stanley School has no PMLD children currently attending and Ellaray Park has a very small number of similar children. Unless the schools had a proper understanding of the children's needs and had staff with the necessary expertise, they simply would not be able to attend the school. Stanley School was good at providing education but not capable of providing the necessary medical support and needs that children required. To date no plans as to what provisions will be available at Stanley and Elleray Park Schools have been provided and shared. Parents do not see how can the SEN test can therefore be met.

Q. SEN Test - The test details what needs to be identified/met. The description of the SEN Test is different in the documentation pack to the 2007 Test but the alternative provision must still be either the same or better than the current provision. What discussion took place with parents concerning the SEN Test and what has been put in place to meet the SEN Test requirements?

A. The assessment must meet the SEN Test, hence its inclusion. Nothing has been put in place at the Stanley and Elleray Park Schools to meet the SEN Test for The Lyndale School children. Both schools require extensions and an investment of £500,000 to £750,000. Parents were assured by the Director of Children's Services if the outside space, sensory environment, staffing levels could not be replicated, then the two schools would not meet the SEN Test. However, the expert report focuses on value and space only. At the Stanley School, 200 children play in a small space, there is a lot more noise, no proper quiet areas, no satisfactory space for wheelchair users, the outside space is inadequate and the school is predominately painted white whereas The Lyndale School has coloured walls and lights.

Q. We've heard from various sources that The Lyndale School was not an option for parents, and that numbers had fallen at the School, what happened? Eric Craven in his report stated that The Lyndale School could only take between 25-28 pupils, but only 21 are currently attending; however the school can cater for 40 pupils. Why do you think that is the case?

A. Evidence was given within the parent's feedback report indicating that parents had been refused a place at The Lyndale School. In relation to pupil numbers, The Lyndale School had never had 40 pupils, the limit was 28, and it had been 8 years or more since the school had had more than that. Parents who had attended the first call-in meeting had evidence that officers had dissuaded parents from opting for The Lyndale School and it was a testament to the school that despite its uncertain future, parents still sent their children to the school. In terms of investment, The Lyndale had only had £20,000 worth of capital investment whilst other special schools had received a lot more. The Lyndale School has had no real investment, had no proper support and not been given a fighting chance.

Q. A request was made to extend the school to encompass 2-19 year olds, is this still the case?

A. Yes, this would increase pupil numbers. The Lyndale School would be the only school to have done this.

Q. In relation to the falling numbers, what has been done by the Governing Body to tackle this? Have representations been made?

A. The issue of falling numbers had only been at the forefront in recent years as the school was always operating to full capacity, questions had been asked but had “hit a brick wall”. There had been an issue whereby pre-school health professionals had been directing parents away from The Lyndale School, but this had now been addressed.

Q. How long has the sensory garden been at The Lyndale School ?

A. Over 10 years. The garden has been added to over the years as children’s needs changed and new equipment introduced to the market. The garden had been established by the local community not by the Council.

Q. Anything else we need to know prior to the Committee making their decision?

A. No, not really. You have heard all we have had to say before. All the information is in the paperwork. We did have further representations to make but as we are only here to answer questions we are not allowed speak. We have lost faith in the democratic process and feel that officers had not been comprehensive enough in their processes; we are angry and frustrated that no one seems to listen to our views.

The Chair apologised to the Parent Governors and indicated that unfortunately this was the process used for dealing with Call-in items; witnesses were called to answer questions from the Committee not necessarily to simply make representations.

Q. What do you think the Cabinet and Cabinet Member had to gain by making this decision?

A. You would have to ask the Cabinet themselves, but our view is that the decision was made for purely financial reasons.

At the request of the Chair and in response to a question from a member, the Head of Legal and Member Services gave advice on the matter of written statements by witnesses. He commented that the procedure agreed by Committee did not allow for witnesses to submit written statements and then not attend the meeting given that they could not be questioned on their evidence.

Q. Anything else you wish to add?

A. In relation to the Education and Health Care Plans, the Cabinet were told that these were undertaken at the beginning of September 2014; however these have yet to be completed and at the meeting on 4 September it was resolved that a deadline of October 2014 be given for these plans to be completed. These plans have not yet reached the draft stage. Education and

Health Care Plans were only recently introduced and were designed to stay with the child until they reached 19 years, it will take time for staff to complete these given the complex needs of the children at The Lyndale School.

Q. Please clarify as to why you feel the Cabinet had not listened to you?

A. There is nothing in place in the other two schools. We have done everything we can, but have yet to be supplied with the details regarding the future plans. We feel Cabinet does not really understand our children. We have attended several working meetings with the Director of Children's Services throughout the summer and very little has been achieved. Instead officers have gone off in another direction. It was hoped that the Cabinet would have considered every bit of evidence we have provide but we feel Cabinet has ignored our evidence and will go on to close the school.

Q. At the public consultation meeting 16 June 2014 you asked if within the "special arrangements" the Department would take into account the needs of non-verbal children, the importance of the environment, friends, a sense of place and a safe environment which may prove difficult if mixed with CLD children, how do you feel this question was answered?

A. This question was asked of us prior to this event taking place. We understood that a picture of each child's needs was to be done for the purpose of the SEN Test and to inform the consultation. This information was subsequently used for the child's Education and Health Care Plans. You need to know the children's needs before you can conclude whether or not their needs were being met. Ms Wright never made any reference to this within her report.

It was commented that there is no reference to any evidence from medical experts within Lynn Wright's report.

In relation to the banding system, this was not based on the needs of the children at The Lyndale School, as no assessments of their needs had been completed.

Q. In relation to the meetings held by the independent consultant, what happened?

A. An expert was instructed for 18 days, we were told that she was coming into the school at short notice and would be holding one meeting only. None of the parent governors could make this meeting due to its short notice. No other meeting was arranged or offered. The first time we had met the independent consultant was at the Cabinet meeting.

In relation to the Independent Consultant's report which listed the documentation she had considered, this made reference to the parent's report

which was not the right report as we had submitted a report in June not March as stated in the report.

Q. Parents have concerns about the proposal to mix PMLD and CLD children. They say it's dangerous, why is that?

A. It would be dangerous given that CLD children are very mobile and lack an understanding of authority. Some of the parents at Stanley School had raised concerns about this proposal as they felt their children may be a danger to those more vulnerable children with PMLD. Some schools do have specialised units within their schools for children with PMLD but not together within the same building.

Q. Is there any evidence of incidents that have occurred due to the mix of CLD and PMLD children?

A. No. However, we have requested incident records from the schools but have not been provided with information about any incidents.

Q. The two schools, Elleray Park and Stanley, do they suit the needs of the children of The Lyndale School? And do you feel that the alternative schools will provide the care and level of safety provided now at The Lyndale School?

A. We don't know as we have not seen any plans. However, nothing is in place as yet.

Tom Harney – Chair of Governors

Q. Confirm how long you have been a Chair or on the Board of Governors at The Lyndale School?

A. I have been a Member of the Board for 20 years and been the Chair for 17 of those years.

Q. In relation to a question you asked at Council on 12 July 2010 (Minute 19 refers) do you remember it? What was your reaction to the response given 4 years ago?

A. Reaction came from the parents regarding having to move their children to a new environment. Parents were concerned by the stress that would be caused by such a move, they were worried given the conditions of their children. Parents expressed the view that The Lyndale School should remain open until there was clear evidence that an alternative school would be provided that was better. The Director of Children's Services at the time interpreted that to mean "close the school". It is important you put yourself in the position of the children so that you understand their needs.

Q. With no financial or political gain to the Council why do you feel the decisions have been made?

A. I cannot look into the minds of others but I want to see a full analysis of the decisions made by the Council. My view is that all the options regarding creating specialised units etc need to be reconsidered. The decision taken should have started with an appropriate planning process in the first instance, assessing the needs of the children with PMLD and Autism. There should be a plan of provision for vulnerable children available but this has not yet been done.

Q. Due to the falling numbers and decrease in finances, do you think that parent Governors at The Lyndale School need to now start making plans to safeguard their children at the school going forward?

A. The Lyndale started in Clatterbridge and when the decision was taken to specialise in PMLD the numbers at the school decreased as the site didn't have the space. Discussions were held to find an alternative site to the current Lyndale site. Parents have raised concerns regarding the lack of apparent space at both Elleray Park and Stanley Schools.

Q. Would you agree that although the decision taken was not for financial gain, there is a financial gain of £2.7 million to the Council?

A. There would be a financial capital gain in that the sum would be deducted from the Council's capital debt. There has always been a plan for two schools to provide the provision and this proposal is the final stage of that plan.

Nicola Kenny – Teaching Assistant

With the permission of the Chair Ms Kenny read out the following statement.

“I am going to say a few words tonight about the Lyndale School, what we do and the impact that this whole process has had on us as a family, ever since the Council announced back in December 2013 that they were ‘minded’ to close the school.

I have written down my thoughts and feelings as they are from my heart, and I feel that without them being written on paper, I may become too emotional and forget all the points I feel you need to hear. I am sure that a few of you will think you have heard parts of this before, and that will be because you have. I originally prepared this speech for the Cabinet meeting on 4th September, but on 3rd September, the school was told only one person could represent Lyndale, but Zoe Anderson kindly read out some parts of my speech. The care that is provided at the Lyndale School should never be simply measured in terms of money, as staff and parents all know that every child who attends the school is priceless.

The care and education requirements of these most vulnerable children should never be evaluated by people who have not personally worked with P.M.L.D. This is because they lack the insight and knowledge of how best to provide the care and education for children with such unique individual needs. I feel that the people who put these proposals forward may have had the best intentions, but do not understand and recognise that this small and intimate school is the perfect setting to cater for, and is tailored to all the needs of these children. For example, our teaching staff are experts at giving the children equal opportunities to access the National Curriculum, but by adapting it to a very multi-sensory approach.

Everything is bright, colourful and stimulating, if we can make it smell we will and if it can be tasted it will be done. From knowledge of working with children with CLD, this teaching style is not always suited to their requirements and they are less tolerant of the multisensory approach. We question how the two very differing needs can be taught in conjunction.

We have heard many times that our small school is not financially viable, but it is in this small environment that these children flourish as part of a small, safe, happy family. Where they can receive the 1-1 individual attention they need, and allowing for a strong bond of trust to be built up between staff and pupils, making a job at the Lyndale a vocation, backed up by the very small turnover of staff.

The future of the school has been under a cloud for many years, it has been admitted by officers that this uncertainty has contributed to what the Council cite as "a drop in pupil numbers over the years". We have also been told that parental preference has had an impact on our pupil numbers. We feel proud to say that parents are still choosing the Lyndale School for their children, despite all the issues surrounding our future, and we have recently had two new admissions, and another two children who are due to start.

It is a devastating reality that whilst at Lyndale, some children are at end of life care, and I can say with great sadness that 12 of our beautiful children have gained their Angel wings and lost their fight for life. This is also tragically reflected in our pupil numbers.

As a parent of a four year old boy who has just started reception years in a mainstream school, I had a range of worries, and for any parent placing their trust in school staff to care for their child as well as they do is hard. I am fully aware that my concerns were relatively small and insignificant compared to the anxieties that our parents at Lyndale must face, when leaving their precious children in our care, given some of their very complex medical requirements. The fact that these amazing parents give us their full trust to care for these fully dependant and vulnerable children, is a testament to the

excellent skills set, knowledge and large caring hearts displayed by my colleagues and all of the multi professional team involved.

The long and drawn out process has taken its toll on all concerned with the school, and I feel could have been handled better, with staff not knowing from one week to the next what their future may be. The Cabinet recommendation states:

“The Director of Children’s Services will investigate if staff could be employed at receiving schools”.

In the consultation paper which staff were all told was a legally binding document, it states staff are “eligible for redeployment”. This was a thoughtless mistake to make, with staff feeling they may have some stability, and be able to ensure that the transition even though unsettling, would have been made smooth, and ensured the childrens’ maximum safety.

This was a misleading statement for parents, staff and the public alike. We are all confused how a legal document can simply be altered later to suit the Council.

From December 2013 the Council maintained they were ‘minded’ to close the school, and have produced a document in order to show this is the best option. In the interest of fairness the Council paid £10,000 for the services of an independent advisor to provide evidence of this. I have worked with these children since I was 21 and I am now 35; that is 14 years’ experience. There are over 30 staff members who work with the children including nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, who have similar amount if not more years of experience than myself. The parents are easily the most experience, knowledgeable and qualified experts on the needs of these children. Look behind me, these are the people you should be listening to, but yet the Council chose to spend a huge amount of money for the advice of someone who has not worked with P.M.L.D children.

This has been an incredibly challenging time for the school and all involved, and has coincided with the death of one of our precious children in July, meaning this has been the toughest period that the school has known. Despite the anguish that many staff are feeling, we are all 100% determined not to let this affect our performance levels. The children come first. At the last call-in meeting one of the children became poorly, his monitors alarmed and he required a medical intervention called ‘suction’. This is one of the procedures we had explained to the councillors not five minutes earlier, is a daily occurrence at the school, and that staff are equipped to deal with such situations. One of the councillors became visibly upset and distressed, this councillor felt they couldn’t continue with the meeting and went home. Whilst I have every sympathy with the councillor, our parents and staff have been suffering from anguish caused by the Council for 10 months.

From the beginning, it seems there is a policy of divide conquer with the three special schools seen as rivals. I very sincerely say that the staff of the Lyndale School have nothing but the utmost respect and admiration, for the children, staff and parents at Stanley School ad Elleray Park School. But as a united family we at Lyndale feel our “unique and caring environment”, the Council’s words, best serves the interests of our children, and we are the best school to meet their needs.

I repeat again that it has been a long and emotionally draining 10 months for all connected with the school but we will fight the decision to close with all we have.

To conclude I would like to use a quote from the American actor, Morgan Freeman,

“Attacking people with disabilities is the lowest display of power I can think of”.

Q. Would you move with the children to a new school?

A. Yes probably, I’d want to look after their health and safety needs and to ensure they were safe. I think most staff at The Lyndale School would feel the same.

Q. Did you attend any of the consultation events?

A. Yes, I attended two at Acre Lane. I felt staff and parents were not listened to and the Chair of the meeting was not very considerate to staff.

Q. You indicated that you were unhappy with the Independent Consultant who was appointed to undertake the review, why do you feel she was not qualified?

A. I saw her only for a few minutes as I worked part time but from what I saw there was no interaction with the children but I could be mistaken.

Q. Do you not think she is qualified to undertake the review?

A. This should have been done by parents or staff who had experience of children with PMLD.

Q. What are Lynn Wright’s qualifications?

A. I don’t know you will have to ask Lynn Wright.

Q. Why do you think she is not qualified?

A. She is not as qualified as me having worked with these children for the past 15 years.

Ian Harrison - Governor

Q. What has been invested in the school over the years?

A. We've had £15,000 invested in The Lyndale School when I started. This had now reduced to £4,000.

Q. In the independent report, it stated that to extend both Elleray Park and Stanley schools would be more cost effective, what is your view?

A. Would be more cost effective to extend The Lyndale School. Elleray and Stanley Schools are not large enough.

Q. What has been done by the Authority to help you through your financial difficulties?

A. When I started the school's 2013/14 funding was for 40 places. The Local Authority had funded about 15 places as the funding formula did not give the school the funding needed.

Q. Would there be an overspend year on year if admissions reduced?

A. The financial problems were due to the funding band which was inadequate to meet the needs of the children. The school would be in deficit. The previous arrangement for funding meant that the school received £23,000 per child but under the new arrangements the maximum funding they would receive is £28,000 per child.

Q. Would you say it was reasonable to say that the school was facing closure due to financial reasons?

A. Not if you look at the needs of the pupils. Such needs require more funding than what had been decided by local authority. The top up for band 5 had not been given correctly.

Q. Over time the Council were funding 40 places but you only had 26 places, you don't have the top you need. Is the funding you now receive inadequate?

A. Yes, SEN test is wrong as the new schools couldn't possibly meet the needs of the children under the new funding arrangements.

Q. Was the formula change a decision of Central Government?

A. No, top ups are set by the Local Authority.

Q. The financial challenges you faced were these revenue not capital? And what steps have you taken with the financial challenges you face?

A. We've had no financial challenges due to funding by the local authority. We had no problems until the new arrangements were introduced.

Q. So the Council have been subsidising a non sustainable school?

A. No, the Council have funded what was needed for the school to meet the needs of the children. Top up funding is a lot lower now.

Q. In relation to band 5 set by this Authority and any school in your opinion taking on 21 children with PLMD will suffer?

A. Yes, the funding is inadequate.

Christopher Locke - Parent of a previous pupil at the school and fundraiser

Q. What is your relationship to Lyndale School?

Mr Locke described attending the school as a child, when it was based at the Clatterbridge site. He advised that he lived close to The Lyndale School and was fully aware of the school and its sensory garden. Over the years Mr Locke indicated that he had raised over £80,000 for Lyndale. He commented that he lived very close to the school and had a close relationship with the staff, parents, ex-pupils etc.

Mr Locke commented that Lyndale was "unique". The meaning of "unique" in the dictionary is "something that cannot be replicated, or improved upon and does not have an equal".

Consultation documents and the reports relating to The Lyndale School indicated that "many" of the children at the school have PMLD and then sometimes it was "some" of the children. Mr Locke stated that the correct figure is 90% of the children have PMLD. The terminology used has been misleading.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.25pm

The meeting reconvened at 8.35pm

Emma Howlett - Parent of a previous pupil at the school

Q. Did you attend any of the consultation meetings?

A. Yes, I came to the one at Wallasey Town Hall.

Q. How do you feel it went?

A. I felt like we were not listened to, and we were shrugged off.

Q. Did your child have PMLD?

A. Yes.

Q. Would send you child to the alternative schools (Elleray Park and Stanley)?

A. My child went to a mainstream school and to a PMLD school. Then schools were unable to meet his needs and he was then moved to The Lyndale School and spent 5 terms there.

Q. Were you at the September Cabinet meeting?

A. No.

Q. Were you surprised at the speed of the decision?

A. There was no full consultation and I was surprised by the speed of the decision.

Evidence from Cabinet Member's witnesses

Julia Hassall – Director of Children's Services; David Armstrong – Deputy Chief Executive and Andrew Roberts, Children and Young Peoples Department.

Q. Was the option to keep the school open ever considered?

A. Yes, it was one of eight options considered, as detailed with the Cabinet report. The report also gave details regarding the concerns in relation to the falling numbers and funding which were considered regarding the future of the school. I am trying to end uncertainty for parents, staff and pupils.

Q. Was the formula set by the Schools Forum?

A. It was set by the Council based on advice by the Schools Forum, following consultation with the schools. The Council does not usually go against the Schools Forum recommendations.

Q. What is the Schools Forum?

A. It consists of representatives from various education bodies and it was chaired by an independent person.

Q. Referring to the comments made regarding there being a financial gain to the Council of £2.7 million if the land was sold off, has this even been discussed?

A. No, we have not had this discussion. This had been raised at the last call-in meeting. There was a process to be followed regarding disposal of school land. If the school land was to become available, it would first need to be offered as a site to become a free school or an academy. If this was not required it would then have to be considered by Sport England as a site for sports and recreation. If they did not require it and the Council wanted to dispose of the land, the Secretary of State for Education needs to approve it.

