



## Policy and Performance - Co-ordinating Committee

**Date:** Wednesday, 30 September 2015

**Time:** 6.00 pm

**Venue:** Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

**Contact Officer:** Shirley Hudspeth, Committee and Civic Services Manager

**Tel:** 0151 691 8559

**e-mail:** shirleyhudspeth@wirral.gov.uk

**Website:** www.wirral.gov.uk

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### AGENDA

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. 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.

**3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)**

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 June 2015 as a correct record. **(Attached)**

**4. NOTICE OF MOTION - 44 COUNCILLORS (Pages 9 - 10)**

At the meeting of the Council held on 20 October 2014 (Minute No. 57 refers), the **attached** Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Jeff Green and seconded by Councillor Leah Fraser was referred by the Mayor to this Committee for consideration.

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (6), Councillors Fraser and Green have been invited to attend the meeting in order for them to be given an opportunity to explain the Motion.

**5. WIRRAL PLAN: A 2020 VISION**

To receive a presentation and an oral update.

**6. 2015/16 QUARTER 1 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT (Pages 11 - 20)**

Report of the Strategic Director, Transformation and Resources.

**7. FINANCIAL MONITORING OUT-TURN 2014/15 (Pages 21 - 58)**

Report of the Acting Section 151 Officer.

**8. 2014/15 REVENUE/CAPITAL MONITORING PROGRESS REPORTS (Pages 59 - 92)**

Report of the Acting Section 151 Officer.

**9. POLICY INFORM BRIEFING PAPERS - SEPTEMBER 2015 (Pages 93 - 168)**

Report of the Strategic Director, Transformation and Resources.

**10. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 169 - 182)**

Report of the Chair of the Committee.

**11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 1)**

**12. 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.

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

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## **POLICY AND PERFORMANCE - COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, 23 June 2015

Present: Councillor M McLaughlin (Chair)

Councillors P Doughty J Williamson  
P Brightmore D Burgess-Joyce  
B Kenny W Clements  
C Muspratt A Sykes  
W Smith S Williams  
M Sullivan P Gilchrist  
KJ Williams

### 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T Anderson and Mr D Cunningham.

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

No declarations of interest were received.

### 3 **MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 February 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.**

### 4 **NOTICE OF MOTION - 44 COUNCILLORS**

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That at the request of Councillors J Green (Proposer of the Motion) and L Fraser (Seconder of the Motion), as they are unable to attend this meeting, this item of business be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee scheduled for 30 September 2015.**

## 5 POLICY AND PERFORMANCE MEETING PROCEDURAL RULES

In accordance with Article 6 of the Council's constitution, the Committee was responsible for determining the Overview and Scrutiny rules and operational protocols.

A report by the Strategic Director of Transformation and Resources set out the refreshed meeting procedure rules for the Policy and Performance Committees' meetings for Members' consideration.

The Committee had regard to the Strategic Director's report and the Meeting Procedure Rules appended to it and raised the following issues:

- Concerns about the time limits in respect of Call-ins. When a matter was being scrutinised it was important to hear all that people had to say. The Chair took this point and agreed to monitor how the timings worked during the new Municipal Year and use her discretion if she considered it to be necessary.
- The Committee noted that within the Policy and Performance Committee Procedure Rules it was stated that

'The Chair will consider all proposed witnesses to be relied upon in relation to the call in. The Chair shall confirm his or her agreement to the proposed witnesses, having regard to details provided by the lead signatory as to the nature of the evidence and information each witness will provide. Should the Chair not agree to a proposed witness being called, he/she will not be invited to attend and address the committee. The Chair may accept written documentary evidence where appropriate.'

The Committee noted that the Chair was able to exercise some discretion and written statements could be submitted in advance of a meeting so long as those who made those submissions were in attendance at the meeting and able to be questioned.

The Committee also noted that only witnesses relevant to the Call-in would be invited to attend a Call-in meeting.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That the procedure rules set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved and the updated rules be circulated to the other Policy and Performance Committees.**

## 6 POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE REMITS

A report by the Strategic Director of Transformation and Resources served to review the roles of the Policy and Performance Committees and proposed a number of updates to their remits to reflect organisational re-structuring that had taken place over the last year and to reflect statutory requirements for Overview and Scrutiny. The Committee was requested to endorse these changes and where necessary refer them to the Council for its approval.

Appended to the Strategic Director's report were the revised committee remits. The Committee noted that under this proposal all service activity would be aligned to one of the three Strategic Directorate Policy and Performance Committees. This freed up this Committee to fulfil its constitutional role to deal with call-ins and consider any Council-wide business or activity that did not clearly align with one of the other committees.

The Committee noted that as well as the statutory duty to undertake overview and scrutiny under the strong leader model, there were three additional areas for which the Council's scrutiny function had a statutory responsibility to undertake scrutiny as follows:

- Health Scrutiny
- Crime & Safety Partnership Scrutiny
- Flood Risk Scrutiny

It was proposed these statutory scrutiny responsibilities be allocated to the Committee with the best fit, in line with the remits set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

### **RESOLVED: That**

- (1) the remits as proposed in Appendix 1 to the report be endorsed; and**
- (2) the statutory scrutiny responsibilities summarised in the following table be referred to the Council for approval:**

<b>Statutory Requirement</b>	<b>Scrutiny</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Performance Committee</b>
Health Provision		Families & Wellbeing Committee
Crime & Partnership	Safety	Transformation & Resources Committee
Flood Risk		Regeneration & Environment Committee

## 7 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE - 2014/15 YEAR END OUT TURN

A report by the Strategic Director of Transformation and Resources set out the current performance of the Council against the delivery of the Corporate Plan as at Year End 2014/15. The Committee was requested to consider the details of the report and highlight any issues.

The Strategic Director reported that the Performance of the Corporate Plan was regularly monitored against the targets set at the start of the year. Red, amber and green (RAG) ratings were assigned depending on the performance level against those targets. For indicators rated red, the responsible officer was required to complete an exception report and highlight what corrective actions would be put in place.

The Corporate Plan Performance Report (Appendix 1 to the report) set out the final year position against 20 outcome measures from across the Council. 14 (70%) of the measures were rated green, 4 (20%) were rated amber and 2 (10%) were rated red. For the 2 measures rated red, action plans were provided and included as follows:

- Performance appraisals completed – (Appendix 2 to the report.)
- Sickness Absence: The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness (cumulative) – (Appendix 3 to the report.)

The refreshed Corporate Plan for 2015/16 had been agreed by the Council on 8 December 2014. This was the final year of a three year planning cycle. The first quarter performance against this would be reported to the Committee in September.

The Committee noted that work was under way to re-shape the Council's business planning framework for the next planning cycle from 2016 onwards. A new Council Plan would be considered by the Council on 13 July 2015 and the performance reporting that underpins it would be developed later in the year. This would involve a significant change to the way performance was reported against a range of agreed priority outcomes.

Members asked a number of questions and issues raised included the following:

- There was no correlation between sickness absence and performance appraisal.
- The Strategic Director held regular meetings with the Trade Unions and a Workforce Engagement Group was well established.
- Some staff did not work normal office hours (9am to 5pm) so there had been difficulties in arranging their performance appraisals.

- Sickness absence was now recorded through the new Selfserve system and it was possible to obtain information and position statements relating to staff illnesses etc. This was seen as good management rather than an HR matter.
- Some staff were supported by Occupational Health, there was wellbeing management and there was a Counselling Service that staff could access themselves.
- Staff were also supported in various ways when they returned to work and if necessary reasonable adjustments were made.
- Members identified that they had a training need as they wanted to better understand the information they were provided with so that they could monitor trends etc. so that they could see if there was any improvements
- A new suite of performance indicators was required to fit in with the Council's Corporate Plan. .
- The Council had seen a dip in terms of stress related absence and this was encouraging.

**RESOLVED: That**

- (1) the content of the report be noted; and**
- (2) the Strategic Director of Transformation and Resources be requested to develop an appropriate training and development plan for Members to help them to understand performance information and data including their analysis and evaluation.**

**8 POLICY BRIEFING PAPER - JULY 2015**

A report by the Strategic Director of Transformation and Resources provided the Committee with the July Policy Briefing papers prepared by the Policy and Performance Team which included an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, bills presented to Parliament and emerging policies. This information was provided to assist the Committee with its work programme and scrutiny work and to demonstrate the Council's approach to its policy framework.

The Strategic Director's report also outlined the timetable for the preparation and reporting of policy briefing papers.

The July Policy Briefing papers focused predominantly on the policies and legislation that had emerged from the new Conservative Government. The papers provided a high level summary based on the available information released by Central Government at this time. The Committee noted that it

was expected that the September Briefing Paper would be more detailed following the release of further information from Government and would also consider any implications for Wirral.

The Committee was asked if it wished to identify specific policy areas to focus upon which were in line with the Committee's work programme. Detailed briefing papers could be prepared for the subject matters if the Committee requested it. These would be in addition to the regular policy briefing papers outlined above.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the content of the report be noted.**

**9 WORK PROGRAMME/ROLE OF CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE REPORT**

A report by the Chair of the Committee reviewed the scrutiny work programme. This programme was attached to the report at Appendix 1. The report sets out the activities currently being undertaken by the three other Policy and Performance Committees and considered the work programme of this Committee. Members were requested to note the contents of the report and consider the proposals for developing the scrutiny work programme in 2015/16 and the work of the Committee.

Councillor M McLaughlin, the Chair informed that the Committee's main activities last year had been to consider a number of called-in decisions and as a consequence it had not had the time to undertake any task and finish work. She also informed that during this Municipal Year it would be considering the Cumulative Impact Policy and she proposed that a task and finish group be established to scope this piece of work in August 2015. The Chair reminded the Committee that this work had been the idea of Councillor P Hayes and she hoped that he would agree to sit on the task and finish group.

Councillor J Williamson, the Chair of the Policy and Performance - Transformation and Resources Committee informed that her Committee had considered the changes to library opening times. It had also undertaken extensive work, as there was no longer any funding for crisis loans, on a Local Welfare Assistance Scheme, gathered a lot of information and had produced a positive report which she hoped would be well received.

Councillor J Williamson also informed that her Committee had not yet decided what it would scrutinise in this Municipal Year.

Councillor M Sullivan, the Chair of the Policy and Performance – Regeneration and Environment Committee informed that he had attended an agenda setting meeting for his Committee earlier in the day. His Committee

would be considering whether the Council obtained value for money from Merseytravel. It would also be looking at the provision of free bus passes for people aged 60 and over.

Councillor M Sullivan also informed that he was looking forward to the year ahead and his Committee aimed to do the best it could for the people of Wirral.

Councillor M McLaughlin, as Chair of the Policy and Performance – Families and Wellbeing Committee informed that her Committee had a big remit even though it no longer had responsibility for anti-social behaviour.

The Committee had established a Health and Care Performance Panel to scrutinise health partners and social care. There was a lot to be done around monitoring health and the Panel would be busy again this year.

The Committee had a focus on education and had replaced the Attainment Sub-Committee with a Children Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee's first piece of work would be about providing children with the best start in life. The Committee would continue to receive regular reports to monitor performance on policy initiatives.

There was an NHS England initiative about delivering the NHS differently with a focus on integrated care and reduced hospital admissions. There had been 29 successful pilot bids and Wirral had been one of them. A Spotlight session had been arranged for 20 July 2015 to inform Members of the implications of this and the vanguard status.

**RESOLVED: That**

- (1) the current position with regard to the work programmes of the other three Policy and Performance Committees be noted and a review of their emerging work programmes be undertaken at the next meeting on 30 September 2015;**
- (2) the Chairs of the Policy and Performance Committees note the requirement to allocate time towards the scrutiny of budget options in September/October 2015;**
- (3) Members be requested to consider the Committee's role, the draft work programme at Appendix 1 to the report and other information provided on the agenda to determine what items of work they wish to prioritise; and**
- (4) The Committee agrees the proposals around the scrutiny of performance exception reports set out in paragraph 2.11 of the report and as follows:**

**It is proposed that Corporate Plan Performance Management and Financial Monitoring reports continue to be provided at regular Co-ordinating Committee meetings. It is also proposed that a regular Policy update is provided.**

## 44 COUNCILLORS

**Proposed** by Councillor Jeff Green

**Seconded** by Councillor Leah Fraser

Council notes the recent decision taken by Knowsley Council to begin consulting its residents over reducing the number of councillors from 63 to 45.

This Council believes that instead of presenting the public with petty, vindictive, rehashed and previously rejected budget options including:

- pulling the plug on school crossing patrols
- introducing car parking charges at Wirral's Country Parks
- not filling grit bins
- removing Council Tax over 70s discount
- closing public conveniences
- increasing fees and charges for football pitches, allotments, bowling greens, burials and cremations

The Leader of the Council should be consulting the public over reducing the number of councillors.

In the absence of the Leader of the Council's willingness to act Council requests the Boundary Commission for England commence an inquiry into the number of councillors, and the electoral cycle, in Wirral, on Council's wish to reduce the number of councillors to 44.

Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to invite the Boundary Commission for England to meet with representatives of all parties represented on the Council and agree a timetable for the inquiry.

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### COORDINATING COMMITTEE

30 SEPTEMBER 2015

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>2015/16 QUARTER 1 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR, TRANSFORMATION &amp; RESOURCES</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>CLLR ANN MCLACHLAN - GOVERNANCE, COMMISSIONING AND IMPROVEMENT</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

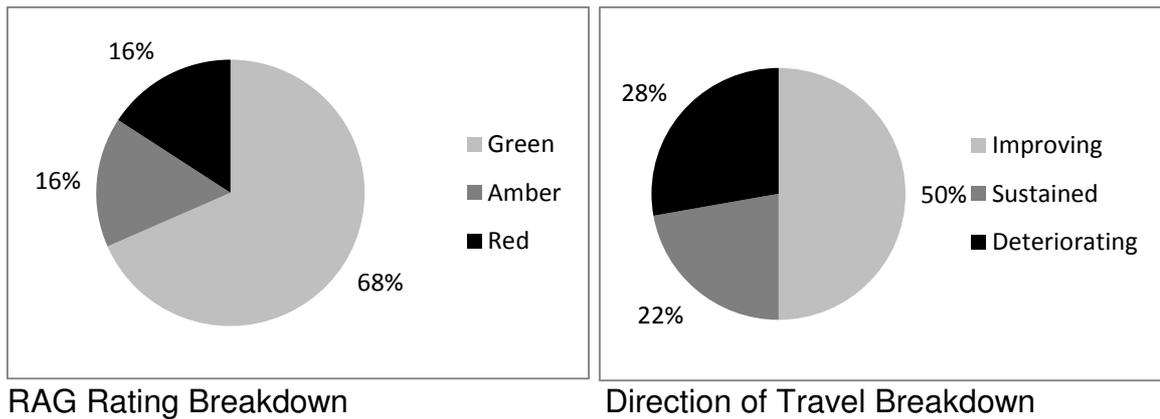
#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the Council's Quarter 1 (April to June) performance against the delivery of the 2015/16 Corporate Plan as agreed at Council on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2014. The report is attached as Appendix 1 and sets out progress against a suite of agreed key performance indicators.
- 1.2 Whilst the Corporate Plan 2015/16 has been superseded by the Wirral Council Plan 2020 Vision, it still forms the basis of the in-year performance management framework. A new Performance Management Framework will be developed for the Council Plan once the associated delivery plan has been finalised.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Corporate Plan performance is reported through a set of 22 agreed performance measures aligned to priorities identified in the plan. Underpinning the Corporate Plan are three Directorates Plans, their performance is reported quarterly through the Policy and Performance Committees.
- 2.2 Performance is monitored against the targets set at the start of the year. For each measure, a Red, Amber or Green (RAG) rating is assigned depending on the performance level against the target. The report also shows the direction of travel to illustrate for each measure whether performance is improving, deteriorating or being sustained.
- 2.3 Of the 20 Corporate Plan performance measures, 1 relates to an activity which will now be reported as part of the new 2020 Council Plan delivery framework.
- 2.4 Of the 19 reportable indicators, 13 are rated Green, 3 are rated Amber and 3 are rated Red. For indicators rated Amber and Red, the responsible officer has indicated the corrective action being put in place to get performance back on track. Of the 18 indicators where it is possible to indicate the Direction of Travel, 9 are improving, 5 are deteriorating and 4 are showing performance

being sustained. The charts below show the breakdown in terms of the RAG and Direction of Travel ratings:



- 2.5 The Appendix 1 report has been re-designed to streamline performance reporting to make it more user-friendly and accessible for those receiving reports and more efficient to produce in terms of officer time.
- 2.6 Work is under way to re-design the Council's performance management arrangements related to the launch of the new Council Plan. A Council Plan Delivery Plan will provide the basis for a new performance management framework.

### 3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 The performance management framework is aligned to the Council's risk management strategy and both are regularly reviewed as part of Corporate and Directorate management processes.

### 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 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

- 8.1 There are none arising from this report.

### 9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The report is for information to Members and there are no direct equalities implications at this stage.

## **11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

13.1 Committee Members are requested to note the contents of this report and highlight any areas requiring further clarification or action.

## **14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

14.1 To ensure Members of Coordinating Committee have the opportunity to scrutinise the Council's performance.

**REPORT AUTHOR: Mike Callon**  
Team Leader – Performance / Scrutiny  
Telephone: 0151 691 8379  
Email: [michaelcallon@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:michaelcallon@wirral.gov.uk)

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan Performance Report – Q1 (April – June) 2015/16

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2015-16 Corporate Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	April - June (Q1)			Year End Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	RAG			
<b>Investing in our future</b>								
RECP02	To maintain local environmental quality (LEQ) of litter, detritus, & graffiti in main gateways and shopping areas	93.5%	93.5%	93.61%	Green	93.5%	↓ Performance for Q4 2014/15 was 97.5% which exceeded its quarterly target of 93.5%. This resulted in the Direction of Travel (DoT) for Q1 2015/16 being determined as a deterioration however this indicator is on track and has slightly exceeded its Q1 2015/16 target.	
RECP03	Number of new affordable homes	250	50	194	Green	250	↑ Target for Q1 has been significantly surpassed due to a number of schemes completing this quarter which were delayed from completion at year-end for 2014/15.	
RECP04	Number of adaptations completed	2000	500	699	Green	2000	↑	
RECP05	Number of interventions to improve private rented sector properties	400	100	135	Green	400	↔	
RECP06	Increase the number of jobs created and safeguarded via Invest Wirral	975	60	72	Green	975	↓ Performance for Q1 2014/15 was 465 which considerably exceeded its quarterly target of 160 due to the approval of a number of Regional Growth Fund (RGF) Grant Applications; subsequent monthly performance slowed and the year-end target of 925 was met as anticipated. The Direction of Travel (DoT) has been assessed as a deterioration because of the lower number of jobs created and safeguarded compared to Q1 2014/15 however this indicator is on track and has even slightly exceeded its Q1 2015/16 target.	
RECP18	Develop and deliver the Wirral Selective Licencing Scheme (WSLS)	100%	17%	17%	Green	100%	↔	

2015-16 Corporate Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	April - June (Q1)			Year End Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	RAG			
<b>Promoting Independence</b>								
CSC003	Rate of Children in Need (CIN) per 10,000	350.2	407.3	414.1	Green	350.2	↑ <i>Rate of Children in need is dropping as we review all current CIN cases and step down and close those cases that do not meet threshold. We anticipate with revised threshold and the Gateway in place the number of assessments will reduce. The number of CIN as at the end of June - 2799</i>	
CSC008	Rate of Looked After Children per 10,000	96.2	99.1	99.3	Green	96.2	↔ <i>Continued work since April 2015 has resulted in a clear strategy to reduce our Children looked after (CLA) population where safe to do so. There are a number of reviews of children placed at home on orders and other care arrangements that are being looked at. The number of CLA as at the end of June - 671</i>	
ADCP07	Permanent Admissions of older people (65+) to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population	696.9	736.9	617.2	Green	696.9	↑ <i>A total of 102 placements have been made to date (34 per month) against a monthly target of 41. 51% of permanent care home admissions can be traced back to a hospital discharge which is a reduction from 57% in 2014/15.</i>	
ADCP11	Proportion of new requests for support resolved by advice and information	50%	50%	55%	Green	50%	↑ <i>The Department is currently reviewing the content of the Adult Social Care pages on the Wirral website and is also in the process of implementing the Liquidlogic 'autonomy' suite which includes public facing portals which will support people to access advice and information and also undertake online self assessments (Eligibility and Financial). The portals are due to go-live later this year.</i>	
ADCP16	Proportion of people who have received short term services to maximise independence requiring no ongoing support	75%	75%	75%	Green	75%	↔ <i>A total of 539 completed a period of STAR reablement during Q1 with 61% of people being fully independent. A further 10% of people self fund an ongoing care package.</i>	

2015-16 Corporate Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	April - June (Q1)			Year End Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	RAG			
PHCP01	Rate of attendance at A&E for injury and assault where alcohol was a factor. PHOF 2.18: Alcohol-related admissions to hospital.	820	820	764.76	Green	820	↑ <i>Performance continues on a positive downward trajectory, one that it has generally sustained for the last two years. This is to be welcomed, but some work will commence in September to try to get a better understanding of the factors that may be driving this downward, so that this can be sustained.</i>	
PHCP02	NHS Health Check programme by those eligible – Health Check offered (PHOF 2.22i)	20%	5%	6.9%	Green	20%	↑ In terms of numbers of invitations issued by practices, performance is on target, however in terms of uptake of invitations offered, this is a disappointing start to yearly performance. Improving performance for this programme continues to be a challenge. Factors that are likely to have contributed to this dip in performance are as follows: -Approx 15 practices made the switch over to EMIS (data holding) systems during Q1. This has caused some disruption to interrogation of activity data. -Core group of practices remain generally resistant to the NHS health check programme.	
PHCP03	NHS Health Check programme by those eligible – Health Check take up (PHOF 2.22ii)	55%	55%	27.7%	Red	55%	↓ Actions to address performance issues include: -A pilot testing out the potential impact of Point of Care testing (POCT) -Update training for frontline staff delivering health checks -Re-issuing comparative performance profiles - New publicity materials (posters, flyers, video)	

2015-16 Corporate Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	April - June (Q1)			Year End Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	RAG			
PHCP04	Proportion of opiate drug users that left drug treatment successfully who do not re-present to treatment within 6 months	10%	10%	9.2%	Amber	10%	↑ Reporting period, Dec 13 - Nov 14 (completions), Dec 14-May 15 (representations) This indicator has now shown strong improvement over 2 consecutive months. This is to be welcomed but with important caveats. The performance straddles the end of the delivery of the previous provider and the beginning of the new service, a period of substantial change and system disturbance. It is an indicator with a compound structure, affected both by those successfully completing treatment, and by the number returning within 6 months, both likely to have been affected by temporary factors present as part of the transition, which could have either +ve or -ve impacts. Performance may therefore fluctuate as the transitional factors work their way through the process. A truer picture of the new service will not emerge until a minimum of 6 months after mobilisation, i.e. from September. The current Wirral performance is classified as green on the national RAG rating and compares to the National average of 7.5%.	
PHCP05	Proportion of non-opiate drug users that left drug treatment successfully who do not re-present to treatment within 6 months	53%	53%	50.8%	Amber	53%	↓ Reporting period, Dec 13 - Nov 14 (completions), Dec 14-May 15 (representations) The performance of this indicator has shown another small reduction from 51.9% to 50.8% but is still way above the national average of 38.9% and is rated as green in the national RAG rating. As above, this performance will continue to be affected by transitional factors for several more months.	
SLCP01	Development of a new delivery model for Leisure Services	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A This activity will now be reported as part of the 2020 Council Plan deliverables.	

2015-16 Corporate Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	April - June (Q1)			Year End Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	RAG			
<b>Transforming the Council</b>								
TRCP02	Projected Delivery of Council budget savings	£38.024m	-	£17.71m	Amber	-	N/A	£17.71m was delivered by quarter one 2015/16, with a further £10.7m expected for delivery within 2015/16. £9.6m requires reprofiling, the detail of which was reported to and agreed by Cabinet on 27th July 2015, and needs to be ratified by full Council on 12th October 2015.
TRCP03	Performance Appraisals completed by September 2015	80%	15%	11%	Red	80%	↑	The percentage completion of PAs recorded within Q1 2015/16 was lower than anticipated, but a significant improvement on 2% completion compared to Q1 2014/15. As at 26th August 2015, 26% of all PAs have been completed, including 58% of Manager PAs. Management action is being taken to ensure that progress is made against this target, including monthly communications from March to July 2015 via One Briefs and the Strategic Leadership Team, and improvements are expected from Q2 as a result.
TRCP04	Sickness Absence: The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence (cumulative)	9.75	2.09	2.50	Red	11.67	↓	It is forecast that the year-end sickness absence will be 1.92 days above the 9.75 day target. However management action is being taken to reduce the level of sickness absence across the Council, including proposed changes to the Council's sickness policy and triggers from September 2015, Strategic Director-led sessions with managers to set expectations, and the development of an employee wellbeing plan, and improvements are expected from Q2 as a result.
<b>Direction of Travel (DoT)</b>		↑	Performance Improving		↓	Performance Deteriorating		↔ Performance Sustained

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### COORDINATING COMMITTEE

30 SEPTEMBER 2015

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>FINANCIAL MONITORING OUT-TURN 2014/15</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>CLLR PHIL DAVIES</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>YES</b>

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out the Financial Monitoring Out-Turn for 2014/15 as reported to Cabinet on 13 July 2015. This is to provide Coordinating Committee with an opportunity to scrutinise 2014/15 financial performance and highlight any areas for further clarification.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The review of corporate finance is a standing item for Coordinating Committee. At each regular committee meeting, the most up to date revenue and capital monitoring reports are provided. These are included elsewhere on this agenda.