In terms of the valuation, councillors asked for a list of assets to be given. It is a financial procedure, to put a figure next to anything the Council owns.

Q. What is the value of the land/building? I also asked this question at the "Call-in", as Head of Asset Management, why didn't you know?

A. The £2.7m is an accountant's value to take account of depreciation in assets. It is not a market value figure. There is no reason why I would know this figure as it was purely for accounting purposes.

Q. Other schools have closed with housing now built on them. You have said it is not a difficult process. Would the Council make money on the sale and development of the land given that the Council would receive £10,000 per new house built.

A. In relation to other site, for example Acre Lane, if the playing fields are not used as playing fields for more than 10 years, you do not need to get permission to sell. We did not have to for Poulton Road land and we don't have to for the new Foxfield site. We were going through processes now and it's not an easy process.

Q. What is the capacity of Stanley School? Is it at capacity?

A. Plans were shared at the School Forum to extend capacity. Papers for this were made available on the website today. Two site visits had been undertaken to see if there is capacity at Stanley or whether with increased capacity they could take children from Lyndale.

Q. Are you happy for children from Lyndale to go to Elleray Park/Stanley School?

A. No, not happy. We held detailed meetings and I am confident both schools, following development, could meet the children's needs.

Q. Why has the Local Authority spent £1.7 million on sending children to West Kirby Residential School? It has received more funding than any other school. If Elleray Park is fabulous, why don't those attending West Kirby go there?

A. There are very few primary schools like West Kirby. It is not a PMLD school. The children of Elleray Park have very complex needs. Children at West Kirkby have behavioural/emotional problems.

Q. So you're quite happy to lump children together with PMLD, CLD and Autism but children with behavioural needs are kept separate?

A. We currently have two Primary CLD schools. Both have capacity. The children of The Lyndale School could have their needs met at both schools. Children at West Kirby have a different set of needs. That is the reason why at this point in time, the school cannot meet their needs but can for those who attend Lyndale.

Q. In relation to funding, West Kirby Residential School received funding of £37,000 per child for 46 children which was double what The Lyndale School received. The Authority was not prepared to do this for The Lyndale School. Why not? Why not just give The Lyndale School the funding need? Why is it so low given you pay for West Kirby Residential School?

A. A banding system was introduced this April. The banding needed to address different needs of our special schools - not an easy task. After all Schools were consulted it was recognised that the new system may cause problems. There was a further plan to review the system in the next 12 months.

In respect of the West Kirby School, this is independent provision and the Council has to pay commercial rates.

Q. When banding agreed where the Schools Forum informed of the difficulties schools may face?

A. This was detailed within the report to the Schools Forum, a "double top up" was introduced also use of school contingency fund.

Q. Was there recognition of the needs of children over a band 5?

A. Yes, there was an introduction of a Band 5 plus.

Q. If the Band 5 could be expanded to a place a child outside the authority. Why not inside the authority?

A. Provision outside the borough is paid at market rates.

Q. Over the transition period, what have you got in place, for supporting the parents?

A. The Principal Educational Psychologist and key health professionals. Staff and parents will meet to assess each child at the Lyndale School. It was hoped this would be done quicker, but it is difficult due to the complexity. Cabinet confirmed October for completion of the Education Health Care Plans but we will do them as soon as possible. It is important the Plans are thorough to ensure all needs are met. It is essential we take the time to get the Plans right for each child.

Q. What about the capital?

A. It's a ring-fenced, in the capital plan.

Q. At the consultation meeting at the Williamson Art Gallery, if there are concerns raised regarding the bandings could it go back to the Schools Forum?

A. Yes

Q. Was there any professional advice given to the Schools Forum when setting the bandings?

A. Officers advised on the rules but no advice was given regarding the bandings. Two working groups had been set up by the Forum and had come up with the banding proposals.

Q. In relation to the January report, was there a reference to Lyndale?

A. Yes.

Q. Where is the "contingency"? Can this be used to allow The Lyndale School to continue?

A. This is normally used to fund unforeseen costs.

It was commented that the Authority funded empty places at The Lyndale School because of the situation there.

Q. What would we have done if the decision on The Lyndale School had not been taken?

A. The whole national system had changed but beyond 2015/16 it will be unknown as to what funding will be allocated.

Q. The consultation on changes to top-up funding has been going on for some time hasn't it?

A. Yes. Since 2005 it has been a constantly evolving issue.

Q. Looking at Appendix 2 of the report, do we have up to date figures?

A. Yes, these figures are updated each term.

Q. In relation Educational Health Care Plans, should these have been done prior to Cabinet considering the options?

A. We felt that we had done enough to do the SEN Test and had spoken to parents and Head teachers. Educational Health Care Plans are private to parents and the children and are designed to ensure they meet the needs of each child.

There extensive discussions regarding an additional option to be considered regarding Foxfield which was submitted late into the consultation. However, Foxfield School confirmed that this was not a viable option for it.

Q. Was there an under spend in the SEN budget last year?

A. Yes.

Q. How much?

A. £1.4 million under spend last year; £600,000 this year for special schools

Q. Why the big under spend?

A. This is a £230million budget, although the under spends are large sums of money, they are not that considerable given the size of the budget. These resources were not committed through the year.

Q Where is it? What's happened to it?

A. This is ring-fenced for the schools, the Council cannot touch it. Where there is an underspend in the school budget, the regulations state that it must be taken forward to the next year's budget.

Q. Where is the under spend?

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Q. If there was an under spend, why wasn't it spent on SEN or Lyndale?

A. There was no need to use the contingency or underspend, as they have had a balanced budget.

Q. Why close it?

A. Falling numbers on roll at the school. There are 21 children in the school currently. There is a need to ensure funding is spent wisely and the number of pupils at the school is falling. Our view is based on all options. PMDL children's needs at The Lyndale School can be met at Ellery Park and Stanley Schools more effectively.

Q. Whilst Educational and Health Care Plans were being written, what Paediatrician or Medical professionals were in attendance?

A. Health professionals could have an input if parents requested it.

Q. Did any parents request this?

A. I don't know, the Educational Psychologist advised me that health professionals had been involved.

Q. In the previous consultation document, it was stated that the staff at The Lyndale School would be redeployed, However, at Cabinet you advised that this was an error. How can you change that mistake?

A. There is no redeployment policy for school staff as they are employed by governing bodies. The responsibility of employment of staff falls under the remit of the relevant Governing Body. The Department will be assisting teachers and assistants to find alternative employment. In the original consultation document, we corrected the error with HR and staff. Officers indicated that they would be speaking to both Heads to look favourably to employ staff if needed. For example, Stanley Park needed maternity cover and contacted the Acting Head of The Lyndale School to see if this would provide an opportunity for a member of staff at The Lyndale School.

Q. Do you have any knowledge that The Lyndale School took action regarding their financial position?

A. Governors had taken action and reduced staff costs.

Q. Does the DfE guidance on banding take into account the child's needs?

A. Yes.

Q. Why not give more funding to The Lyndale School? DfE says that you can.

A. Schools Forum could look at this. They would have to consider whether other schools can accommodate those children.

Q. What factors would be considered?

A. Factors such as falling numbers, what are the best options for the child.

Councillor Phil Davies – Leader of the Council

Q. How did you come to make the decision at Cabinet?

A. Speaking on behalf of the Cabinet, everyone had an open mind during the consultation. All Members had read the papers prior to the meeting. On the day of the meeting, we had a lunchtime meeting with the Cabinet Member (Cllr Tony Smith) a Lyndale Parent Governor and a parent thereby giving them a further opportunity to highlight any further points/information they wanted to.

The Cabinet Member had drafted a draft resolution which was tabled on the evening of the Cabinet meeting. Cabinet Members had not reached a settled view prior to the meeting. They were aware that further information received at the meeting could result in the draft resolution being amended or replaced entirely. In fact that was actually happened, after consideration of the representations, evidence etc, I proposed a change to the proposed resolution which related to the completion of the Care Plans. Neither I nor other Cabinet Members attended Cabinet with a predetermined view. The Cabinet listened to all views at the meeting before reaching its decision.

Q. Why did the draft resolution not also include the possibility of keeping the The Lyndale School open?

A. It was a draft resolution. Cabinet Members and I were all free to change, disagree or approve the resolution that had been moved.

Q. Why not adjourn the meeting to discuss and draft a resolution and then come back to give your decision? The only amendment you made to your draft was in relation to the completion of the Education Health Care Plans. Do you think completion of these plans are essential to ensure the needs of the children of the children are met?

A. We felt that the Education Health Care Plans were not needed to make the decision. The Cabinet had sufficient evidence to make an informed decision.

Q. Do think that as you have given officers until October to complete the plans, the decision to close the school should wait until after October?

A. No, felt we could proceed to the next stage of the process that proposed closure of the school given the evidence considered.

Q. Was it pre-determined?

A. Cabinet members did not decide until after they considered the outcome of the consultation, heard all the presentations at the Cabinet and considered the evidence. There was no predetermination on my part or other Cabinet members.

Q. You've heard that parents were unhappy about the consultation. They felt they were not been listened to. Given that, why was an officer chairing the public meeting and not a Cabinet member or councillor or at least a Head of the Department?

A. I do not know, I cannot answer that. I know with absolute confidence that officers had taken an open view and showed no bias and behaved correctly at those meetings.

I am sorry parents felt they weren't listened to. I have been to The Lyndale School, met parents and read their submissions. The fact is I don't agree with their views - but I have listened to them. Sadly, the school has a falling roll and other schools have excellent facilities.

Q. Obviously you must have felt Education Health Care Plans were crucial as you wanted them completed by October. What qualifications do you have to make the judgement they were not needed as part of the decision making?

A. I don't have any qualifications but I felt we had enough information on which to base our decision.

Q. When are the Education Health Care Plans going to be done if not by the end of October?

A. I can't answer that.

Q. What advice had you been given to set 31 October as the deadline for the Education, Health Care Plans to be completed?

A. I was advised by the Director of Children's Services that these plans should be completed sooner rather than later. The date of 31 October was ambitious but she felt it could be done.

Witness Lynn Wright – Independent Consultant

Ms Wright introduced herself to the Committee and commented that she had 30 years experience in education and working with children at senior level in relation to financial management, project management and Special Educational Needs reorganisation.

Q. Looking at your C.V. are you qualified to judge children with SEN, or the school's situation?

A. This was a far more detailed review and report. I could not have done it if I was a PMLD teacher as the review requires an understanding of strategy too.

Q. How do you define a child with PMLD?

A. The definition I used is detailed on Page 39 in the report pack. I used this reference for the Lyndale children.

Q. Why did you not make more appointments with parents or spend more than 2 hours with them?

A. These meetings were arranged with the Acting Head. Three meetings were arranged and letters were sent out inviting parents to a meeting to be held on a Wednesday. On that day four or five parents were there, but Parent Governors could not attend. I also read the document submitted by parents in March 2014 and the responses from June. I took into consideration all the letters from officers and Governors.

Q. Did you take into account the findings from the Educational Psychologist?

A. Yes, I relied on her as my expert.

Q. In relation to the SEN Improvement Test, do you agree that provision has to be existing to enable it to be assessed? The provision in Stanley and Elleray Park Schools can only be based on a theoretical basis?

A. I have met with all schools and in my opinion both schools can provide just as well, if not better than The Lyndale School.

Q. Have you seen the building plans and staff models for both schools?

A. Yes, I have seen the plans. However, it is up to the Head and Governors to determine staffing.

Q. How much were you paid to write the report and will you be paid for coming here tonight?

A. I am not prepared to answer that question.

Q. What's your experience with PMLD that enables you to say that the children will benefit from the move to the two schools?

A. I have worked with children with PMLD for five years, my experience tells me that the children will benefit from being with other children who have different needs.

Summary of the Lead Signatory -Councillor Paul Hayes

Councillor Hayes thanked the Committee for its consideration of his call-in. He commented that meeting had provided a contrast in the argument from the parents to that of the Cabinet's views.

Councillor Hayes referred to the Cabinet who had asked for trust in their decision, but felt that parents shouldn't be asked to take a gamble on their child's educational future.

He commented that with a review of the funding banded yet to undertaken, Education Health Care Plans yet to be done and building plans being produced after the decision being made, parents shouldn't have to put up with this uncertainty,

Councillor Hayes urged the Committee to consider the video shown at the meeting earlier and the fact that there was no evidence to say the SEN Test was met.

He urged the Committee to show Cabinet that we care and send it back to Cabinet to think again.

Summary of the Cabinet Member Councillor Tony Smith (Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services)

Councillor Smith in response to comments made earlier regarding the chair at the consultation meeting indicated the decision as to who would chair these meetings was taken by officers and me. He explained that he wanted to listen to all that was said at that meeting. The officer in attendance who chaired the meeting was new to authority, therefore had no prior dealings with previous discussions in relation to The Lyndale School.

Councillor Smith indicated that extensive consultation had been undertaken and he had considered all the written representations received, he had met the leader of the Council and had met with parents, staff and Governors and considered all the papers carefully.

Councillor Smith indicated that this was not a political or financial decision, but The Lyndale School was not sustainable. The Council had undertaken an independent consultation and considered all options, including further options.

In the long term, this is the best thing for the people of Lyndale and we do have an outstanding provision at primary level.

Committee Debate

In opening the matter for debate the Chair set out the options available to the Committee upon making their decision as detailed within the Call-in Procedure.

It was moved as an amendment by Councillor Gilchrist and seconded by Councillor T.Anderson –

“That this Committee has heard evidence of dissatisfaction with the consultation process; it has also heard that Parent Governors were given no real opportunity to have meaningful discussion with the independent consultant, although some parents were able to attend the meeting.

This Committee believes there should be ongoing discussion with the Schools Forum to review the banding, especially the high needs band.

We believe money has been found in the past to stabilise finances of The Lyndale School.

We recognise that an underspend has been reported and we recommend to the Schools Forum that this be released to support The Lyndale School.

We appreciate the commitment of officers to supporting children but note that work on the Education, Health & Care Plans is still in process. A full picture of the needs of children has yet to be put together.

We recommend that Cabinet be requested to suspend the proposal to publish Notices until outcomes and further discussion with the Schools Forum has been reported to Cabinet and considered by Council”.

It was moved as an amendment by Councillor S. Williams and seconded by Councillor Fraser –

“That Committee, having listened to evidence cannot agree with the Cabinet’s decision to proceed with steps to close the school.

Committee believes that due to the excellent job that The Lyndale School does in caring for and educating their pupils with PMLD, the school should remain open.

We recommend Cabinet reconsiders its decision and asks Officers to work with Wirral Schools Forum to ensure reform of the current banding system to truly reflect the needs of each child”.

It was moved by Councillor Doughty, seconded by Councillor Sullivan:

“That the Cabinet minute 44 – 4 September 2014 (Outcome of The Lyndale School Consultation) be upheld”.

The first amendment was put and lost (3:12)

The second amendment was put and lost (6:9)

The Substantive Motion was put and carried (9:6)

RESOLVED: (9:6)

That the Cabinet minute 44 – 4 September 2014 (Outcome of The Lyndale School Consultation) be upheld.

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POLICY AND PERFORMANCE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 15 October 2014

Present: Councillor M McLaughlin (Chair)

Councillors P Doughty C Blakeley
C Muspratt W Clements
W Smith M Hornby
KJ Williams S Williams
P Gilchrist

32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Anderson, P Brightmore, A Leech, M Sullivan and J Williamson.

33 CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RELEVANT AUTHORITIES (DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS) REGULATIONS 2012, INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS

No declarations of interest were received.

It was noted that Members of this Committee, who were also signatories to the call-in notice, were able to take an active part in the scrutiny of the key decision. There was no restriction within the Council's Constitution.

34 CALL-IN OF A DELEGATED DECISION - MINUTE NO. 54 - EARLY YEARS AND CHILDREN'S CENTRES

The Chair reported that as there was no space in the Council's Committee timetable to fit in this call-in meeting within the 15 working days of the decision to call-in as set out in the Council's Procedure Rules (Standing Order 35) and have enough time to scrutinise the key decision, she was proposing that the meeting be adjourned to 12 November 2014.

Members were in favour of the Chair's proposal but also wanted to ensure that the procedure agreed by the Committee on 24 June 2013 was revised and improved so that witnesses, who were in attendance at call-in meetings could have the opportunity to read out their own written statement to the Committee if they so wished. Members also agreed that the reading out of these statements should be time limited to a maximum of five minutes each.

Members also considered it appropriate for the Cabinet Member concerned and the Lead Member to the call-in to be questioned once they had made

their statements to the Committee. Currently, the Call-in Procedure did not allow for this.

RESOLVED: (unanimously) That

- (1) the meeting stand adjourned until 6pm on Wednesday, 12 November 2014 in Committee Room 1 of Wallasey Town Hall;**
- (2) the Call-in Procedure be revised to enable:**
 - (a) a witness to a called in decision, who attends the meeting, to have the option of reading out any prepared written statements to the Committee (within a timescale not to exceed five minutes); and**
 - (b) the relevant Cabinet Member and the Lead Member to the call-in to be questioned by the Committee, once they have made their opening statements;**
- (3) the revised Call-in Procedure note be presented to the Committee at its reconvened meeting on 12 November 2014 for adoption.**

POLICY AND PERFORMANCE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 12 November 2014

Present: Councillor M McLaughlin (Chair)

Councillors T Anderson P Gilchrist
B Berry R Gregson
C Blakeley W Smith
P Brightmore M Sullivan
P Doughty I Williams
P Brightmore J Williams
W Smith J Williamson
M Sullivan

35 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors W Clements, A Hodson, M Hornby, A Leech, C Muspratt and S Williams and Mrs H Shoebridge.

36 CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RELEVANT AUTHORITIES (DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS) REGULATIONS 2012, INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS

Councillor P Hayes, Lead Member and signatory to the Called-in decision, declared a personal interest because of this and by virtue of being a Director of Overton Community Centre that ran a Nursery.

Councillors B Berry and L Fraser declared a personal interest by virtue of them being signatories to the called-in decision.

It was noted that no Member of the Committee was subject to the Party Whip.

37 CALL-IN OF A DELEGATED DECISION - MINUTE NO. 54 - EARLY YEARS AND CHILDREN'S CENTRES

The Committee had before it for consideration a report by the Strategic Director of Transformation and Resources that included the relevant documents in relation to the called-in key decision of the Cabinet following the Early Years and Children Centre Review. (Cabinet Minute No. 54 refers.)

Appended to the Strategic Director's report were the following documents:

- Appendix 1 - Call-in Procedure which included the names of the witnesses provided by both the Lead Member and Signatory to the Call-in and the Decision-Taker.
- Appendix 2 - The Call-in Notice.
- Appendix 3 - The Cabinet Report.
- Appendix 4 - August 2014 – Wirral Early Years & Children’s Centre Review.
- Appendix 5 - An Extract from the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 11 September 2014. (Minute No. 54)

The Committee was reminded in the report that the Call-in Procedure had been agreed by at its meeting held on 24 June 2013 and subsequently revised at a further meeting held on 15 October 2014.

The Call-in Procedure had been revised to ensure that:

- (a) witnesses to a called-in decision, who attended the meeting had the flexibility to read out a written statement to the Committee within a timescale not to exceed five minutes; and
- (b) the relevant Cabinet Member and the Lead Member and Signatory to the call-in could be questioned once they had made statements to the Committee.

The Committee noted that the decision had been called-in by Councillors P Hayes, J Green, G Watt, I Fraser, J Hale, G Ellis, L Rennie, T Anderson, S Williams, B Berry, A Sykes and E Boulton. It was also noted that the Signatories had raised the following four significant points:

‘We are concerned that such a huge reduction in service provision will have a real and adverse impact on those communities who have come to rely upon the valuable services offered through our Children’s Centres.

A decision so crucial to the Council’s provision of early year’s services should be subject to further member scrutiny.

Mindful of the concerns raised over alleged deficiencies with the consultation on the closure of the Lyndale School, we require further details as to how future consultations to ‘progress’ the recommendations will take place and its format.

We are concerned that the Leader of the Council is reported to have said that the plans mean the Council will retain the buildings and “hopefully have a new government next year and we can build these services back up”. Is the mothballing of buildings in the hope of a change in government conducive to a well thought through Early Years policy? Is

the Leader confident a different government would allow for the 'building up' of these services and what is the evidence of this? These are questions which should be further explored.'

Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair on opening the meeting asked Members, Officers and Witnesses in attendance to introduce themselves and they duly obliged. The Chair then proposed that the Call-in Procedure be varied so that the Leader of the Council, Councillor P Davies, a Call-in Witness and also a Witness for the Decision-Taker, could leave the meeting at 6:45pm to attend to other Council business. On a question from a Member the Head of Legal and Member Services confirmed that the Committee could vary its procedure if it saw fit to do so.

The Chair's proposal was then seconded and a vote was taken and it was

RESOLVED: (10 for and 5 against (with Councillor C Blakeley voting against))

That the call-in procedure be varied and Councillor P Davies be the first witness to come forward and make his opening statement and answer any questions that the Committee may have.

The Lead Member and Signatory to the Call-in asked the Chair if he could address the Committee on a matter before the Leader began to give evidence. The Chair agreed to his request.

The Lead Member and Signatory to the Call-in informed that he had wanted to call as a witness a representative of Unison but unfortunately, she had been unable to attend the meeting. The representative had formulated some written remarks and he sought permission to present them to the Committee.

The Chair informed that the Call-in Procedure did not allow for written witness evidence to be presented at a meeting if the actual Witness was not in attendance. A similar request had been considered previously by the Committee and Members, when they considered this very issue, had also considered that it was very important that the Committee had the opportunity to question all witnesses and/or seek clarification on any points raised by witnesses. The Head of Legal and Member Services confirmed that the Chair was correct in her understanding and that the Committee had previously exercised its discretion and refused a written statement from a Witness who was not in attendance at a Call-in meeting.

The Chair then proposed that the Committee adhere to the procedure it had used in the past and that the written statement of the witness who had been

unable to attend be not accepted, this was seconded and a vote was taken and it was

RESOLVED: (10 for and 5 against (with Councillor C Blakeley voting against))

That the procedure this Committee has used in the past be adhered to and the written statement of the Witness who had been unable to attend this meeting be not accepted.

Explanation of the Call-In by the Lead Member and Signatory, Councillor Paul Hayes

Councillor P Hayes informed the Committee that the Cabinet had made a very important decision which he considered could benefit from further scrutiny. Consequently, this key decision had been called in for the reasons set out earlier in the meeting. The Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services had previously informed that he was a strong advocate of Early Years and what could be achieved. The cross party view was important and consequently his view was that the Key Decision should be considered again.

The Early Years and Children Centre Review had ticked all the boxes in terms of strategic thinking and partnerships but Councillor P Hayes questioned whether this really was the case in respect of this Review as the partners felt left out and hood winked and the staff felt let down by the consultation.

Councillor P Hayes considered that this Key Decision had been more about funding cuts than presenting a plan to ensure Early Years remained a priority for the Council. It was not evidenced based but was emulating another local authority who had a set of different circumstance to that of Wirral.

Explanation of the Decision Taken by the Cabinet – Councillor T Smith – Cabinet Member – Children and Family Services

Councillor T Smith set out the chronology and reasoning of how the Cabinet arrived at its decision to resolve

- (1) That the Wirral Early Years and Children's Centre Review undertaken between April – July 2014 and detailed in August 2014, be endorsed.
- (2) That Cabinet notes that a key consideration of the review has been to ensure that efficiencies of £2m (agreed in December 2013), can be achieved for the 2014 – 2015 period. The review has noted and acknowledged that there will be continued financial pressures on public sector services.

- (3) That the recommendations detailed in the Review be progressed through to a public consultation.
- (4) That a six week consultation period be undertaken to progress the recommendations detailed in the Review, which will advise a future delivery approach for the Early Years and Children's Centre Service, namely that –
 - (i) The Children's Centre offer becomes an integral part of the Early Help offer through effective identification and support of children and families who need targeted early help. An overarching aim is to safely reduce the number of children referred to social care or accessing specialist/statutory services. *Noting*, as key to this, that in 2013 the former Children's Centre Family Support Resource shifted to become an integrated part of the Borough's wider Family Support offer, aligned and co-ordinated based on need and demand to the Gateway and as part of targeted services.
 - (ii) Work to establish strategic and operational policies and procedures to ensure that a joint service offer across the Borough's early childhood services develop – reducing duplication, and cost and improving outcomes. This will see formal commissioning partnership arrangements drawn up between the Council and health visiting and the Council and Jobcentre Plus (as statutory partners). These will include agreements for effective and robust information sharing. This will see wherever possible a health visiting and Jobcentre Plus service delivered through Children's Centres and built around integrating delivery plans aligned through the outcomes framework (see page 7 of the Review).
 - (iii) Staffing Structures are developed for four Constituency Areas, designed around need and population. A Central Business Support Team will also be developed to secure the wider Early Years and Childcare remit and offer essential support to the operation of Children's Centre activity.
 - (iv) To secure one main Children's Centre (which will be designated with DfE as full core purpose offer centres) in each of the four Constituency Localities. This will give a named Children's Centre for every child and support the local authority to carry out its statutory function to evidence sufficient Children's Centre activity. It is anticipated that all other current buildings will be preserved through partnership working with key stakeholders such as schools, health, and the voluntary, private and independent sector to offer an

element of targeted support in those areas where there is a high local need identified. This will see the 18 Children's Centre buildings deliver as:

- 4 Main Hubs or Designated Children's Centres
- 4 Outreach or Satellite of the Main Hubs
- 2 work as an extended nursery school to offer service
- delivery alongside the poverty hub schools
- 4 potentially transferred to be delivered by schools
- 4 to be further developed with schools and partners'

Councillor T Smith referred to the current financial position of the Council, informed that further reductions in funding were anticipated and that Early Years had not been the subject of a review since its inception in 2002. The current practice and approach to the delivery of Children's Services did not reflect well enough the Government Guidance introduced in 2013. In short he informed that the Early Years and Children's Centres' Services and general approach were out of step but he was confident that the Review would address this for the good of the Services going forward.

Evidence from Call-In and Decision-Taker's Witness

Councillor P Davies

Councillor P Davies provided the Committee with a short statement and informed that he had seen the wording of the Call-in Notice. He then reminded the Committee why Early Years and Children's Centres had been the subject of discussion since 2010. Councillor P Davies told the Committee that public services had been absolutely savaged by Central Government and that the Council was only half way through the period of austerity that had been planned, witnessing unprecedented cuts and that this would continue to impact on a local authority like Wirral. The Early Years Intervention Grant had been completely cut from the Council's budget and the Council was now witnessing a scorched earth approach.

Councillor P Davies referred to the recent report of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and reminded the Committee that areas in the North of England had suffered greater cuts than those in the South. He informed that the reality of all of this was that the Council had to make profound decisions on its services in order to ensure that the books balanced. He considered the report to be a good starter for ten, subject to the six week consultation to look at how the Council could reshape Early Years and Children's Centres, in the light of the funding cuts it had to make. The end result must be that the Council lived within its means whilst delivering a good quality service.

Finally, Councillor P Davies made reference to the fact that he had been quoted in the Call-in Notice. He reported that it was not an accurate quote and he considered that, given the cuts the Coalition Government was making,

the Council should try to retain Children's Centres, One Stop Shops, Libraries etc. with a reduced service so that if, in the future, a more enlightened Government was elected, the Council could build them up again. Councillor P Davies informed that his Political Group accepted that the Council's deficit needed to be driven down but that this should be done in a more humane way for local authorities like Wirral that had high levels of social deprivation. Members then asked Councillor P Davies a number of questions which he answered accordingly. Issues raised during this session included the following:

- Money the Council had loaned and the income it had generated over the last five years.
- The cost to the Council of servicing its loans? Councillor Phil Davies was unable to answer this question as he had not received any notice of it but agreed to write to the Member who had asked this question with the answer in due course.
- A Member claimed that in the last five years the Council had spent £77m in interest payments and queried whether the approach that was being adopted was good financial management.
- A Member informed that the Leader had been quoted as saying that the Council would not be closing Children's Centres like other local authorities and queried whether this was a sensible approach. Councillor P Davies replied that he considered that it was and that it would be short sighted to close buildings in the Council's ownership because it was difficult to open them once they were mothballed. Quite often they were the subject of vandalism. However, the Council did have a policy to reduce the number of buildings it owned but it was Councillor P Davies' view that Libraries, One Stop Shops and Children's Centres etc. provided a valuable service and with a more enlightened Government in the future, they could be built back up.
- A Member's view was that decisions were been taken based on hope for the future and that he had seen the Council's approach to Children and Young People in respect of its proposal to close the Lyndale School where no savings would be made.
- A Member referred to the staffing levels on page 51 of the agenda (page 35 of the Review document at Appendix 4) and queried how the Council would get to the new levels and target the new service to meet need and asked what work had been done to show that the new structure suggested met the need. Councillor P Davies responded that broadly, the Council needed to have a model of hubs and satellite Children's Centres. Some would be taken over by schools and services delivered in partnership. The Council needed to be more robust in identifying families in the deprived areas of the Borough and robust in recording the outcomes that were delivered. The Council had been good at recording outputs and activity but Councillor P Davies questioned whether it was addressing the deep levels of poverty. It needed to capture the impact that would be delivered going forward.

- Councillor P Davies asked what the cost to the Council had been of capitalising the redundancies of 1100 members of staff.
- A Member asked if Councillor P Davies had made his objections clear to Central Government and if it had received cross Party support. Councillor P Davies replied that he had made numerous representations but unfortunately, the Government did not listen. The Key Decision, subject to the call-in, was based on a sensible analysis of what the Council had to do to make savings and deliver services. He was happy with an all Party approach to protesting about the level of cuts and would be happy to join a delegation to see the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister to tell them that the level of cuts the Council was being forced to make was unacceptable and point out the level of misery that the 'Bedroom Tax' was causing.
- This approach was the only way to target the Council's services and the only way forward. The Council had to be more strategic, tailor its services and find new ways of delivering them. It was a problematic solution and in an ideal world Councillor P Davies would not want to do this.
- Reference was made by a Member to the Council lending money to Carlisle Council at an interest rate of ½%. Councillor P Davies informed that the money the Council lent generated additional funding it would not have had otherwise. This was a Treasury Management Policy that all Councils used.

Questioning of the Lead Member and Signatory by the Committee

Members were afforded the opportunity to question Councillor P Hayes. Issues raised during this session included the following:

- Councillor P Hayes believed that the review should be a review of the service as a whole and that it should not just be based on cutting the service. It needed to be a mixture of both of these.
- Councillor P Hayes considered that there needed to be more targeting of service but not by using a broad brush approach and that certain officers had been operating in silos and not consulting on what they were doing.
- Councillor P Hayes was of the view that the consultation process had not been carried out properly. A fundamental review to change the way the Council worked clearly needed proper consultation with partners, families and staff. There was little evidence of any work in this regard.
- A Member admitted confusion with the way the Call-in Notice had been worded and referred to a statutory Government Report published in 2013. Councillor P Hayes advised that the Government has said that local authorities need to look at a targeted approach but it had to be done working collaboratively with partners etc.

- A Member informed that Officers had tried to come up with targeted services to address inadequacies on the Wirral. Councillor P Hayes informed to do this they needed to speak to staff; families and partners but currently, they had no ownership of this.
- Many of the Centres were providing services very well but the report did not recognise this.
- A Member asked who were the partners and where were they, who had been consulted and who had not. Councillor P Hayes informed that this would be made plain to the Committee when his witnesses were invited to give evidence.
- Councillor P Hayes was asked if he had a specific interest in Early Years. He informed that he hoped that Early Years would make a dent in child poverty in Wirral.
- Councillor P Hayes was asked if he had any involvement with Early Years. He informed that he had only as a Borough Councillor and that he did not have children.
- Councillor P Hayes considered that the Council's staff were well placed to provide quality services and the Council needed to work with them to shape them. They had not had any involvement in any shape or form.
- Councillor P Hayes was of the view that there should have been a proper review document.
- A Member informed that he was not convinced that Councillor P Hayes understood the report and what was being done and queried whether he was using the call-in process for political gain, as he had been a signatory to a number of call-ins.

Questioning of the Cabinet Member – Children and Family Services by the Committee

Members were afforded the opportunity to question Councillor T Smith. Issues raised during this session included the following:

- A Member asked for details of the consultation exercise undertaken before the Key Decision was taken. Councillor T Smith informed that there had been pre consultation, one of the most extensive pre consultation exercises carried out by the local authority. It had involved all partners and had been done extremely well. Officers had put in a lot of time and effort in to consulting in a rigorous and robust way.
- A Member asked to see evidence of the pre consultation results and asked why the consultees had not received copies of the notes taken. Councillor T Smith informed that the Minutes would be made available to the consultees.
- A Member referred to the fact that there had not been a review of this service area since 2002 and asked if expectations in respect of Early Years had changed since this time. Councillor T Smith informed that there had been some tremendous legislation in 2002, brought about by a Labour Government and outcomes for children in the most

disadvantaged areas had been as good as they could have been. He wanted the best for all children on Wirral and this was the purpose of the review. Councillor T Smith reported that in 2012, when he became a Cabinet Member, he began to review the situation. He also informed that because of funding cuts he was aware that 500 Children's Centres had been closed across the country since 2011.

- A Member considered that it must be established whether the pre consultation process on which the Key Decision had been based had been flawed. Councillor T Smith reported that, in his opinion, the pre consultation had been as extensive and robust as it could have been carried out by a local authority.
- A Member asked why if Councillor T Smith wanted the best for all the children in the Borough, when it was also proposed to close the Lyndale School when it was within budget.

{The Chair informed that this question was out of order and advised Councillor T Smith not to answer it.}

- There had been some pre consultation and there was to be another consultation period of six weeks and partners would be involved. The Council aimed to provide the best opportunities for all children in the Borough and to do this would go the extra mile to support them. The six week consultation would be robust and the views of partners, schools and other interested parties in Early Years would be sought. There had not been a review since 2002, the world and families had changed, the Council did not have all of the knowledge and would need to look at any best practice. The aim was to improve outcomes for all Wirral children in a smarter way, even if savings could not be made. Councillor T Smith indicated that he would listen carefully to those who provided suggestions/solutions to improve outcomes for those children who lived in disadvantaged areas, with an open mind, so that when they transferred to school they were 'school ready'.
- A Member noted that Appendix 3 and Appendix 5 (Pages 15, 53 and 54 of the Agenda referred to reducing duplication and queried what duplication should be reduced, referring in particular to health visiting. Councillor T Smith informed that he wanted no duplication of what health visitors did and that the Council needed to work closely with them. All organisations involved needed to play a part in the Early Years and the Council must work smarter with the Health Service.
- Councillor T Smith considered it imperative to ensure that more funding was provided in the areas of greatest deprivation in order to ensure good parenting and that their children were encouraged to participate from ages one, two and three.
- A Member queried whether the further six weeks of consultation was adequate and had the Christmas period been taken into account. Councillor T Smith informed that he had spoken to Lead Members in other Councils who had only had three weeks of consultation but he

was flexible, especially over the Christmas period. He had received very robust feedback.

It was then proposed and seconded and it was

RESOLVED:

That the Committee adjourn for five Minutes so that members could have a comfort break.

Adjournment

Evidence from Call-in Witnesses:

Cathlyn Hughes, Head of Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre;

Lynn Loughran, Wirral Link Forum Member; and

Steve Vasey, Children and Family Services Manager, Wirral Autistic Society

Members were afforded the opportunity to question the three witnesses listed above. Issues raised during this session included the following:

- The view of one witness was that there had not been any meaningful consultation with voluntary organisations and the families with whom she worked. Voluntary organisations and families had been unaware that a pre consultation exercise of such importance had been taking place and the voice of these people should be heard.
- It was important that there were effective services providing best outcomes and services for the families with whom the witnesses worked.
- One witness informed that he had some first-hand experience of the pre scrutiny. He had been invited to a meeting on 30 April 2014 as a member of the Bromborough Steering Group. Issues discussed had been recorded on a flip chart. On 24 September 2014 a document had been discussed at the Link Forum. It had become apparent to him that he had been the only person who had attended a consultation meeting. Link Forum members had shared their concerns that they had not been consulted. He accepted the need for funding and that it had to be targeted but was confused about what he had been engaged in and concerned about difficult to reach families.
- A witness informed that she understood the Council's position regarding funding cuts and that new ways of working had to be identified. She was also aware that the Council needed to make its decisions as fair as possible. However, the recommendations in the report did not meet that aspiration.
- It was considered that the detail of the review was unclear.
- High aspirations were embedded in the SEN Code of Practice.

- Nursery School Teachers believed that they had been omitted from the first round of the consultation.
- No consultation meetings had been held in the Leasowe and Moreton areas.
- The witnesses were worried about the huge reduction in funding and that it was not targeted enough on the most vulnerable. Cuts continued to be made in funding to Leasowe Children's Centre and delegated schools savings. Service delivery had been built up whilst making savings and staff had not been made redundant.
- The effect of the Voluntary Intervention Programme was discussed. It was noted that there were more children with challenging behaviour and there were more children who were not 'school ready'. This made families more vulnerable not less vulnerable.
- A witness believed that budget allocation had not been done in a clear way and money had been syphoned off. Staff structures did not provide enough capacity. As a result, children and families would fall through the net.
- A witness was concerned that there were no options being put forward on which to consult and considered the review to be fundamentally flawed. Opportunities had been missed to maximise the service. It was accepted that the further consultation would be robust but what consultees were being consulted on was a worry.
- On being asked by the Chair whether the witnesses would like a responsive consultation process, a witness informed that his concern and that of his organisation was that the document being reviewed did not go far enough and it was obvious that the specific needs of families on the Wirral was not understood. He queried how the decisions had been arrived at. It was a difficult time and disaffected families did not understand the processes being gone through. Outreach Workers were the life's blood of these families. From them decisions were made on how to support the services. Too much funding had been taken away and there were no longer enough Outreach Workers to support these families.

The Chair announced that there was an emergency in the local area as two buildings had collapsed into the street. This meant that the Town Hall had to be evacuated before Brighton Street was closed. She proposed, it was seconded and it was

RESOLVED:

That the meeting be adjourned because of an emergency in the local area to a date and time to be agreed as soon as possible.