2.2 This report provides Coordinating Committee with an opportunity to review the year end position for 2014/15 for the Council's finances. These details are included in the suite of reports attached to this report as follows:

- Cabinet Report 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015 – Financial Monitoring Out-Turn
- Appendix 1 - Revenue Out Turn
- Appendix 2 - Capital Out Turn
- Appendix 3 - Collection Summary

### 3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 These are set out in the relevant sections of the accompanying reports included as Appendices 1 – 4.

### 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**

8.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

13.1 Committee notes the content of these reports and highlights any areas requiring further clarification.

## **14.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

15.1 For the committee to discharge its role in scrutinising the Council's finances.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Peter Molyneux  
Senior Manager  
telephone: 0151 666 3389  
email: [petermolyneux@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:petermolyneux@wirral.gov.uk)

## **APPENDICES**

- Cabinet Report 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015 – Financial Monitoring Out-Turn
- Appendix 1 - Revenue Out Turn
- Appendix 2 - Capital Out Turn
- Appendix 3 - Collection Summary

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### CABINET

13 JULY 2015

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>FINANCIAL MONITORING OUT-TURN 2014/15</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES</b>
<b>KEY DECISION</b>	<b>YES</b>

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report details the Out-turn for 2014/15 and concludes the reporting to Cabinet for the 2014/15 financial year. There are separate Appendices for Revenue (including details of the reserves), Capital (including resources used to fund the Programme) and the Collection Summary (including Council Tax, Business Rates and Sundry Debts).

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 Throughout the financial year Cabinet received Monitoring Reports in respect of Revenue (including income and debt collection) and Capital. This report is a summary of the actual out-turn for 2014/15.

2.2 The last monitoring reports were for Month 10 and were considered by Cabinet on 12 March 2015. Since the end of March work has been on-going in order to conclude the accounts for the financial year. In respect of income collection Cabinet also received a number of specific reports relating to the write-off of sundry debt.

2.3 The detail contained within the Appendices informs part of the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2014/15. The Statement was issued on 30 June 2015. It is subject to review by the appointed External Auditor (Grant Thornton UK LLP) and will be considered by Audit & Risk management committee on 22 September 2015. The Statement has to be published by 30 September 2015.

#### REVENUE OUT-TURN

2.4 Appendix 1 provides the detail of which the headlines are:-

- The revenue outturn is an underspend of £0.5 million. This was an improvement on the £0.8 million overspend projected at Month 10.

- Underspending within Regeneration and Environment (£3.3 million due to in the early delivery of savings, additional income and reduced staffing costs) and Transformation and Resources (£2.5 due to reduced capital financing costs and reduced staffing costs).
- The main adverse variations were within the Families and Well Being Directorate (£2.8 million overspend due to demand pressures and slippage on savings) and Corporate Growth and Savings (£2.9 million overspend due to slippage on Remodelling savings due to service structures taking longer to implement than was anticipated).
- With the underspend mitigating the overspend there has been no requirement to use reserves or general fund balances to fund the adverse variations.
- General Fund Balances at 31 March 2015 are £18.7 million. This is above the target for 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2015 are £87.4 million.

Purpose of Earmarked Reserves	Balance £ million
To Support Service Activities and Projects	31.8
To Support the Councils Remodelling Programme	15.4
Mitigation of Future Risks: Insurance & Taxation	25.1
Schools Related	15.1
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>87.4</b>

## **CAPITAL OUT-TURN**

2.5 Appendix 2 provides the detail of which the headlines are:-

- The capital spend was £32.5 million. This compares to a predicted spend at Month 10 of £39.5 million.
- The capital spend has been used to improve:-  
 Educational achievement through the major works at Somerville School and classrooms at Holy Trinity and Woodchurch Road Schools.  
 Health and wellbeing through the new 3G football pitches and fitness suite at Guinea Gap and the Arrowe Park Sports Pavilion.  
 Economic regeneration through Regional Growth Fund grants to support businesses and also further investment into New Brighton.  
 Investing into highways and road safety and also works to Cleveland Street Depot and the new Salt Barn.  
 Support for the vulnerable through the completion of the new Foxfield School and Disabled Facilities Grants / aids and adaptations.

- The capital spend was funded from borrowing of £6.0 million, government grants of £21.8 million, useable capital receipts of £3.9 million and revenue/reserves £0.8 million.
- Capital Receipts received in 2014/15 were £3.4 million which was above the target for the year of £2.5 million.

## **COLLECTION (INCOME)**

2.6 Appendix 3 provides the detail of which the headlines are:-

- The Council Tax Collection Rate increased from 95.4% in 2013/14 to 95.5% in 2014/15.
- The Business Rates Collection Rate increased from 96.9% in 2013/14 to 98.2% in 2014/15.
- The level of Sundry Debt arrears increased from £23.5 million at 31 March 2014 to £30.9 million at 31 March 2015. The 2015 figures include £14 million of invoices raised in the final week of the financial year. By 30 April 2015 the arrears were comparable with April 2014.

2.7 The Appendix also includes details of further write-offs totalling £0.47 million of which £0.42 million relate to Adult Social Services. These will be charged against the provision for bad debts and reflect the on-going programme to review outstanding debts.

## **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 3.1 There are none associated with the summary of the financial position for 2014/15. The position has been monitored throughout the year and has been the subject of monthly reports to Cabinet.
- 3.2 In respect of the collection of income this has been the subject of reports to Cabinet and the inclusion of items which are irrecoverable overstates the potential income which could be collected by the Council.

## **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 No other options were considered. There is a legal requirement to publish the Statement of Accounts and agree the capital spend and financing at the end of the financial year.

## **5.0 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 This is an end of year report. Consultation takes places as part of the planning and implementation of specific schemes or projects within the Council Budget and Capital Programme.

## **6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS**

6.1 This report provides the end of year financial report which incorporates the actions agreed as part of the Revenue and Capital Monitoring reports and sundry Debtor write-off reports presented to Cabinet throughout the 2014/15 financial year.

## **7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

7.1 There are none arising directly from this report. These would be considered when planning and implementing specific schemes or projects.

## **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The financial implications are summarised as headlines in Section 2 and detailed within the Appendices.

8.2 There are no staffing, IT or asset implications arising directly from this report.

## **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Local authorities have to produce an Annual Statement of Accounts which demonstrates the financial performance of the Council for the year and the financial position at the end of the period. The Accounts must comply with the Code Of Practice on Local Authority Accounting. There is a legal requirement to publish the Statement of Accounts each year.

## **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report being a report on the overall financial affairs for the financial year just completed.

## **11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report. These are included in reports to Cabinet on individual schemes and in the Carbon Budget report.

## **12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

13.1 Revenue

- a) The Revenue Out-turn for 2014/15 which showed an underspend of £0.5 million be noted.
- b) The transfer of the underspend to General Fund Balances be confirmed.
- c) The Reserves as detailed in the Annex be confirmed.

### 13.2 Capital

- a) The additional re-profiling of £9.9 million from 2014/15 to 2015/16 be noted.
- b) The financing of the Programme for 2014/15 be noted.
- c) The Programme for 2015/16 and beyond be kept under review to ensure it is realistic and deliverable.

### 13.3 Collection Summary

- a) The Council Tax in-year collection rate of 95.5% being an improvement upon the 95.4% rate in 2013/14 be noted.
- b) The Business Rates collection rate increased to 98.2% in 2014/15 from 96.9% in 2013/14 be noted.
- c) The Sundry Debtors arrears at 31 March 2015 stood at £30.9 million which was an increase on the position at 31 March 2014 for the reasons set out be noted.
- d) That the sundry debts for Adults Social Services and Other Directorates detailed in the report be written-off against the Provision for Bad Debts.

## 13.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Local authorities have to produce an Annual Statement of Accounts which demonstrates the financial performance of the Council for the year and the financial position at the end of the period. The full Statement is approved by Audit & Risk Management Committee on behalf of the Council. This report informs Cabinet of the key elements.

13.2 The Collection Summary provides details on income collection performance and any sums which are deemed irrecoverable need to be written off in accord with the authorisation processes set out in the Council Constitution.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Tom Sault  
Acting S151 Officer / Head Of Financial Services  
Telephone 0151 666 3407  
Email tomsault@wirral.gov.uk

## APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Revenue Out-turn 2014/15.
- Appendix 2 Capital Out-turn 2014/15.
- Appendix 3 Collection Summary 2014/15.

## REFERENCE MATERIAL

- CIPFA Code Of Practice On Local Authority Accounting In The UK 2014/15.
- Local Government Act 2003 and subsequent amendments.
- Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations 2008.
- Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

## SUBJECT HISTORY

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cabinet – Out-turn 2012/13	13 June 2013
Cabinet – Out-turn 2013/14	7 July 2014
Cabinet – Budget 2014/17	12 February 2014
Council – Budget 2014/17	25 February 2014
Cabinet – Budget 2015/18	10 February 2015
Council – Budget 2015/18	24 February 2015
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2014/15	Monthly reports
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2014/15	Monthly reports
Cabinet – Sundry Debtor (DASS) Write-offs	6 November 2014
Cabinet – Sundry Debtor Write-offs	15 January 2015
Cabinet – Sundry Debtor Write-offs	10 February 2015

## CABINET

13 JULY 2015

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>REVENUE OUT-TURN 2014/15</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES</b>
<b>KEY DECISION</b>	<b>YES</b>

**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report informs Cabinet of the Revenue Out-turn for 2014/15 including details of the level of general Fund balances and reserves at 31 March 2015.

**2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES****MONITORING 2014/15**

- 2.1 The Budget 2014/15 was agreed by Council on 25 February 2014 with any increase in the Budget agreed by full Council. Changes to the Budget since it was set are summarised in Table 1 and comprise: variations approved by Cabinet / Council including approved virements; budget realignments reflecting changes to the Directorate structure and responsibilities; the allocation of savings to Directorates; any technical adjustments.

**Table 1: 2014/15 Original & Revised Net Budget by Directorate (£000)**

	<b>Original Net Budget</b>	<b>Budget Changes</b>	<b>Revised Net Budget</b>
	£000	£000	£000
Chief Executive	10,035	-6,364	3,671
FWB - Adult Social Services	74,667	-759	73,908
FWB - Children & Young People, Schools & Safeguarding	82,877	1,510	84,387
FWB – Sports and Recreation	8,502	-1,019	7,483
Regeneration and Environment	95,190	1,430	96,620
Transformation & Resources	20,199	-1,342	18,857
Corporate Growth & Savings	-15,813	6,544	-9,269
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>275,657</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>275,657</b>

- 2.2 Throughout the financial year Cabinet have received updates in respect of Revenue Monitoring with these reports having been submitted monthly. After the significant changes the Council went through during 2012/13 and 2013/14, 2014/15 has seen an increasingly stable and positive position being reported.

- 2.3 The last monitoring report, for Month 10, considered by Cabinet on 12 March 2015, projected a General Fund overspend of £0.8 million. The overspending was principally due to slippage or non-delivery of in-year savings and demand pressures in particular services. It was mitigated by underspending in certain Directorates and the implementation of a number of management actions and mitigation to help compensate and limit the adverse variances.
- 2.4 The actual Out-turn was an underspend of £0.5 million and Table 2 compares this with the position as at Month 10 with the improvement essentially due to the underspends with Regeneration & Environment, in respect of staffing and increased income, and Transformation & Resources, with further savings identified from treasury management activities. These more than offset the slippage on the delivery of the Re-modelling savings which were initially to be met from the Re-modelling Reserve.

**Table 2: 2014/15 Projected / Actual Variations by Directorate (£000)**

	<b>Month 10 (Under) Over</b>	<b>Actual (Under) Over</b>
Chief Executive	(194)	(386)
FWB - Adult Social Services	2,745	2,457
FWB – Children & YP, Schools & Safeguarding	196	349
FWB – Sports and Recreation	259	0
Regeneration and Environment	(1,475)	(3,349)
Transformation & Resources	(759)	(2,537)
Corporate Growth & Savings	0	2,956
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>(510)</b>

- 2.5 Within the Budget for 2014/15 was £36.2 million of efficiencies. The Revenue Monitoring reports throughout the year highlighted the potential overspending areas which included slippage in the delivery of some of the savings to be delivered. This reflected timing delays in implementation mainly within Families & Wellbeing – Adult Social Services. Table 3 provides details of the variations by Directorate.

**Table 3 : Analysis of the Directorate Variations**

Directorate	Description	Over £m	Under £m
Chief Executives	Employees and use of provision		0.4
FWB - Adult Social Services	Additional Care including packages	5.4	
	Employees and other costs		1.3
	Additional Income and funding		1.7
FWB – Children & YP, Schools & Safeguarding	Additional Residential Care costs	0.8	
	Transport overspend	0.4	
	Connexions Service		0.3
	Reduced staffing & retirement costs		0.5

Directorate	Description	Over £m	Under £m
Regeneration and Environment	Increased income and reduced staffing in various areas		2.1
	Supporting People Programme (early delivery of savings and efficiencies)		1.0
	Additional grant support and match funding not utilised		0.5
	Floral Pavilion	0.3	
Transformation and Resources	Treasury Management including Capital Financing		2.0
	Reduced staffing expenditure and increased income in various areas		0.5
Corporate Growth and Savings	Slippage on Remodelling saving due to longer than anticipated timescale for consultation	2.9	

- 2.6 The net underspend of £0.5 million at the year-end has been transferred to General Fund Balances.

#### **LEVEL OF GENERAL FUND BALANCES**

- 2.7 The level of balances is locally determined using a risk-based assessment which takes into account the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the Council. The approach was adopted during 2014/15 and Cabinet 12 February 2014 agreed to the level of balances being set at, or above, the locally determined figure.
- 2.8 When setting the Budget 2014/15 the projected balances were £17.3 million with £0.3 million used to support the Budget 2014/15 leaving balances of £17 million. In setting the Budget 2015/16 the projected balances were to be maintained at £17.3 million for 2014/15 and £17.4 million for 2015/16.
- 2.9 The out-turn shows the final figure to be £18.7 million which is above the target figure for General Fund balances of £17.4 million for 2015/16.

**Table 4: Summary of the General Fund balances**

Details	£m	£m
Balance at 31 March 2014		17.3
Less: Contribution to 2014/15 Budget		-0.3
Add : Additional New Homes Bonus		+0.2
Add : Release of Insurance Fund Reserve		+1.2
Add : Outturn 2014/15 Underspend		+0.5
Actual Balance 31 March 2015		18.7

## COLLECTION FUND

- 2.10 A number of significant changes implemented from April 2013 continue to impact upon the Collection Fund. These include the business rates retention scheme and the abolition of the Council Tax Benefit System and replacement with Local Council Tax Support. Business Rates Retention replaced the pooling arrangement with guaranteed central pool income with a system which involves increased risk, partially mitigated with a Government ‘top up’ payment for authorities such as Wirral with a low business rates tax base.
- 2.11 The Collection Fund comprises Council Tax and Business Rates balances which are apportioned separately in accordance with the relevant legislation for each income source. Whilst Council Tax generated a surplus there was a deficit within Business Rates due to the requirement to set aside increased provision for potential future business rates appeals. This deficit is shared with Government. Wirral’s share of the Fund equates to a surplus of £2.6 million.

**Table 5 : Collection Fund Balance As At 31 March 2015**

	£000
Council Tax	4,947
Business Rates (NNDR)	-2,307
Net Surplus	2,640

- 2.12 In accord with accounting requirements, the Wirral share of the surplus is shown in the Council accounts. As agreed by Cabinet on 15 January 2015 during 2015/16 Wirral will receive £3.7 million from the Fund relating to the projected surplus for Council Tax. Depending upon performance in 2015/16 a further amount may be available for distribution in 2016/17.

## PROVISIONS FOR BAD DEBTS

- 2.13 Details of the performance for 2014/15 are contained in the Collection Summary 2014/15 which details the collection performance, the level of debts at the year-end and debts written-off in the year.

**Table 6 : Provision For Potential Bad Debts**

	At 31 Mar 2014	At 31 Mar 2015
	£000	£000
General Fund		
Sundry Debtors	7,208	7,943
Summons Costs	506	621
Housing Benefit	7,837	8,997
Collection Fund		
Business Rates	1,761	1,715
Council Tax	9,527	11,258

## RESERVES

- 2.14 Details of the current level of the reserves and the movements during 2014/15 are shown in the Annex. The earmarked reserves increased from £84 million at 31 March 2014 to £87 million at 31 March 2015. The categories of earmarked reserves are as follows:

Category and Description
<p><b>TO SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS</b> Includes Government Grant funded schemes where the grant is received and spend incurred in the following year such as Public Health and Family Intervention and where the sums held are earmarked for the completion of programmes such as Community Asset Transfer and IT Development.</p>
<p><b>TO SUPPORT THE COUNCILS RE-MODELLING PROGRAMME</b> Support future Council operational changes including the costs of investments to deliver future savings and one-off workforce reduction costs.</p>
<p><b>MITIGATION OF FUTURE RISKS:INSURANCE AND TAXATION</b> Assessed liabilities including potential cost of meeting outstanding Insurance Fund claims, Business Rates appeals, etc.</p>
<p><b>SCHOOLS RELATED</b> Balances and sums for school-related services which can only be used by schools and not available to pay for Council services</p>

- 2.15 Careful consideration has been given to any proposals which increase earmarked reserves with additional verification required as part of the 2014/15 closure of accounts process. The increase in reserves for the year reflects the establishment of the Waste Development Fund, £6.7 million, and the increase of £4.6 million under Business Rates. The year saw the use of a number of reserves including £3 million from IT Development and £4 million from Remodelling. An in-year review of reserves saw the transfer of a number of reserve balances that were no longer required, totalling £2.7 million, to the Remodelling Reserve to enable the maintenance of a fund to support the remodelling of Council services in future years.
- 2.16 Under the Education Reform Act 1988 all primary, secondary, special and nursery schools manage delegated budgets. At 31 March 2015 the balances held by schools totalled £ 10.7 million (£11.7 million at 31 March 2014) and these can only be used for schools' purposes.
- 2.17 The Insurance Fund reserves was £10.2 million at 31 March 2015. The Fund increased due to the transfer of funding from the insurance provision following an actuarial review of the future liabilities and claims. This reflected the required funding level indicated and saw a reduction in provisions for known claims management outcomes (see Audit & Risk Management Committee 8 June 2015 Insurance Fund Annual Report 2014/15).

### **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

3.1 There are none associated with this report which provides a summary of the Council's financial affairs for 2014/15 and the balances at 31 March 2015.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1 No other options were considered. There is a legal requirement to publish the Statement of Accounts by 30 September 2015.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

5.1 This is an end of year report. Consultation takes place as part of the planning and implementation of specific schemes within the Council Budget.

### **6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS**

6.1 This report provides the end of year financial report which incorporates the actions agreed as part of the Revenue Monitoring reports presented to Cabinet throughout the 2014/15 financial year.

### **7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

7.1 There are none arising directly from this report. These would be considered when planning and implementing specific schemes or projects.

### **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The financial headlines are:-

- a) The Revenue Out-turn for 2014/15 showed an underspend of £0.5 million which compares with the £0.8 million overspend projected at Month 10. This is set out in sections 2.4 and 2.5.
- b) The Balances at 31 March 2015 were £18.7 million which is above the level forecast when the Budget 2014/15 was agreed.
- c) The Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2015 were £87.4 million. These are held for a number of specific purposes.

8.2 There are no staffing, IT or asset implications arising directly from this report.

### **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Local authorities have to produce an Annual Statement of Accounts which demonstrates the financial performance of the Council for the year and the financial position at the end of the period. The Accounts must apply with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting. There is a legal requirement to publish the Statement of Accounts each year.

## **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report being a report on the overall financial affairs for the financial year just completed.

## **11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report. These are included in reports to Cabinet on individual schemes and in the Carbon Budget report.

## **12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 13.1
- a) The Revenue Out-turn for 2014/15 which showed an underspend of £0.5 million be noted.
  - b) The transfer of the underspend to General Fund Balances be confirmed.
  - c) The Reserves as detailed in the Annex be confirmed.

## **14.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

14.1 Local authorities have to produce an Annual Statement of Accounts which demonstrates the financial performance of the Council for the year and the financial position at the end of the period. The full Statement is approved by Audit & Risk Management Committee on behalf of the Council. This report informs Cabinet of the key elements.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Tom Sault  
Acting S151 Officer / Head Of Financial Services  
Telephone 0151 666 3407  
Email tomsault@wirral.gov.uk

## **ANNEX**

Earmarked Reserves Statement 2014/15

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

CIPFA Code Of Practice On Local Authority Accounting In The UK 2014/15.  
Local Government Act 2003 and subsequent amendments.  
Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations 2008.  
Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

## SUBJECT HISTORY

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cabinet – Out-turn 2012/13	13 June 2013
Cabinet – Out-turn 2013/14	7 July 2014
Cabinet – Budget 2014/17	12 February 2014
Council – Budget 2014/17	25 February 2014
Cabinet – Budget 2015/18	10 February 2015
Council – Budget 2015/18	24 February 2015
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2014/15	Monthly reports

## EARMARKED RESERVES STATEMENT 2014/15

<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>Balance 31 Mar 14</b>	<b>Movement 2014/15</b>	<b>Balance 31 Mar 15</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Remodelling	14,156	(1,307)	12,849
Schools Balances	11,682	(958)	10,724
Insurance Fund	9,151	1,055	10,206
Business Rates Equalisation	3,259	4,621	7,880
Waste Development Fund	-	6,502	6,502
Housing Benefit	6,888	(954)	5,934
Families & Well Being Budget Stabilisation	3,431	-	3,431
Dedicated Schools Grant	1,402	656	2,058
Public Health Outcomes	1,953	(90)	1,863
One Stop Shop/Libraries IT Networks	1,878	(137)	1,741
Efficiency Investment Rolling Fund	1,289	250	1,539
Community Asset Transfer	1,531	(213)	1,318
Support and Assistance to Public in Need	626	577	1,203
Intensive Family Intervention Project	914	104	1,018
Business Rates Appeals	1,000	-	1,000
IT Development	3,792	(2,855)	937
Stay, Work, Learn Wise	908	-	908
Supporting People Programme	905	-	905
Property Development Framework	-	700	700
School Harmonisation	1,077	(416)	661
Schools Capital Schemes	750	(116)	634
Public Health - Information and Performance	564	-	564
Early Years - 2 Year Olds Funding	-	510	510
Waste Efficiencies Fund	-	500	500
Major Infrastructure Project Development	-	500	500
Home Adaptations	495	-	495
Flood Prevention	284	201	485
Schools Contingency	368	-	368
Children's Workforce Development Council	469	(146)	323
Business Improvement Grant	328	-	328
Children Centre Nurseries	322	-	322
Parks & Countryside	311	-	311
Local Pay Review	296	-	296
Schools Service IT	294	-	294
Homeless Prevention	271	-	271
Champs Innovation Fund	186	81	267
New Homes Bonus	145	120	265
Budget Equalisation	1,860	(1,860)	-
Schools - PFI Affordability Gap	600	(600)	-
Child Poverty	250	(250)	-
Other Reserves	9,995	(2,720)	7,275
	<b>83,630</b>	<b>3,755</b>	<b>87,385</b>

Summary of Earmarked Reserves

<b>Generic Purpose of Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>Balance 31 Mar 2014 £ million</b>	<b>Balance 31 Mar 2015 £ million</b>
To Support Service Activities and Projects	26.5	31.8
To Support the Councils Remodelling Programme	19.3	15.4
Mitigation of Future Risks: Insurance and Taxation	20.3	25.1
Schools Related	17.5	15.1
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>83.6</b>	<b>87.4</b>

## CABINET

13 JULY 2015

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CAPITAL OUT-TURN 2014/15</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES</b>
<b>KEY DECISION</b>	<b>YES</b>

**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report whilst detailing the Capital Out-turn for 2014/15 and the resources which were used to fund the Programme also provides a review of the progress of the delivery of the agreed Capital Programme.

**2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES****MONITORING 2014/15**

- 2.1 The Capital Programme 2014/17 was considered by Cabinet on 12 February 2014 and approved by Council on 25 February 2014. The Programme is dictated by Government announcements on supported schemes and programmes and affordability. It was highlighted that the Council's Revenue Budget position limited the scope for unsupported capital expenditure.
- 2.2 Cabinet received regular updates in respect of Capital Monitoring throughout the financial year. The last monitoring report, for Month 10, was considered by Cabinet on 12 March 2015. Since then work has been on-going in order to conclude the accounts for the financial year.
- 2.3 During the year the Programme was regularly reviewed with a fuller mid-year review in order to re-profile the Programme which resulted in schemes being deferred to 2015/16 along with the supporting funding. This delivered one-off Treasury Management savings through a reduced need to borrow in 2014/15.

**CAPITAL OUT-TURN**

- 2.4 The capital spend for the year on the accruals basis amounted to £32.5 million compared to the Revised Programme of £39.5 million which was reported in January (Month 10). This is summarised in Table 1.
- 2.5 The estimate for January was amended to include the Formula Capital schemes that are delegated to the schools, the expenditure for which is only realised at the end of the financial year.

**Table 1 : Capital Programme 2014/15**

<b>Spend</b>	<b>Original Approval</b>	<b>Revised January</b>	<b>Actual Out-turn</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Universal & Infrastructure	5,827	3,147	3,643
Families – Children	10,998	8,405	8,400
Families – Adults	3,611	2,623	1,557
Families – Sport & Rec	1,000	2,157	1,122
Reg & Env– Env & Regulation	8,407	9,727	7,580
Reg & Env – Hsg & Comm Safety	5,707	4,057	2,812
Reg & Env – Regeneration	5,744	7,133	6,252
Transformation & Resources	4,000	2,500	1,096
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>45,294</b>	<b>39,749</b>	<b>32,462</b>

- 2.6 Cabinet had approved amendments totalling £5.8 million to the originally approved programme, as reflected in the position for Month 10. Since then Directorates have identified a net £9.9 million of planned scheme expenditure to be deferred until 2015/16. This includes an additional £2.4 million of grant funding now available for Children’s condition, modernisation and basic need schemes. Some activity was brought forward from 2015/16 into 2014/15 and is indicated by negative values.

**Table 2 : Significant slippage identified since Month 10**

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Universal &amp; Infrastructure</b>	
Building refurbishment to increase occupancy	-643
Fund to assist land assembly and resale	-113
Park depot rationalisation	670
<b>Families &amp; Wellbeing - Children</b>	
Elleray Park Special School redevelopment	-100
School remodelling and additional classrooms	-550
Condition/Modernisation	1,864
Basic Need allocation	550
Youth Capital	149
Universal Free School Meals	209
Somerville Mobile Replacement	366
<b>Families &amp; Wellbeing – Adults</b>	
Transformation of day service	615
Integrated I.T.	458
<b>Families &amp; Wellbeing – Sport &amp; Recreation</b>	
West Kirby/Guinea Gap/Europa Pools	824
<b>Reg &amp; Env– Environment &amp; Regulation</b>	
Active Travel	101
Highway Maintenance	146
Energy schemes (LED Street Lighting)	236
Parks vehicles replacement	617

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Reg &amp; Env – Housing &amp; Community Safety</b>	
LIFT programme	298
Clearance	519
Home Improvement	-378
Improvement for sale grants	180
New House Building Programme	520
<b>Reg &amp; Env – Regeneration</b>	
Other Regional Growth Fund Schemes	876
LEP Regional Growth Fund Schemes	269
<b>Transformation &amp; Resources</b>	
Information Technology development	1,404
<b>Total of Significant Schemes</b>	<b>9,087</b>

2.7 In reviewing the final spend for the year it is clear that whilst a number of schemes have progressed, there have been further schemes which have been re-profiled to 2015/16 and beyond as referred to in Section 2.3. This change in timing delivers in-year revenue savings in respect of Treasury Management costs for schemes that were reliant upon borrowing as the need to borrow is also deferred.

2.8 A summary of progress in the year within the Programme is as follows:-

#### 2.8.1 Universal and Infrastructure

The roofing scheme at West Kirby Concourse was completed and a new changing pavilion built at Arrowe Park.

Works to refurbish Council buildings and increase occupancy progressed and included Wallasey Town Hall and Birkenhead Town Hall. Acre Lane staff were relocated and general works undertaken on the Cheshire Lines building.

At Cleveland Street Transport Depot works took place, and continue to refurbish existing buildings, to allow a phased move from various parks depots that will reduce revenue costs and/or produce a capital receipt.

Works on the new Salt Barn facility in Cleveland Street and the demolitions of Stanley Special School, Moreton Adult Unit and Fernleigh were completed.

#### 2.8.2 Families and Wellbeing - Children

This includes investment in Schools which is essentially funded by Government Grant with announcements confirmed annually and just prior to the financial year. Works are undertaken in conjunction with the schools and mindful of the impact upon the service are largely arranged for completion outside of term-times. These factors impact upon the timing of the actual spend with frequent revisions to be accommodated.

The new Foxfield School was completed (£1,072,000) and the major phase of works undertaken at Somerville Primary School (£984,000) completed.

Woodslee Primary School scheme (£550,000) commenced replacing nursery and creating a library/resource area.

Fender Primary School scheme to create two additional classrooms and internal remodelling (£600,000) commenced.

Works to classrooms at both Hoylake Holy Trinity School (£340,000) and Woodchurch Road. Primary School (£680,000) were completed.

Stanley Special School scheme (£750,000) to further develop two further classrooms and external remodelling to enable the school to receive additional pupils places to be ready for September 2016 was also begun.

Following announcements in late 2013 to introduce a new entitlement to free school meals for all pupils in years 1 and 2 £870,000 was invested towards meeting these requirements.

### 2.8.3 Families and Wellbeing - Adults

The Integrated I.T. Scheme (Liquidlogic) went live during September 2014. The next phase of the project sees the procurement and implementation of the additional modules relating to the citizen and provider portals which will support the delivery of some Care Act duties from April 2015.

With the Transformation of Day Services, and creation of the new company, ongoing the capital works were deferred until 2015/16.

The Extra Care Housing scheme was reprofiled to 2015/16 and to 2016/17.

### 2.8.4 Families and Wellbeing – Sport and Recreation

The new 3G football pitches at Guinea Gap opened in February and are proving a popular facility and although severe winter weather delayed some of the building work, the new fitness suite facility opened in March and is immensely popular.

West Kirby Concourse phase 1 works were undertaken during the year.

### 2.8.5 Regeneration and Environment – Environment and Regulation

The Authority continued to improve the highway network spending more than £2.5 million on highway structural maintenance schemes in 2014/15. There was also £0.5 million spent on bridges which included the completion of the Cottage Lane bridge strengthening works and the preparation works and technical report for the future Dock bridges scheme.

£0.5 million of Local Sustainable Transport Funding was used to improve access to key employment sites by providing infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists on key corridors in East Wirral. This was further supplemented with £0.6 million from the Active Travel funding allocation. The most significant scheme was at Bolton Road.

£0.8 million was spent on road safety improvements such as traffic signals, speed cushions and puffins. Again, the most significant scheme was in Bolton Road (£0.37 million).

The planned investment in new vehicles, plant and equipment as part of the Parks and Countryside services modernisation project has continued with £0.8 million spent in 2014/15.

#### 2.8.6 Regeneration and Environment – Housing and Community Safety

The support for the provision and re-provision of new housing through the clearance programme saw £1.8 million in total deferred to 2015/16.

Approximately half the Home improvement allocation was spent during the year, an improvement on what was anticipated mid-way through the year.

Disabled Facilities Grants/Aids and Adaptations 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 but will not be completed until the following year. £2 million was spent in 2014/15.

#### 2.8.7 Regeneration and Environment – Regeneration

Public realm improvements to New Brighton seafront to increase visitors and improve footfall for local businesses were completed in 2014/15. This included maintenance and traffic improvements outside the Floral Pavilion and to Victoria Parade.

The Regional Growth Fund (RGF) is a £2.6 billion fund operating across England from 2011/16. It supports projects and programmes that lever private sector investment to create economic growth and sustainable employment. 12 projects have been supported committing £4.9 million in RGF grant.

Using the Local Enterprise Partnership funding has enabled 35 projects to be supported. A total of £4.1 million has been expended to date.

#### 2.8.8 Transformation and Resources

£1.1 million was spent on Information Technology which was less than the original projection of £2.5 million as reserves were used to fund £1.4 million of expenditure to save borrowing costs. With additional expenditure planned in 2015/16. £2.9 million has been carried forward to 2015/16.

## CAPITAL FINANCING

2.9 Table 3 details the resources used to finance the Capital Programme.

**Table 3 : Capital Financing 2014/15**

<b>Resources</b>	<b>Original Approval</b>	<b>Revised January</b>	<b>Actual Out-turn</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Unsupported Borrowing	20,717	10,393	5,984
Grants	21,287	22,605	21,738
Capital Receipts	3,000	6,006	3,942
Revenue and Reserves	290	745	798
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>45,294</b>	<b>39,749</b>	<b>32,462</b>

2.10 The re-profiling referred to earlier has seen the schemes and associated funding deferred until 2015/16.

## CAPITAL RECEIPTS

2.11 The Capital Programme is reliant on the Council generating capital receipts to finance future schemes. The receipts received during the year totalled £3.4 million which was in excess of the target of £2.5 million.

2.12 Table 4 shows the movements in the Reserve during 2014/15 with £8.3 million held at 31 March 2015. This will be used for funding the 2015/16 programme. The option of financing from borrowing has been curtailed as the revenue budget includes savings on loan financing. Instead the maximisation of capital receipts will be used, thereby reducing Capital Financing charges.

**Table 4: Capital Receipts Reserve**

	<b>£000</b>
<b>Balance as at 1 April 2014</b>	<b>8,789</b>
Add : Receipts during the year	3,431
Less : Used to part fund the Capital Programme	(3,942)
<b>Balance as at 31 March 2015</b>	<b>8,278</b>

2.13 Regarding progress in respect of the 3 possible major disposals, bids from various developers for the site at Acre Lane are currently being assessed. Preparatory work for the marketing of the Manor Drive site has commenced. Secretary of State approval is required before the Rock Ferry High School can be sold.

### **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

3.1 There are none associated with this report which provides a summary of the spend and financing of the Capital Programme in 2014/15. The Programme has been monitored throughout the year and has been the subject of monthly reports to Cabinet.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1 No other options were considered. There is a legal requirement to publish the capital spend and financing at the end of the financial year.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

5.1 This is an end of year report. Consultation takes place as part of considering the capital programme and over the planning and implementation of the specific schemes within the Programme.

### **6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS**

6.1 This report provides the end of year financial report which incorporates the actions agreed as part of the Revenue Monitoring reports presented to Cabinet throughout the 2014/15 financial year.

### **7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

7.1 There are none arising directly from this report. These would be considered when planning and implementing specific schemes within the Programme.

### **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The capital spend for the year amounted to £32.5 million. This was funded from borrowing of £6.0 million, Government Grants of £21.9 million, useable capital receipts of £3.9 million and revenue/reserves £0.8 million.

8.2 The re-profiling of schemes from 2014/15 to 2015/16, and beyond, has seen the funding similarly re-profiled. This includes the planned borrowing which has been deferred and has contributed towards the in-year savings on Treasury Management activities within the revenue budget.

8.3 There are no staffing, IT or asset implications arising directly from this report.

### **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There is a legal requirement to publish a report on the capital spend and financing at the end of each financial year.

## **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report which covers the overall programme and its funding for the financial year.

## **11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report. These are included in reports to Cabinet on individual schemes and in the Carbon Budget report.

## **12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 13.1
- a) The additional re-profiling of £9.9 million from 2014/15 to 2015/16 be noted.
  - b) The financing of the Programme for 2014/15 be noted.
  - c) The Programme for 2015/16 and beyond be kept under review to ensure it is realistic and deliverable.

## **14.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

14.1 The Council is required to make a number of formal Determinations in respect of its capital expenditure and financing and this report includes those for the 2014/15 financial year.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Reg Huyton  
Principal Accountant  
Telephone 0151 666 3415  
Email reghuyton@wirral.gov.uk

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting In the UK 2014/15.  
Local Government Act 2003 and subsequent amendments.  
Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations 2008.  
Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cabinet – Budget 2014/15	10 February 2014
Council – Budget 2014/15	24 February 2014
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2014/15	Monthly reports

## CABINET

13 JULY 2015

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>COLLECTION SUMMARY 2014/15</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>HEAD OF BUSINESS PROCESSES</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES</b>
<b>KEY DECISION</b>	<b>YES</b>

**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This report details the collection of Council Tax, Business Rates, Sundry Debtors, Housing Benefit Overpayments and Housing Act Advances. It also highlights key collection indicators and for irrecoverable sums, the sums that were written off under delegation and details of those debts for which Cabinet approval is sought to write off.

**2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES****COUNCIL TAX**

2.1 This year was the second year of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme and the removal of the Empty Property discounts / exemptions. There was a slight payment increase in each area as the new charges bed in and the overall Collection Rate increased from 95.4% to 95.5%.

**2.2 Collection Summary 2014/15**

	£	£
Arrears Brought Forward at 1 April 2014		16,886,455
Total Charge		<u>184,684,765</u>
		201,571,220
Less Credits Brought Forward at 1 April 2014		<u>991,499</u>
		200,579,721
Less Allowances:		
Exemptions	3,067,983	
Disabled Persons Relief	149,853	
Discounts and Band alterations	17,301,319	
Council Tax Support	27,195,000	
Write-offs	<u>1,003,779</u>	
		<u>48,717,934</u>
		151,861,787
Add Refunds Made		1,725,600
Add Costs		<u>409,068</u>
		153,996,455
Less Cash Received		<u>136,088,000</u>
Arrears Carried Forward at 31 March 2015		<u>17,908,455</u>

### 2.3 Debt Recovery Actions

	2013/14	2014/15
Reminder Notices	88,253	82,862
Summonses Issued	23,153	23,121
Leading to		
Liability Orders	16,674	16,904
Attachment of Earnings Orders	1,961	2,218
Deductions from Job Seekers Allowance / Income Support	7,193	7,234
Referred to Bailiffs	7,408	8,274

2.4 Members will note apart from a drop in the number of reminders recovery action was very similar to the previous year. Debt levels are impacted by the Local Council Tax Support Scheme which provides maximum support of 78% and the removal of the Empty Property discounts / exemptions. Collection activity continues against all debts with recovery actions high due to non-payments from those affected by the Council Tax Support Scheme. Wherever possible an application for deduction from benefit is the preferred method for those in receipt of Council Tax Support.

### Irrecoverables

2.5 There is no specific power to write-off Council Tax debts, which are covered by the general power of administering the financial affairs of the Authority. Examples of suitable cases for write-off are: deceased persons with no estate, persons not traced, Insolvency, sums remitted by the court during proceedings for imprisonment and minimal sums. All other debts are actively pursued.

2.6 The write-off provision for 2014/15 was £11.2 million and whilst trace and recovery work is ongoing for Council Tax arrears £1,003,779 has been written off in 2014/15 categorised as follows:

Category	2013/14 £	2014/15 £
Deceased	77,909	7,702
Insolvency	203,901	251,880
Court Remission	11,783	7,426
Prison sentence served (by order of the magistrates)	0	1,259
Non-traceable	<u>648,846</u>	<u>735,512</u>
Total	<u>942,439</u>	<u>1,003,779</u>

### 2.7 Statistics

	31 Mar 2014	31 Mar 2015
Number of properties	146,450	146,936
Number of CTS Recipients	37,932	36,536
Council Tax Collection	95.4%	95.5%

## 2.8 Year on Year Volume Comparisons

	31.03.13	31.03.14	31.03.15
Direct Debit Payers	89,081	91,545	93,428
Discount Recipients	67,950	70,225	71,957
Pensioners discounts	13,856	14,011	11,482
Exempt Persons	4,189	1,908	2,203
No. of Amended/Copy Accounts	117,795	126,212	128,006
No. of Returned Direct Debit Payments	11,018	12,891	12,045
Payments: Direct Debits	900,217	945,527	966,861
Cash/Cheque	24,310	70,384	73,151
Salaries/Wages	12,517	11,497	10,393
Debit/Credit Card	57,651	78,915	84,325
Paypoint	29,349	44,092	42,947
Post Office	57,298	77,203	74,488
Dept. for Work & Pensions	27,012	35,102	57,662
Bailiff	16,276	14,675	14,972

## BUSINESS RATES (NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES)

2.9 There was a small increase in the number of properties and in 2014/15 collection substantially increased from 96.9% to 98.2%.

## 2.10 Collection Summary 2014/15

	£	£
Opening Debit		86,659,964
Plus Balance Brought Forward		6,769,892
Less Credit b/f		<u>1,026,876</u>
		92,402,980
<u>Allowances</u>		
Assessment changes in year	-895,928	
Transitional Relief	445,112	
Empty relief	-780	
Empty relief exemptions	-3,855,495	
Part Occupation relief	-76,828	
Charitable Organisations	-5,269,653	
Rural Relief	-578	
Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR)	-6,323,493	
Multi Occupation SBRR	-16,419	
Local Disc/Flood/Retail	-1,336,584	
Re-Occupation Relief	-35,724	
Write-Offs	-1,341,795	
Interest	<u>4,010</u>	<u>-18,704,155</u>
		73,698,825
Add Refunds made		3,675,527
Add costs		<u>48,695</u>
		77,423,047
Less Cash Received		<u>-71,373,609</u>
Balance Carried Forward		<u>6,049,438</u>

## 2.11 Debt Recovery Action

	2013/14	2014/15
Summonses	724	620
Liability Orders	665	536
Chargepayers on Direct Debit	1,979	2,023

### Irrecoverables

2.12 Within the collection target is an allowance for irrecoverables or losses on collection. This is calculated as a percentage of anticipated yield and was £0.9 million in 2014/15.

2.13 Category	2013/14	2014/15
	£	£
Absconded/Irrecoverable	521,447	526,660
Insolvency	507,420	878,266
Miscellaneous (including deceased)	-8,186	-63,131
Total	<u>1,020,681</u>	<u>1,341,795</u>

## 2.14 Statistics

	2013/14	2014/15
Number of Properties on Valuation List	8,202	8,228
Rateable Value	£181,379,353	£180,338,530
New and Altered Property Notifications	1,788	1,361
Collection Rate	96.9%	98.2%

2.15 The Council has an Enterprise Zone, Wirral Waters part of Mersey Waters, which came into force on 1 April 2012. The Zone has been the subject of reports to Cabinet and two buildings are currently being built. To date there have been no completed buildings within the Zone for Business Rates purposes.

2.16 Cabinet agreed on 10 April 2014 to use High Street Innovation Fund monies (£100,000) to support the Wirral Chamber of Commerce to draw up proposals relating to the establishment of a Birkenhead Business Investment District (BID), which would be the first BID for Wirral. A progress report is being presented to Cabinet on 13 July 2015 which refers to the additional resources required for the Council to levy and collect this additional sum (if the BID is agreed).

2.17 Central Government is currently undertaking a fundamental review of Business Rates and have indicated that whatever the outcome the preferred option is for a property based tax which must be fiscally neutral in that the current amount raised of £23 billion must be raised by any replacement. The review will report its findings to inform the Spending Review and Budget for 2016/17.

- 2.18 In setting the Council Budget for 2015/16 it was agreed to implement a scheme awarding a local discount to a number of companies paying the Living Wage. The Living Wage Discount Policy was submitted to Cabinet on 29 June 2015.

## SUNDRY DEBTOR ACCOUNTS

- 2.19 During 2014/15 invoices totalling £106 million were raised and income of £97 million collected. Whilst there was an increase in the level of outstanding debts at 31 March 2015 compared to 31 March 2014 this was adversely affected by the issuing of £14 million of invoices in the final week. These were primarily from Families & Wellbeing and Transformation & Resources and in respect of NHS bodies and the Merseyside Residuary Body debt administered by the Council. Over £17 million of income was received during April 2015 with the outstanding debt at 30 April 2015 being £26.2 million (compares to £25.7 million at 30 April 2014).

### 2.20 Collection Statement

	2013/14	2014/15
	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	30,006,306	23,493,755
Net Amount of Invoices	<u>99,552,730</u>	<u>105,535,382</u>
	129,559,036	129,029,137
Less Write-Offs	<u>3,962,531</u>	<u>861,457</u>
	125,596,505	128,167,680
Payments Received	<u>102,102,750</u>	<u>97,276,976</u>
Balance Carried Forward at 31 March	<u>23,493,755</u>	<u>30,890,704</u>

- 2.21 The number of invoices and their value raised over recent years and the outstanding debt at the year-end is as follows:-

Financial Year	Invoices Number	Invoices Value	Debt 31 March
2011/12	50,740	£98.0m	£31.1m
2012/13	47,912	£103.1m	£30.0m
2013/14	51,139	£99.6m	£23.5m
2014/15	48,879	£105.5m	£30.9m

- 2.22 The table below outlines Departmental Debt as at 31 March 2015

Department Description	Less than 10 days	1 <sup>st</sup> Reminder	2 <sup>nd</sup> Reminder	3 <sup>rd</sup> Reminder	Total as 31.03.15	Land Charges
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Chief Exec	97,818	10,889	38,301	737,275	884,283	180
Neighbourhood	50,607	0	979	13,174	64,760	0
Transformation	6,864,838	566,889	29,997	1,093,841	8,555,565	39,433
Families	8,560,070	1,980,063	446,652	9,133,734	20,120,519	2,130,602
Regeneration	589,367	52,289	78,793	784,686	1,505,135	250,888
Policy and Perf	5,581	0	123,857	1,600	131,038	-
Totals	16,168,281	2,610,130	718,579	11,764,310	31,261,300	2,421,101

2.23 The figures are for invoices in respect of the period up to the end of March 2015. Payments as well as amendments such as write-offs and debts cancellations continue to be made after this date on all these accounts and the unallocated receipts at 31 March leave a balance of £30,890,704.

2.24 Land charges represent those debts which have been registered as a charge against a property and should be recovered when that property is subsequently sold.

### Irrecoverables

2.25 Sums over the limit of delegation £1,000 and below £5,000 require Cabinet approval. For each case over £5,000 the approval is in respect of individual cases for which explanations are provided to Cabinet.

2.26 Work has been undertaken during the year to check accounts and submit debts for write off to Cabinet and those agreed to date for 2014/15 are:-

Cabinet Date	Debtors DASS	Debtors Other	HB Overpayments	Total
	£	£	£	£
06.11.14	130,137	-	-	130,137
15.01.15	192,100	-	-	192,100
10.02.15	-	-	59,663	59,663
Total	322,237	-	59,663	381,800

2.27 Further sums totalling £479,656 are proposed for write off comprising £418,397 of Adult Social Services debtors and £61,259 of other Departmental debts. The cases above £5,000 are detailed in the Annex.

Debt – Value	Adult Social Services		Other Directorates	
	Number	£	Number	£
<£1,000	649	109,554	123	4,713
£1,000-£5,000	46	91,536	12	27,324
£5,000	16	217,307	4	29,222
Total	711	418,397	139	61,259

Reason for write off	Adult Social Services		Other Directorates	
	Number	£	Number	£
Irrecoverable	597	338,902	117	42,748
Statute Barred	5	20,919	8	5,267
Deceased	102	33,471	1	763
Liquidation	7	25,105	13	12,581
Total	711	418,397	139	61,259

## HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT DEBTS

2.28 The following Housing Benefit overpayment debts, including those referred to in Section 2.26, were written off in 2014/15.

Reason	No	£
Elderly	13	3,600
Bankrupt	52	13,861
Deceased	77	20,011
Statute Barred	116	38,906
Small Balance	84	1,761
Uneconomic to pursue	172	20,725
Total	514	98,864

## HOUSING ACT ADVANCES

2.29 No new advances were made in 2014/15. The number of mortgage accounts continues to decrease as more are redeemed or transferred to other institutions. The small caseload retained continues to be monitored to prevent arrears increasing. The management of the remaining accounts have been brought in-house as the costs of remaining with the current supplier were prohibitive and in excess of the loans outstanding.

### 2.30 Collection statement

	2013/14 £	2014/15 £
Arrears Brought Forward	2,892	2,504
Charges	<u>17,025</u>	<u>9,309</u>
Total	19,917	11,813
Cash Collected	<u>17,413</u>	<u>10,147</u>
Arrears Carried Forward	<u>2,504</u>	<u>1,666</u>

### 2.31 Housing Act Advances Five Year Collection Details

Financial Year	Amount Collectable £	Arrears £	Number of Accounts
2010/11	34,483	1,382	22
2011/12	25,229	1,884	19
2012/13	31,329	2,892	15
2013/14	19,917	2,504	12
2014/15	11,813	1,666	7
Total of loans outstanding at 31 March 2014			£27,754
Total of loans outstanding at 31 March 2015			£19,151

## **IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS**

2.32 Under delegated powers and previous Cabinet approval written off as irrecoverable against the provision for bad debts are the following:-

	£
Council Tax	1,003,779
Business Rates	1,341,795
Sundry Debtors	861,457
Housing Benefits Overpayments	<u>59,663</u>
Total	<u>3,266,694</u>

## **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

3.1 If debts are not written off they have the potential to inflate what might be thought collectable. Debts are only written off after a number of stringent checks and following advice from the Head of Legal and Member Services.

## **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1 The report presents a summary of the collection performance for 2014/15. No other options were considered.