Adjournment

WIRRAL COUNCIL

COORDINATING COMMITTEE

23 FEBRUARY 2015

SUBJECT:	CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2014/15
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEAD OF POLICY & PERFORMANCE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR ANN MCLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The aim of this report is to update Cabinet in relation to current performance of the Council against the delivery of the Corporate Plan (as at 30th November 2014). The report translates the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan into a coherent and measurable set of performance outcome measures and targets. Members are requested to consider the details of the report and highlight any issues.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 As part of the development of the Corporate Plan, a set of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time related) outcome measures have been developed. The senior management team have determined the outcome indicators contained within the report and signed off the following parameters which underpin their on-going performance management:

- 2014/15 Plan
- 2014/15 Plan trajectory
- 2014/15 Performance tolerance levels (Red, Amber, Green status)
- Head of Service responsible for delivery of target

2.2 Corporate Plan performance is monitored on a monthly basis against the parameters agreed as part of the business planning process. Some indicators are only available on a quarterly basis, in line with the availability of data. Heads of Service responsible for the delivery of targets must complete an exception report and delivery plan for all indicators which are under performing (e.g. red RAG rated indicators).

2.3 Monthly Corporate Plan Performance Reports are produced and made available to support corporate challenge via:

- Monthly DMTs
- Monthly Portfolio Lead briefings
- Quarterly Audit, Risk, Governance and Performance meetings
- Quarterly Policy and Performance Committees

3.0 SUMMARY

3.1 The Corporate Plan Performance Report (Appendix 1) sets out performance against 20 outcome measures. Of these there are 2 measures where the outcome metric is under design or due to report at the end of the year. A commentary is provided against these.

3.2 Of the 20 measures that are RAG rated, 16 are rated green, 1 is rated amber and 3 are rated red. The 3 measures rated red have action plans (included as Appendices 2, 3 & 4) which refer to:

- NHS Health Checks – Take up
- Rate of Children in Need (per 10,000 population 0-17)
- Performance appraisals completed

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

4.1 The performance management framework policy is aligned to the Council's risk management strategy.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 N/A

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 N/A

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 N/A

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

8.1 Financial implications of undertaking the actions to deliver the Corporate Plan will be addressed by Directorates as appropriate.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 N/A

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(c) No because equalities implications relating to the actions set out in the Corporate Plan will be addressed by departments as appropriate, and details set out in individual departmental plans. The report is for information to Members and there are no direct equalities implications at this stage.

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 N/A

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 N/A

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 Cabinet are requested to consider the information contained within this report and highlight any observations or matters for clarification.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 To provide Cabinet with the information required to evaluate the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan Performance Report (30th November 2014/15)

Appendix 2 – Exception report/action plan for NHS Health Checks – Take up

Appendix 3 – Exception report/action plan for Rate of Children in Need (per 10,000 population 0-17) completed

Appendix 4 – Exception report/action plan for Performance Appraisals completed

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Coordinating Committee	2 July 2014
Coordinating Committee	3 September 2014

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WIRRAL COUNCIL
Corporate Plan Performance, Finance and Risk Report as at 30th November 2014



No.	Description	Data Source	Performance 2013/14	North West 2013/14	Target/Plan 2014/15	YTD Target 2014/15	YTD Performance	Forecast Outturn	Overall Status	Monthly Trend	Reporting Period	Accountable Officer (Head of Service)	Comments
PERFORMANCE													
DOMAIN 1: FAMILIES AND WELLBEING													
Public Health, Performance, Business Intelligence and Commissioning													
PHCP01	Alcohol-related admissions to hospital: Rate of attendance at A & E for injury and assault where alcohol was a factor	Trauma, Injury Intelligence Group (TIIG)	901.37	N/A	901.37	901.37	843.46	901.37	G	+	Dec 13 - Nov 14	J Webster	The data shows a reduction in attendances to A&E to November of this financial year, suggesting a positive improvement in the performance of the system. However it should also be noted that this current methodology is new so it will be important to watch future trends to check that this downward trend is a genuine improvement and not a function of the change in the methodology.
PHCP02	NHS Health Checks - Offered	Integrated Performance Measures Monitoring Return	17.7%	18.5%	20.0%	8.0%	12.7%	20.0%	G	+	Apr - Sep	J Harvey	<p>Within year, individual practices have the flexibility to spread out their Health Check invitations in a way that best suits their practice. As a result, actual take-up of invitations can vary from quarter to quarter. We are therefore aiming to ensure that the overall full-year uptake figure is at least 50% (which was exceeded in 2013/14). In order to support practices to achieve this, the following is in place:</p> <p>Seconded Practice Nurses have also been visiting / liaising closely with GP practices who require further support to improve take-up rates.</p> <p>A promotional video and poster are under development to be used in all GP practices and also community settings.</p>
PHCP03	NHS Health Checks - Take up	Integrated Performance Measures Monitoring Return	53.1%	51.0%	50.0%	50.0%	30.1%	50.0%	R	-	Apr - Sep	J Harvey	<p>A proposal to pilot the impact of 'Point of Care Testing' within GP practices is being developed.</p> <p>Owing to the availability of additional data for this quarter, practices will also shortly receive a personalised performance report, comparing their results to all other practices.</p>
Children and Young People Department													
CYCP01	Rate of Children Looked After (per 10,000 population 0-17)	SSDA 903 Return	100.1	81.0	95.8	97.9	100.8	95.8	G	+	Apr - Oct	S Butcher	<p>Looked after children (LAC) numbers continue to be higher than the national average and statistical neighbours. A LAC Task Group is now in operation which is ensuring a whole systems approach to addressing this issue. Emphasis is on detailed analysis of individual children and implementing strategies to safely reduce the LAC population and associated costs.</p> <p>The number of LAC has been steadily reducing since June. The current number of LAC is 682, with an expected further reduction in November.</p>
CYCP02	Rate of Children in Need (per 10,000 population 0-17)	Children in Need Census	396.1	365.3	375.0	385.6	439.1 (Estimated)	375.0	R	+	Apr - Oct	S Butcher	<p>A new and improved data system is currently being installed and embedded across Children's Services, therefore at this stage the number of Children in Need (CIN) cases provided is an estimate.</p> <p>Factors contributing to the increase in the number of CIN cases include an increase in referrals in September and October which means that a higher number of cases are currently in the system. In addition staff training on the new system - (up to five days per worker) has affected social work capacity and this has led to a delay in the closure of some cases, which contributes to the higher than expected number of open cases on the system.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that social workers are undertaking statutory visits and all children open on the system continue to be seen during this period.</p> <p>An actual figure will be available for future reporting and early indications evidence that this indicator will show an improvement in the next performance report</p>
Department of Adult Social Services													
ADCP01	Proportion of safeguarding alerts actioned within 24hrs	SWIFT	98.4%	N/A	100%	100%	99.9%	99.6%	G	-	Apr - Nov	S Garner	<p>A number of cases had previously been identified as having fallen outside of the target, however a review of these cases has been completed and there is a record in the narrative of the client file, that decisions were taken within 24 hours. This is a recording issue that has been addressed by the design of the new client information system, Liquid Logic. Social workers now have to complete the section on what action is required following a safeguarding alert before they can complete the section on confirming that action has been completed.</p> <p>There have been 7 cases out of a total of 1,977 that have fallen outside of target and this is due to either waiting for further information from the referrer or the police.</p>
ADCP02	Permanent admissions of older people (aged 65 and over) to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population	ASC-CAR & Office for National Statistics (ONS)	835.9	777.8	759.3	797.6	737.1	728.4	G	+	Apr - Nov	C Beyga	<p>YTD Placements</p> <p>Total - 321 Target - 343</p> <p>The average number of placements per month equates to 40.</p>

WIRRAL COUNCIL
Corporate Plan Performance, Finance and Risk Report as at 30th November 2014



No.	Description	Data Source	Performance 2013/14	North West 2013/14	Target/Plan 2014/15	YTD Target 2014/15	YTD Performance	Forecast Outturn	Overall Status	Monthly Trend	Reporting Period	Accountable Officer (Head of Service)	Comments
ADCP03	Proportion of people who have received short term services to maximise independence requiring no on-going support	SALT	New measure	N/A	50%	50%	73.9%	70%	G	+	Apr - Nov	C Beyga	Performance has been strong against this new indicator.
DOMAIN 2: REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT													
Environment & Regulation													
RECP01	Number of interventions put in place for travel plans and transport (to improve accessibility to employment & opportunities)	Travel Solutions	2,300	N/A	2,200	1,550	2,487	2,600	G	+	Apr-Nov	M Smith	The number of referrals has increased significantly recently due to a number of special events held by the team. As a result of recent success the end of year forecast has been increased to 2,600.
RECP02	To maintain local environmental quality (LEQ) of litter, detritus, & graffiti in main gateways and shopping areas	Local Survey Data	91%	N/A	93.5%	93.5%	97.5%	93.5%	G	+	Apr-Sep	M Smith	This indicator has exceeded its anticipated target for the second quarter in succession and remains on target for delivery by year-end as planned.
Housing & Community Safety													
RECP03	Number of new affordable homes	Homes & Communities Agency MIS	354	N/A	300	80	125	300	G	+	Apr-Sep	I Platt	Delivery of the quarter 3 target and achieving the year-end forecast are anticipated
RECP04	Number of interventions to improve private rented sector properties	MVM Database	783	N/A	400	200	199	400	G	↔	Apr-Sep	I Platt	This performance indicator is reported quarterly and reports will be run at the end of this month that contribute towards this performance indicator and review targets. While there have been significant staff absences, workloads have been re-organised within the team and it is still hoped to meet the end of year target for the number of private rented sector interventions.
RECP05	Number of adaptations completed	MVM Database	1,934	N/A	1,900	950	981	1,900	G	+	Apr-Sep	I Platt	This indicator continues on track to achieve the quarter 3 target and year-end forecast.
Business & Investment													
RECP06	Jobs created and safeguarded (via Invest Wirral)	Invest Wirral	937	N/A	925	630	681	925	G	+	Apr-Nov	A Evans	This indicator remains on track and is expected to achieve its year-end target.
RECP07	Gross Value Added per head of population	Office for National Statistics (ONS)	£11,599	N/A	£12,013	NYA	NYA	£12,013	G	-	-	A Evans	This performance indicator reports 12 months in arrears. Wirral's Investment Strategy continues to support the local economy and the good economic performance over recent years is expected to positively impact this indicator which will be known in December 2014. This performance indicator will report in quarter 3 and is expected to achieve the 2014/15 target.
RECP08	Number of working age people claiming out-of-work benefits (economic inactivity)	NOMISWEB	15%	N/A	14.5%	14.7%	14.6%	14.5%	G	+	May	A Evans	Worklessness in Wirral has fallen since the last quarter by 0.5% which is a reduction of 830 claimants, meaning Wirral is on track to achieve the end of year target. The next update is due February 2015.
DOMAIN 3: TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES													
Resources													
TRCP01	Implementation of Windows 7 & Office 2010 across the Council	Silver Project reports	N/A	N/A	100%	40%	40%	100%	G	+	Apr-Sep	V Quayle	The implementation of Windows 7 & Office 2010 is 55% as at the end of November 2014. Additional resources have improved the number of appointments that have been made and kept, however there is still a gap which needs to be closed.
TRCP02	£(m) Projected Delivery of Council budget savings	General Ledger, revenue monitor and Concerto	£46.900	N/A	£36.259	-	£16.293	NYA	A	-	Oct	V Quayle (Accountable for reporting)	£16.3m delivered with remaining savings rated as £4.2m green (on track), £10.7m amber (concerns) and £5m red (high risk/not achieved) after mitigation from adjusted growth assumptions is included. Additional mitigation has been identified which reduces risk. Overall revenue budget is forecasting an overspend of £2.1m as at 31st October 2014. November 2014 figures will be available after publication of 15th January 2015 Cabinet financial monitoring report.
Human Resources													
TRCP03	Performance Appraisals completed	Intranet	27% (employee KIEs) 65% (senior manager PAs)	N/A	80%	70%	29%	50%	R	-	Apr-Sep	C Hyams (Accountable for reporting)	As at November 2014 the completion of performance appraisals has risen to 46%. Monthly breakdown of figures by directorate continue to be sent to Heads of Service to encourage further activity. By the end of December 2014, based on current performance to date, it is anticipated that 50% will be achieved, 30% below the year end target of 80%.
TRCP04	Sickness Absence: The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness (cumulative)	Data collected via HR SelfServe	10.47	N/A	9.75	5.84	5.70	9.62	G	+	Apr-Oct	C Hyams (Accountable for reporting)	The provisional sickness absence rate of 5.70 days for April - October 2014 is 0.56 below the 6.26 rate for April - October 2013 and is forecast to be 9.62 at 2014/15 year end, 0.13 below the 9.75 target.

WIRRAL COUNCIL
 Corporate Plan Performance, Finance and Risk Report as at 30th November 2014



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-  Performance is improving
Lower is better
-  Performance is improving
Higher is better
-  Performance is deteriorating
Lower is better
-  Performance is deteriorating
Higher is better
-  Performance sustained
in line with targets set

G	Performance within tolerance for target set.
A	Performance target slightly missed (outside of tolerance).
R	Performance not on track, action plan required.

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PERFORMANCE ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

This template is to be completed for ALL measures showing **RED** status of non-compliance against the specified target reported.

INDICATOR OVERVIEW	
Indicator Title	NHS Health Checks: Take up of the NHS Health check programme by those eligible
Strategic Director Lead	Fiona Johnstone, Director of Public Health
Departmental Lead	Julie Webster Head of Public Health
Target	50% take up by those people offered a health check

CURRENT SITUATION: Detail what the performance is for this measure and reason/s for non-compliance		
Performance this Period	30.0%	+ / - Target : -20.0% YTD
Non-compliance reason	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual practices have the flexibility to schedule their Health Check appointments through the year in a way that best suits their work profile. Many practices have initially sent out a large volume of invites to patients and are now arranging for patients to have their actual appointments. This inevitably has an impact on quarterly figures. This programme is effectively competing with the Quality Outcomes Framework (QoF) and 2 major Local Enhanced Service (LES) contracts; 'Over-75s' and 'Admissions avoidance'. These are all far more financially attractive to practices and are of higher priority. There are ongoing issues with data collection. Despite now being in the 2nd year of operation, we are still uncovering basic yet significant errors (e.g. practice nurses using the wrong clinical template, hence activity data not coming through). <p><i>Please note the take-up rate in Wirral for 13-14 was 53.09% compared to national figure of 49%.</i></p>	

ACTIONS: This describes what's necessary or how to achieve a 'green' score. This way everyone is clear on what is required and when; knows the expected outcome and how to achieve it .	
What (is required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A close review of data and processes with associated support to poorly performing practices. • Promoting GP health checks within practices and in community settings. • Explore feasibility of using Point of Care Testing (POCT) that will enable patients to receive relevant tests and receive immediate results at the practice. Evidence from other programmes has shown a positive impact.
How (will it be achieved)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health will continue to work with those GP practices that are significantly underperforming to improve the uptake rates. Factors to be addressed include inaccurate coding and reinforcing the invitation process. • Training sessions to support healthcare professionals in undertaking NHS health checks will be repeated early in the new year. • Promotional materials are currently being developed (video and posters) for GP practices to use in their patient waiting areas to promote NHS health checks. These materials will also be used to promote the programme in a range of community settings. • A pilot study is planned to test out the impact of using Point of Care Testing (POCT) in each practice, which would allow for a range of test to be carried out as part of the one consultation. At present, patients sometimes have to attend repeat appointments for various tests at various locations, which can result in non-attendance or follow-up.
Who (will be responsible)	Jane Harvey
When (will results be realised)	<p>The next data return is 31st January 2015 for Q3 data (1st October – 31st December 2014). However, it is predicted that the Christmas period will have an inevitable impact on Health Checks uptake. In the knowledge that many patient swill not attend for this type of appointment at this time of year, practices will not schedule many appointments. We are therefore predicting another underperformance</p>

	in Q3 with a significant upsurge in activity for Q4.
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PERFORMANCE ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

This template is to be completed for ALL measures showing **RED** status of non-compliance against the specified target reported.

INDICATOR OVERVIEW	
Indicator Title	Rate of Children in Need (per 10,000 population 0-17)
Strategic Director Lead	Clare Fish
Departmental Lead	Sue Butcher
Target	385.6 (ESTIMATED Oct 2014) / 375.1 (March 2015)

CURRENT SITUATION: Detail what the performance is for this measure and reason/s for non-compliance	
Performance this Period	439.1 +Target: 54.1 per 10,000 (14.0%)
Non-compliance reason	<p>A new and improved data system is currently being installed and embedded across Children's Services, therefore at this stage the number of Children in Need (CIN) cases provided is an estimate.</p> <p>Factors contributing to the increase in the number of CIN cases include an increase in referrals in September and October which means that a higher number of cases are currently in the system. In addition staff training on the new system - (up to five days per worker) has affected social work capacity and this has led to a delay in the closure of some cases, which contributes to the higher than expected number of open cases on the system.</p> <p>There is clear evidence that social workers are undertaking statutory visits and all children open on the system continue to be seen during this period.</p> <p>An actual figure will be available for future reporting and early indications evidence that this indicator will show an improvement in the next performance report</p>
ACTIONS: This describes what's necessary or how to achieve a 'green' score. This way everyone is clear on what is required and when; knows the expected outcome and how to achieve it.	
What (is required)	An actual figure CIN will be reported at the earliest opportunity. Cases that are completed are required to be closed down on the system.
How (will it be achieved)	Once social worker training on the new system is completed, cases that are completed will be closed down on the system.
Who (will be responsible)	Sue Butcher Head of Specialist Services
When (will results be realised)	It is expected that an actual figure will be reported at the end of Q3, December 2014.

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PERFORMANCE ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

This template is to be completed and forwarded to the Corporate Performance Team for ALL Corporate and Directorate performance measures showing **RED** status of non-compliance against the specified target. It needs to be updated on a monthly basis for the period that the measure shows a **RED** status.

INDICATOR OVERVIEW			
Indicator Title	TRCP03 - Performance Appraisals completed		
Strategic Director Lead	Joe Blott		
Departmental Lead	Chris Hyams/ Melissa Holt		
Year End Target	80%	Year End Forecast	50%

CURRENT SITUATION: Detail what the performance is for this measure and reason/s for non-compliance		
Performance this Period	46% (as at November 2014)	- 24% Target (Q2)
Non-compliance reason	Performance Appraisals have been delayed due to the roll out of Future Council and general capacity of managers.	

ACTIONS: This describes what's necessary or how to achieve a 'green' score. This way everyone is clear on what is required and when; knows the expected outcome and how to achieve it.	
What (is required)	Lead communication from Chief Executive, monitored through Departmental Management Teams with reports on a monthly basis.
How (will it be achieved)	Increased awareness via reminders in One Brief and reports, identifying staff where a PA completion has not been registered, being sent to Heads of Service (via DMTs) on a monthly basis, to highlight the requirement to complete and record all PAs within the timescales set and to ensure that the system is up-to-date in relation to PAs completed.
Who (will be responsible)	Strategic Directors Heads of Service
When (will results be realised)	December 2014 However it is forecast, based on current performance to date, that only 50% of PAs will be completed by the end of December 2014 (30% below the original target of 80%).