## **5.0 CONSULTATION**

5.1 Relevant officers of the Council have been consulted in preparing this report.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

## **7.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS**

7.1. None in relation to this report

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

8.1 Debts written off as irrecoverable are charged against the Council provisions for bad debts which are reviewed annually in accordance with the requirements of accounting practice. At 31 March 2015 the provision for Council Tax stood at £11.2 million and for Sundry Debts at £7.9 million.

## **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Those debts recommended for write-off have been agreed by the Head of Legal and Member Services.

## **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

## **11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

## **12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 13.1
- a) The Council Tax in-year collection rate of 95.5% being an improvement upon the 95.4% rate in 2013/14 be noted.
  - b) The Business Rates collection rate increased to 98.2% in 2014/15 from 96.9% in 2013/14 be noted.
  - c) The Sundry Debtors arrears at 31 March 2015 stood at £30.9 million which was an increase on the position at 31 March 2014 for the reasons set out be noted.
  - d) That the sundry debts for Adults Social Services and Other Directorates detailed in the report be written-off against the Provision for Bad Debts.

## **14.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

14.1 To inform Members of the collection activity undertaken in these areas.

14.2 Sums written off are approved either under delegation or by Cabinet.

### **ANNEX**

Sundry Debtor Accounts – Write-Offs over £5,000

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Neil Powell  
Revenues Manager  
Telephone: 0151 666 3505  
Email: neilpowell@wirral.gov.uk

### **SUBJECT HISTORY**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cabinet - Collection Summary 2011/12	21 June 2012
Cabinet - Collection Summary 2012/13	13 June 2013
Cabinet - Collection Summary 2013/14	7 July 2014

## SUNDRY DEBTOR ACCOUNTS – WRITE-OFFS OVER £5,000

### DEBTORS - ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

Case	Reason For Write-Off	Amount
1	Deceased	5,781.37
2	Deceased	6,136.45
3	Irrecoverable / Deceased	6,285.63
4	Irrecoverable / Deceased	8,555.23
5	Deceased	10,045.02
6	Irrecoverable	10,600.09
7	Irrecoverable	13,178.53
8	Deceased	13,881.60
9	Deceased	13,881.60
10	Deceased	64,580.12
11	Deceased	5,230.80
12	Irrecoverable	5,532.86
13	Irrecoverable	10,000.00
14	Irrecoverable	13,306.87
15	Irrecoverable	15,872.46
16	Liquidation	14,438.62

Case	Details
1	Invoice dated 06/02/14, amount £5,781.37 in relation to accommodation charges from 20/03/2007 to 5/12/2012. The Client is deceased and a probate search produced a negative result, leaving no one to pursue for the outstanding debt.
2	Invoice dated 25/11/2013, amount £6,136.45 relates to the final amount outstanding for residential / nursing home charges up to 17/06/2011. The client is now deceased. The estate was distributed by the executor prior to being made aware of the debt.
3	Invoice dated 29/04/2014, amount £6,285.63 relates to the final amount outstanding for residential / nursing charges up to 26/07/2013. The provision was not authorised until after the client's death so the Client was therefore not formally notified of the charge.
4	Invoice dated 09/05/2013, amount £8,555.23 relates to the final balance outstanding for Residential care up to 11/03/2013. The Client is deceased and there is evidence to show that there are no funds in the estate to pay the debt.
5	Invoice dated 13/05/2010, amount £10,045.02 relates to the final account for accommodation charges, for the period 11/9/2004 to 31/12/2009. The Client is deceased and a probate search produced a negative result, leaving no one to pursue for the outstanding debt.
6	Invoice dated 02/05/2014, amount £10,600.09 was a final invoice and relates to an amalgamation of accommodation charges specifically raised, for recommendation for write off. There are no electronic or paper records available to prove the debt and therefore it cannot be pursued.

7	Invoice dated 29/04/2014, amount £13,178.53 relates to accommodation charges from 02/04/2007 to 23/02/2014. Prior to Recovery Team involvement the clients was spending on items other than care. The Team have secured payment going forward however evidence has been provided to show there are no funds available to pay the arrears.
8	Invoice dated 27/11/2012, amount £13,881.60 and relates to the final balance for accommodation charges from 12/10/2010 to 18/10/2012. The Client is deceased and a probate search produced a negative result, leaving no one to pursue for the outstanding debt.
9	Invoice dated 20/03/2013, amount £13,881.60 relates to the final balance outstanding for accommodation charges up to 26/07/2012. The Client is deceased and a probate search produced a negative result, leaving no one to pursue for the outstanding debt.
10	Invoice dated 13/02/2013, amount £64,580.12 relates to the final balance outstanding for nursing care charges up to 06/11/2012. The client never disclosed his finances and so was treated as full cost. Since his death it has since been identified that his income would have reduced his charge to approximately, 40% less than the outstanding balance. The probate search has produced a negative result, there is no-one to pursue for the debt.
11	Invoice dated 11/04/2013, amount £5,230.80 relates to the final balance for nursing care charges up to 08/03/2012. The Client is deceased and a probate search produced a negative result, leaving no one to pursue for the outstanding debt.
12	Invoice dated 08/01/2014, amount £5,532.86 raised for support at home charges up to 17/11/2013. The Client is paying the charge going forward and has cleared £2,000 from the arrears. No further funds are available. Legal advice is that there is no prospect of recovery.
13	Invoice dated 17/09/2013, amount £10,000 relates to the final account for support at home charges for the period 19/11/2007 to 10/03/2013. A Compromise agreement signed by DASS Head of Business Management and the Interim Director of Finance saw the client's estate pay £50,148.10. The remainder of the debt is to be written off.
14	Invoice dated 09/01/2014, amount £13,306.87 relates to accommodation charges from 12/06/2007 to 01/12/2013. The client does not have funds available to pay as her finances have been inappropriately managed in the past. The current home owners are now paying the four weekly charges correctly. No prospect of recovery.
15	Invoice dated 01/07/2013, amount £15,872.46 relates to final residential care charges up to 04/12/2012. The Council is now the appointee for the client, but there are no funds available to pay the outstanding arrears. Client only receives a personal allowance which cannot be used to recover the debt.
16	Invoice dated 03/08/2010, amount £14,438.62 raised by Department of Adult Social Services and relates to overpaid nursing fees. (Period not known). Was referred to the Legal Department and the debtor had gone into Liquidation. A claim was lodged with the liquidators as an unsecured debtor and that a final dividend had been paid out so no prospect of balance being settled.

## DEBTORS – OTHER

Case	Reason For Write-Off	Amount
1	Irrecoverable - Insufficient evidence	6,530.40
2	Irrecoverable - Insufficient evidence	10,000.00
3	Liquidation / Bankruptcy	6,550.63
4	Irrecoverable	6,140.50

Case	Details
1	Invoice dated 23/08/2012, amount £6,530.40, for ITS Computer Service Level Agreement 2012/13 for a Study Support Centre. Legal Services have been unable to acquire sufficient evidence and documentation to support the claim to pursue recovery and recommend write off.
2	Invoice dated 16/12/2009, amount £10,000 for supplying and erecting two Vehicle activated boundary signs. Legal Services have been unable to acquire sufficient evidence to support the claim and pursue recovery and recommend write off.
3	Invoice dated 09/08/2013, amount £6,550.63 for Roadside advertising which related to an amalgamation of invoices. Company went into liquidation / bankruptcy leaving little prospect of the claim being settled. The Legal Team subsequently recommended the debt be submitted for write off due to Liquidation / Bankruptcy
4	Invoice dated 28/04/2011, amount £6,140.50 for repayment of sick pay advanced following a Road Traffic Accident in July 2007. All practical efforts to recover the balance of this debt have proved unsuccessful, including referral to a debt collection agency. Legal Team advised that if proceedings were issued, the action would not present a realistic or cost effective prospect of recovery. Recommendation made to submit the balance outstanding for write off.

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### COORDINATING COMMITTEE

30 SEPTEMBER 2015

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>2014/15 REVENUE / CAPITAL MONITORING PROGRESS REPORTS</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>CLLR PHIL DAVIES</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>YES</b>

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides Coordinating Committee with the Quarter 1 Revenue and Capital Financial Monitoring details, as report to Cabinet on 27 July 2015. This is to enable Coordinating Committee to scrutinise progress against the 2014/15 revenue and capital budgets and highlight any areas for further clarification.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The review of corporate finance is a standing item for Coordinating Committee. At each regular committee meeting, the most up to date revenue and capital monitoring reports are provided.

2.2 This report provides Coordinating Committee with the Quarter 1 Revenue and Capital Monitoring Reports that went to Cabinet on 27 July. These are included as follows:

- Cabinet Report 27/07/15 Revenue Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 1
- Cabinet Report 27/07/15 Capital Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 1

#### 3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 These are set out in the relevant sections of the accompanying reports included as Appendix 1 and 2.

#### 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**

8.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

13.1 Committee notes the content of these reports and highlights any areas requiring further clarification.

## **14.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

15.1 For the committee to discharge its role in scrutinising the Council's finances.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Peter Molyneux  
Senior Manager  
telephone: 0151 666 3389  
email: [petermolyneux@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:petermolyneux@wirral.gov.uk)

## **APPENDICES**

- Cabinet Report 27/07/15 Revenue Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 1
- Cabinet Report 27/07/15 Capital Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 1

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## CABINET

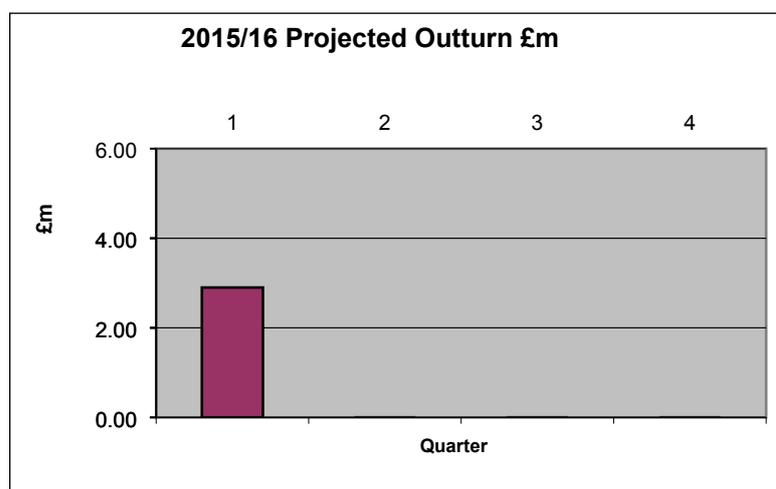
27 JULY 2015

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>REVENUE MONITORING 2015/16 QUARTER 1 (APRIL-JUNE 2015)</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES</b>
<b>KEY DECISION</b>	<b>YES</b>

## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the projected revenue position for 2015/16 as at the end of June 2015. The 2015/16 revenue budget included a savings programme of £38 million. Progress is regularly reviewed and has identified that whilst over £28 million is deliverable in year some slippage has been identified. It is recommended that the 2015/16 budget be adjusted to reflect this through the use of Reserves and an element of the sum set aside in General Fund balances. This leads to a forecast overspend of £2.9 million primarily due to early indications of demand pressures on which further work will be undertaken to confirm, to seek mitigation and also a review of reserves in order to restore the General Fund balances to the required level.
- 1.2 The headline position is shown in the graph below.

**Graph 1: Wirral Council – 2015/16 General Fund Variance**



## 2 CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET

- 2.1 The 2015/16 Budget was agreed by Council on 24 February 2015 and is detailed in Annex 2; any increase in the Budget has to be agreed by full Council. Changes to the Budget since it was set are summarised in Table 1.

**Table 1: 2015/16 Original & Revised Net Budget by Directorate £000's**

	Original Net Budget	Approved Budget Changes Prior Mths	Approved Budget Changes Quarter 1	Proposed Budget Changes Quarter 1	Revised Net Budget
FWB - Adult Social Care	68,305	-	134	2800	71,239
FWB – Children & Young People,	67,964	-	141	4400	72,505
FWB - Further Areas: Safeguarding, Schools, Leisure, Public Health	7,956	-	431	400	8,787
Regeneration & Environment	90,287	-	-664	-	89,623
Transformation & Resources	31,947	-	-556	-	31,391
Corporate Growth, Savings & Grant	-7,267	-	514	2000	-4,753
Net Cost of Services	259,192	-	-	9600	268,792

- 2.2 The Approved Budget Changes reflect the impact of the completion of the ongoing remodelling and restructuring of Council services. With structures finalised this sees adjustments between Children & Young People, Regeneration & Environment and the Corporate Growth, Savings and Grant budgets. Other movements as a consequence of the restructuring include the transfer of employee budgets between Directorates and the implementation of the Social Worker Progression Framework.
- 2.3 The Proposed Budget changes relate to the review of the savings programme and a realistic assessment of the deliverability of the savings in the current financial year. It is recommended that these be covered by the actions and recommendations set out in Table 5.
- 2.4 The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced on 4 June 2015 a series of in year savings to Government Department budgets. The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2015/16 remains unchanged. Whilst there are reductions in other areas the details are awaited. It is estimated that the reduction in the Department of Health resources may result in an in-year reduction in Wirral's Public Health Grant of up to £2.4 million.
- 2.5 The Chancellor delivered a Budget Statement on 8 July 2015. This was focussed upon welfare reform, which is likely to lead to increased demands for Council support and services, and included the National Living Wage. The latter increases provider costs, particularly within care services, which will lead to increased pressure on service providers to the Council and potentially increased contract costs.

### **3 PROJECTIONS AND KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 The projected outturn position as at the end of June 2015, key issues emerging and Directorate updates are detailed in the following section.

**Table 2: 2015/16 Projected Budget variations by Directorate £000's**

Directorates	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	(Under)	RAGBY Class	Change from prev
			Overspend		
			Quarter 1		
FWB - Adult Social Care	71,239	73,670	2,431	R	
FWB – Children & Young People	72,505	74,505	2,000	R	-
FWB - Further Areas: Safeguarding, Schools, Leisure, Public Health	8,787	8,787	0	G	
Regeneration & Environment	89,623	89,323	-300	B	-
Transformation & Resources	31,391	30,202	-1,189	Y	
Corporate Growth, Savings & Grant	-4,753	-4,753	0	G	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>268,792</b>	<b>271,734</b>	<b>2,942</b>		-

The report classifies the forecast under/overspends for the above areas using a colour RAGBY rating. The ratings are defined as follows:

- 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: Adult Social Care

3.2.1 There is a shortfall, primarily within adult social care, of £2.8 million relating to delays in the implementation of a number of savings projects which are detailed in Table 4. There is a further £2.4 million in respect of demand pressures within a number of Community care areas for which further work is being undertaken to confirm the projection and identify mitigating actions.

3.2.2 To assist with budget delivery, a number of projects are being supported by the Improvement and Transformation Team. Saving Plans and profiles are being reviewed to identify mitigation and an Implementation Board has been established to review Day Services and challenge financial delivery targets. Further detailed work is being undertaken to further analyse the causes and impact of the demand pressures.

#### Families and Wellbeing: Children and Young People

3.2.3 The forecast shows a shortfall of £4.4 million against current savings (see Table 4) and pressures of £2.9 million which have partly been offset by £0.9 million of mitigation. The increased demands relate to commissioned services and agency costs and include additional foster allowance costs.

## **Families and Wellbeing : Other**

- 3.2.4 The Budget, and the progress on delivery of change, is reviewed at the Directorate Senior Leadership Team meetings. With the Social Worker Progression Framework now implemented there is a rolling programme of recruitment to Social Work positions. Agency costs and placements are being reviewed and the implementation of the framework will enable progress to be made on the required changes. A Project Group meets to review numbers and the Strategic Plan for looked after children is identifying work to develop an adolescent unit and reduce agency foster care numbers/residential care.
- 3.2.5 **Leisure Services:** An adverse variance of £0.4 million is currently forecast relating to slippage against the leisure review saving. Further areas for mitigation will be identified and investigated.
- 3.2.6 **Public Health.** As referred to earlier in the report the Chancellor announced a reduction in the Health Budget which could see an in-year reduction of up to £2.4 million in the Public Health grant.

## **Regeneration and Environment**

- 3.2.7 An underspend of £0.3 million is currently forecast relating to further contract efficiencies within Supported Housing.

## **Transformation & Resources**

- 3.2.8 An underspend of £1.2 million is currently forecast. This is mainly within Treasury Management as a consequence of the continued use of internal funds to minimise the need to externally borrow and the projected slippage within the Capital Programme which delivers one-off in year savings.

## **Remodelling**

- 3.2.9 The savings from remodelling totalled £10.9 million. Slippage is forecast at £2 million as a number of staff consultations have still to be concluded resulting in delayed implementation of savings.

## **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 Budget for 2015/16 included £38 million of efficiency measures and it was recognised that the delivery of the savings, particularly within Adults and Children's Services was challenging being more of a transformational / change nature. In determining the level of General Fund balances the risk of slippage / non-delivery was assessed at £7.2 million.

**Table 3: Budget Implementation Plan 2015/16 (£000's)**

BRAG	Number of Options	Approved Budget Reduction	Amount Delivered at Q1	To be Delivered see T4
B - delivered	24	14,258	14,258	0
G – on track	19	3,016	2,193	823
A - concerns	19	16,739	1,260	15,479
R - high risk/ not achieved	6	4,011	0	4,011
<b>Total at Quarter 1 2015-16</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>38,024</b>	<b>17,711</b>	<b>20,313</b>

- 4.2 The savings tracker contains an assessment of the 2015/16 savings. The forecasted position includes overspends from the red rated savings. Within the amber rated projects a number will be delivered by the end of 2015/16 but will not fully deliver in year. Overall the latest projections indicate that over £28 million of the planned savings will be achieved with a £9.6 million shortfall forecast.

**Table 4: Shortfall against the 2015/16 target**

Department/Saving	Reasons for Delay	£m
<b>Adult Social Care</b>		
Extra Care Housing	Key housing provider withdrew and now looking for alternative providers and potential sites. Links to slippage in Capital Programme. Full saving slips to 2016/17.	1.3
Girtrell Court shared service	Working with partner provider to agree service specification prior to implementing the capital works for which funding is in the Capital Programme so to 2016/17.	0.3
Cost of Care	Projections are for overspending within Care services meaning the proposed saving will not be delivered in 2015/16. Work by the Directorate to address the pressures and deliver the savings for 2016/17 is on-going.	0.5
Day Services	New company established during 2015/16 Anticipated that 50% of savings deliverable in year with balance in 2016/17.	0.5
Continuing Health Care Appeals	Process involved negotiations on individual cases with progress being made but not as anticipated so partially deliverable in 2015/16.	0.2

<b>Department/Saving</b>	<b>Reasons for Delay</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b>Children &amp; Young People</b>		
Specialist Services	Looked After Children numbers rising so potential overspend makes saving non-achievable in 2015/16. The Directorate are confident this is still deliverable over a longer timeframe given the structural changes now in place.	1.4
All Age Disability Service	The savings will be delivered but the timescales means the full £0.6 million will not be achieved this year.	0.4
Transport	Whilst numbers of Children & Adults receiving transport have reduced this saving will not be delivered without a fuller review of Transport options which will not be effective in 2015/16.	1.0
Children's Centres	Proposals being considered by Cabinet in July and following consultation the savings will be delivered from early 2016 leaving a shortfall in year.	1.2
Central Strategic services	Proposals to amend internal structures and policies still to be developed so will slip to 2016/17.	0.4
Leisure Review	Work continues of options to deliver the £1 million for 2015/16 including alternative provision but projected shortfall this year.	0.4
Remodelling	Of the overall £10.9 million programme £9.4 million agreed but there are staff consultations to be concluded resulting in delayed implementation.	2.0
<b>Total Savings Slippage</b>		<b>9.6</b>

4.3 In order to fund the slippage a series of actions have been recommended.

**Table 5 : Actions to cover the shortfall in 2015/16**

<b>Use of</b>	<b>£m</b>
Families & Wellbeing Reserve Established from the early delivery of savings by the Directorate in 2013/14 and held to meet potential shortfalls in delivery in future years	3.4
Remodelling Reserve Set up to meet the cost of remodelling and restructuring of the Council so can be applied to meet slippage in the delivery of remodelling savings	2.0
General Fund balances Included £7.2 million identified as being based on the risk of non-delivery of savings so part of this sum used to meet the balance of the shortfall	4.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.6</b>

4.4 The Directorates will work to identify compensatory savings which will be reported to Cabinet as part of the Monitoring report and these will be used to replenish the General Fund balances.

## 5 GROWTH

5.1 An allowance for the impact of demographic changes, inflation and other risks has been incorporated into the 2015/16 budget. Details of these allowances are contained within the Budget Book and Forecasts 2015/18 approved by Budget Council on 24 February 2015.

## 6 INCOME AND DEBT

6.1 Revenue and Income falls into four broad areas for reporting purposes. Amounts raised and collected in the year are shown below.

**Table 6: Amount to be collected in 2015/16**

	2015/16	2015/16	
	Collectable	Collected	%
	£000	£000	
Council Tax	139,663	38,739	27.7%
Business Rates	71,214	21,905	30.8%
Fees and charges – Adults & Children	29,165	9,611	33%
Fees and charges – all other services	26,314	16,445	63%

### COUNCIL TAX

6.2 Compared with June 2014 the collection performance is down by 0.2% and recovery action has commenced with 28,168 reminders and 5,820 summonses issued to date.

6.3 The major change this year relates to the full removal of the local Pensioner Discount for 2015/16. This affected 11,482 Band A-D, 70+ households who previously received a 5% discount. In 2014/15 the discount from Band E-H households was removed with a reduction in the discount from 7.76% to 5%.

### BUSINESS RATES

6.4 The % collected at June 2015 of 30.8% compares favourably with the 27.6% at June 2014.

6.5 The Government is undertaking a fundamental review of Business Rates including consultation with interested parties. It has been indicated that any changes would need to raise the same amount as Business Rates does now, some £27 billion and the Government has also indicated that it prefers a property based tax. The outcome of the review is expected to feature in the Government Budget 2016.

## **DEBTORS**

- 6.6 At the end of June 2015 the arrears stood at £22.8 million which compares to £21.4 million at June 2014. With the date being a moment in time the timing of the sending of bills impacts upon the reported position particularly with month-end and year-end bills. Recovery action continues to be undertaken to minimise arrears and additional temporary staff will support this work.

## **7 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 The possible failure to deliver the Revenue Budget is being mitigated by:
- Senior Leadership Team / Directorate Teams reviewing the financial position.
  - Tracking system of savings options to monitor progress.
  - Benefits Realisation Group monitors the delivery of key change projects.
  - Use of temporary additional support to assist with revenues collection.

## **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 On 10 February 2015 Cabinet agreed to the level of General Fund balance for 2015/16 being based upon a risk calculation and a minimum of £17.4 million. The level is kept under review during the year to reflect changing circumstances and in-year developments.
- 12.2 As reported to Cabinet on 13 July 2015 the 2014/15 financial year saw an underspend of £0.5 million on the revenue budget, With the release of Insurance Fund Reserve this added £1.4 million to the balances at 31 March 2015.

- 12.3 As referred to in this report the delivery of the large savings programme brings significant risks of delay (slippage). The opening balance contained £7.2 million specifically against this risk of which £4.2 million is to be used to meet the in-year shortfall set out in Section 4.

**Table 7: Summary of the projected General Fund balances**

Details		£m
Balance 31 March 2015 when setting the Budget 2015/16		+17.4
Add; Increase following closure of 2014/15 Accounts		+1.4
Less Transfer to General Fund		-4.2
Less: Potential overspend at June 2015		-2.9
Projected balance 31 March 2016		+11.7

- 12.4 The requirement to replenish the General Fund balances to the minimum level will be addressed through Directorates identifying potential underspends in the current financial year together with a mid-year review of the Earmarked Reserves. The Reserves excluding School balances totalled £71.5 million at 1 April 2015. These include reserves relating to the cost of Council remodelling, mitigation and specific project support and ongoing financial risks.
- 12.5 There are no IT, staffing or asset implications arising directly out of this report.

### **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 available to it to meet that expenditure.

### **14 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1 This report is essentially a monitoring report which reports on financial performance.

### **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 That the Revenue Budget 2015/16 be amended to reflect the re-profiling of the delivery of the savings programme with this funded through contributions from the Families & Wellbeing Reserve, Remodelling Reserve and General Fund balances.
- 17.2 That Officers identify actions to reduce the projected overspend of £2.9 million, to mitigate against any in-year funding reductions for Public Health and to replenish General Fund balances.
- 17.3 That the Financial Monitoring report be presented to Cabinet after the end of each quarter which is in line with Performance Management monitoring arrangements.

## 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. 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.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Peter Molyneux  
Senior Manager  
Telephone (0151) 666 3389  
Email petemolyneux@wirral.gov.uk

## ANNEXES

Annex 1 General Fund Revenue Budget 2015/16  
Annex 2 Income and Debt

## SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Since September 2012 Revenue monitoring reports have been submitted to Cabinet. Budget Council	24 February 2015

## GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2015/16

## ORIGINAL BUDGET AGREED BY COUNCIL ON 24 FEBRUARY 2015

Directorate/Service Area	Original Budget	Variances	Revised Budget
	£000	£000	£000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Families and Wellbeing			
Adult Social Services	68,305	134	68,439
Children and Young People	67,964	141	68,105
Further Areas - Public Health, Schools, Sports and Recreation	7,956	431	8,387
Regeneration and Environment	90,287	-664	89,623
Transformation and Resources	31,947	-556	31,391
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>266,459</b>	<b>-514</b>	<b>265,945</b>
Corporate Growth	457	-400	57
Corporate Savings	-4,068	914	-3,154
Education Services Grant	-3,656	-	-3,656
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>259,192</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>259,192</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Revenue Support Grant	64,281	-	64,281
Business Rates Baseline	33,266	-	32,266
Business Rates Top Up	41,287	-	41,287
Business Rates Section 31 Grants	2,193	-	2,193
Council Tax Requirement	114,210	-	114,210
Council Tax Freeze Grant	1,358	-	1,358
New Homes Bonus	2,597	-	2,597
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>259,192</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>259,192</b>
<b>Statement of Balances</b>			
As at 1 April 2015	17,400	1,400	18,800
Contributions to/from Balances	0	-	0
<b>Forecast Balances 31 March 2016</b>	<b>17,400</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>18,800</b>

## Note:

This table will be updated for agreed variances during the year.

Balances as at 1 April 2015 updated following completion of the Accounts for 2014/15.

**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 2015 to 30 June 2015 with the amount collected in the same period in 2014/15:

	<b>Actual 2015/16 £000s</b>	Actual 2014/15 £000s
Cash to Collect	<b>139,663</b>	137,208
Cash Collected	<b>38,739</b>	38,330
% Collected	<b>27.7%</b>	27.9%

**Council Tax Support Scheme**

Council Tax benefits were abolished at the end of 2012/13 and replaced by Council Tax Support. £27 million is currently in payment and the numbers of awards as at 30 June 2015 are as follows:

Number of pensioners	<b>15,066</b>
Number of vulnerable (working age)	<b>9,036</b>
Number of working age	<b><u>11,826</u></b>
Number of <b>Council Tax Support</b> recipients	<b><u>35,928</u></b>

Council Tax Support claimants have dropped from 36,231 to 35,928 (303) since the beginning of the financial year.

**Council Tax Discretionary Policy as at 30 June 2015**

Period 1 April 2015 – 30 June 2015  
1 award and 23 refusals in this period.

**BUSINESS RATES**

The following statement compares the amount collected for **National Non-Domestic Rates** for the period 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2015 with the amount collected for the same period in 2014/15:

	<b>Actual 2015/16 £000</b>	Actual 2014/15 £000
Cash to Collect	<b>71,214</b>	71,310
Cash Collected	<b>21,905</b>	19,714
% Collected	<b>30.8%</b>	27.6%

## 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 30.06.15
Chief Executive	£196,692	£8,903	£5,809	£785,378	<b>£996,782</b>
Neighbourhood	£30,899	£330	£330	£18,317	<b>£49,876</b>
Transformation & Resources	£1,753,349	£893,419	£98,023	£1,800,659	<b>£4,545,450</b>
Families & Wellbeing	£3,684,624	£1,198,955	£1,497,859	£9,757,775	<b>£16,139,213</b>
Regeneration & Environment	£493,817	£37,909	£87,859	£852,609	<b>£1,472,194</b>
Policy & Performance	£3,005	£0	£0	£1,600	<b>£4,605</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£6,144,677</b>	<b>£2,139,186</b>	<b>£1,691,421</b>	<b>£13,223,453</b>	<b>£23,198,737</b>

The above figures are for invoices in respect of the period up to the end of June 2015. 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 £353,769 to be made for unallocated payments at month end leaving a balance of **£22,844,968**

## BENEFITS

The following statement details the number of claimants in respect of benefit and the expenditure for Tenants and those in receipt of Council Tax Support up to 30 June 2015:

	2015/16	2014/15
Number of <b>Private Tenant</b> recipients	<b>30,233</b>	32,221
Total rent allowance expenditure	<b>£38,615,749</b>	
<i>Number under the Local Housing Allowance Scheme (included in the above)</i>	11,698	12,396
	£14,818,686	
Number of <b>Council Tax Support</b> recipients	<b>35,928</b>	37,578
Total Council Tax Support expenditure	<b>£27,028,551</b>	
Total expenditure on benefit to date	<b>£65,644,300</b>	

The following statement provides information concerning the breakdown according to client type as at 30 June 2015 and gives the early year numbers to show the shift in sector by benefit claimants during the year.

	<b>30.06.15</b>	31.3.15
Claimants in the Private Rented Sector	<b>13,715</b>	13,723
Claimants in the Social Rented Sector	<b>16,518</b>	16,271
Owner Occupiers	<b>10,180</b>	10,112
Total claimants by age group		
- under 25 years old	<b>2,213</b>	2,238
- 25 – 60 years old	<b>21,290</b>	20,921
- over 60 years old	<b>16,910</b>	16,947

There are 40,413 benefit recipients in Wirral as at 30 June 2015.

### **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 2,550 cases
- By 25% in 628 cases

The number of claims affected does fluctuate. The numbers above are a snapshot at 30 June 2015

### **Housing Benefit Fraud and Enquiries – 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2015**

New Cases referred to Fraud team in period	473
Successful Prosecution/Administration penalty/caution	26
Tenancy Fraud	0

### **Discretionary Housing Payments**

The table profiles 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 2015/16 is £736,570 with an overall limit of £1,841,425 which the Authority must not exceed. The difference must come from the Authority's own Expenditure. It was agreed to supplement the Government contribution by a Local Authority contribution of £300,000, giving a total budget in respect of 2015/2016 of £1,036,570.

The present level of spend is not reflective of a realistic position as the service area is currently dealing with a backlog of work items, including applications for Discretionary Housing Payment. The strain on the available budget remains high and is consistent with that in respect of 2014/2015, meaning that the fund will be fully utilised.

date	Number of awards	current awards	committed awards up to 31/03/2016	% spent (committed) of Govt cont
08/04/2015		£4,687.23	£40,158.74	4%
05/05/2015	864	£40,421.27	£70,031.94	7%
01/06/2015	934	£47,148.86	£94,694.10	9%
02/07/2015	1041	£103,253.24	£208,173.93	20%

### Local Welfare Assistance

The Local Welfare Assistance Scheme was, up until March 2015, directly funded by Government grant.

The Council Budget 2015/16 includes £900,000 held in a reserve for this fund following the Government's decision to withdraw direct funding from 1 April 2015. The current scheme is in place until 31 July 2015 and a Task & Finish Scrutiny Review Panel have reviewed the position and reported to Cabinet their findings and recommendations on how the scheme should be taken forward from 1 August 2015.

The outcome being that the Council continues to administer and maintain the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme with the remaining budget available in line with the current scheme to 31 July 2015 and from August 2015 in line with the amended Scheme.

No. of Awards 2015/16		Total Awarded	Cumulative expenditure
April	673	£38,896.60	£38,896.60
May	564	£26,315.11	£65,211.71
June	754	£42,240.12	£107,451.83

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**WIRRAL COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**27 JULY 2015**

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CAPITAL MONITORING 2015/16 QUARTER 1 (APRIL TO JUNE 2015)</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES</b>
<b>KEY DECISION</b>	<b>YES</b>

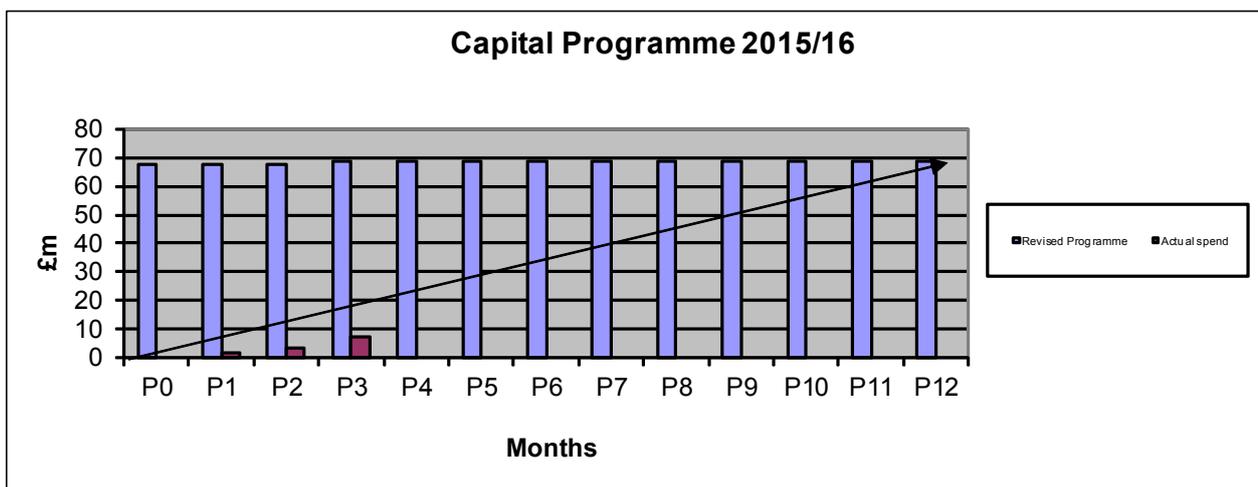
**1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This report provides an update on the progress in delivering the Capital Programme 2015/16 at the end of Quarter 1 (June 2015).

**2 OVERALL POSITION AT END OF QUARTER 1 (30 JUNE 2015)**

2.1 The actual spend against the Capital Programme is summarised in Table 1.

**Chart 1: Capital Programme spend below line of best fit**



**3 ORIGINAL AND PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16**

3.1 The Programme for 2015/16 is subject to change and reflects the Programme agreed by Cabinet on 10 February 2015 together with subsequent amendments. Broadly these reflect the re-profiling identified since the 2014/15 Budget Cabinet. The revisions differ from that reported in the 2014/15 Outturn report which shows re-profiling relating to the 2014/15 programme only, whilst this report also shows post 2014/15 adjustments. Revisions to the programme also include any changes regarding external financial support, primarily the latest grant notifications and any estimated re-profiling of schemes into the 2016/17 year.

- 3.2 To aid the monitoring process, schemes are categorised against five gate points being Conception, Approval, Start Up, Delivery and Completion.

**Table 1: Capital Programme 2015/16 at end of Quarter 1 (30 June)**

	<b>Capital Strategy</b>	<b>Revisions Since Budget Cabinet</b>	<b>Revised Capital Programme</b>	<b>Actual Spend June 2015</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Universal & Infrastructure	8,956	-190	8,766	505
Families – Children	8,517	2,337	10,854	1,054
Families – Adults	8,263	-2,446	5,817	213
Families – Sport & Rec	1,865	1,725	3,590	581
R&E– Env & Regulation	12,633	2,491	15,124	180
R&E– Hsg & Comm Safety	6,412	2,381	8,793	374
R& E – Regeneration	1,808	3,751	5,559	4,322
Transformation Resources	1,600	1,404	3,004	115
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>50,054</b>	<b>11,453</b>	<b>61,507</b>	<b>7,344</b>

- 3.3 As outlined above a number of schemes within the 2014/15 Programme have been reprofiled with expenditure now likely in 2015/16. A smaller number of schemes had spend re-profiled from 2015/16 into the 2014/15 Programme to reflect accelerated progress. Details of significant variances are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Significations variations to the 2015/16 Programme**

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Universal &amp; Infrastructure</b>	
<b>Re-profiling</b>	
Building refurbishment to increase occupancy	
Fund to assist land assembly and resale	-643
Park depot rationalisation	-113
	670
<b>Families &amp; Wellbeing – Children</b>	
<b>Re-profiling</b>	
School remodelling and additional classrooms	-550
Condition/Modernisation	1,864
Youth Capital	149
Universal Free School Meals	209
Somerville Mobile Replacement	366
Wirral Youth Zone rephased into 2016/17	0
<b>Grants</b>	
Condition/Modernisation	-1,706
Basic Needs	1,897
<b>Families &amp; Wellbeing – Adults</b>	
Citizen and provider portal	450
Transformation of day service	1,115
Integrated I.T.	1,085

Extra Care Schemes reprofiled to 2016/17	-3,896
Pensby Wood – day service remodelling and additional rooms reprofiled to 2016/17	-1,200
<b>Families &amp; Wellbeing – Sport &amp; Recreation</b>	
<b>Re-profiling</b>	
West Kirby/Guinea Gap/Europa Pools	824
West Kirby Marine Lake	690
<b>Reg &amp; Env – Environment &amp; Regulation</b>	
<b>Re-profiling</b>	
Active Travel	101
Highway Maintenance	146
Bridges	352
Energy schemes (LED Street Lighting)	236
Parks vehicles replacement	684
Allotments	165
Additional Grant – STEP	500
<b>Reg &amp; Env – Housing &amp; Community Safety</b>	
<b>Re-profiling</b>	
LIFT programme	298
DFG/ Aids and adaptations	1,162
Home Improvements	-878
Clearance	519
Improvement for sale grants	180
New House Building Programme	520
Cluster of Empty Homes Grant	650
<b>Reg &amp; Env – Regeneration</b>	
<b>Re-profiling and additional grant</b>	
Other Regional Growth Fund Schemes	3,208
LEP Regional Growth Fund Schemes	1,102
Hamilton Square Access Improvements to 2016/17	-600
<b>Transformation &amp; Resources</b>	
<b>Re-profiling</b>	
I.T. development	1,404
Total of variances below £100,000 each	493
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>11,453</b>

### 3.4 Universal and Infrastructure Services

Cleveland Street Transport Depot works are continuing refurbishing existing buildings to allow a phased move from various parks depots that will reduce revenue implications and/or produce a capital receipt.

Other spend to date includes the continuation of building refurbishment works to increase occupancy, energy efficiency and land assembly.

### **3.5 Families and Wellbeing - Children**

This area of the Programme includes investment in Schools which is essentially funded by Government Grant. The Government Grant announcements have been confirmed annually just prior to the financial year, however this year 3 year announcements have been made providing allocation amounts from 2015/16 – 2017/18. This 3 year allocation will assist in the programming of significant school projects. The works to the buildings are undertaken in co-operation with the schools and, mindful of the impact upon the service, such works are largely arranged for completion outside of term-times wherever possible. These factors impact upon the timing of the actual spend with frequent revisions to be accommodated. A design framework is being developed to allow the use of external Designers i.e. Architects, Mechanical and Electrical engineers, Cost Surveyors to enable schemes to progress in partnership with Local Authority Designers team and Asset Management.

Woodslee Primary School scheme [£550,000] is nearing completion replacing the nursery and creating a new library/resource area.

Fender Primary School scheme to create two additional classrooms and internal remodelling [£600,000] is now on site and progressing well, with anticipated completion October 2015.

Stanley Special School scheme [£750,000] to further develop two classrooms and external remodelling to enable the school to receive additional pupils places to be ready for September 2016.

Legal documentation has been drafted between OnSide Youth Zones and Hill Dickenson and competitive tendering undertaken for the building works in respect of the Youth Zone. A formal planning application is expected early in the new financial year. To date approximately £5m of the overall £6m funding required has been secured with OnSide hoping to secure the rest by July. The Council's contribution is now more likely to be drawn down during 2016/17.

### **3.6 Families and Wellbeing - Adults**

The Integrated I.T. scheme (Liquidlogic) went live during September 2014. The next phase of the 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. £500,000 has been committed in the year to date. Additional modules and implementation costs may increase the committed spend in year.

Transformation of Day Services is ongoing. Plans for the Local Authority implementation have been delayed slightly resulting in some of the capital works being delayed until next year.

### **3.7 Families and Wellbeing – Sport and Recreation**

The programme for the year involves £3.6 million of investment across a range of Leisure facilities.

West Kirby Concourse – phase 1 – creation of the new fitness suite is now open to all user groups. There are some delays with phase 2, which includes remodelling of other areas of the building and completion is now expected during September.

### **3.8 Regeneration and Environment – Environment and Regulation**

This element of the capital programme will involve £15.1 million of investment.

The largest element of the programme is LED lighting scheme. The tender process for the installation has been completed, and installation will commence mid-August. The scheme remains on schedule and the budget savings are expected to be achieved.

Cabinet 20 July 2015 received reports detailing planned use of transport block g and Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package (STEP) funding.

### **3.9 Regeneration and Environment – Housing and Community Safety**

Investment of £8.8 million is planned for this element of the programme. This includes support for the provision and re-provision of new housing through the clearance programme with £1.8 million deferred to 2015/16 from 2014/15 as well as approximately half of the 2014/15 Home Improvement allocation.

The authority has received DCLG funding via Liverpool City Council (acting as the accountable body) of £1.2m for a grant scheme entitled “Cluster of Empty Homes Fund”. This capital funding is to be used in accordance with the bid conditions to bring empty property (including commercial property) into use as housing. £31,657 has been used to support the Council’s Empty Homes Grant programme. The remaining funding has been allocated to contribute to the overall costs of renovating and converting the Old Court House in Manor Road and The Ark, Birkenhead.

Disabled Facilities Grants/Aids and Adaptations continue to be approved and the spend committed but the incurring of this spend is determined by the grant applicants which may result in delays.

### **3.10 Regeneration and Environment – Regeneration**

Approximately £5.6 million of expenditure is forecast in the year for this area. £4.3 million has been incurred to date in respect of Regional Growth Fund activity.

### **3.11 Transformation and Resources**

The programme comprises £3 million of expenditure mainly in respect of the continued programme of IT development. Expenditure of £112,000 has been incurred to date.

#### 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**

<b>Capital Programme Financing</b>	<b>Capital Strategy</b>	<b>Revised Programme</b>
	<b>£000s</b>	<b>£000s</b>
Unsupported Borrowing	19,090	21,410
Capital Receipts	12,693	14,436
Revenue and Reserves	537	1,387
Grants	17,734	24,274
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>50,054</b>	<b>61,507</b>

4.2 Any reprofiling of the Capital Programme which reduces the borrowing requirement will produce one off in-year revenue savings. A permanent saving will only occur if schemes are permanently ceased, otherwise the full budget will be required in 2016/17 when the re-profiled expenditure is incurred.

#### 5 PROJECTED LONGER TERM CAPITAL PROGRAMME

5.1 Funding for the forecast 2015/16 to 2017/18 Capital Programme is shown in Table 4. This reflects the 2015-18 Capital Programme agreed by Cabinet on 10 February 2015 together with any subsequent amendments for additional reprofiling and subsequent grant notifications.

**Table 4: Capital Programme Financing 2015/16 to 2017/18**

<b>Capital Programme Financing</b>	<b>2015/16 Revised Estimate</b>	<b>2016/17 Revised Estimate</b>	<b>2017/18 Revised Estimate</b>	<b>Total Programme</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Unsupported Borrowing	21,410	9,362	0	30,772
Capital Receipts	14,436	5,445	2,414	22,295
Revenue / Reserves	1,387	120	66	1,573
Grants	24,274	15,075	9,511	47,563
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>61,507</b>	<b>30,002</b>	<b>11,991</b>	<b>102,203</b>

#### 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 2015/16 to 2017/18 the Council has included an element of prudential borrowing. At Month 3 there is a sum of £30.7 million of new unsupported borrowing included over the three years, which will result in approximately £2.5 million of additional revenue costs detailed at Table 5, if there is no change in the Strategy.

**Table 5: Unsupported Borrowing Forecasts & Revenue Costs**

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	£000	£000	£000	£000
New Unsupported Borrowing	21,410	9,362	0	0
Cumulative	21,410	30,772	30,772	30,772
Annual Revenue repayment costs				
Cumulative	0	1,713	2,462	2,462

6.2 The re-profiling of the capital programme and the use of internal borrowing i.e. using the Councils cash balances rather than taking out external loans, means that Treasury Management costs are anticipated to be £1 million less in 2015/16. With cash investments currently yielding low rates of return and the interest rate on external loans being much higher it is financially advantageous to use cash balances to fund certain capital projects.

## 7 CAPITAL RECEIPTS POSITION

7.1 The Capital Programme is reliant on the Council generating capital receipts to finance future schemes. The Capital Receipts Reserve at 1 April 2015 contained £8.3 million of receipts. The table assumes the proposed spend, set out at Section 4.1 is agreed. Receipts and funding assumptions are based upon the latest estimates available.

**Table 6: Projected Capital Receipts position**

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	£000	£000	£000
Capital Receipts Reserve	8,300	364	4,469
In - Receipts Assumption	6,500	9,550	9,550
Out - Funding assumption	-14,436	-5,445	-2,414
Closing Balance	364	4,469	11,605

7.2 There are 3 possible major site disposals. Bids from various developers for the site at Acre Lane are being assessed. Marketing of the Manor Drive site has commenced. The third site is Rock Ferry High School where Secretary of State approval would be required should the Council decide on any sale.

## 8 RELEVANT RISKS

8.1 The possibility of 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 may be influenced by factors outside the authority's control e.g. ecological issues. Lambert, Smith, Hampton are still providing external support.

## 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 is no carbon reduction or environmental implications arising directly from this monitoring report.

## **17 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

## **18 RECOMMENDATIONS**

18.1 That Cabinet is asked to note:

- a) The spend to date at Month 3 of £7.3 million, with 25% of the financial year having elapsed;

18.2 That Cabinet is asked to agree and refer to Council:

- a) The revised Capital Programme of £61.5 million (Table 1);

18.3 That the Capital Monitoring report be presented to Cabinet after the end of each quarter, which is in line with Performance Management Monitoring arrangements.