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

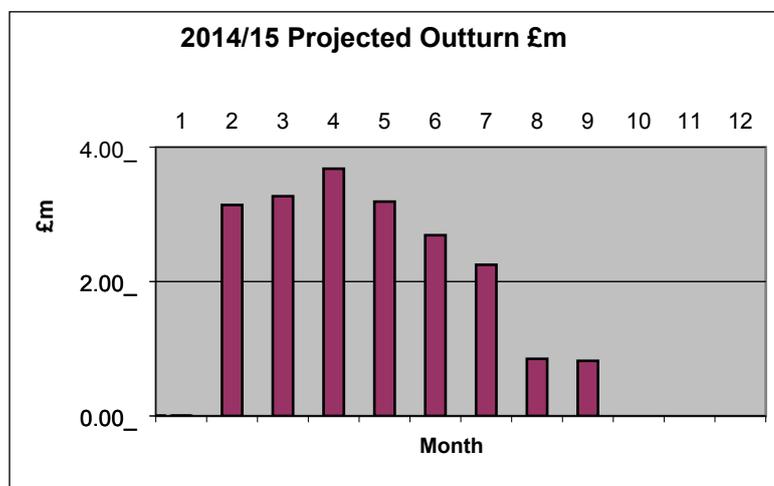
10 FEBRUARY 2015

SUBJECT	REVENUE MONITORING 2014/15 MONTH 9 (DECEMBER 2014)
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF	ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER	COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES
KEY DECISION	YES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the revenue position for 2014/15, which at Month 9 (December 2014) shows a projected General Fund overspend of £0.82 million (0.3% of the net revenue budget). This is a small improvement on the £0.85 million projected overspend reported at Month 8 as shown in Graph 1.
- 1.2 The Adult Social Services projected overspend has increased in the month by £52,000 to £2.77 million. The overspend is mainly due to slippage or non-delivery of in year savings and continued demand pressures. The forecast overspend within Children’s Services has reduced further with a forecast overspend now of £196,000 (down from the Month 8 projection of £330,000). The overspend largely relates to the non-achievement of in year transport savings as well as costs of external placements. The Families and Wellbeing Directorate has implemented a number of management actions to help compensate and/or limit any adverse variances.

Graph 1: Wirral Council – 2014/15 General Fund Variance, by month



2 CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET

- 2.1 The 2014/15 Budget was agreed by Council on 25 February 2014 and is

detailed in Annex 2; any increase in the Budget has to be agreed by full Council. Any changes to the budget occurring since it was set will be summarised in the table below.

Table 1: 2014/15 Original & Revised Net Budget by Directorate £000's

	Original Net Budget	Approved Budget Changes Prior Mths	Approved Budget Changes Month 9	Revised Net Budget
Chief Executive	10,035	-39	-1380	8,616
FWB - Adult Social Services	74,667	-55	-282	74,330
FWB – Children & YP, Schools & Safeguarding	82,877	-87	-3015	79,775
FWB - Sport & Recreation	8,502	-	-66	8,436
Regeneration & Environment	95,190	-622	3400	97,968
Transformation & Resources	20,199	-467	246	19,978
Corporate Growth & Savings	-15,813	1,270	1097	-13,446
Net Cost of Services	275,657	0	0	275,657

2.2 Budget changes made in month 9 relate to three areas

- Allocation from corporate to directorates of funding for lump sum payments made in December in respect of pay award.
- Revised depreciation charges in respect of revalued assets.
- Adjustments to reflect achievement of in-year remodelling savings by Directorates against the Corporate target.

3 PROJECTIONS AND KEY ISSUES

3.1 The outturn position projected as at the end of Month 9, key issues emerging and Directorate updates are detailed below.

Table 2: 2014/15 Projected Budget variations by Directorate £000's

Directorates	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	(Under)	RAGBY Classification	Change from prev
			Overspend Month 9		
Chief Executive	8,616	8,407	-209	B	7
FWB - Adult Social Services	74,330	77,099	2,769	R	52
FWB – Children & YP, Schools & Safeguarding	79,775	79,972	197	A	-133
FWB - Sport & Recreation	8,436	8,651	215	A	78
Regeneration & Environment	97,968	96,493	-1,475	Y	-
Transformation & Resources	19,978	19,306	-672	Y	-33
Corporate Growth & Savings	-13,446	-13,446	-	G	-
TOTAL	275,657	276,482	825		-29

The main report only comments on large variations (Red and Yellow items). The 'variations' analysis over 29 budget areas, distinguishes between overspends and underspends. The 'risk band' classification is:

- Extreme: Overspends - **Red** (over +£301k), Underspend **Yellow** (over - £301k).

- Acceptable: Amber (+£141k to +£300k), Green (range from +£140k to -£140k); Blue (-£141k to -£300k).

3.2 Directorate Updates

Families and Wellbeing: Adults

- 3.2.1 A potential overspend of £2.77 million is forecast at Month 9. This is made up of £2.4 million slippage against current year savings and £0.4 million demand pressures. The level of management actions required to contain budget issues is £3.0 million. Following implementation of the new care management system, financial data has been transferred and an in year reconciliation between old and new systems undertaken which will provide information to monitor future progress.
- 3.2.2 Day Services are likely to only achieve in year £370,000 of the £750,000 2014/15 saving, due to part year impact of implementation, with the balance slipping into 2015/16. The full saving will be made from 1 April 2015 when the new service commences.
- 3.2.3 Targeting support through NHS contracts and targeting Council resources are large 2014/15 savings options. The review of current cases remains challenging, however revised processes and tightened procedures are now in place for all new packages and current packages are being picked up through the review process.
- 3.2.4 Demand for Adult Social Care continues to increase and the mix of services provided to individuals continues to vary as a consequence. These changes together with the outcome of case reviews impact on the forecasted spend across care areas. At this stage there remains a £400,000 projected overspend.
- 3.2.5 The review of Continuing Health Care Appeals has required liaison. Whilst a number of hurdles have now been cleared the NHS project includes a lengthy 10 stage process. This is taking longer than initially envisaged delaying the achievement of the £500,000 saving.
- 3.2.6 A number of the savings are linked to increased income, the main item being the income from the domiciliary care block contracts. The £250,000 target is viewed as achievable but the full target is unlikely to be reached until 2015/16.
- 3.2.7 Management actions include:-
- The assessment and review of cases is key and a Business Case is being prepared about the potential recruitment of additional temporary support in order to progress the reviews.
 - For the high cost placements an additional review is being undertaken by the Head of Service and Director.
 - A Transformation Group supported by colleagues from other Directorates monitors progress and has given greater focus to ensure

that scarce resources are targeted towards achieving the savings.

- Review of other Directorate budgets to ascertain if any efficiencies can be identified to mitigate against the projected overspend being forecast. This includes the use of the monies set-aside as a result of the early delivery of savings achieved in 2013/14.

Families and Wellbeing: Children's

3.2.8 There has been an improvement to the position with the projected overspend reducing from £330,000 to £197,000 due to a number of spending controls put in place across the department. Pressures continue within the areas of Social Care, in particular the costs of agency staff and within the transport budget all of which are being closely managed.

3.2.9 As previously reported the savings attributed to changes in the Day Nursery provision have slipped. This will be compensated for from savings within the service and use of the early learning reserve.

3.2.10 A number of management actions are being taken with regards to controlling the overspend, these are -

- Restructures across the department are being implemented and are closely managed to minimise the impact on services and staff, whilst keeping slippage on savings targets as low as possible.
- There is a rolling programme of recruitment to Social Work positions. Agency costs and placements are reviewed on a monthly basis.
- Residential Care placements are by a multi-agency panel and no decision is made below head of service. Progress and packages of care are closely monitored by the Head of Service in monthly meetings to ensure that decisions are implemented and overall costs for children entering and leaving care are clearly understood.
- Budget progress is reported and reviewed monthly at DMT with opportunities to maximise grant and external funding are constantly reviewed.

3.2.11 **Sport & Recreation:** An adverse variance of £215,000 is currently forecast which is attributable to elements of the transformation programme taking longer to deliver than was originally anticipated.

3.3 Other Directorate Variances

3.3.1 **Chief Executive's:** A potential underspend of £209,000 is currently forecast as a result of staffing vacancies and anticipated non-utilisation of the improvement fund for 2014/15.

3.3.2 **Regeneration and Environment:** This area has a forecast underspend of £1,475,000. This underspend is due to a number of variations with the largest being:

- £500,000 currently set aside for match funding future grant delivery

programmes will not be used in this financial year due to delays in finalising future ERDF & ESF grant programmes.

- £300,000 of savings made in advance plus efficiencies within the Supporting People contract area of Housing & Community Safety.
- £250,000 underspend on staffing costs in various areas including non-filling of posts ahead of implementation of new structures.
- £100,000 from areas increasing their income generation forecasts such as Environment Health from export certificates and Community Safety from community patrol work.

The Floral Pavilion budget position continues to be challenging although the Directorate forecast remains an underspend position.

3.3.3 Transformation & Resources: An underspend of £672,000 is currently forecast for the directorate. The main reason being a predicted reduction in revenue funding costs following the review and re-profiling of the 2014/15 Capital Programme, plus savings on directorate staffing and running costs within business processes.

3.3.4 For libraries and One Stop Shops a saving of £466,000 was predicated upon revised opening hours, introducing lone working with support from volunteers and / or agile workers. These measures have yet to be introduced, but compensatory savings, primarily from vacant posts have been found in the year. Cabinet and Council in December agreed further proposals for future service provision and the undelivered savings will be implemented alongside these from March 2015.

3.3.5 Corporate Wide Budgets: A number of high value corporate-wide savings options, because of their size and complexity, are currently classed as red or amber. These include savings from Corporate Commissioning where mitigation has been identified. Given their strategic importance these projects are being very closely monitored and will be further reported upon during the year.

3.3.6 The Remodelling saving for 2014/15 remains rated as amber. The £9.4 million savings remodelling target was scheduled to deliver over two years - £4.9 million in 2014/15 and £4.5 million in 2015/16. Work to review and remodel the organisation began in February 2014. As the project progressed, the scale of change in some service areas and the statutory consultation process required with all staff affected by remodelling of services became clearer. An implementation date of 1 January 2015 was anticipated which would have led to an in year short fall of £2.55 million, with in-year compensatory savings required. A phased approach has been adopted enabling staff queries raised throughout the consultation process to be fully responded to and this has placed additional pressure on the consultation timetable which is now due to complete in 2015. The latest forecast is that £1.9 million of savings will be delivered in year. The full year effect of these changes will deliver the £9.4 million in 2015/16.

Table 3: Directorate Business Area Projected Budget variations

	Chief Exec	FWB	Rege & Environ	Trans & Res	Total
Red Overspend	0	3	0	0	3
Yellow Underspend	0	2	3	1	6

The full Table is set out at [Annex 3](#)

3.4 Directorate budgets are further sub-divided into a number of business areas.

Three business areas are currently flagged as red rated.

3.4.1 Delivery within Families and Wellbeing (Adult Social Services). This relates mainly to the delivery of some 2014/15 savings for which management actions are as outlined earlier in the report.

3.4.2 Integrated Transport Unit within Families and Wellbeing (Childrens). Overall against the £556,000 target for both the Childrens (£306,000) and Adults (£250,000) provision there is £90,000 shown as being achieved. There is £104,000 of travel grant monies brought forward that will help to offset the savings target leaving a potential shortfall of £362,000. The overspend is also attributable to the Depot savings target of £100,000 which has only been partially met by the relocation of the Reeds Lane Depot and the lease of the Salt Barn.

3.4.3 Specialist Services within Families and Wellbeing (Childrens). The main reasons for the projected overspend remains to be in relation to the cost of agency staff (currently 39 in Fieldwork) exceeding the established employee budget however there are contributions from reserves helping to reduce the impact. The forecast for Residential placements exceeds the available budget by £0.6 million with 43 in residential and 16 in semi-independent placements compared to 45 and 34 at the start of the financial year respectively. Fostering is £0.6 million over budget with 37 in non-local authority placements compared to 34 at the start of the year.

Six business areas are currently flagged as yellow rated.

3.4.4 Targeted Services within Families and Wellbeing (Children's). There are reduced budgetary pressures within Youth & Play and, although New Brighton Day Nursery has transferred, the remaining 5 nurseries are subject to ongoing discussions. The additional costs to the end of March have been offset by a reserve and vacancies.

3.4.5 Universal Services within Families and Wellbeing (Children's) - Vacant posts within Admin contribute largely towards the under spend together with a projected £150,000 under spend against the redundancy/severance budget relating to teachers.

- 3.4.6 Resources within Transformation & Resources. Increased Treasury Management savings have been generated from the re-profiling of expenditure following a capital programme review and the use of internal resources to temporarily fund spend. There is a resulting reduction in investment income but this is outweighed by a greater saving on borrowing costs with the net saving being approximately £410,000. There are also some underspends within salary budgets and running costs within business processes.
- 3.4.7 Housing & Community Safety within Regeneration and Environment. The proposed 2015/16 budget saving option for Supported Housing is £150,000 which will be generated from efficiency savings in contract negotiations. These efficiencies have already been negotiated and therefore are reflected in the 2014/15 forecast. There are also further savings (£150,000) from one off in-year variations in contract use. Other smaller savings are from the reduced requirement for repairs & maintenance of alley gates and from vacancies across the service area.
- 3.4.8 Environment & Regulation within Regeneration and Environment. There are currently a number of vacancies in the Parks & Countryside, Traffic and Transport (school crossing patrols) and Waste & Environment Service Areas. There are also budget savings on the wheelie bin replacement budget lines due to the innovative use of the spare parts of discarded bins being used to limit purchase of replacement bins. These underspends have now been offset by the Cabinet approval to postpone £85,000 of street lighting budget savings and the approval for the free after 3pm car parking initiative over the Christmas period.
- 3.4.9 Investment Strategy & Business Support within Regeneration and Environment. Employee costs within the Invest Wirral team are currently being subsidised by ERDF grants, as part of their delivery of the Council's grant funded Business Support programme. This is time limited funding but does enable this service area to declare an underspend of approximately £100,000 in 2014/15. There is also £100,000 of savings from employee costs due to delays in establishing the new Economic Development unit approved as part of the 2014/15 budget. Budgets of £500,000, currently set aside for match funding future grant delivery programmes, will not be used in this financial year due to delays in finalising future ERDF & ESF grant programmes.

4 IMPLEMENTATION OF SAVINGS

- 4.1 The delivery of the agreed savings is key to the Council's financial health and is tracked at both Council and Directorate level. The assumption is that, where there is slippage, the Strategic Director will implement replacement savings.

Table 4: Budget Implementation Plan 2014/15 whole Council (£000's)

BRAG	Number of Options	Nov 2014	Change from prev mnth	Approved Budget Reduction	Amount Delivered at Dec	To be Delivered
B - delivered	49	47	2	10,921	10,921	0
G – on track	24	24	0	5,130	2,232	2,848
A - concerns	22	24	-2	13,119	3,254	9,204
R - high risk/ not achieved	9	9	0	7,089	1,318	1,128
P – mitigation achieved	0	0	0	0	5,354	0
Total at M9 Dec 14	104			36,259	23,079	13,180
<i>Total at M8 Nov 14</i>	<i>104</i>			<i>36,259</i>	<i>18,113</i>	<i>18,146</i>

Note: For 2014/15 the red rating definition has been amended from that used in 2013/14. Red is now classed as high risk or not achieved (in 2013/14 it was defined as failed)

- 4.2 A number of savings options are currently red rated. The 2014/15 red rating definition has been broadened from that used in 2013/14 to now include high risk rather than only failed options.
- 4.3 The mitigation achieved (purple) category is used to show mitigating actions taken against savings that have failed or partially failed within 2014/15. This reflects adjustments including a review of corporate growth assumptions and mitigation against the Corporate Commissioning targets.
- 4.4 The savings tracker contains an assessment of the 2014/15 savings programme. This shows £7.1 million of savings assessed as red (defined as high risk or not achieved) with a further £13.1 million of options rated at amber (concerns). Please note that a red rating does not mean that savings will not be delivered, but that there is a risk to full delivery in the year. Savings of £4.6 million have been delivered so far in year relating to options currently rated red or amber. In addition mitigation has further reduced the amount outstanding required to meet the overall £36 million savings target.
- 4.5 The ratings are a result of robust assessment of progress to date against the original proposed budget options and identification of in year slippage against targets. Red rated options include a number relating to Adult Social Services, transport, Floral Pavilion, the library budget, not yet implemented. The corporate commissioning and procurement savings are still to be identified. However mitigation is in place and being developed as set out below.
- 4.6 A number of identified mitigating actions are in place to assist the Corporate savings delivery and reduce the risks to the budget. These include continuation of the spending freeze, vacancy management, the voluntary redundancy offer, reviewing growth allocations and identification and control of other underspending directorate budgets.
- 4.7 The impact of the above measures combined with the projections for the overall budget position reduces the forecast overspend to £0.82 million.

Projections are updated monthly and further mitigating measures are being identified to cover any potential overspend.

5 GROWTH

- 5.1 An allowance for the impact of demographic changes, inflation and other risks - that is outcomes that could be worse than assumed - was built into the budget 2014/15 as detailed at Annex 4. The assumptions which totalled £9.2 million were subject to review resulting in a reduction of £0.9 million as reported in the month 2 monitor. This was removed from the budget in Month 7 and Annex 4 has been adjusted to reflect this. These reductions have contributed to mitigating savings held within the Corporate Growth and Savings area.

6 INCOME AND DEBT

- 6.1 Revenue and Income falls into four broad areas for reporting purposes:

Table 5: Amount to be collected in 2014/15

	2014/15	2014/15	
	Collectable	Collected	%
	£000	£000	
Council Tax	137,344	113,164	82.4%
Business Rates	71,656	58,225	81.3%
Fees and charges – Adults & Children	33,803	27,855	82.4%
Fees and charges – all other services	33,081	34,438	104.1%

Note: fees and charges income includes receipts for invoices raised pre 1 April 2014

COUNCIL TAX

- 6.2 The Council Tax collection after nine months of the year is comparable with the equivalent 2013/14 collection rate. No significant changes to Council Tax apart from the amendment to the Pensioner Discount scheme were implemented for 2014/15. This is now the second year of Local Council Tax Support scheme.
- 6.3 Recovery from non-Council Tax Support recipient debtors is continuing as normal. Action taken to recover from those of Working Age that previously received Council Tax Benefit is on-going. Repayment plans offering weekly/fortnightly instalments were offered to those contacting the Council. Where possible attempts to collect by Attachment of Earnings and Benefits will be prioritised however inevitably in some cases this will not be possible and alternative methods including Bailiffs will need to be utilised.
- 6.4 An exercise is currently underway to check the Single Person Discounts awarded (25%) with in excess of 31,000 of 55,640 discount awards being checked. Council Tax Support recipients are excluded from this exercise. The firm undertaking this work estimates that between 4-6% of the recipients will have the full charge re-instated. The 2015/16 Council Tax Base reflects an estimated £300,000 increase in Council Tax receipts. The exercise will ensure that Wirral council tax payers are not subsidising falsely claimed discounts..

BUSINESS RATES

- 6.5 Following changes introduced by central government, businesses can now have the option to pay Business Rates over 12 monthly instalments. Previously payment options had been over 10 instalments. Income collection to the end of December was 81.3%. This was lower than the 85.9% collected at the equivalent period in 2013/14 and is in line with reported drop in collection for similar authorities who are on average 4.5% down on the previous year.