## **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.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Reg Huyton  
Principal Accountant  
Telephone 0151 666 3415  
Email reghuyton@wirral.gov.uk

**SUBJECT HISTORY**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Capital monitoring reports, from September 2012	
Capital Programme – Council	25 February 2014
Capital Programme – Council	24 February 2015

<b>Universal &amp; Infrastructure</b>	<b>Revised Programme £000</b>	<b>Spend to Date £000</b>	<b>Council Resources £000</b>	<b>Revenue/ Reserves £000</b>	<b>Grants £000</b>	<b>Total Funding £000</b>
Building refurbishment to increase occupancy	2,119	337	2,119	-	-	2,119
Fund to assist land assembly and re-sale	623	63	623	-	-	623
Cleveland St Transport Depot	3,115	-	3,115	-	-	3,115
Park depot rationalisation	1,270	-	1,270	-	-	1,270
Energy efficiency Initiatives	596	105	596	-	-	596
Demolish Stanley Special & External Renovation Work	150	-	150	-	-	150
Demolish Bebington Town Hall and Liscard Municipal	378	-	378	-	-	378
Demolish former Rock Ferry High	395	-	395	-	-	395
Demolish Foxfield	120	-	120	-	-	120
	<b>8,766</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>8,766</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,766</b>

<b>Families and Wellbeing - CYP</b>	<b>Revised Programme £000</b>	<b>Spend to Date £000</b>	<b>Council Resources £000</b>	<b>Revenue/ Reserves £000</b>	<b>Grants £000</b>	<b>Total Funding £000</b>
Elleray Park Special School redevelopment	<b>850</b>	198	850	-	-	<b>850</b>
School remodelling and additional classrooms (Primary Places)	<b>2,050</b>		1,800	-	250	<b>2,050</b>
Condition/Modernisation	<b>4,658</b>	397	-	-	4,658	<b>4,658</b>
Basic Need allocation	<b>1,897</b>	66	-	-	1,897	<b>1,897</b>
PFI	<b>150</b>	-	-	150	-	<b>150</b>
Children's centres	<b>53</b>	-	-	-	53	<b>53</b>
Aiming Higher	<b>24</b>	53	-	-	24	<b>24</b>
Youth Capital	<b>149</b>		98	-	51	<b>149</b>
Birkenhead High Girls Academy	<b>80</b>	157	-	69	11	<b>80</b>
Funding for 2 year olds	<b>18</b>	-	-	-	18	<b>18</b>
Universal Free School Meals	<b>209</b>	-	-	-	209	<b>209</b>
Somerville Mobile Replacement	<b>366</b>	134	366	-	-	<b>366</b>
Family Support Scheme	<b>200</b>	49	200	-	-	<b>200</b>
Stanley Special School - additional classrooms, medical/hygiene provision	<b>150</b>	-	150	-	-	<b>150</b>
	<b>10,854</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>3,464</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>7,171</b>	<b>10,854</b>

<b>Families and Wellbeing - DASS</b>	<b>Revised Programme £000</b>	<b>Spend to Date £000</b>	<b>Council Resources £000</b>	<b>Revenue/ Reserves £000</b>	<b>Grants £000</b>	<b>Total Funding £000</b>
Citizen and Provider Portal for Social and Health Services	617	-	-	-	617	617
Transformation of Day Service	1,115	90	500	-	615	1,115
Integrated IT	1,085	123	1,000	-	85	1,085
Community Intermediate Care Services	1,000	-	-	-	1,000	1,000
Integrated Social Care and Health Learning Disability Service - Girtrell Court	2,000	-	2,000	-	-	2,000
	<b>5,817</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,317</b>	<b>5,817</b>

<b>Families and Wellbeing - Sports &amp; Recreation</b>	<b>Revised Programme £000</b>	<b>Spend to Date £000</b>	<b>Council Resources £000</b>	<b>Revenue/ Reserves £000</b>	<b>Grants £000</b>	<b>Total Funding £000</b>
West Kirby Concourse Fitness Suite	112	-	112	-	-	112
Guinea Gap 3G Football pitches	99	-	99	-	-	99
West Kirby/Guinea Gap/Europa Pools	2,024	581	2,024	-	-	2,024
Refurb of Artificial Turf Pitch & perimeter fence repairs at the Tennis & Sports Centre	240	-	240	-	-	240
West Kirby Marine Lake – Integrated accommodation and service delivery	690	-	690	-	-	690
Bidston Tennis Centre re-roofing	425	-	425	-	-	425
	<b>3,590</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>3,590</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,590</b>

<b>Regeneration and Environment - Environment &amp; Regulation</b>	<b>Revised Programme £000</b>	<b>Spend to Date £000</b>	<b>Council Resources £000</b>	<b>Revenue/ Reserves £000</b>	<b>Grants £000</b>	<b>Total Funding £000</b>
Road Safety	157	14	84	-	73	157
Active Travel	185	13	185	-	-	185
Transportation	104	11	104	-	-	104
Bridges	1,566	-	728	-	838	1,566
Street Lighting	76	18	26	-	50	76
Highway Maintenance	3,105	80	400	-	2,705	3,105
Integrated Transport	1,558	-	-	-	1,558	1,558
Start Active, Play Active, Stay active	34	6	24	10	-	34
Wirral Way - widening and safety improvements	14	-	14	-	-	14
Cemetery Extensions and Improvements	171	-	171	-	-	171
Coast Protection	251	4	251	-	-	251
Energy schemes (LED Street Lighting)	4,236	-	4,236	-	-	4,236
Allotments	165	-	165	-	-	165
Parks Improvements	13	8	-	13	-	13
Royden Park	2	-	-	-	2	2
Parks vehicles replacement	684	23	684	-	-	684
Reeds Lane Play Area	23	3	-	-	23	23
West Kirby Flood Alleviation	1,500	-	-	200	1,300	1,500
Dock Bridges Replacement	280	-	280	-	-	280
Preventative Maintenance to Unclassified and Residential Streets	500	-	500	-	-	500
Preventative Maintenance to Classified Roads	500	-	500	-	-	500
	<b>15,124</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>8,352</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>6,549</b>	<b>15,124</b>

<b>Regeneration and Environment - Housing &amp; Community Safety</b>	<b>Revised Programme £000</b>	<b>Spend to Date £000</b>	<b>Council Resources £000</b>	<b>Revenue/ Reserves £000</b>	<b>Grants £000</b>	<b>Total Funding £000</b>
Aids, Adaptations and Disabled Facility Grants	<b>3,235</b>	263	1,162	-	2,073	<b>3,235</b>
LIFT	<b>298</b>	2	298	-	-	<b>298</b>
Clearance	<b>1,840</b>	16	755	350	735	<b>1,840</b>
Home Improvement	<b>854</b>	66	485	369	-	<b>854</b>
Improvement for sale grants	<b>180</b>	-	-	180	-	<b>180</b>
Empty Property Interventions	<b>236</b>	27	190	46	-	<b>236</b>
New House Building Programme	<b>1,500</b>	-	1,500	-	-	<b>1,500</b>
Cluster of Empty Homes Fund	<b>650</b>	-	-	-	650	<b>650</b>
	<b>8,793</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>4,390</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>3,458</b>	<b>8,793</b>

<b>Regeneration and Environment - Regeneration</b>	<b>Revised Programme £000</b>	<b>Spend to Date £000</b>	<b>Council Resources £000</b>	<b>Revenue/ Reserves £000</b>	<b>Grants £000</b>	<b>Total Funding £000</b>
Other Regional Growth Fund Schemes	<b>3,208</b>	3,208	-	-	3,208	<b>3,208</b>
LEP Regional Growth Fund Schemes - Targeted Assistance	<b>1,102</b>	1,102	-	-	1,102	<b>1,102</b>
Business Investment Grants	<b>780</b>	-	780	-	-	<b>780</b>
The Priory	<b>69</b>	12	-	-	69	<b>69</b>
Hamilton Square Accessibility Improvements	<b>400</b>	-	-	-	400	<b>400</b>
	<b>5,559</b>	<b>4,322</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,779</b>	<b>5,559</b>

<b>Transformation &amp; Resources</b>	<b>Revised Programme £000</b>	<b>Spend to Date £000</b>	<b>Council Resources £000</b>	<b>Revenue/ Reserves £000</b>	<b>Grants £000</b>	<b>Total Funding £000</b>
CCTV cameras and other equipment	100	-	100	-	-	100
I.T Development	2,904	115	2,904	-	-	2,904
	<b>3,004</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>3,004</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,004</b>
<b>Programme Total</b>	<b>61,507</b>	<b>7,344</b>	<b>35,846</b>	<b>1,387</b>	<b>24,274</b>	<b>61,507</b>

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### COORDINATING COMMITTEE

30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>POLICY INFORM BRIEFING PAPERS – SEPTEMBER 2015</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR TRANSFORMATION &amp; RESOURCES</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE, COMMISSIONING &amp; IMPROVEMENT</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides Committee Members with the September Policy Inform Briefing papers which include an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, potential implications for the Council and emerging policies.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The policy briefing papers are intended to provide Members with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support each Policy and Performance Committee's work programme and future scrutiny work.

2.2 During the course of the 2015-16 municipal years, the Council's Policy and Strategy team will prepare four policy briefing papers which will be reported to the Policy and Performance Committees for consideration. The following table outlines the timetable for the preparation and reporting of policy briefing papers:

<b>Policy &amp; Performance Committee Briefings</b>	
<b>July 2015</b>	The first policy briefing will focus predominately on the Queen's Speech, which will establish the Government's legislative programme for the parliamentary year ahead.
<b>September 2015</b>	The second policy briefing will be produced in September and will focus on the Chancellor's July 2015 Budget Statement. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.

<b>January 2016</b>	The third policy briefing will focus on the local government finance settlement which informs the annual determination of funding to local government. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>March 2016</b>	The fourth policy briefing will focus upon the 2016 Chancellor of Exchequers Budget. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.

2.3 The September Policy Inform briefings outline the key features of the Chancellor of Exchequers Budget Statement, which was announced on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The Policy Inform briefings also allude to any potential implications for Wirral Council, and elaborate on any legislation or policy updates that have been implemented, or developed since the last policy briefing in July. It is expected that the January Briefing Paper will focus on the local government finance settlement which informs the annual determination of funding to local government.

2.4 The Committee may wish to identify specific policy areas to focus upon which are in line with the Committee's work programme. Detailed briefing papers can be prepared for these subject matters at the request of the Committee which would be in addition to the regular policy briefing papers outlined above.

### **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

3.1 No specific risks identified.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1 None considered.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

5.1 Not applicable.

### **6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS**

6.1 Not applicable.

### **7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

7.1 There are none arising directly from this report. Any implications identified in ongoing and recent national legislation and policy will require further consideration by the Council to identify the appropriate action that will be taken.

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

8.1 There are none arising directly from this report. Any implications identified in ongoing and recent national legislation and policy will require further consideration by the Council to identify the appropriate action that will be taken.

## **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are none arising directly from this report. Any implications identified in ongoing and recent national legislation and policy will require further consideration by the Council to identify the appropriate action that will be taken.

## **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

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

(c) No because of another reason which is

The policy briefing is intended to provide Committee Members with an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, bills presented to Parliament, emerging policies and upcoming consultations.

The local implementation of any policy or legislation will require an individual equality impact assessment.

## **1.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

## **12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

13.1 Committee Members are requested to note the contents of the Policy Briefing papers and identify any areas of focus for further detailed policy briefings to be provided.

## **14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

14.1 To provide Committee Members with an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation and emerging policy developments.

## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 – Policy Inform: Families & Wellbeing
- Appendix 2 – Policy Inform: Regeneration & Environment
- Appendix 3 – Policy Inform: Transformation & Resources

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# POLICY INFORM: FAMILIES AND WELLBEING

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## Directorate Policy: September 2015

The Directorate Policy briefings will provide an overview of key political events, ongoing and recent national legislation, and emerging policies. The Directorate Policy briefing will be produced specifically to inform Portfolio Holders and Elected Members and will be taken to Policy & Performance Committees for discussion.

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# Introduction

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The policy briefing paper is intended to provide Members of the Policy and Performance Committee with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support the committees work programme and future scrutiny work.

The following table outlines the timetable for the preparation and reporting of policy briefing papers:

<b>Policy &amp; Performance Committee Briefings</b>	
<b>July 2015</b>	The first policy briefing will focus predominately on the Queen's Speech, which will establish the Government's legislative programme for the parliamentary year ahead.
<b>September 2015</b>	The second policy briefing will be produced in September and will focus on the Chancellor's July 2015 Budget Statement. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>January 2016</b>	The third policy briefing will focus on the Autumn Statement and the local government finance settlement which informs the annual determination of funding to local government. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>March 2016</b>	The fourth policy briefing will focus upon the 2016 Chancellor of Exchequers Budget. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.

The September policy briefing outlines the key features of the Chancellor of Exchequers Budget Statement, which was announced on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The policy briefing also alludes to any potential implications that have been highlighted by relevant Officers for Wirral Council, and elaborates on any legislation or policy updates that have been implemented or developed since the last policy briefing in July.

The Committee may wish to identify specific policy areas to focus upon which are in line with the Committee's work programme. Detailed briefing papers can be prepared for these subject matters at the request of the Committee which would be in addition to the regular policy briefing papers outlined above.

# Chancellors Statement- 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

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On 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015, the Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne gave his Budget statement to the House of Commons. The budget set out £17bn of savings and deferred announcements on another £20bn to the autumn's Spending Review. The key announcements outlined in the statement have been divided into themes and are displayed below:

## Social Housing

- The budget details plans to legislate to freeze working-age benefits, including tax credits and the Local Housing Allowances, for 4 years from 2016-17 to 2019-20. This is forecast to save £4 billion a year by 2019-20.
- Rents in social housing in England will be reduced by 1% a year for 4 years.

## Welfare

- Working-age benefits, including tax credits and Local Housing Allowance, will be frozen for 4 years from 2016-17 (this doesn't include Maternity Allowance, maternity pay, paternity pay and sick pay).
- The household benefit cap will be reduced to £20,000 (£23,000 in London).
- Support through Child Tax Credit will be limited to 2 children for children born from April 2017.
- Those aged 18 to 21 who are on Universal Credit will have to apply for an apprenticeship or traineeship, gain work-based skills, or go on a work placement 6 months after the start of their claim.
- From April 2017 the Budget will remove the automatic entitlement to housing support for new claims in Universal Credit from 18-21 year olds who are out of work.

## Housing

- Rents for social housing will be reduced by 1% a year for 4 years.
- £800 million of funding is designated for Discretionary Housing Payments over the next 5 years.
- Social housing tenants with household incomes of £40,000 and above in London, and £30,000 and above in the rest of England, will be required to "Pay to Stay", by paying a market or near market rent for their accommodation.

## Children and Education

- From the 2016-17 academic year, cash support for new students will increase by £766 to £8,200 a year. New maintenance loan support will replace student grants. Loans will be paid back only when graduates earn above £21,000 a year.
- From September 2017, the free childcare entitlement will be doubled from 15 hours to 30 hours a week for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds.
- Parents with a youngest child aged 3 or older (including lone parents) who are able to work will be expected to look for work if they are claiming Universal Credit.
- £30 million will be provided to further speed up the adoption process while paving the way for the introduction of regional adoption agencies.

## Pay

- From April 2016, a new National Living Wage of £7.20 an hour for the over 25s will be introduced. This will rise to over £9 an hour by 2020.
- Public sector pay will increase by 1% a year for 4 years from 2016-17.
- The budget details plans to increase the National Insurance contributions (NICs) Employment Allowance from £2,000 to £3,000 a year.

## Efficiency

- The budget supports plans to continue to pursue more efficient ways of working and further reform to public services. The government will provide funding for the Cabinet Office to explore a number of cross-cutting savings proposals. The Treasury, working with Cabinet Office, will develop specific proposals to inform the Spending Review.

## Devolution

- The budget commits to transport devolution in all of the country's city regions that elect a Mayor, as well as the country's counties. This includes the rollout of Oyster-style smart and integrated ticketing systems.
- The government is working towards further devolution deals with the Sheffield City Region, Liverpool City Region, and Leeds, West Yorkshire and partner authorities, to be agreed in parallel with the Spending Review. The Budget notes that agreement will be reached based on combined authorities agreeing to an elected mayor working with local leaders to oversee any new powers devolved from ministers.
- The Budget announces further devolution of powers to Manchester, including devolving Fire Services under the control of the new directly-elected Mayor, establishing a Greater Manchester Land Commission and granting the city region more powers over planning subject to the agreement of the Cabinet member representing the district in which the power is used.
- The Budget states that it will be offering towns and counties the opportunity to agree devolution deals.

## Economic Development

- The government is inviting bids for a new round of Enterprise Zones. The existing Enterprise Zones have supported the creation of over 15,000 jobs throughout England.
- To ensure that local areas have a greater say over their own economies, the government will consult on devolving powers on Sunday trading to city mayors and local authorities.
- The budget details plans to invest £23m in 6 Next Generation Digital Economy Centres over 6 sites (London, Swansea, Newcastle, Nottingham, York and Bath), leveraging £22 million of additional funding, and partnering with LEPs, regional councils, and local SMEs. These centres will exploit opportunities across sectors of the digital economy including the creative industries, finance, healthcare and education.

# Queen's Speech 2015- Designation to Policy and Performance Committees

On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the Queen unveiled the Government's legislative plans for the year ahead. Below is a list of each individual Bill which will have implications for local government that were announced during the speech. The list identifies the Policy and Performance committee with whose remit the legislation most closely aligns:

Legislative Plans	Policy and Performance Committee
National Insurance Contributions Bill/ Finance Bill	Transformation and Resources
Full Employment and Welfare Benefits Bill	All Policy and Performance Committees
Trade Unions Bill	Transformation and Resources
Housing Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Buses Bill	Regeneration and Environment
High Speed Rail Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Childcare Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Energy Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Education and Adoption Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Enterprise Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Policing and Criminal Justice Bill	Families and Wellbeing Transformation and Resources
Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill	Transformation and Resources
Psychoactive Substances Bill	Families and Wellbeing

Additional bills that have been announced are outlined below. These will be monitored in relation to any emerging implications for Local Government and reported to the relevant Policy and Performance Committee as appropriate.

Additional Legislative Plans
EU Referendum Bill
Scotland Bill
Immigration Bill
Extremism Bill
Investigatory Powers Bill
Charities Bill
Armed Forces Bill
Bank of England Bill
Northern Ireland (Stormont House Agreement) Bill

Wales Bill
Votes for Life Bill

The bills relevant to the Families and Wellbeing Committee are discussed in further detail below. The information provided has been sourced predominately from the LGiU, as well as SOLACE and the LGC and therefore solely represents a fact-based introduction to the bills.

# Queen's Speech 2015- Developments and Implications

## Childcare Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The purpose of the Childcare Bill is to help support working people from the start of their family life and help hard-working families with the costs of childcare and support parents in work. The changes aim to help 600,000 children a year from 2017.

#### **Key Points:**

- Deliver on the Government's election manifesto commitment of giving families where all parents are working an entitlement to 30 hours a week of free childcare for their three and four-year olds for 38 weeks of the year (equivalent of the school year).
- Require local authorities to publish information about the provision of childcare in the local authority area, and other services or facilities which might be of benefit to parents or prospective parents, or children, or young persons in their area.

### Further Developments:

- The Childcare Bill was introduced in the House of Lords on 1 June 2015, and published the following day. The Second Reading of the Bill took place on Tuesday, 16 June. The Bill is likely to complete its Lords stages by the Summer recess (likely to be around 16 July), and complete the Commons Stages by the end of November with Royal Assent before the end of 2015.

#### **The Government issued a press release on 1 June 2015 giving further information about the Bill and Government policy. Key points include:**

- There will be pilots in some areas offering 30 hours a week from September 2016 (it is understood that the original plan was to introduce the new entitlement from April 2017)
- There is a promise of more money 'to increase the average childcare funding rates paid to providers (the hourly funding provided for each free place)' ... 'with a review promised before summer'.
- A new government taskforce, headed by Minister of State for Employment Priti Patel, will 'drive forward the plans and ensure not a moment is wasted in passing the benefits onto working families'.

### Wirral Implications:

- Capacity to respond to additional child care places (from 15 to 30 hours a week) based on the current profile of parents of 3 and 4 year olds. The current take-up of 3 and 4 year old places is 80%. At present there appears to be sufficient estimated growth for those 3 and 4 year old places for working parents to extend from 15 to 30 hours. Within the maintained and non- maintained childcare sector (over 450 new places have been registered in the last 12 months).

## Wirral Implications Continued:

- However, the precise impact of the measures in the Bill and the additional capacity required to respond to all eligible three year olds, is currently unclear. This is due to further clarity being required on the implications of the proposed changes to the welfare reform and child care capacity, required to meet the demand from parents whose youngest child is three years old or older and who need to make themselves available for work. It is currently unclear if the conditions of grant (from 15 to 30 hours entitlement a week) extends to parents in training and/or education or if parents in training and/or education are exempt from making themselves available for work and if so for how long. There is currently very limited information with regard to implementation of the increased offer which will be piloted in 2016 with roll out planned for 2017.
- Capacity to provide places within schools – the impact on schools is even more unclear, and this has and will continue to be discussed with Head Teachers. Currently schools are being actively encouraged to extend provision to develop provision for disadvantaged 2 year olds. This has been supported by recent changes in legislation; in that schools providing or seeking to provide this facility, where they already provide 3 year old provision (F1), no longer require a separate Ofsted registration. This focus on the 2 year old offer could potentially limit capacity to deliver the extended offer for three and four year olds (from 15 to 30 hours a week), within the school environment. The offer is not a universal offer and is dependent on parents being in employment which is likely to make the administration of the offer of 30 hours for some children and schools more complex.
- Wirral has nearly 50% of its 2 year olds eligible to take up the offer for disadvantaged two year olds (not evenly spread across the Borough). The additional funding (available when a child is 3) may be seen as an incentive for those parents currently eligible for the free 2 year old entitlement, encouraging and enabling them to seek work or to extend hours of paid employment to take the family income above the benefits thresholds. We will work with partners such as Job Centre Plus and employment agencies to support an increase in the take up of the offer and actively seek to support parents to move to a work ready position.
- Identifying families - working together with Job Centre Plus we need to ascertain the current level of worklessness amongst parents with young children across Wirral in order to assess the potential need for additional capacity as parents move into employment. In addition, the wider impact of the Welfare Reforms needs to be better understood for this group of parents.
- Impact on child poverty - for parents who move into work or extend their hours of employment this policy is seen as positively contributing to the targets to reduce child poverty within the Child Poverty Act, 2010. Many parents who intend to go back to work or enter employment do find the costs of childcare unaffordable. Whilst the additional childcare entitlement may make this more affordable, the wider implications of universal credits remain unknown.
- Identifying eligibility for take up – in Wirral, the current 3 and 4 year old funding is managed through the Early Years Business Support Team and the Finance Department. The current process to manage payments is labour intensive and will be made more complex to match eligibility for this new policy requirement.

### Wirral Implications Continued:

- The pilot sites are yet to be determined and Wirral will bid to be included in any early delivery cohort, if it was deemed possible through the range of providers – work to ascertain the likelihood of this will be undertaken once the criteria is understood.
- There are implications about how we make information available about this change in eligibility for families, through the family information service and other communication mechanisms, to ensure maximum take up. This is being considered as part of the early years and children’s centre remodelling.
- Wirral’s childcare providers meet as part of local networks, and discussions to understand the impact of the Bill will be planned through children’s centre leads.

## Education and Adoption Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The purpose of the Education and Adoption Bill is to strengthen the government's intervention powers in failing maintained schools. Separately the Bill introduces powers to deliver regional adoption agencies.

#### **Key Points:**

- The Bill would give Regional Schools Commissioners powers to bring in leadership support from other excellent schools and heads, and would speed up the process of turning schools into academies.
- An inadequate Ofsted judgment would usually lead to a school being converted into an academy, and barriers would be removed to ensure swift progress towards conversion.
- It would make schools that meet a new coasting definition, having shown a prolonged period of mediocre performance and insufficient pupil progress, eligible for academisation.
- A coasting definition will be set out in due course according to a number of factors.

### Further Developments:

- The Education and Adoption Bill is now at its reporting stage and is scheduled to have its third reading at the House of Commons (date has not yet been confirmed).
- Since the announcement of the Education and Adoption Bill, the use of the term 'coasting school' has become commonplace. Briefings by the LGiU have reviewed the development of the term 'coasting school' and have connected the 'coasting schools' agenda with school improvement.
- The Education and Adoption Bill will provide a legal framework to define 'coasting schools' and subject them to a notice to improve. They will be given support from a DfE team of expert headteachers with those schools that continue to be unable to demonstrate a clear plan for improvement also given new leadership. The implementation of this new approach will be consulted on this summer.

### Wirral Implications:

- Wirral has a strong commitment to improving standards in schools, and whilst this Bill is intended to strengthen the government's powers to intervene in "coasting schools"; the Council is continuously developing its approach, using all powers currently enshrined in regulation and guidance, to support and where necessary intervene to raise standards in schools. For example, from September 2015, Wirral is implementing a new approach to providing "school to school support". This will strengthen the approach of schools supporting each other to raise standards. Support will be delivered through three clusters, each with a teaching school and a school improvement officer. An overarching Board involving head teachers from the clusters, chaired by the School Commissioning Manager, will provide the framework to drive this approach and monitor its effectiveness.
- In terms of the Adoption aspect of the Bill; preliminary discussions have taken place across the Liverpool City Region and there is a commitment develop proposals to progress the regionalisation of adoption on a geographical footprint.

## Welfare Reform and Work Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### Synopsis:

- The overriding aim of the Bill is to reduce expenditure and “help to achieve a more sustainable welfare system.” A related aim is to support efforts to increase employment and “support the policy of rewarding hard work while increasing fairness with working households.”

#### Key Points:

- It is essentially a Bill of three parts. First, it will introduce a duty to report to Parliament on:
  - Progress towards achieving full employment.
  - Progress towards achieving 3 million apprenticeships in England.
  - Progress with the Troubled Families programme (England).
- Second, it will repeal almost all of the Child Poverty Act 2010 and introduce a new duty for the Secretary of State to report annually on “life chances”: children living in workless households and educational attainment at age 16, in England.
- Finally, the Bill allows for the introduction of extensive changes to welfare benefits, tax credits and social housing rent levels. These will account for around 70% of the £12-13 billion in welfare savings identified in the Summer Budget 2015. The welfare/housing measures include:
  - Lowering the benefit cap threshold and varying it between London and the rest of the UK.
  - A four year benefits freeze.
  - Limiting support through Child Tax Credits/Universal Credit.
  - The abolition of Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Component.
  - Changes to conditionality for responsible carers under Universal Credit.
  - Replacing Support for Mortgage Interest with Loans for Mortgage Interest.
  - Reducing social housing rent levels by 1% in each year for four years from 2016-17.

### Further Developments:

- The Welfare Reform and Work Bill was presented on 9 July 2015. The Bill passed its second reading on 20 July 2015. MPs also agreed a programme motion which schedules the Bill to be considered in a public bill committee. Proceedings in the public bill committee are scheduled to conclude by Thursday 15 October 2015, but could finish earlier.

### Wirral Implications:

- **Freeze Working Age Benefits** - This will impact on household disposable income, not previously frozen albeit uprating was nominal in 2014/15. This will potentially increase the strain on Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Local Welfare Allowance (LWA) with consequential harder to collect charges. This will affect all Revenues areas such as Personal Finance Unit charges, Benefits overpayments and Council Tax. Rent arrears locally will increase as with all cuts and will continue as (social) landlords maintain rent levels and annual increases.

## Wirral Implications Continued:

- **Freeze Working Age Benefits Continued** - This will increase pressure on LA Housing Benefit services from Social Landlords which is evident already via the rent shortfall in Bedroom Tax and insufficient DHP. In the private sector it may see a freezing of Local Housing Allowance rates which will give Private Sector landlords further issue with taking on tenants who rely on HB. This is likely to have a consequential impact on the levels of people being threatened with homelessness in the Borough.
- **Cutting Household Benefit Cap** – This will certainly impact locally, regrettably we cannot identify how many within present caseload will be affected, nor by how much in monetary terms on a weekly basis, as DWP consider circumstances of household and benefits in payment that LA are unable to identify from records held. The LA's HB service administers the Cap not the DWP who advise us of each situation. There are currently 72 cases live (but cases go on and off and DWP projected our numbers would be 130). The change would bring more case with a consequential impact on resources, both front and back of house. Those affected would have an increased reliance on other means of support, financial, Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP - annual cash limited budget) or the Local Welfare Assistance potentially (LWA - finite residual budget as scheme no longer nationally funded). Likely impact will see increased problems for those in temporary accommodation with large families and again, for LA, placing the homeless or those at risk etc., then reliance on the limited discretionary schemes (DHP).
- **General Issues for Wirral/Benefits Service** - As a consequence of these changes there will be a need to revise local schemes and policies with an increased reliance on any discretion the authority can, within its local policies and resources, exercise (again for example its LWA/DHP funds). The definition of 'vulnerable' will need review given the ratio of those reasonably deemed to be vulnerable which are those financially at risk, including dispossession. This will impact on key grant limited local schemes such as Council Tax Support Scheme which currently awards £27m pa. This will provide a significant challenge for officers reviewing the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2016/2017 onwards and will see collection issues increase as more people face difficulty paying, ultimately having their national benefits reduced at source to pay Council Tax. Broadly we can expect from these changes increased contact to services, both front facing public contact and back of house processing and decision making services with an increased need and reliance on knowledgeable, experienced, skilled resource, ensuring accessibility.
- **Remove Housing Benefit from Young People** 18-21 year olds, this will see more remain at home where it may not be appropriate to do so which will see issues for householder with Housing Benefit non dependant charges being applied and more rent to pay (as adult is meant to contribute as resident). These cases which will increase already provide issues for the LA with collection of information and provision of evidence of household occupants.
- **Troubled Families Programme-** It is expected that approximately 450 of the 600 families Wirral will work with this year, through the Troubled Families Programme (Family Intervention), will be affected by the Welfare Reform and Work Bill through changes to benefits and the implementation of Universal Credit. To support these families Wirral's provision of Advisors from JCP (Job Centre Plus) has increased from 1FTE (full time equivalent) to 2FTE. These staff will work specifically with

### Wirral Implications Continued:

- those affected by the changes. They will also provide the wider Family Intervention workforce with updates and training about the roll out of universal credit and enable them to support their families better. A Manager has been appointed from JCP to oversee all work with Troubled Families across Merseyside and he will be joining Wirral's Troubled Families Board to provide quarterly updates on the progress of moving Troubled Families into employment.
- Wirral will continue to report to the DCLG on progress into employment for Troubled Families and to submit the cost benefit analysis for each of those families.
- At this stage it is hard to predict what the specific implications for families might be. This could be: more reliance on food banks, more families moving out of social housing into private housing, more families unable to secure tenancies, more applications for discretionary payments.
- Reports will be provided outlining the implications as time progresses.

## Policing and Criminal Justice Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### Synopsis:

- This legislation is intended to continue the reform of policing with the aim of enhancing protections for vulnerable people

#### Key Points:

- The Bill would ensure 17 years olds who are detained in police custody are treated as children for all purposes under PACE.
- In particular, the amendments to the provisions of PACE concerning 17 year olds include:
  - Ensuring an appropriate adult is present for drug sample taking;
  - Ensuring appropriate consent is granted by both the 17 year old and parent/ legal guardian for a range of interventions, including intimate searches; and
  - The ability to impose conditional bail to ensure the welfare and interests of the 17 year old.
- Reforming legislation in relation to the detention of people under sections 135 and 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 to ensure better outcomes for those experiencing a mental health crisis.
  - Prohibiting the use of police cells as places of safety for those under 18 years of age and further reducing their use in the case of adults;
  - Reducing the current 72 hour maximum period of detention; and
  - Extending the power to detain under section 136 to any place other than a private residence.

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The Policing and Criminal Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- **Appropriate Adult Provision**- The Youth Offending service is in support of this change and we have been anticipating it for over a year. For many years 17 year olds have not been treated as Youths in the Police custody suite / Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) arena, which is inconsistent with other youth justice parameters. Therefore this change supports and recognises 17 years olds as still being youths and not adults during PACE interviews, processing and charging stages of detention.

Our **Appropriate Adult** (AA) services are already in place and will accommodate this wider age group. YOS provides this service by day and EDT by night. This may involve an increase in workload, however some 17 year olds who are detained in custody can be deemed to be Vulnerable Adults and the existing AA service covers youths and vulnerable adults anyway, so the increased workload may not be large.

We will monitor any increase in use of AA in respect of 17 years olds but this extension of age group now represents the same 10-18 year age group YOS and the youth courts accommodate, so this is more in line and consistent with other such youth justice services.

### Wirral Implications Continued:

• **Identification of Accommodation for those Young People detained-** The Merseyside Criminal Justice Board **Youth Detention Protocol** may also need to include 17 year olds and this may have an impact on the requirements for Local Authorities to find accommodation for 17 year olds who have been refused Police Bail and the LA has a duty to accommodate them. The compliance of this protocol is monitored by the Police Crime Commissioner and the existing Policy may change to include 17 years olds, and this would then have an impact on CYPS Specialist Services and demands to accommodate 17 year olds at short notice who have been refused Bail. I have attached the existing protocol as this currently only covers 10-16 year olds but maybe amended.

## Psychoactive Substances Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### Synopsis:

- The Queen's speech on 27 May 2015 included a commitment to bring forward new legislation to ban the new generation of psychoactive drugs. The Psychoactive Substances Bill is intended to protect people from the risks posed by untested, unknown and potential harmful drugs. The Bill will create a blanket ban which is seeking to prohibit and disrupt the production, distribution, sale and supply of new psychoactive substances (NPS) in the UK.
- For the purpose of the Bill, a psychoactive substance is a substance which is capable of producing a psychoactive effect in a person who consumes it and is not an exempted substance.

#### Key Points:

- make it an offence to produce, supply, offer to supply, possess with intent to supply, import or export psychoactive substances; that is, any substance intended for human consumption that is capable of producing a psychoactive effect. The maximum sentence will be 7 years' imprisonment
- exclude legitimate substances, such as food, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, caffeine and medical products, from the scope of the offence, as well as controlled drugs, which will continue to be regulated by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- exempt specific persons from certain offences under the bill, such as healthcare professionals, who may have a legitimate need to use NPS in their work
- include provision for civil sanctions – prohibition notices, premises notices, prohibition orders and premises orders (breach of the two orders will be a criminal offence) – to enable the police and local authorities to adopt a graded response to the supply of NPS in appropriate cases
- provide powers to stop and search persons, vehicles and vessels, enter and search premises in accordance with a warrant, and to seize and destroy psychoactive substances

### Further Developments:

- The bill had its 3rd reading in the House of Lords on 20th July and is now waiting to go to the House of Commons for consideration.
- In the meantime it has attracted some criticism and with the Government's advisory body for drug misuse, the Advisory Council for the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) making 8 recommendations for amendment, including a tighter definition of the drugs that the bill covers, greater clarification of the difference between potentially harmful and harmless substances to avoid possible prosecution of suppliers of benign or beneficial substances, a sharper focus on commercial supply rather than users. These recommendations have now been responded to by the Home Secretary.

### Wirral Implications:

**At this time there are not any apparent major implications for Wirral Local Authority however the following issues will need to be considered;**

- The local prevalence of the use of NPS is not known with any confidence so it would be valuable to carry out some sort of study to gain better

### Wirral Implications Continued:

knowledge of the nature and extent of the use of these substances by the Wirral population.

- There is some consideration for Trading Standards in terms of investigating the so called “Head Shops” and assessing their compliance with the content of the new bill. The bill is setting out to close down the sources of supply and these retail outlets are targets, so Trading Standards, and the Police, will need to consider looking at what their approach is going to be to these retailers, including possible prosecution of those found to be in contravention with the bill.
- The Trading standards and the Police will also need to consider their approach to pubs and clubs where it is found that NPS are being used on their premises.
- A general review of the harm reduction education information offered locally to those groups in the population likely to be possible consumers of NPS.

# Policy Developments

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## [Briefing: Downward mobility, opportunity hoarding and the 'glass floor' – SMCP report](#)

“Downward mobility, opportunity hoarding and the ‘glass floor’”, a research report published by the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission claims there is a ‘glass floor’ which serves to protect less able children from more affluent backgrounds when they reach adulthood whilst simultaneously inhibiting opportunities for more abled students from less advantaged backgrounds.

The report suggests some ways in which policy responses can help to compensate those deprived children for the benefits that being from a better educated family can bring. These include:

- The setting of homework
- Fostering and nurturing aspiration
- High quality and age appropriate education and careers advice
- Inspirational high calibre teachers deployed where they can have greatest impact
- Encouraging successful alumni to return and talk about their experiences
- Avoiding practices that damage non-cognitive skill development.

The report recognises the difficult in legislating against discrimination based on socio-economic grounds but that the Equality Act of 2010 describes a public sector duty with regards to socio-economic inequalities.

**Source:** [Martin Rogers, Briefing: Downward mobility, opportunity hoarding and the 'glass floor' – SMCP report, LGiU, 21<sup>st</sup> August 2015](#)

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## [Briefing: The first 100 days: impact on local government](#)

August 14th 2015 marked 100 days since the election of the new government. As per tradition, this milestone provides an opportunity to review government actions during this period and assess the impact on local government.

Key areas of development have been in relation to devolution; social care and housing and planning.

### **Devolution and local government**

- Publication of ‘Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill’ about to go into the Commons from the Lords.
- Cornwall is the first county to have negotiated a deal and groups of authorities are pressing ahead with new deals.

## Heath and Social Care

- Postponement of cap on social care costs until 2020
- Councils affected by proposed £200m cut in 2015-2016 public health grant.
- Progress on improving mental health services.

## Housing and Planning

- Plans to extend the Right to Buy to 1.3m housing association tenants has been confirmed in the Queen's speech and forms part of the housing bill to be published in Autumn.
- A commitment to increase the housing supply by 200,000 homes
- Faster planning application processing

Significant developments have been the momentum behind the devolution bill; however, controversy and concern remain in areas such as social care and the environment.

**Source:** [Janet Sillett, Briefing: The first 100 days: impact on local government, LGiU 19<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

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## [Briefing: Options for integrated commissioning: Beyond Barker](#)

The report explores a recommendation by the Independent Commission on the Future of Health and Social Care in England, (established by the Kings Fund and chaired by Katy Barker) for there to be a single ring fenced budget and a single local commissioner to integrate both health and social care.

The report recommended three options for implementation which included:

Option 1 - Build on existing organisational and policy arrangements

Option 2- CCG or local government to take responsibility

Option 3 - A new vehicle – 'health and wellbeing boards plus'

The Kings Fund suggests a combination of options two and three in terms of causing the least disruption or organisational change and provides clear potential to ensure that both local authority and NHS perspectives are given appropriate weight.

Examples of developments around the UK, such as in Sheffield, Greater Manchester, Scotland and North East Lincolnshire demonstrate integration boards in practice. The report makes it clear that a national drive is what is required in order to "encourage local and regional integration that has genuine power and responsibility".

**Source:** [Christine Heron, Briefing: Options for integrated commissioning: Beyond Barker, LGiU, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

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## [Briefing: The Hattie Reports: Is Policy on School Improvement correctly aligned?](#)

The Politics of Distraction and The Politics of Collaborative Expertise (both June 2015) produced by John Hattie, raise questions about the direction of education policies across OECD countries that are particularly pertinent to the direction of policy in the UK over the last 25 years, particularly in relation to how one improves schools.

This briefing explores Hattie's thinking and the background to his two most recent papers which are focused on the current issues faced by policy makers.

**Source:** [Andrew Crompton, Briefing: The Hattie Reports: Is Policy on School Improvement correctly aligned?, LGiU, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

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## [Ofsted – Teaching and play in the early years – a balancing act?](#)

This briefing focuses on the Ofsted report 'Teaching and play in the early years – a balancing act?' The report has been published in support of Ofsted's second annual report on early years 2015. The report is a good practice survey exploring perceptions of teaching and play in the early years. Eight good practice examples support the survey report, and focus on the interplay between teaching and play in a range of early year's settings.

- Collaborating to support early years teaching and learning
- Improving boys' literacy skills
- Integrating provision for two year-olds in school
- Learning together through play in the early years
- Parents as partners in teaching
- Supporting children's learning through teaching and play
- Teaching young children to develop their communication skills
- Using the physical environment as a tool for teaching

**Source:** [Kathy Baker, Ofsted – Teaching and play in the early years – a balancing act?, LGiU, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

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## Briefing: Update on the Care Act

This briefing updates and expands on information in previous briefings on the Care Act. It outlines the Government's decision to postpone implementation of certain aspects of the Act, following representation by local government.

- The cap on the amount an individual will contribute to their own care will be postponed until 2020 in recognition of existing pressures on social care budgets.
- The Government has said it is still committed to introducing the cap.
- A proposed increase in the threshold above which people will start to contribute to residential care has also been postponed.

Source: [Fiona Campbell, Briefing: Update on the Care Act, LGiU, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

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## NAO report Care Act first-phase reforms

The NAO has reviewed the Department of Health's implementation of Phase 1 of the Care Act which looks at national eligibility criteria, carers' assessments, preparation for deferred payment or loan agreements and the requirements of local authorities to provide universal information and advice on care and support and also new safeguarding requirements.

Although the NAO has concluded that the Department of Health has provided the necessary support needed to proceed with the legislation, it has noted that the extreme financial pressure of local governments and has challenged the Department's estimation of local government's ability to afford the extra assessments and support demanded by the Care Act.

The NAO makes the following recommendations within its report:

- The department should be notified quickly and respond in the same manner if individual local authorities are struggling to meet the requirements of the Care ACT
- The department must report whether it has achieved government objectives to parliament.
- For Phase 2, the department and sector should work closely together on data improvements to reduce uncertainty in its assumptions.
- In the longer term, the department should maximise their resources and be transparent about its expectations of what funds are required by local authorities and where these should be sourced from e.g. Better Care Fund.

Since the report was written, the government has made the decision to delay Phase 2 as a positive recognition of the warnings that have been made about the lack of funding available. The department has added that they need to be realistic about where scarce resources are needed most.

**Source:** [Fiona Campbell, NAO report Care Act first-phase reforms, LGiU, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2015](#)

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### **Ofsted – 2015 Early years annual report**

Ofsted have released the second annual report on the early years sector.

There are some very positive findings which show that standards are rising in the provision of early education.

- Across the country 85% of early years providers have achieved good or outstanding.
- Rising standards are now more evenly spread across the various providers
- In 2014 60% of children were meeting the ‘good level of development’ by the end of reception.
- There is now a growing recognition of the importance of early years education as a determinant of what happens to an individual later in life.
- Political focus and public investment are developing

However, the report does outline that “we have done better for children who need it least”, drawing attention to the continuing underachievement for disadvantaged young people, highlighting that inequities must be addressed.

- There is a need for a stronger role for primary schools in early education of disadvantaged 2 year olds.
- Debate is needed between Ofsted and sector partners including local authorities with a duty to secure provision and engage wider public conversation about the type of education wanted for disadvantaged children and how best to facilitate and support them.

**Source:** [Kathy Baker, Ofsted – 2015 Early years annual report, LGiU, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2015](#)

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### **Ofsted and DfE consultations: area multi-agency child protection inspections**

Ofsted are consulting on proposals for delivery of joint targeted area inspections under Section 20 of the Children Act 2004 in order to assess the effectiveness of multi-agency practice to protect children.

The new framework is to be implemented in April 2016 following up to six area inspections focused on particular areas of concern.

The new framework will focus on other areas of practice and cohorts and include:

- Those receiving early help
- Those living with domestic abuse
- Older children at risk
- Children at risk of intra familiar sexual abuse
- Child neglect
- Girls at risk of female genital mutilation.

The Department for Education is consulting on proposed related amendments to the Joint Area Review regulations from April 2016.

**Source:** [Martin Rogers, Ofsted and DfE consultations: area multi-agency child protection inspections, LGiU, 28<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#)

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### Care leavers' transitions to adulthood – NAO

The NAO has published a report which examines support for and challenges facing care leavers, government policy and actions and progress made in improving outcomes.

The findings of the report suggest that for those young people leaving care in England, the system is not working effectively despite the introduction of a new care leaver's strategy and change policy.

The NAO also reported that local authorities' reported spend on care leavers does not correlate with the quantity and quality of their services, with two thirds of all services inspected being labelled inadequate.

Recommendations for the government departments involved with the care leavers strategy include:

- Creating a more joined-up approach across government including an inspection of care leave services
- Develop indicators to measure progress against objectives and collect data in order to provide a better understanding of the social problems that care leavers face
- Examine how incentives such as payment by results could be used to encourage innovation and joint local working towards improving outcomes for care leavers.

In addition, the Department for Education should:

- Make full use of the data collected to help improvement of local services
- Work closely with local authorities to develop reliable and comparable data to provide ways of assessing value for money
- Develop and share good practice by creating a central store, evaluate initiatives and make the findings widely available.

**Source:** [Mark Upton, Care leavers' transitions to adulthood – NAO, LGiU, 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#)

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## **Further Education – Overseeing Financial Sustainability – NAO report**

The NAO report records the significant decline in the financial health of the Further Education college sector that has occurred since 2010/11.

The report evaluates:

- The procedures in place for identifying colleges at risk of falling into financial difficulties. This report does not include the Sixth Form College sector.
- The effectiveness of the intervention procedures that can be initiated once struggling colleges have been identified.

**Source:** [Toby Hill, Further Education – Overseeing Financial Sustainability – NAO report, LGiU, 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

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## **Funding for disadvantaged pupils: NAO Report**

The National Audit Office has published a value for money report ‘Funding for disadvantaged pupils’ examining if the Department for Education is on course to achieve its objective of narrowing the attainment gap between disadvantaged and other pupils.

Within the report NAO make a number of recommendations to the Department for Education:

- develop its understanding of how schools are using the Pupil Premium and take further steps to reduce schools’ use of ineffective, costly activities to support disadvantaged pupils;
- ensure that all Pupil Premium reviews are conducted by approved reviewers and consider whether to make reviews mandatory;
- examine with the Education Endowment Foundation, whether and how to expand the evidence base more quickly;
- use a fairer schools core funding formula so that pupils across England receive similar funding, related more closely to their needs and less affected by where they live;
- work with local authorities to understand the impact of the core funding allocated to schools on the basis of disadvantage and consider how schools could be held accountable for its use;
- clarify instructions to schools about the total value of funding that ought to be available to disadvantaged pupils with special educational needs;
- explore how it can identify disadvantaged pupils more effectively;

- be more specific about how it will measure the Pupil Premium's impact in a comparable way until at least 2023; and
- Research how other potential Pupil Premium impacts, such as the destinations of disadvantaged pupils and savings in terms of other public services, can be measured.

**Source:** [LGiU Associate, Funding for disadvantaged pupils: NAO Report, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#)

# Useful Sources

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## Chancellors Budget Statement

[Chancellor George Osborne's Summer Budget 2015 Speech, Government website, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) - *Full speech*

[Andrew Jones, July 2015 Budget Analysis, LGiU, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) - *Brief analysis and key points emerging from the Chancellor Budget Statement*

## Childcare Bill

[Childcare Bill 2015-16, Parliamentary website](#) – *Previous debates on all stages of the Childcare Bill and any latest updates*

[John Fowler, Childcare Bill, LGiU, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015](#) – *Brief analysis of the Childcare Bill*

[Government Press Release: Government brings forward plans to double free childcare for working families, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015](#) – *Details current childcare entitlement and changes*

## Education and Adoption Bill

[Education and Adoption Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - *Previous debates on all stages of the Childcare Bill and any latest updates*

[Government Press Release: Hundreds of 'coasting' schools to be transformed, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015](#) – *Outlines draft regulations to be implemented by 2016 and defines the term 'coasting schools'*

[Andrew Crompton, Coasting Schools: Draft Regulations, LGiU, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) – *Brief analysis of coasting schools and draft regulations*

## Welfare Reform and Work Bill

[House of Commons, Briefing Paper- Welfare Reform and Work Bill, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) – *Brief analysis of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill*

[Welfare Reform and Work Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - *Previous debates on all stages of the Childcare Bill and any latest updates*

[Andrew Jones, The Welfare Reform and Work Bill: Welfare Reform Update, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#) – *Brief overview of the Bill and any latest updates*

## Psychoactive Substances Bill

[Psychoactive Substances Bill, Parliamentary website](#)- *Previous debates on all stages of the Psychoactive Substances Bill*

# POLICY INFORM: REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT

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## Directorate Policy: September 2015

The Directorate Policy briefings will provide an overview of key political events, ongoing and recent national legislation, and emerging policies. The Directorate Policy briefing will be produced specifically to inform Portfolio Holders and Elected Members and will be taken to Policy & Performance Committees for discussion.

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# Introduction

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The policy briefing paper is intended to provide Members of the Policy and Performance Committee with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support the committees work programme and future scrutiny work.

The following table outlines the timetable for the preparation and reporting of policy briefing papers:

<b>Policy &amp; Performance Committee Briefings</b>	
<b>July 2015</b>	The first policy briefing will focus predominately on the Queen's Speech, which will establish the Government's legislative programme for the parliamentary year ahead.
<b>September 2015</b>	The second policy briefing will be produced in September and will focus on the Chancellor's July 2015 Budget Statement. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>January 2016</b>	The third policy briefing will focus on the Autumn Statement and the local government finance settlement which informs the annual determination of funding to local government. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>March 2016</b>	The fourth policy briefing will focus upon the 2016 Chancellor of Exchequers Budget. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.

The September policy briefing outlines the key features of the Chancellor of Exchequers Budget Statement, which was announced on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The policy briefing also alludes to any potential implications that have been highlighted by relevant Officers for Wirral Council, and elaborates on any legislation or policy updates that have been implemented or developed since the last policy briefing in July.

The Committee may wish to identify specific policy areas to focus upon which are in line with the Committee's work programme. Detailed briefing papers can be prepared for these subject matters at the request of the Committee which would be in addition to the regular policy briefing papers outlined above.

# Chancellors Statement- 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

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On 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015, the Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne gave his Budget statement to the House of Commons. The budget set out £17bn of savings and deferred announcements on another £20bn to the autumn's Spending Review. The key announcements outlined in the statement have been divided into themes and are displayed below:

## Social Housing

- The budget details plans to legislate to freeze working-age benefits, including tax credits and the Local Housing Allowances, for 4 years from 2016-17 to 2019-20. This is forecast to save £4 billion a year by 2019-20.
- Rents in social housing in England will be reduced by 1% a year for 4 years.

## Welfare

- Working-age benefits, including tax credits and Local Housing Allowance, will be frozen for 4 years from 2016-17 (this doesn't include Maternity Allowance, maternity pay, paternity pay and sick pay).
- The household benefit cap will be reduced to £20,000 (£23,000 in London).
- Support through Child Tax Credit will be limited to 2 children for children born from April 2017.
- Those aged 18 to 21 who are on Universal Credit will have to apply for an apprenticeship or traineeship, gain work-based skills, or go on a work placement 6 months after the start of their claim.
- From April 2017 the Budget will remove the automatic entitlement to housing support for new claims in Universal Credit from 18-21 year olds who are out of work.

## Housing

- Rents for social housing will be reduced by 1% a year for 4 years.
- £800 million of funding is designated for Discretionary Housing Payments over the next 5 years.
- Social housing tenants with household incomes of £40,000 and above in London, and £30,000 and above in the rest of England, will be required to "Pay to Stay", by paying a market or near market rent for their accommodation.

## Children and Education

- From the 2016-17 academic year, cash support for new students will increase by £766 to £8,200 a year. New maintenance loan support will replace student grants. Loans will be paid back only when graduates earn above £21,000 a year.
- From September 2017, the free childcare entitlement will be doubled from 15 hours to 30 hours a week for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds.
- Parents with a youngest child aged 3 or older (including lone parents) who are able to work will be expected to look for work if they are claiming Universal Credit.
- £30 million will be provided to further speed up the adoption process while paving the way for the introduction of regional adoption agencies.

## Pay

- From April 2016, a new National Living Wage of £7.20 an hour for the over 25s will be introduced. This will rise to over £9 an hour by 2020.
- Public sector pay will increase by 1% a year for 4 years from 2016-17.
- The budget details plans to increase the National Insurance contributions (NICs) Employment Allowance from £2,000 to £3,000 a year.

## Efficiency

- The budget supports plans to continue to pursue more efficient ways of working and further reform to public services. The government will provide funding for the Cabinet Office to explore a number of cross-cutting savings proposals. The Treasury, working with Cabinet Office, will develop specific proposals to inform the Spending Review.

## Devolution

- The budget commits to transport devolution in all of the country's city regions that elect a Mayor, as well as the country's counties. This includes the rollout of Oyster-style smart and integrated ticketing systems.
- The government is working towards further devolution deals with the Sheffield City Region, Liverpool City Region, and Leeds, West Yorkshire and partner authorities, to be agreed in parallel with the Spending Review. The Budget notes that agreement will be reached based on combined authorities agreeing to an elected mayor working with local leaders to oversee any new powers devolved from ministers.
- The Budget announces further devolution of powers to Manchester, including devolving Fire Services under the control of the new directly-elected Mayor, establishing a Greater Manchester Land Commission and granting the city region more powers over planning subject to the agreement of the Cabinet member representing the district in which the power is used.
- The Budget states that it will be offering towns and counties the opportunity to agree devolution deals.