DEBTORS

- 6.6 On-going work has continued to improve collection and resolve outstanding debts and currently leaves a balance outstanding of £19,336,872. This is less than the £21,209,731 reported at the end of November 2014 and the £29,016,258 at December 2013..

BENEFITS

- 6.7 Discretionary Housing Payments are funded by Government Grant although the Council can increase the funding available through using its own resources. The demands for support in 2014/15 are projected to exceed the grant and the Welfare Reform Update report on this agenda recommends the transfer of £70,000 from the Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Relief Fund in 2014/15 to help meet this demand.

7 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The possible failure to deliver the Revenue Budget is being mitigated by:
- Tracking system of savings options to ensure delivery.
 - Budget Tracker Officer Group / CESG review savings progress.
 - Future Council Project Governance arrangements.
 - Benefits Realisation Group monitoring the delivery of future savings and delivery of the key change projects.
 - Monthly review by Chief Officers and Cabinet, together with an improved Scrutiny regime and greater transparency.
 - Individual monthly review by Cabinet Portfolio holder at portfolio meeting.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Any option to improve the monitoring and budget accuracy will be considered.

9 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 No consultation has been carried out in relation to this report.

10 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

- 10.1 There is an ongoing requirement to identify during the financial year necessary actions to mitigate any forecast overspend.

11 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 11.1 As yet there are no implications for voluntary, community or faith groups.

12 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL, IT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 12.1 Cabinet 12 February 2014 agreed a 2014/15 General Fund balance risk calculation of a minimum of £17.3 million. As part of the budget process for 2015/16 the level of risk will be reassessed and incorporated into the Cabinet budget report. This will be reviewed during the year to reflect changing circumstances and any in year developments.

Table 6: Summary of the projected General Fund balances

Details		£m
Balance 31 March 2015 when setting the Budget 2014/15		+17.3
Less: Potential overspend, at Month 9		-0.8
Add: Additional New Homes Bonus		+0.2
Projected balance 31 March 2015		+16.7

- 12.2 Earmarked Reserves excluding school balances totalled £66.1 million at 1 April. These include reserves relating to the cost of Council remodelling, mitigation and specific project support and ongoing financial risks. Earmarked reserves will be reviewed during the year.

13 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The entire report concerns the duty of the Council to avoid a budget shortfall. The Chief Finance Officer has a personal duty under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 section 114A to make a report to the executive if it appears to them that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure.

14 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 This report is essentially a monitoring report which reports on financial performance. Any budgetary decisions, of which there are none in this report, would need to be assessed for any equality implications.

15 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

16 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

16.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

17 RECOMMENDATIONS

17.1 Cabinet is asked to note that at Month 9 (December 2014), the full year forecast projects a General Fund overspend of £825,000.

17.2 Cabinet is asked to note the changes in budget allocations relating to the pay award, revised depreciation charges and re-modelling savings (as outlined in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2) which do not impact on the General Fund position.

17.3 Cabinet is asked to note the risks relating to non-delivery of savings as detailed within the report and the continued requirement for mitigation and actions to be identified.

18 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 The Council, having set a Budget at the start of the financial year, needs to ensure that the delivery of this Budget is achieved. This has to be within the allocated and available resources to ensure the ongoing financial stability of the Council. Consequently there is a requirement to regularly monitor progress so that corrective action can be taken when required which is enhanced with the monthly reporting of the financial position.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1 Revenue Monitoring and Reporting Timetable 2014/15.
Annex 2 General Fund Revenue Budget for 2014/15 agreed by Council.
Annex 3 Monitoring RAGBY Full Details
Annex 4 Growth and Risk
Annex 5 Income and Debt

SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Since September 2012, a monthly Revenue monitoring report has been submitted to Cabinet. Budget Council	25 February 2014

REVENUE MONITORING AND REPORTING TIMETABLE 2014/15

Period Number	Month	General Ledger Updated and Reports Available To Be Produced	Reports Available For The Executive Strategy Group	Reports Available For Cabinet
			Monthly	Monthly
1	April	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	May	Jun 6	Jun 17	Jul 7
3	June	July 7	Aug 26	Sep 11
4	July	Aug 7	Aug 26	Sep 11
5	August	Sep 5	Sep 22	Oct 9
6	September	Oct 7	Oct 20	Nov 6
7*	October	Nov 7	Nov 20	Dec 9
8*	November	Dec 5	Dec 19	Jan 15
9	December	Jan 8	Jan 19	Feb 10
10	January	Feb 6	Feb 23	Mar 12
11	February	Mar 6	TBC	TBC
12	Outturn (Provisional)	TBC	TBC	TBC

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15

AGREED BY COUNCIL ON 25 FEBRUARY 2014

Directorate/Service Area	Original Budget	Variances	Revised Budget
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure			
Chief Executives	10,035	-1,419	8,616
Families and Wellbeing		-	
Children and Young People, Schools and Safeguarding	82,877	-3,102	79,775
- Adult Social Services	74,667	-337	74,330
- Sports and Recreation	8,502	-66	8,436
Regeneration and Environment	95,190	2,778	97,968
Transformation and Resources	20,199	-221	19,978
Net Cost of Services	291,470	-2,367	289,103
Corporate Growth	1,016	-310	706
Corporate Savings	-16,829	2,677	-14,152
Budget Requirement	275,657	-	275,657
Income			
Local Services Support Grant			
New Homes Bonus	1,768	-	1,768
Revenue Support Grant	87,492	-	87,492
Business Rates Baseline	32,036	-	32,036
Top Up	40,513	-	40,513
Council Tax Requirement	112,214	-	112,214
Council Tax Freeze Grant	1,334	-	1,334
Contribution from G Fund Balances	300	-	300
Total Income	275,657	-	275,657
Statement of Balances			
As at 1 April 2014	17,300	-	17,300
Contributions from Balances	-300	-	-300
Forecast Balances 31 March 2015	17,000	-	17,000

Note: This table will be updated for agreed variances during the year

MONITORING FULL DETAILS

RAGBY REPORTING AND OTHER ISSUES

The Red and Yellow RAGBY issues that are the subject of corporate focus are detailed in the following sections by Business Areas within Directorates.

Department	Number of Budget Areas	Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Yellow
Chief Executive's	6	0	0	5	1	0
Adult Social Services	2	1	0	1	0	0
Children & Young People, & Schools	5	2	0	1	0	2
Safeguarding	1	0	0	1	0	0
Sports & Rec	1	0	1	0	0	0
Regeneration & Environment	5	0	1	1	0	3
Transformation & Resources	7	0	0	6	0	1
Corporate Growth & Savings	2	0	0	2	0	0
Total	29	3	2	17	1	6

Business Area Reds

	Chief Exec	People	Places	Trans & Res	Total
Red Overspend	0	3	0	0	3
Value £000s		4,280			4,280

Business Area Yellows

	Chief Exec	People	Places	Trans & Res	Total
Yellow underspend	0	2	3	1	6
Value £000s		1,385	1,655	675	3,715

GROWTH AND RISK

DIRECTORATE	OPTION TITLE	2014/15 £000
FAMILIES		4,115
Demographic Growth	Childrens - Special Guardianship & Adoption numbers	240
	Adults - Demand (Young Adults with Learning Disabilities)	926
	Adults - Increased demand Older People (Adj)	1,039
	Adults - Ordinary Residence (Adj)	300
Other Growth	Assets - Leasowe Millennium Centre (Adj)	0
	Childrens - Youth and Play Services - refocus provision(Adj)	0
Inflation	Childrens - Fostering & Adoption Allowances	200
	Childrens - PFI Affordability Gap	190
	Childrens - Teacher Retirement Costs	80
	Childrens - Transport Contracts	80
	Childrens - Energy and CRC Allowances	310
	Adults - Contract inflation (Adj)	750
REGENERATION		1,506
Demographic Growth	Temporary Accommodation Budget	50
Other Growth	Car Parking Operations Income	350
	Increase to green waste processing gate fee	65
	Economic Strategy Unit (Adj)	100
	New System for administering Resident Parking	40
	Parking Income due to end of income agreement	68
	Biffa Property Uplift	13
	Selective Licensing of Landlords (Adj)	178
	Homelessness Prevention Grant	221
Inflation	Highway Services Contract	48
	Contract for Parking Enforcement Services	10
	Urban Traffic Control Systems	20
	Biffa Contract Inflation	343
TRANSFORMATION		2,685
Other Growth	Graduate Trainee Programme (Adj)	0
	Savings Profiling including Business Rates	900
	Council Tax Summonses	1,300
	Council Tax Support Scheme: Uprating	265
	IT Support	120
	Benefit Advice Services	100
TOTAL GROWTH		8,306

The table reflects the outcome of the review of growth and assumptions which was undertaken and which was reported in the Month 2 monitor.

INCOME AND DEBT

The following shows the collection progress for Council Tax, Business Rates, Accounts Receivable and Benefits

COUNCIL TAX

The following statement compares the amount collected for **Council Tax** in the period 1 April 2014 to 31st December 2014 with the amount collected in the same period in 2013/14:

	Actual 2014/15 £000s	Actual 2013/14 £000s
Cash to Collect	137,344	135,550
Cash Collected	113,164	111,577
% Collected	82.4%	82.3%

Council Tax benefits have been abolished and replaced by Council Tax Support £27.44 million is currently in payment and the numbers and awards as at 31st December 2014 are as follows:

Number of pensioners	15,599
Number of vulnerable (working age)	8,499
Number of working age	12,856
Number of Council Tax Support recipients	<u>36,954</u>

Claimants have dropped from 37,932 to 36,954 (978) since the beginning of the financial year.

Council Tax Discretionary Policy as at 31st December

35 awards granted totalling £6,258

268 refused, reason, requesting payment of 22% after maximum Council Tax Support granted.

9 cases reason, moved to 100% CTS from 78%,

8 cases reason, other/misc.

11 cases outstanding.

BUSINESS RATES

The following statement compares the amount collected for **National Non-Domestic Rates** for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 December 2014 with the amount collected for the same period in 2013/14:

	Actual 2014/15 £000	Actual 2013/14 £000
Cash to Collect	71,656	69,887
Cash Collected	58,225	60,021
% Collected	81.3%	85.9%

* 12 instalments introduced and adopted by at least 25% of accounts

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

The table below shows the directorates and amount of debt at each recovery stage:

Directorate Description	Less than 10 days	1st reminder	2nd reminder	3rd reminder	Total at 31.12.14
Chief Executive	£75,938	£43,464	£2,813	£680,325	£802,540
Neighbourhood	£6,631	£2,874	£98	£13,544	£23,147
Transformation & Resources	£2,301,900	£234,048	£21,265	£1,062,162	£3,619,375
Families & Wellbeing	£3,899,593	£508,921	£210,047	£9,463,049	£14,081,610
Regeneration & Environment	£268,130	£172,936	£95,565	£682,906	£1,219,537
Policy & Performance	£105	£42,875	£0	£105	£43,085
Totals	£6,552,297	£1,005,118	£329,788	£11,902,091	£19,789,294

The above figures are for invoices in respect of the period up to the end of December 2014. Payments as well as amendments such as write-offs and debt cancellations continue to be made after this date on all these accounts. There is a further deduction of £452,422 to be made for unallocated payments leaving a balance of **£19,336,872**.

BENEFITS

The following statement details the number of claimants in respect of benefit and the expenditure for Private Tenants and those in receipt of Council Tax Support up to 31 December 2014:

	2014/15	2013/14
Number of Private Tenant recipients	31,731	31,627
Total rent allowance expenditure	£107,153,111	
Number under the Local Housing Allowance Scheme (<i>included in the above</i>)	12,090	12,243
	£43,713,399	
Number of Council Tax Support recipients	36,954	38,138
Total Council Tax Support expenditure	£27,540,550	
Total expenditure on benefit to date	£134,693,661	

The following statement provides information concerning the breakdown according to client type as at 31 December 2014 and gives the early year numbers to show the shift in sector by benefit claimants during the year.

	31.12.14	30.4.14
Claimants in the Private Rented Sector	14,290	14,531
Claimants in the Social Rented Sector	17,441	16,906
Owner Occupiers	9,087	10,118
Total claimants by age group		
- under 25 years old	2,338	2,551
- 25 – 60 years old	21,291	21,666
- over 60 years old	17,189	17,338

There are 40,818 benefit recipients in Wirral as at 31 December 2014.

Under Occupancy regulations

From 1 April 2013 property size criteria was introduced to working age tenants of social landlords (Registered Providers). Where a claimant is deemed to be occupying accommodation larger than they reasonably require Housing Benefit is restricted:-

- By 14% in 2,694 cases
- By 25% in 638 cases

The number of claims affected does fluctuate. The numbers above are a snapshot at 31 December 2014

Housing Benefit Fraud and Enquiries – 1 April 2014 to 31 December 2014

New Cases referred to Fraud team in period	724
Successful Prosecution/Administration penalty/caution	48
Tenancy Fraud	3

Discretionary Housing Payments

The table below profiles the position of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) administration and associated spend. DHP is not a payment of Housing Benefit and is funded separately from the main scheme. Since the introduction of Welfare Reform and associated impacts, additional funding has been made available.

The Government contribution for 2014/15 is £995,795 with an overall limit of £2,489,487 which the Authority must not exceed. The difference must come from the Authority's own Expenditure. The committed spend against the Government contribution at 31 December 2014 was 98%, (63% at the end December 2013) with 59% of awards made are in respect of social sector tenant/claimants whose housing benefit has been reduced on the basis of accommodation size. Whilst the variance to 2013/14 is considerable at this point in 2013/14 spend increased to 95% at year end.

The present rate of spend projects an overspend. Applications are now subject to increased scrutiny in line with the agreed Policy the remaining fund is unlikely to support as many applicants who would otherwise meet the criteria to secure an award. With the Government contribution likely to be exhausted by 31 January 2015 the Welfare Reform Update report to Cabinet on 10 February 2015 is recommending that £70,000 be transferred to the DHP Fund from the unallocated Council Tax Discretionary Relief Hardship Fund to meet anticipated demands during the remainder of 2014/15.

Month	Claims Considered			DHP Awards in Payment	Current Awards	% spent (committed) of total fund	Annual Total Cont. remaining
	Total considered	Awarded	Refused				
April	259	203	56	248	£93,371	10%	£902,424
May	464	361	103	816	£181,503	35%	£814,292
June	501	358	143	1370	£307,503	57%	£426,171
July	401	235	166	1777	£503,465	74%	£256,841
August	248	124	124	1953	£600,280	81%	£192,869
September	203	96	107	2073	£689,039	83%	£165,221
October	255	132	123	2238	£779,946	87%	£129,113
November	235	145	90	2418	£870,520	92%	£82,026
December	156	92	64	2557	£948,694	98%	£17,285
Totals	2703	1746	976				

Local Welfare Assistance

The Local Welfare Assistance Support Scheme (LWA), supported by a £1,345,925 Government Grant, gives assistance to those in immediate crisis or need through the provision of pre-payment cards for food and fuel and direct provision of white goods. The number of applications continues to rise on a week by week basis. The present rate of spend now projects 100% grant spend at year end.

LWA details for period from 07 April 2014 to 31 December 2014:

Number of awards granted for food	2,042	value	£95,960
Number of awards granted for fuel	2,703	value	£43,780
Number of awards granted for goods	5,232	value	£557,493
Total number of awards made	9,977	value	£697,233

This direct grant will be ended on 31 March 2015 and during 2014/15 the Authority is reviewing options for what, if any, provisions are made for 2015/16 in this area which would have to be from its own resources. The DCLG is encouraging LA's to support locally and continue with schemes, where at all possible.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

10 FEBRUARY 2015

SUBJECT	CAPITAL MONITORING 2014/15 MONTH 9 (DECEMBER 2014)
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF	ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER	COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES
KEY DECISION	YES

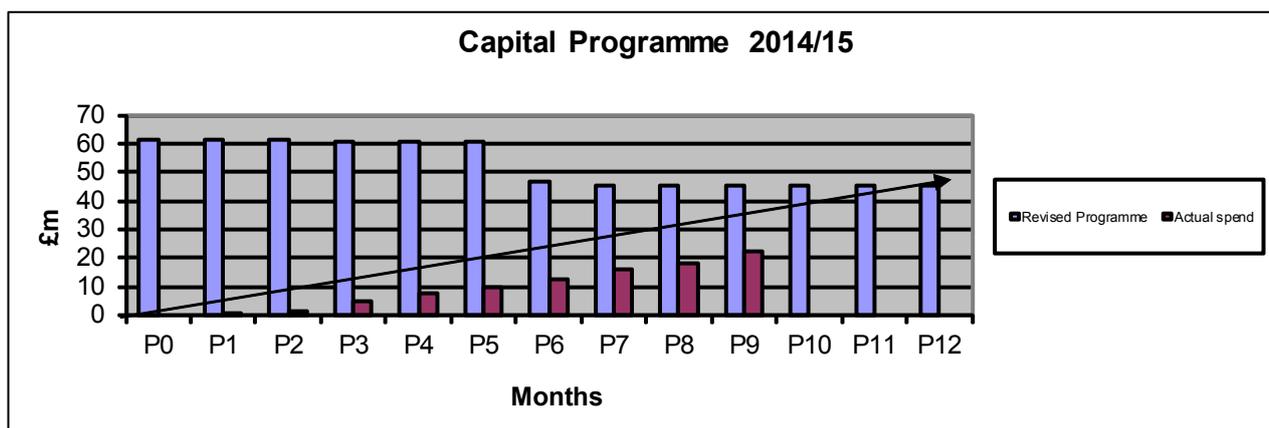
1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out the capital position for 2014/15 at Month 9 (December 2014).

2 OVERALL POSITION AT PERIOD 9 (DECEMBER 2014)

2.1 The actual spend against the Capital Programme is summarised in Table 1. A number of variances have been identified which impact upon the forecast outturn and these are highlighted in Table 2. The report provides information on the progress in delivering the 2014/15 Capital Programme and the sources of financing.

Chart 1: Capital Programme spend below line of best fit



3 ORIGINAL AND PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2014/15

3.1 The Programme for 2014/15 is subject to change. Month 9 reflects the Programme agreed by Cabinet on 12 February 2014 together with subsequent amendments. Broadly these reflect the re-profiling from 2013/14 as referred to in the Capital Outturn report, more up to date information regarding external financial support, primarily latest grant notifications, the outcome of a half year review to update the forecast spend profile and information subsequently available in December.

3.2 To aid the monitoring process, greater use is being made of the Concerto Performance Management System for each scheme. This shows how schemes in the Capital Programme are progressing. Annex 1 contains information about which stage in the gateway process schemes have reached. The 5 gates currently in use are: Conception, Approval, Start Up, Delivery and Completion.

Table 1: Capital Programme 2014/15 at Period 9 (December) £000's

	Capital Strategy	Changes approved by Cabinet	Changes not yet approved/ noted	Revised Capital Programme	Actual Spend Dec 2014
Universal & Infrastructure	5,827	-2,490	0	3,337	2,315
Families & Wellbeing – Children	10,998	-688	0	10,310	5,678
Families & Wellbeing – Adults	3,611	-38	0	3,573	1,086
Families & Wellbeing – Sport & Recreation	1,000	1,157	0	2,157	591
Regeneration & Env – Env & Regulation	8,006	2,250	0	10,256	4,346
Regeneration & Env – Hsg & Comm Safety	5,707	-1,684	0	4,023	1,909
Regeneration & Env – Regeneration	5,744	3,389	0	9,133	3,894
Public Health	401	-401	0	0	0
Transformation & Resources	4,000	-1,500	0	2,500	2,700
Total expenditure	45,294	-5	0	45,289	22,519

Universal and Infrastructure Services

- 3.3 The roofing scheme at West Kirby Concourse is 100% complete, cost £354,000.
- 3.4 Phases 1-3 of Electrical Infrastructure and refurbishments works at Cheshire Lines are complete with Phase 4 to be completed by March 2015. This will enable Birkenhead Municipal Building to be vacated and staff relocated to Cheshire Lines.
- 3.5 Works to Birkenhead Town Hall are complete and Acre Lane staff have now been relocated.
- 3.6 The full refurbishment tender for Wallasey Town Hall South Annexe has been loaded onto the Procurement Portal (The CHEST) by the end of January. Tenders have been received for the programme of asbestos removal.
- 3.7 Cleveland Street Transport Depot, works are underway refurbishing existing buildings to allow a phased move from various parks depots that will reduce revenue implications and/or produce a capital receipt.
- 3.8 Work in respect of a New Salt Barn facility at the Cleveland Street site is complete.

- 3.9 Construction of the new build for Arrowe Park changing pavilion commenced in November is 90% complete.
- 3.10 The schemes to demolish Bebington Town Hall and Liscard Municipal Building are on temporary hold.
- 3.11 Stanley School demolition on site with an estimated contract duration of 10 weeks (tender price £171,000). Work to the playing field cannot be completed until April/May 2015.
- 3.12 Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of Rock Ferry High School but awaiting Secretary of State Approval before proceeding to tender. Approval is also awaited before the demolition of former Foxfield facility can commence.
- 3.13 The demolition of Moreton Adult Unit and Fernleigh has been completed.
- 3.14 Cabinet 13 March 2014 agreed that the Council enters into a Deed of Surrender of land included in the present agricultural tenancy at New Hall Farm, Hoylake, which is required for the proposed Hoylake Golf Resort. Compensation to the current lessee was agreed from the Capital Programme with a capital receipt being generated from the future disposal of this land.

Children and Young People

- 3.15 Good progress is being made by the in-house Asset Management and Design Teams on major projects. There are 2 large contracts (over £500,000) on site in addition to a range of smaller value projects and 15 large projects where detailed design work is taking place; these are at various stages of the design/conception phases.
- 3.16 Universal Infants Free School Meals. The Government initiative will result in an expected increase of 7,000 pupil meals per day. Some kitchens required extensive building work to meet capacity increase others new heavy equipment. Continuation of capital investment was required to meet the increased meal numbers, to ensure that safety legislation is met and to replace old kitchen equipment. This being met from the grant of £624,000.
- 3.17 The contract for development works to Elleray Special School has been awarded (£1.028 million plus fees £0.154 million).
- 3.18 Priority School Building Programme (PSBP). The first scheme to rebuild Foxfield Special School is on-site and construction is progressing quickly. The anticipated date for completion is February 2015. Ridgeway High School and Bedford Drive School are also included in PSBP (1) but will follow a Private Finance Initiative route and the projects are progressing. PSBP (2). Wirral submitted three bids as follows; Pensby High for Girls, Pensby High for Boys - refurbishment & re-design and Riverside Primary bid to re-build new school. An announcement of the successful bids is now expected in Spring 2015.

3.19 School Basic Need and Sufficiency Requirements

Fender Primary School has been identified for use of the Basic Need allocation to meet the increase in pupils in the Woodchurch area. The Council Capital contribution of £750,000 in 2014/15 will support the Future Capacity Initiative for primary schools. The indicative allocations for Basic Need in 2015/16 and 2016/17 which are in the region of £3 million are the subject of discussions with curriculum leaders, pupil admissions, schools forum etc to agree the programme for increasing pupil numbers in selected schools.

- 3.20 Phase 1 of the Somerville Mobile Replacement scheme has been completed (approx £0.7 million in total). Phase 2 has been completed (estimated £0.2 million) with the final phase having started in September (£0.85 million).
- 3.21 A new charitable organisation is being created to manage the construction of the Youth Zone. Once formally established the Council contribution to the £6 million scheme will be paid.
- 3.22 School remodelling – a number of schemes have now been identified. Given that these need approval and feasibility studies £1.1 million has been deferred to 2015/16 rather than be incurred in the current financial year.
- 3.23 Vehicle procurement – 2 gritters have been purchased and a car for transporting pupils to and from Oaklands has been ordered.

Adults

- 3.24 The Integrated I.T. scheme (Liquidlogic) went live during September 2014.
- 3.25 Next phase of the Liquidlogic project will see the procurement and implementation of the additional modules relating to the citizen and provider portals. Implementation will support the delivery of some Care Act duties from April 2015.
- 3.26 Transformation of Day Services is ongoing and now moving into the implementation stage with work expected to be completed by the year end.

Sport and Recreation

- 3.27 All projects are now underway at Guinea Gap with completion estimated for January 2015. Works at West Kirby commenced late October with completion anticipated in April 2015.
- 3.28 The work on the 3G football pitches at Guinea Gap commenced on 30 July, was completed in early January and the pitches are being well used by local groups.

Housing & Community Safety

- 3.29 Disabled Facilities Grants continue to be approved and the spend committed but the incurring of this spend is determined by the grant applicants which means that there will invariably be works approved that will not be completed during the year.

3.30 For the New House-Building Programme, the Council is using the Homes and Community Agency new Affordable Homes Programme as the basis for developing the programme of works. Processes such as defining the criteria and legal obligations for grant funding, site acquisition and planning approval need to be completed before scheme commencement.

Regeneration

3.31 The Regional Growth Fund grant supports investment into the offshore renewable energy sector. Applications have been approved up to the grant allocation but companies are only paid upon defrayment of supported expenditure with this grant having to be paid by May 2015.

3.32 The Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has secured a total of £15 million from the Government’s Regional Growth Fund (RGF) for a Business Growth Grant programme. From this allocation Wirral has to date, secured £3 million with grants payable upon defrayment and having to be paid by March 2015.

3.33 The contract for New Brighton, primarily for infrastructure developments, started in September and is to be completed by March 2015.

3.34 Funding from reserves (£50,000) is available to ensure that the final phase of the Marine Business Park was completed to the agreed standard.

Transformation & Resources

3.35 The substantial programme of investment into Information Technology is underway. This includes investment in both hardware and software with the new equipment having been piloted and is being ‘rolled-out’ across the Council from September. Further developments include elements to support the delivery of the Future Council project and upgrading the ORACLE financial system which is likely to occur in 2015/16.

Table 2: Variations to the 2014/15 programme £000’s

	Amount	Explanation
		(A) Policy
		(B) Items previously deferred
		(C) Funding
		(D) Re-profiling
		(E) Reduced requirement
	£000	
Nn variations identified for Month 9		

4 FINANCING OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

4.1 Table 3 summarises the financing sources for the original and latest programmes.

Table 3: Revised Capital Programme Financing 2014/15 £000's

Capital Programme Financing	Capital Strategy	Revised 2014/15 Programme
Unsupported Borrowing	20,717	10,884
Capital Receipts	3,000	8,073
Revenue and Reserves	290	745
Grants	21,287	25,587
Total Financing	45,294	45,289

- 4.2 The reprofiling of the Capital Programme following the half year review at Month 6 reduced the borrowing requirement for 2014/15 by £8.8 million resulting in a one-off financing saving in 2014/15 of £800,000. The changes since then revise this figure to £840,000. The full budget will be required in 2015/16 when the re-profiled expenditure occurs.

5 PROJECTED LONGER TERM CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 5.1 Funding for the forecast 2014/15 to 2016/17 Capital Programme is shown in Table 4 and reflects the 2014/17 Capital Programmes agreed by Budget Council and subsequent amendments.

Table 4: Capital Programme Financing 2014/15 to 2016/17 £000's

Capital Programme Financing	2014/15 Revised Estimate	2015/16 Revised Estimate	2016/17 Original Estimate	Total Programme
Unsupported Borrowing	10,884	20,522	4,376	35,782
Capital Receipts	8,073	5,758	0	13,831
Reserve Reserves	745	177	0	922
Grants	25,587	9,282	6,644	41,513
Total Financing	45,289	35,739	11,020	92,048

6 SUPPORTED AND UNSUPPORTED BORROWING AND THE REVENUE CONSEQUENCES OF UNSUPPORTED BORROWING

- 6.1 Based on the current cost, £1 million of Prudential Borrowing would result in additional revenue financing costs of £80,000 per annum in the following year. As part of the Capital Strategy 2014/15 to 2016/17 the Council has included an element of prudential borrowing. At Month 9 there is a sum of £36.0 million of new unsupported borrowing included over the three years, which will result in approximately £3.2 million of additional revenue costs detailed at Table 5, if there is no change in Strategy.

Table 5: Unsupported Borrowing Forecasts & Revenue Costs £000's

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
New Unsupported Borrowing	10,884	20,522	4,376	-
Cumulative		31,406	35,782	35,782
Annual Revenue repayment costs				
Cumulative		980	2,827	3,220

The Unsupported Borrowing has to be divided into those schemes for which there is planned support i.e. spend to save schemes; and truly unsupported schemes.

Table 6: Analysis of Unsupported Borrowing £000s

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
Spend to save	4,192	10,012	750	14,954
Other borrowing	6,692	10,510	3,626	20,828

7 CAPITAL RECEIPTS POSITION

- 7.1 As reported to Cabinet on 7 November 2013 the Council could realise £20 million from asset disposals including Acre Lane, former Rock Ferry High School and Manor Drive, Upton. The latest projections from Lambert, Smith, Hampton suggest a figure closer to £22 million; however the market is subject to fluctuations. It is anticipated that the disposal for Acre Lane will occur early in 2015, for Manor Drive will occur in 2016 and that for Rock Ferry (presently seeking Secretary of State consent to dispose of the former school facility) in 2016/17. Table 6 reflects these latest projections.
- 7.2 The Capital Programme is reliant on the Council generating capital receipts to finance future schemes. The Capital Receipts Reserve at 1 April 2014 contained £8.8 million of receipts. The table assumes the proposed spend, set out at Section 4.1 is agreed. At this stage the receipts and funding assumptions are estimates.
- 7.3 At December 2014 the Council had received receipts of £2.531 million during the current financial year which has exceeded the target of £2.5 million (Annex 2).

Table 7: Projected Capital Receipts position £000's

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Capital Receipts Reserve	8,800	3,227	7,469
In - Receipts Assumption	2,500	10,000	13,000
Out - Funding assumption	-8,073	-5,758	TBA
Closing Balance	3,227	7,469	20,469

8 RELEVANT RISKS

- 8.1 The possible failure to deliver the Capital Programme will be mitigated by the monthly review by a senior group of officers, charged with improving performance.
- 8.2 The generation of capital receipts could well be influenced by factors outside the authority's control e.g. ecological issues. Lambert, Smith, Hampton are still providing external support.
- 8.3 An in year review of the Capital Programme was undertaken by the Capital Working Group and this was incorporated within the Month 6 Monitoring Report.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 No other options have been considered.

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 No consultation has been carried out in relation to this report.

11 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

- 11.1 There are no outstanding actions.

12 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 12.1 As yet, there are no implications for voluntary, community or faith groups.

13 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The whole report is about significant resource implications.

14 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

15 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 An Equality impact assessment is not attached as there are none.

16 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 16.1 There are no carbon reduction or environmental implications arising directly from this monitoring report.

17 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 17.1 There are no planning and community safety implications arising directly from this monitoring report.

18 RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 That Cabinet is asked to note:

- a) The spend to date at Month 9 of £22.5 million, with 75% of the financial year having elapsed;

19 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

19.1 Regular monitoring and reporting of the Capital Programme enables decisions to be taken faster which may produce revenue benefits and will improve financial control of the Programme.

19.2 Any variations to the Capital Programme are agreed by Cabinet but then referred to Council to formally approve the changes.

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SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Capital monitoring reports, from September 2012, are being submitted monthly. Capital Programme – Council	25 February 2014

ANNEXES

Annex 1 Revised Capital Programme and Funding
Annex 2 Capital Receipts

Revised Capital Programme and Funding 2014/15 and Programme 2015/16

	Revised Programme £000	Actual £000	Council Resources £000	Grants £000	Revenue/ Reserves £000	Total £000	Programme 2015/16	
Universal and Infrastructure Services								
Building refurbishment to increase occupancy	660	830	660			660	2,262	Start Up/Delivery
Wallasey Town Hall	68	60	68			68		Completion
Strategic Asset Review	96	302	96			96		Completion
Fund to assist land assembly and re-sale	200	163	200			200	736	Conception/Start
Cleveland St Transport Depot	450	321	450			450	3,050	Start
Park depot rationalisation	710	40	710			710	600	Start Up
Energy efficiency Initiatives	500		500			500	500	Conception
Structural/Roofing works - West Kirby Concourse	344	354	344			344		Completion
Arrowe Park Changing pavilion	144	140	144			144		Delivery
Demolish Stanley Special & External Renovation Work	160	100	160			160	115	Start/Completion
Demolish Bebington Town Hall and Liscard Municipal	0		0			0	378	Conception
Demolish former Rock Ferry High	5	5	5			5	395	Conception
Demolish Foxfield	0		0			0	120	Conception
	3,337	2,315	3,337	0	0	3,337	8,456	

	Revised Programme £000	Actual £000	Council Resources £000	Grants £000	Revenue/ Reserves £000	Total £000	Programme 2015/16	
Families and Wellbeing - CYP								
Elleray Park Special School redevelopment	100	13	100			100	900	Start Up
School remodelling/additional classrooms	236	167	0	236		236	1,850	Start Up/Delivery
Children's centres	106	23		106		106	100	Approval
Aiming Higher for Disabled Children	90	64		90		90		StartUp/Delivery
Youth Capital	149		98	51		149		Approval
Birkenhead High Girls Academy	472	392		403	69	472		Delivery
Vehicle Procurement	123	106			123	123	17	Delivery
Condition/Modernisation	3,590	2,423		3,590		3,590	4,500	Delivery/Completion
Basic Need	100			100		100		Conception
Family Support Scheme	155	1	155			155	100	Approval
Private Finance Initiative	0				0	0	150	Conception
Wirral Youth Zone	2,085	55	2,085			2,085		Approval
Funding for 2 year olds	130	51		130		130		Start Up
Foxfield contribution to priority school	1,000	1,000	500	500		1,000		Completion
Somerville Primary School	1,350	748	600	750		1,350		Delivery/Completion
Universal Free School Meals	624	635		624		624		Delivery/Completion
	10,310	5,678	3,538	6,580	192	10,310	7,617	
Families and Wellbeing - DASS								
Citizen and Provider Portal for Social and Health Services	450			450		450	167	Conception
Transformation of Day Service	1,250	123		1,250		1,250		Conception
Integrated IT	1,873	963	1,000	873		1,873		Delivery
Extra Care Housing	0					0	1,500	Conception
LD extra care housing	0					0	1,396	Conception
	3,573	1,086	1,000	2,573	0	3,573	3,063	
Families and Wellbeing - Sports & Recreation								
West Kirby/Guinea Gap/Europa	1,800	445	1,800			1,800	1,200	Delivery
Guinea Gap 3G Football pitches	245	146	245			245		Delivery
West Kirby Concourse Fitness Suite	112		112			112		Conception
	2,157	591	2,157	0	0	2,157	1,200	

	Revised Programme £000	Actual £000	Council Resources £000	Grants £000	Revenue/ Reserves £000	Total £000	Programme 2015/16	
Regeneration and Environment - Environment & Regulation								
Road Safety	753	404	33	720		753	84	Start Up/Delivery
Congestion	358	0	3	355		358		Conception
Active Travel	641	316	211	430		641	84	Start Up/Delivery
Transportation	321	148	91	230		321		Start Up/Delivery
Local Sustainable Transport Fund	499	0		499		499		Conception
Bridges	922	314	72	850		922	664	Conception/Start Up/Delivery
Highways Maintenance	3,347	2,168	523	2,824		3,347	254	Start Up/Delivery/Completion
Street Lighting	288	217	88	200		288		Start Up/Delivery
Coast Protection	157	23	20	50	87	157	231	Approval
Asset Management	84	0		84		84		Approval
Energy schemes (LED Street Lighting)	300		300			300	4,000	Approval
Parks Plant and Equipment	728	220	728			728		Delivery
Parks vehicles replacement	988	231	988			988		Delivery
Landican Cemetery	71	50	71			71		Delivery
Birkenhead Park Restoration	97	87	97			97		Delivery
Parks Improvement Works	35	15			35	35		Delivery
Hoylake Golf Course	30		30			30		Conception
Park Outdoor Gyms	2	1		2		2		Completion
Reeds Lane Play Area	60	31		60		60		Delivery
Royden Park/Eastham Country Park	14	12		14		14		Delivery
Gautby Rd Play Area	16	16			16	16		Completion
Allotments	168	2	168			168		Conception
Start Active, Play Active, Stay active	260	53	230		30	260	10	Conception
Wirral Way - widening and safety improvements	117	38	117			117	13	Start Up
Cemetery extension/improvement							150	
	10,256	4,346	3,770	6,318	168	10,256	5,490	

	Revised Programme £000	Actual £000	Council Resources £000	Grants £000	Revenue/ Reserves £000	Total £000	Programme 2015/16	
Regeneration and Environment - Housing & Community Safety								
Aids, Adaptations and Disabled Facility Grants	2,485	1,365	796	1,689		2,485	3,206	Start Up/Delivery
Clearance	200	131		125	75	200	1,321	Start Up/Delivery
Home Improvement	442	328	102	340		442	912	Start Up/Delivery
Improvement for sale grants	200				200	200		Conception
Empty Property Interventions	176	85	116		60	176	156	Start Up/Delivery
New House Building Programme	520		520			520	980	Start Up
Housing Renewal							1,030	
	4,023	1,909	1,534	2,154	335	4,023	7,605	
Regeneration and Environment – Regeneration								
Business Investment Grants	0		0			0	808	
Regional Growth Fund Schemes	4,697	1,367		4,697		4,697		Start Up/Delivery
LEP Regional Growth Fund Schemes - Targetted Assistance	3,000	1,502		3,000		3,000		Start Up/Delivery
New Brighton	1,111	816	1,111			1,111		
Marine Business Park	50	50			50	50		
The Priory	275	159	10	265		275		Delivery
	9,133	3,894	1,121	7,962	50	9,133	808	
Transformation & Resources								
I.T Development	2,500	2,700	2,500			2,500	1,500	Delivery
	2,500	2,700	2,500	0	0	2,500	1,500	
	45,289	22,519	18,957	25,587	745	45,289	35,739	

Capital Receipts**Disposals for which cash has been received by 31 December 2014**

	£000
Former day centre 78 Union Street	150
Land at St Mary's Gate	15
Overchurch Hall	10
Site of Lingham School	352
Land at Sandy Lane North	15
Sylvandale	450
Land at Hope Street	40
Land at Abbey Street	12
Tarran Industrial (Units 1,2,3,2A,2B – Freehold reversion)	370
Former Poulton Primary School	315
Highfield Luncheon Club	34
Mollington St (Ground lease)	16
	1,779
Magenta Living – Right to Buy	752
Total Receipts	2,531

Anticipated auction list for February

Cottage Street industrial unit

WIRRAL COUNCIL

COORDINATING COMMITTEE

23 FEBRUARY 2015

SUBJECT:	REVIEW OF THE FUTURE COUNCIL BUDGET OPTIONS SCRUTINY PROCESS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	CHAIR OF COORDINATING COMMITTEE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR ANN MCLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report documents the pre-decision scrutiny process undertaken to review the Chief Executive's budget options arising from the Future Council process during September/October 2014. Members are requested to consider the approach taken and consider any learning points for scrutinising future budget proposals.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The Council is faced with unprecedented challenges as a result of significant reductions in Central Government grant funding combined with increased demand for our services. In response to these challenges, the Council commissioned Ernst Young (EY) in October 2013 to conduct a review into the structure, design and function of the Council. The review provided a blueprint for remodelling staffing structures to enable the organisation to become more modern and flexible.

2.2 Early in 2014, the Council developed the Future Council programme as the vehicle for driving forward this work. The programme was designed to deliver the remodelling process to streamline back office function as well as developing new proposals to achieve the forecast budget shortfall as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

2.3 At its meeting 10 April 2014, Cabinet resolved:

"That this report and the engagement process for the Future Council Programme be referred as a priority for inclusion in the Work Programmes of each of the Policy and Performance Committees commencing in July 2014".

2.4 At the first round of Policy and Performance Committees in July 2014, a series of 'Position Papers' were presented which set out the principles for change and a series of outline themes for identifying savings. This provided Members with the opportunity to comment on the framework and rationale for the emerging proposals.

2.5 Prior to the detailed proposals being published, the Chair of the Coordinating Committee convened a meeting of all committee Chairs and Spokespersons to

develop a consistent approach to scrutinising the budget options. At this meeting (3 September), consideration was given to a piece of work undertaken in Autumn 2013 by the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee to review the previous years' budget options. This had been well received and led to a number of recommendations including a scrutiny review into the Council's Car Parking Strategy, completed during 2014.

2.6 The Chairs and Spokesperson acknowledged the success of this approach which followed the standard task and finish format over a series of meetings with a final report being taken back to the full committee. It was agreed that this format should be adopted for the Future Council budget options.

2.7 A briefing note was developed to this effect and circulated to the September Policy and Performance Committees setting out the following:

- A task and finish approach is adopted with the three Policy and Performance Committees setting up a scrutiny panel to review the options that fall under their remit.
- Each committee to determine the number of Members on its panel and the number of sessions required.
- The panel should have an initial scoping meeting once the budget options are published to agree which options they wish to scrutinise and who they want to speak to i.e. Council Officers / external advisors.
- The panel should determine the preferred days/times for the Q and A sessions i.e. full evidence day, or a number of workshop sessions.
- Cabinet leads should be invited to observe sessions.
- In line with all task and finish scrutiny work, notes will be taken and a report with recommendations will be taken back to full committee for discussion and approval.

2.8 Following the September Policy and Performance meetings, scoping meetings were convened and a series of detailed question and answer sessions were scheduled with the relevant Council officers during September and October. A number of these sessions were accompanied by site visits at locations that would be impacted by the proposals. At the end of these sessions, a report was prepared for each of the Policy and Performance Committees detailing the findings for each of the budget options scrutinised, with recommendations where appropriate.

2.9 The reports of the scrutiny review process were taken to the November Committee meetings to coincide with the report on the outcome of the public and stakeholder consultation process. Both sources of information were considered by the committees as part of their final deliberations. The three reports and the minutes of the November meetings were referred on to Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 9th December 2014.

<http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=27437#mgDocuments>

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 There are none arising from this report.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 The Future Council programme was developed on an iterative basis to respond to the Council's unique set of organisational challenges and as such, no other options have been considered.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 The budget options arising from the Future Council process were subject to a comprehensive and far reaching stakeholder and public consultation in autumn 2014.

6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

6.1 There are none relating to this report.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 There are none arising from this report.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 There are none arising from this report.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are none arising from this report.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality? Yes, an EIA was created at the start of the Future Council process and this can be accessed from the link below. Individual EIA's have also been completed for each of the budget options consulted upon during autumn 2014.

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/chief-executives>

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are none arising from this report.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising from this report.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 That Members of the Coordinating Committee consider the scrutiny process undertaken and highlight any issues or learning that can be factored into any future budget consultations.

13.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

13.1 For the committee to review the effectiveness of the process for scrutinising the Future Council budget options.

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APPENDICES

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	13 March 2014
Cabinet	10 April 2014
Cabinet	9 June 2014
Transformation and Resources Committee	15 July 2014
Transformation and Resources Committee	16 September 2014
Transformation and Resources Committee	5 November 2014
Cabinet	6 November 2014
Cabinet	9 December 2014

WIRRAL COUNCIL

COORDINATING COMMITTEE

23 FEBRUARY 2015

SUBJECT:	SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	CHAIR OF COORDINATING COMMITTEE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR ANN MCLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides an update on the progress made developing and implementing the Scrutiny Work Programme. The report includes the work programmes of all Policy and Performance Committee in line with the remit of the Coordinating Committee to ensure there is a planned approach to scrutiny. Members are requested to consider the proposals for the work programme as set out in this report.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 In line with the Council's constitution, the Coordinating Committee is responsible for determining the overall work programme of the Policy and Performance Committees, including ensuring there is an overall planned approach to in depth reviews. The work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council and be informed by service priorities and performance, risk management information, public or service user feedback and referrals from the Executive.

2.2 For each of the Policy and Performance Committees the work programme is made up of a combination of standing items, officer reports and scrutiny reviews. This provides the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

2.3 At its last regular meeting on 3 September 2014, Members of the Committee proposed that for the remainder of the municipal year, Coordinating Committee meetings are re-scheduled to come last in the meeting cycle. This is to allow the Coordinating Committee to take a more reflective overview of the wider scrutiny programme, following the meetings of the three Policy and Performance Committees.

COORDINATING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

2.3 At the last regular meeting of the Committee, a number of items were considered for inclusion in the Committee's work programme including decision-making by Constituency Committees and Cumulative Impact Policy. Separate reports were received on these items at that meeting.

- 2.4 Since that meeting, there have been six additional committee meetings to deal with a number of decisions that were subject to call-in. Due to this additional activity, there has been limited capacity to progress any of the proposed review items in the work programme and no task and finish work has been progressed.
- 2.5 A further item of work has been suggested for inclusion in the Coordinating Committee's work programme. This would be for Members to explore ways in which pre-decision scrutiny can be more widely promoted and channelled through the Policy and Performance committees in support of the Council's on-going improvement agenda.
- 2.6 An updated work programme schedule is included as Appendix 1. This highlights the additional meetings scheduled to deal with call-ins. It also captures the potential review topics as set out above. Members are requested to consider initiating a task and finish group in relation to one of the potential review items highlighted.

THE WIDER WORK PROGRAMME

- 2.7 The most up to date work programmes of the three Policy and Performance Committees are included as Appendix 2 – 4. These follow the standard format, setting out scheduled and potential review items, officer reports and standing agenda items. In reviewing these programmes, the varying scope and levels of activity across the committees is evident. Members of the Coordinating Committee should give consideration to its constitutional function to:

“Determine the overall work programme of the Policy and Performance Committees, including ensuring there is an overall planned approach to in depth reviews”.

PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.8 Progress against the recommendations arising from the IER scrutiny review are set out in the table below:

	Recommendation	Action
Rec 1	Where access to Council held data is required for the purpose of data-matching to support the transfer to IER, this is made available (in line with legal requirements) to the Elections Team in a timely manner.	Access to Council Tax data has been made readily available. Discussions are on-going with Education colleagues with regard to accessing those electors attaining the age of 18.
Rec 2	The Head of Legal and Member Services to coordinate periodic briefings with all Members as a means of maintaining two-way communication to support the implementation of IER.	Briefings have been provided via the constituency committees (see recommendation 3) with a further update being planned at the April 2015 Committee Meetings.
Rec 3	Chairs of constituency committees are requested to include IER as a	A representative from the elections team attended each of the

	topic for discussion as part of their forward planning in the New Year.	June/July 2014 Constituency Committees.
Rec 4	The Head of Legal and Member Services should ensure that funds are used in accordance with Cabinet office requirements/conditions and where possible used to support additional targeted engagement and canvassing activities, using the IER process as a vehicle to maximise electoral registration, and for contingency purposes.	Activities to encourage registration have been undertaken including delivery of the mini canvas which was targeted to address the data-matching results (in line with Cabinet Office requirements). In addition, empty property cards have been posted to identify those properties which may have come back into occupation.
Rec 5	The Head of Legal and Member Service to make ward data on IER and non-registered eligible voters available to all Elected Members and via the Council's website.	This data was included in the scrutiny review report taken to Coordinating Committee 15 January 2014.
Rec 6	The Head of Legal and Members Services should prepare a report to the Policy and Performance Committee providing an update on preparations for IER closer to the launch in June 2014.	An update report was provided to Coordinating Committee on 3 September 2014.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 There are none arising from this report.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 N/A

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 N/A

6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

6.1 There are none relating to this report.

7.0 IMPLICATION FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 There are none arising from this report.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 There are none arising from this report.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are none arising from this report.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are none arising from this report.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are none arising from this report.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising from this report.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 Members of the Coordinating Committee consider the proposed scrutiny review items set out in 2.3 and 2.5 and identify a topic to be progressed through a piece of task and finish work.

12.2 Members of the Coordinating Committee consider the wider programme in line with its constitutional role.

13.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

13.1 For the committee to discharge its scrutiny function in relation to this area of Council business.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Coordinating Committee Work Programme
Appendix 2 – Families and Wellbeing Committee
Appendix 3 – Regeneration & Environment Committee
Appendix 4 – Transformation & Resources Committee

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Coordinating Committee	02 July 2014
Coordinating Committee	03 September 2014

Appendix 1 - 2014-15 Coordinating Committee Work Programme

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2014	June 2014	July 2014	Aug 2014	Sept 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	Mar 2015	April 2015	Outcome
Regular Committee Dates					2nd		3rd					23rd		27th	
Scheduled Reviews															
Approach to scrutinising budget options		Requested by Chair													
Potential Reviews															
Pre-decision scrutiny		Requested by Member													
Review Constituency Committee decision-making		Requested by Member													
Cumulative Impact Policy		Requested by Member													
Officer Reports															
New municipal year briefing pack		Provided by officers													
Future Council Position Papers		Referred by the Leader													
Review Constituency Committee decision-making		Requested by Chair													
Individual Electoral Registration - Implementation Update															
Call-in meetings															
Financial monitor - public health expenditure						7th									
Financial monitor - public health expenditure								18th							
Revised pricing structure for leisure facilities								23rd							
Outcome of Lyndale School consultation									2nd						
Early Years and Children's Centres										15th					
Early Years and Children's Centres											12th				
Early Years and Children's Centres												12th			
Standing Items															
Corporate Performance Dashboard															
Financial Monitoring															
Policy Update															

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Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2014	June 2014	July 2014	Aug 2014	Sept 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	Mar 2015	April 2015	Outcome
Committee Dates					Tues 8th		Tues 9th		Mon 3rd	Tues 2nd		Mon 2nd		Mon 13th	
Scheduled Reviews															
Safeguarding Children	Cllr Moira McLaughlin	Agreed by P&P Committee on 5th Dec 2013													
Domestic Violence	Cllr Janelle Williamson	Agreed by P&P Committee on 9th Sept 2013													
Future Council options	Cllr Moira McLaughlin	Part of Future Council process													Complete - Report submitted to Cabinet on 09/12/14.
Reducing hospital admission and dependency on nursing and residential home for older people		Proposed by Spokespersons - July 2013													12/08/14 - Spokespersons agreed to prioritise this review for early 2015
Impact Report from previous In-depth Reviews															
Looked After Children Review															Committee (02/12/14) requested future progress report in Dec 2015
Implications of the Francis Report for Wirral															12/08/14 - Spokespersons agreed to refer this item to the Health & Care Performance Panel. A report was presented to the Panel on 20/10/14.
Review of Co-optees															12/08/14 - Spokespersons agreed to remove this item from the 2014/15 work programme
Quality Assurance and Standards in Care Homes															12/08/14 - Spokespersons agreed to refer this item to the Health & Care Performance Panel. A report was discussed by the Panel on 19/11/14.
Reports Requested to Committee															
Families and Wellbeing Departmental Plan	Clare Fish														Complete
Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral Area Team of NHS England, Two Year Plan (to include proposed service reviews)	Andrew Crawshaw	Item requested by NHS England Area Team													Complete, although NHS England Area Team will update members during the next 2 years regarding specific projects
Clatterbridge Cancer Centre - Restructuring proposals (Are the proposals a substantial variation to service for Wirral?)	Jacqueline Robinson	Item offered by Clatterbridge Cancer Centre													08/07/14 - Members agreed that the proposals were a substantial variation to service. Wirral has participated in the joint scrutiny review across Merseyside and Cheshire Local Authorities. Complete. (02/02/15) Chair and Spokesperson of largest opposition group proposed as members of ongoing discretionary joint scrutiny Committee.
Future Council - outline of process															Further scrutiny of specific Future Council options / proposals took place during Sept / Oct 2014. Complete
Community Dental Service Procurement	Richard Freeman	Item requested by NHS England Area Team													Complete
Specialised Commissioning	Richard Freeman	Item requested by NHS England Area Team													Complete
Traded Services - proposed changes to service delivery	Clare Fish / David Armstrong														Committee (02/12/14) requested future progress updates
Safeguarding Annual Report 2013/14	Julia Hassall / Graham Hodkinson	Proposed by Spokespersons 16th Dec 2013													Complete
Leisure Review	Clare Fish														Complete
All-age Disability Service	Julia Hassall / Graham Hodkinson														
Anti-social Behaviour, emphasising on youth	Julia Hassall	Agreed by P&P Committee 28th Jan 2014													Committee (02/02/15) requested update in March 2015 regarding outcome of the organisational review re anti social behaviour and community safety
Child Poverty Strategy - update	Julia Hassall														Appendix 2 - Committee (02/02/15) requested future updates re effectiveness of the child poverty strategy.
Early Years and Children's Centres	Julia Hassall	Agreed by Spokespersons 6th Nov 2014													Deferred due to the call-in of the Cabinet decision of 11th September
An asset based approach to support: "Using social care resources effectively to transform lives"	Graham Hodkinson	Agreed by Spokespersons 6th Nov 2014													Complete
Sexual Health Service - Proposed service change	Fiona Johnstone / Julie Graham														Complete
Wirral University Teaching Hospital - Cost Improvement Plan		Requested by Chair, 11th Dec 2014													Committee (02/02/15) requested future quarterly updates (ie, June 2015)

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2014	June 2014	July 2014	Aug 2014	Sept 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	Mar 2015	April 2015	Outcome
Wirral University Teaching Hospital - A&E targets		Agreed by Spokespersons 7th Jan 2015													Committee (02/02/15) requested future quarterly updates (ie, June 2015)
Reports to be distributed to Members for information															
Audit on Public Health Annual Report 2012/13 (Social Isolation) - The response of partners	Fiona Johnstone / Julie Webster	Proposed by Spokespersons 16th Dec 2013													
Public Health Annual Report 2013/14	Fiona Johnstone / Julie Webster														
Fostering Annual Report	Julia Hassall														
Adoption Annual Report	Julia Hassall														
Health & Wellbeing Strategy	Fiona Johnstone														
Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control - update	Julie Webster	Agreed by Spokespersons 7th January 2014													
Referrals from other Committees															
NOM - Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control	Fiona Johnstone	Agreed by P&P Committee 28th Jan 2014													Follow-up Report - proposed Jan 2015
NOM - Becoming a 'Dementia-friendly' Council	Proposed: Cllr Tom Anderson; Seconded: Cllr Tracey Smith	Referred from Council, 14th July 2014													
Standing Items															
Performance Dashboard															
Financial Monitoring															
Policy Update															
Special Budget meeting															
Spotlight Sessions															
Overview of the NHS framework	Fiona Johnstone	Agreed by F&W P&P Committee 8th July 2014				14th									
Proposed implementation of the Care Act 2014	Graham Hodgkinson	Agreed by F&W P&P Committee 8th July 2014									8th				Proposed to hold a follow-up session in approx 6 months (July 2015)
Children & Families Act - Update	Julia Hassall	Proposed by Spokespersons 10th March 2014							27th						
CRI - Provider of Drug and Alcohol Service	Julie Webster / CRI	Agreed by Chair 9th Dec 2014									21st				
NHS & Social Care Integration plus Vision 2018	Graham Hodgkinson	Proposed by Spokespersons 12th August 2014													Date to be arranged
Health Inequalities	Fiona Johnstone	Proposed by F&W P&P Committee 8th July 2014													Date to be arranged
Attainment Sub-Committee															
Sub-Committee meetings								1st		10th			4th		
Health & Care Performance Panel															
Panel meetings									20th	19th	11th		4th		1st

Appendix 3 - 2014-15 Regeneration & Environment Committee Work Programme

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2014	June 2014	July 2014	Aug 2014	Sept 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	Mar 2015	April 2015	Outcome
Committee Dates					22nd		22nd		4th	3rd		3rd		20th	
Scheduled Reviews															
Review of Apprenticeships	Cllrs Pat Hackett and Tony Smith	Requested by Members													Completed - Reported to Cabinet November 2014
Future Council															Completed - Reported to Cabinet November 2014
Car Parking	Cllr Stuart Whittingham	Requested by Members													Completed - Reported to Cabinet November 2014
Potential Reviews															
Coastal Strategy		Requested by Members													
Homelessness		Requested by Members													
Reports Requested															
Under-Occupation - Follow up	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
Review of street cleansing post budget options	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
Monitoring the highways contract	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
DWP Work Programme	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													Complete
Dangerous Dogs	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													Complete
Investing in Wirral's Infrastructure	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													Complete
Notice of Motion															
Underground Coal Gasification															Complete
Investing in Wirral's Infrastructure															Complete
Private Rented Sector Reform															Complete
Standing Items															
Performance Dashboard															
Financial Monitoring															
Recommendations from Highways Representation Panels															
Special Budget meeting															

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Appendix 4 - 2014-15 Transformation and Resources Policy & Performance Committee Work Programme

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2014	June 2014	July 2014	Aug 2014	Sept 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	Mar 2015	April 2015	Outcome
Committee Dates					15th		16th		5th	4th		4th		21st	
Scheduled Reviews															
Local Welfare Assistance Scheme	Cllr Ann McLachlan / Malcolm Flanagan	Requested by Members													Temporarily suspended
Budget Options	Joe Blott	Part of Future Council Process													Completed - Referred to Cabinet November 2014
Potential Reviews															
Council's Approach to filming	Cllr Ann McLachlan														
Notice of Motion															
Reports Requested															
ICT Strategy		Requested by Members													
Council Tax / Sundry Debtors		Requested by Members													
Evolving process of Future Council		Requested by Members													
Freedom of Information - Follow up report		Requested by Members													
Standing Items															
Performance Dashboard															
Financial Monitoring															
Special Budget meeting															

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