## Economic Development

- The government is inviting bids for a new round of Enterprise Zones. The existing Enterprise Zones have supported the creation of over 15,000 jobs throughout England.
- To ensure that local areas have a greater say over their own economies, the government will consult on devolving powers on Sunday trading to city mayors and local authorities.
- The budget details plans to invest £23m in 6 Next Generation Digital Economy Centres over 6 sites (London, Swansea, Newcastle, Nottingham, York and Bath), leveraging £22 million of additional funding, and partnering with LEPs, regional councils, and local SMEs. These centres will exploit opportunities across sectors of the digital economy including the creative industries, finance, healthcare and education.

# Queen's Speech 2015- Designation to Policy and Performance Committees

On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the Queen unveiled the Government's legislative plans for the year ahead. Below is a list of each individual Bill which will have implications for local government that were announced during the speech. The list identifies the Policy and Performance committee with whose remit the legislation most closely aligns:

Legislative Plans	Policy and Performance Committee
National Insurance Contributions Bill/ Finance Bill	Transformation and Resources
Full Employment and Welfare Benefits Bill	All Policy and Performance Committees
Trade Unions Bill	Transformation and Resources
Housing Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Buses Bill	Regeneration and Environment
High Speed Rail Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Childcare Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Energy Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Education and Adoption Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Enterprise Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Policing and Criminal Justice Bill	Families and Wellbeing Transformation and Resources
Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill	Transformation and Resources
Psychoactive Substances Bill	Families and Wellbeing

Additional bills that have been announced are outlined below. These will be monitored in relation to any emerging implications for Local Government and reported to the relevant Policy and Performance Committee as appropriate.

Additional Legislative Plans
EU Referendum Bill
Scotland Bill
Immigration Bill
Extremism Bill
Investigatory Powers Bill
Charities Bill
Armed Forces Bill
Bank of England Bill
Northern Ireland (Stormont House Agreement) Bill

Wales Bill
Votes for Life Bill

The bills relevant to the Families and Wellbeing Committee are discussed in further detail below. The information provided has been sourced predominately from the LGiU, as well as SOLACE and the LGC and therefore solely represents a fact-based introduction to the bills.

# Queen's Speech 2015- Developments and Implications

## Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The Bill will provide for the devolution of powers to cities with elected metro mayor, continuing the government's commitment to building a 'northern powerhouse'.

#### **Key Points:**

- To provide new primary legislative powers to fulfill the Government's manifesto commitments.
- Together with existing powers under the Localism Act 2011, the Bill would also enable the Government to empower towns and counties, building on the programme of Growth Deals which the Government implemented in the last Parliament.

#### **The provisions in the Bill would be generic (to be applied by order to specified combined authorities and their areas) and would enable:**

- An elected mayor for the combined authority's area who would exercise specified functions and chair the authority.
- The mayor to undertake the functions of Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the area.
- Where a mayor is to have PCC functions, allow the current PCC term of office to be extended until the mayor is in place.
- Remove the current statutory limitation on its functions (currently these are limited to those on economic development, regeneration, and transport).
- Enable local authority governance to be streamlined as agreed by councils.

### Further Developments:

#### **The Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill has recently completed its journey through the House of Lords resulting in some significant changes:**

#### **Agreed changes to the role of Mayor-**

- Mayors will be appointed for a term of four years
- The consent of member authorities will be needed to the allocation of responsibilities to elected mayors.

#### **Setting up a Combined Authority-**

- A major new proposal creating a streamlined route to setting up a combined authority was put forward during Report stage of the Bill. The aim is to create a two-track process. The fast track will make it possible to establish a combined authority based on a negotiated devolution deal, removing the requirement for councils to undertake the lengthy process of preparing a governance review and scheme.

## Further Developments Continued:

### **Structuring Combined Authorities-**

- New possibilities for structuring combined authorities are being introduced. These new structuring arrangements include:
- Local authorities that do not have contiguous boundaries will be able to form combined authorities and economic prosperity boards. This will include combined authorities and economic prosperity boards that have a 'doughnut-shaped' area
- A county council in a two-tier area will be able to join a combined authority for only part of its area where that area coincides with one or more districts.
- Councils will be able to prompt changes to the funding, constitution or functions of an economic prosperity board.

### **Local Authority Functions and Responsibilities-**

- Two new clauses introduced changes that will allow functions of public authorities to be conferred on local authorities as well as combined authorities. Amendments that were agreed include provision for:
- Responsibilities being exercised either by the public authority or the combined authority, or by joint working arrangements.
- Avoiding devolution of regulatory functions to local authorities which are providing the regulated service.

### **Accountability and Governance: Overview and Scrutiny-**

- Opposition amendments have been aimed at bringing the government's original proposals for overview & scrutiny of mayoral and combined authority decisions into line with practice in local government. These arguments have struck a chord with government, and some key points were agreed:
- Members of committees will have access to documents containing exempt or confidential information
- Panels and members of the combined authority will reach agreement on how decisions made but not yet implemented will be scrutinised, and allow for a delay while the decisions are under consideration
- It will be possible to follow general rules for the appointment of an independent chair of scrutiny, or to agree local arrangements for inclusion in the Order creating the mayoral combined authority
- Rules on political balance will apply.

### **Accountability and Governance: Audit Committee-**

- The Government also agreed proposals for a Audit Committee:
- A requirement for a combined authority to appoint an audit committee
- Audit committee functions to include reviewing and scrutinising or assessing:
  - the authority's financial affairs
  - the authority's risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements
  - the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which resources have been used in discharging the authority's functions

### Further Developments Continued:

#### **Parliamentary Accountability-**

- Two requirements introduced at the start of the debate, and agreed after a vote and against government opposition, are more radical. These require
- An annual report to parliament on the devolution programme for all areas of England
- A devolution statement for each new parliamentary Bill, in which the minister introducing the Bill confirms that it is compatible with the principle that powers should be devolved to combined authorities or the most appropriate local level.

### Wirral Implications:

- Wirral has an ongoing role with LCR partners in working up the detail about our devolution asks;
- LCR proposals to be submitted to Government's Comprehensive Spending Review by 4th September;
- Senior Civil Servants and LCR Officers will continue to work up the further detail required to underpin the deal by mid-November this year;
- Communications and engagement with key stakeholders is taking place over the coming weeks.

## Housing Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- This legislation will give housing association tenants the chance to own their own home. It also aims to increase housing supply and access to home ownership.

#### **Key Points:**

- The main elements of the Bill can be separated into two sections:

#### **Home Ownership-**

- To enable the extension of Right to Buy levels of discount to housing association tenants.
- To require local authorities to dispose of high-value vacant council houses, to help fund the Right to Buy extension discounts and the building of more affordable homes in the area.
- To provide the necessary statutory framework to support the delivery of Starter Homes.
- To take forward the Right to Build, requiring local planning authorities to support custom and self-builders registered in their area in identifying suitable plots of land to build or commission their own home.

#### **Housing Supply-**

- To introduce a statutory register for brownfield land, to help achieve the target of getting Local Development Orders in place on 90% of suitable brownfield sites by 2020.
- To simplify and speed up the neighbourhood planning system, to support communities that seek to meet local housing and other development needs through neighbourhood planning.
- To give effect to other changes to housing and planning legislation that would support housing growth.

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The Housing Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- **Extend Right to Buy-** There is still further detail to be announced as to how the actual scheme will work, discounts to be offered, the level of high value assets, however the extension of right to buy to housing association tenants and the Councils tenants (the council owns 23 houses where tenants have the preserved RTB) will reduce the availability of social housing stock generally to meet housing needs in the borough. It is likely this would be seen more so in the more attractive residential areas thereby reducing provision in these. The extent of the take up is difficult to forecast as levels of discounts, individual's financial circumstances and the ability of people to secure mortgages would need to be taken into account.

The impacts of this would need to be mitigated in part by increased provision of even further new build social housing stock. However whilst the aim of the

## Wirral Implications Continued:

- Government is for income received from sales to be reinvested into new affordable housing provision, it is unlikely that the sale of higher value local authority housing assets will fund this and it is anticipated that any future provision will have to be subsidised. The Institute for Fiscal Studies have identified that under the existing Right to Buy initiative only one in ten homes have been replaced, this is likely to cause an increased pressure on the supply available to meet housing needs via the Allocations System.

There could also be issues around the charitable status of RPs and their standing as being outside of the public sector borrowing and the use of assets to cover loans which RP have to enable development and investment. Any shortfall to be covered by RP's will result in less being able to be invested back into replacement affordable housing and also services.

- **Starter Homes**- The detail on how this will be achieved in a balanced way to ensure the Borough is able to at least take a pro-rata share (which would be equivalent to 1,300 homes) is unknown at present. The pledge to build 200,000 Starter Homes is supported by an exception site policy which directs Starter Homes to under-used or nonviable industrial and commercial land that has not been currently identified for housing. This could put pressure employment sites in Wirral that have been identified for employment use to support sustainable communities. It could have the unintended consequence of site owners resisting future employment uses and removing existing employment uses where higher land values could be accrued for Starter Homes sites. The Starter Homes policy could also undermine the provision of alternative forms of affordable housing, in areas where it is needed. In stronger market areas, a 20 per cent discount on open market value may still price out many first time buyers. Furthermore, the CIH (Chartered Institute of Housing) have indicated that these developments would be exempt from section 106 agreements, meaning no new affordable housing could be sought within these developments.

- **Brownfield Land**- The Government has pledged to encourage the provision of housing on previously developed (brownfield) sites. The Council could be required to maintain a register of all brownfield sites available and ensure that 90 per cent of suitable brownfield sites have planning permission for housing by 2020 through local development orders. The provision of local development orders on such a scale could represent a significant use of limited Council resources, particularly when planning permission can still be granted on sites, irrespective of whether a local development order is in place. This initiative has previously been subject to public consultation to which the Council submitted an officer-level response, which forms the basis of these comments.

- **Right to Build**- The new Right to Build (once enacted) will require the Council to establish a local register of custom builders who wish to acquire a suitable land to build their own home and to have regard to the demand on their local register when developing its Local Plan and determining planning applications. The Right could require the Council to offer registered custom builders suitable plots of land (with some form of planning permission and servicing), which would have resource implications for planning and housing. The Right could have an impact on the future capital receipts from the sale of Council-owned land for self-build plots, if plots are to be provided at a discounted rate. This form of development is also driven by the demand and capability and ability of individuals to be able to build or commission new build. There have been very few expressions of interest from community organisations on this in the Wirral area as part of the approach to looking at Custom Build when this has been promoted as part of the HCA programme.

## Energy Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The aim of this Bill is to improve energy security. It gives new powers to the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA) to maximise the economic recovery of oil and gas from UK waters and changes the law to give local communities a greater say in planning applications for wind farms.

#### **Key Points:**

- Ensuring local planning authorities have consenting powers for all onshore wind farms.
- The Bill would make legislative changes to remove the need for the Secretary of State's consent for any large onshore wind farms (over 50MW)
- This, in effect, would devolve powers out of Whitehall by transferring the existing consenting powers, in relation to onshore wind, to local planning authorities.
- This will mean that in future the primary decision maker for onshore wind consents in England and Wales will be the local planning authority. These changes will be supported by changes to the national planning policy framework to give effect to the manifesto commitment that local communities should have the final say on planning applications for wind farms.
- These changes would not impact on the planning regime in Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- The commitment to end new subsidy for onshore wind farms will be delivered separately, and DECC will be announcing measures to deliver this soon.

### Further Developments:

- The Energy Bill had its second reading which consisted of a general debate on all aspects of the Bill on 22nd July 2015. The Committee Stages of the Bill will commence on 7th September 2015.

### Wirral Implications:

- Wirral will become the Local Planning Authority for all future planning applications for on-shore wind farms. These applications will be dealt with through the existing Development Management processes which are already in place.

## High Speed Rail Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The aim of this Bill is to provide the Government with the legal powers to construct and operate phase 1 of the High Speed 2 (HS2) railway.

#### **Key Points:**

- Give the Government deemed planning permission for the railway between London and the West Midlands.
- Give the Government compulsory purchase powers and the power to temporarily take possession of land required to construct and operate the railway.
- Help rebalance the UK economy and free up space on the UK rail network, improving connections between London, the Midlands, the North and Scotland

### Further Developments:

- On 2 July 2015, the Government published their response to the House of Lords' Economic Affairs Committee report on 'The Economics of High Speed 2'. Their overall conclusion is that there is a convincing and compelling case for investing in HS2. In response to the Committee's concerns about the final cost of HS2 being even higher than the £50.1 billion currently estimated, the Government says that they aim to deliver HS2 below this figure and that there are strong controls in place to ensure they remain within budget.
- The members of the current HS2 Hybrid Bill Select Committee were appointed on 8 June 2015. On 4 June 2015, the Secretary of State for Transport as promoter of the Hybrid Bill for the first stage of HS2, published his response to the 'First Special Report' (PDF document) which was published by the Bill Committee in March. Many of the Committee's recommendations related to specific local areas or concerns about the compensation arrangements for those whose properties are affected by construction of the line and much of the response focuses on how these issues will be addressed.
- The Government announced in June 2015, that it was instructing the HS2 Bill Committee to consider more than 120 amendments it wishes to make to the Bill. These amendments have resulted from discussions between HS2 Ltd and communities on phase 1 of the route. They include changes to the route near Lichfield which will avoid the need for two crossings over the Trent and Mersey Canal; altering the proposals for the relocation of the existing Heathrow Express depot at Old Oak Common to Langley near Slough; and the construction of sidings to the west of the Old Oak Common station, which could facilitate a future connection between Crossrail and the West Coast Main Line, if needed. These amendments were debated and agreed by the House of Commons without a vote on 23 June and will now be subject to a consultation which is expected to run from mid-July to late August. Anyone affected by the changes will also be able to petition the Bill Committee about them.

### Wirral Implications:

- The passing of this Bill confirms the start of the construction of Phase 1 of HS2. The significant investment in infrastructure should unlock growth but ensuring that these benefits are fully realised within the city region will require the progression of HS3 linking the key cities across the north including Liverpool.

## Enterprise Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- This bill will include measures to reduce regulation on small businesses in a bid to boost job creation.

#### **Key Points:**

- Seek to cut red tape for British business by at least £10bn and, for the first time, require independent regulators to contribute to that target.
- Proposes to create a new Small Business Conciliation Service, to help settle disputes between small and large businesses, especially over late payment practices.
- To improve the business rates system ahead of the 2017 revaluation, including by modernising the appeals system
- To introduce a cap on public sector redundancy payments to six figures for the highest earners

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The Enterprise Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- 'There are no recorded implications at this time. This policy will be kept under review by the relevant officers with any future implications reported in future policy papers to Elected Members.'

## Welfare Reform and Work Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### Synopsis:

- The overriding aim of the Bill is to reduce expenditure and “help to achieve a more sustainable welfare system.” A related aim is to support efforts to increase employment and “support the policy of rewarding hard work while increasing fairness with working households.”

#### Key Points:

- It is essentially a Bill of three parts. First, it will introduce a duty to report to Parliament on:
  - Progress towards achieving full employment.
  - Progress towards achieving 3 million apprenticeships in England.
  - Progress with the Troubled Families programme (England).
- Second, it will repeal almost all of the Child Poverty Act 2010 and introduce a new duty for the Secretary of State to report annually on “life chances”: children living in workless households and educational attainment at age 16, in England.
- Finally, the Bill allows for the introduction of extensive changes to welfare benefits, tax credits and social housing rent levels. These will account for around 70% of the £12-13 billion in welfare savings identified in the Summer Budget 2015. The welfare/housing measures include:
  - Lowering the benefit cap threshold and varying it between London and the rest of the UK.
  - A four year benefits freeze.
  - Limiting support through Child Tax Credits/Universal Credit.
  - The abolition of Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Component.
  - Changes to conditionality for responsible carers under Universal Credit.
  - Replacing Support for Mortgage Interest with Loans for Mortgage Interest.
  - Reducing social housing rent levels by 1% in each year for four years from 2016-17.

### Further Developments:

- The Welfare Reform and Work Bill was presented on 9 July 2015. The Bill passed its second reading on 20 July 2015. MPs also agreed a programme motion which schedules the Bill to be considered in a public bill committee. Proceedings in the public bill committee are scheduled to conclude by Thursday 15 October 2015, but could finish earlier.

### Wirral Implications:

- **Freeze Working Age Benefits** - This will impact on household disposable income, not previously frozen albeit uprating was nominal in 2014/15. This will potentially increase the strain on Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Local Welfare Allowance (LWA) with consequential harder to collect charges. This will affect all Revenues areas such as Personal Finance Unit charges, Benefits overpayments and Council Tax. Rent arrears locally will increase as with all cuts and will continue as (social) landlords maintain rent levels and annual increases.

## Wirral Implications Continued:

- **Freeze Working Age Benefits Continued** - This will increase pressure on LA Housing Benefit services from Social Landlords which is evident already via the rent shortfall in Bedroom Tax and insufficient DHP. In the private sector it may see a freezing of Local Housing Allowance rates which will give Private Sector landlords further issue with taking on tenants who rely on HB. This is likely to have a consequential impact on the levels of people being threatened with homelessness in the Borough.
- **Cutting Household Benefit Cap** – This will certainly impact locally, regrettably we cannot identify how many within present caseload will be affected, nor by how much in monetary terms on a weekly basis, as DWP consider circumstances of household and benefits in payment that LA are unable to identify from records held. The LA's HB service administers the Cap not the DWP who advise us of each situation. There are currently 72 cases live (but cases go on and off and DWP projected our numbers would be 130). The change would bring more case with a consequential impact on resources, both front and back of house. Those affected would have an increased reliance on other means of support, financial, Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP - annual cash limited budget) or the Local Welfare Assistance potentially (LWA - finite residual budget as scheme no longer nationally funded). Likely impact will see increased problems for those in temporary accommodation with large families and again, for LA, placing the homeless or those at risk etc., then reliance on the limited discretionary schemes (DHP).
- **General Issues for Wirral/Benefits Service** - As a consequence of these changes there will be a need to revise local schemes and policies with an increased reliance on any discretion the authority can, within its local policies and resources, exercise (again for example its LWA/DHP funds). The definition of 'vulnerable' will need review given the ratio of those reasonably deemed to be vulnerable which are those financially at risk, including dispossession. This will impact on key grant limited local schemes such as Council Tax Support Scheme which currently awards £27m pa. This will provide a significant challenge for officers reviewing the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2016/2017 onwards and will see collection issues increase as more people face difficulty paying, ultimately having their national benefits reduced at source to pay Council Tax. Broadly we can expect from these changes increased contact to services, both front facing public contact and back of house processing and decision making services with an increased need and reliance on knowledgeable, experienced, skilled resource, ensuring accessibility.
- **Remove Housing Benefit from Young People** 18-21 year olds, this will see more remain at home where it may not be appropriate to do so which will see issues for householder with Housing Benefit non dependant charges being applied and more rent to pay (as adult is meant to contribute as resident). These cases which will increase already provide issues for the LA with collection of information and provision of evidence of household occupants.
- **Troubled Families Programme-** It is expected that approximately 450 of the 600 families Wirral will work with this year, through the Troubled Families Programme (Family Intervention), will be affected by the Welfare Reform and Work Bill through changes to benefits and the implementation of Universal Credit. To support these families Wirral's provision of Advisors from JCP (Job Centre Plus) has increased from 1FTE (full time equivalent) to 2FTE. These staff will work specifically with

### Wirral Implications Continued:

- those affected by the changes. They will also provide the wider Family Intervention workforce with updates and training about the roll out of universal credit and enable them to support their families better. A Manager has been appointed from JCP to oversee all work with Troubled Families across Merseyside and he will be joining Wirral's Troubled Families Board to provide quarterly updates on the progress of moving Troubled Families into employment.
- Wirral will continue to report to the DCLG on progress into employment for Troubled Families and to submit the cost benefit analysis for each of those families.
- At this stage it is hard to predict what the specific implications for families might be. This could be: more reliance on food banks, more families moving out of social housing into private housing, more families unable to secure tenancies, more applications for discretionary payments.
- Reports will be provided outlining the implications as time progresses.

# Policy Developments

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## Briefing: The first 100 days: impact on local government

August 14th 2015 marked 100 days since the election of the new government. As per tradition, this milestone provides an opportunity to review government actions during this period and assess the impact on local government.

Key areas of development have been in relation to devolution; social care and housing and planning.

### **Devolution and local government**

- Publication of 'Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill' about to go into the Commons from Lords.
- Cornwall is the first county to have negotiated a deal and groups of authorities are pressing ahead with new deals.

### **Health and Social Care**

- Postponement of cap on social care costs until 2020
- Councils affected by proposed £200m cut in 2015-2016 public health grants.
- Progress on improving mental health services.

### **Housing and Planning**

- Plans to extend the Right to Buy to 1.3m housing association tenants has been confirmed in the Queen's speech and forms part of the housing bill to be published in Autumn.
- A commitment to increase the housing supply by 200,000 homes
- Faster planning application processing

Significant developments have been the momentum behind the devolution bill; however, controversy and concern remain in areas such as Social care and the Environment.

**Source:** [Janet Sillett, Briefing: The first 100 days: impact on local government, LGiU 19<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

## Faster decision making on shale gas for economic growth and energy security

Under new government measures, shale gas planning applications will now be fast-tracked through a dedicated planning process in a bid to ensure faster decision making on the exploration of shale gas for the purpose of economic growth and energy security.

Local authorities must now fast-track applications and provide a decision within a 16-week timeframe to prevent prolonged uncertainty.

The government asserts that there are plans that will ensure that local people have a strong voice over any development of shale exploration in their area and that they will ensure both communities and industries benefit from the faster processes for developing new sites.

Councils that repeatedly fail to process applications and provide decisions within the specified timeframe will be identified and any further applications may be decided by the Communities Secretary. Councils have therefore been urged to take full advantage of funding available through the £1.2 million shale support programme for resourcing to enable timely decision making in 2015 to 2016.

The government has also stated that communities that participate in the development of shale and gas exploration should benefit from the financial returns generated. Proposals for a new sovereign wealth fund will be presented later in the year.

**Source:** [Department of Energy & Climate Change, Department for Communities and Local Government, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015.](#)

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## Briefing: Mapping climate disadvantage in England

“Climate change is a route through which deprivation can be worsened.”

The briefing outlines a new online mapping tool has been developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) in partnership with Climate UK, the Environment Agency and Manchester University. It aims to help local decision makers understand at a fine level of spatial detail the relationship between climate change and social vulnerability/disadvantage

- The mapping tool can be used to overlay various climate change impacts with a range of socio- spatial vulnerabilities at the neighbourhood scale.
- The online portal contains a wealth of more guidance and information to get the most from the mapping tool.

The mapping tool has been described by Core Cities as “a fantastic resource that will enable councils to understand the climate disadvantage in their area and respond accordingly, planning for a changing climate whilst also creating a more equal society”.

**Source:** [Steven Bland, Briefing: Mapping climate disadvantage in England, 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

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### **Briefing: High Speed Rail Update: Summer 2015**

This briefing reports on key developments in the HS2 project and other related proposals since April 2015.

It covers:

- The Government response to a report from the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee examining the economic case for HS2 and concluded that the analysis presented to justify the project is seriously deficient.
- The briefing includes the Secretary of State’s response to the ‘First Special Report’ by the Select Committee examining the Bill for phase one of HS2. It also includes a brief overview of other recent developments relating to HS2 and HS3, the proposed east-west high-speed rail link.

**Source:** [Ruth Bradshaw, Briefing: High Speed Rail Update: Summer 2015, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2015](#)

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### **Briefing: What does the new government mean for planning? Part 2: The Productivity Plan**

The government’s productivity plan ‘Fixing the Foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation’ identifies the planning system as being a key constraint to improving productivity.

It focuses on:

- Improving the rate of building on brownfield land
- Punishing local planning authorities that fail to get a local plan adopted or are slow to make planning decisions.

**Source:** [LGiU, Briefing: What does the new government mean for planning? Part 2: The Productivity Plan, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2015.](#)

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# Useful Sources

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## Chancellors Budget Statement

[Chancellor George Osborne's Summer Budget 2015 Speech, Government website, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) - Full speech

[Andrew Jones, July 2015 Budget Analysis, LGiU, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) - Brief analysis and key points emerging from the Chancellor Budget Statement

## Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill

[Hilary Kitchen, Devolution Bill: Important changes in the Lords, LGiU, 28<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) – Outlines some of the key changes to the Devolution Bill

[Hilary Kitchen, Devolution: 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, LGiU, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015](#) – Outlines the main topics discussed at the House of Lords on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015

[Dr Jonathan Carr-West and Dr Patrick Diamond, Devolution: A Road Map, LGiU, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2015](#) - Outlines the practical ways in which devolution can happen at scale and at speed to avoid a bureaucratic log jam in Whitehall.

[Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, Parliamentary website](#)- Previous debates on all stages of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill and any latest updates

[Mark Upton, Wave 1 City Deals – NAO report, 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) – Examines the progress of Wave 1 City deals

## Housing Bill

There are no further developments at this time. The Housing Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

## Energy Bill

[Energy Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - Brief analysis of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill

## High Speed Rail Bill

[High Speed Rail Bill, Parliamentary Website](#) - Brief analysis of the High Speed Rail Bill

[Ruth Bradshaw, High Speed Rail Update: Summer 2015, LGiU, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2015](#) – Update on key developments and other related proposals since April 2015.

### Enterprise Bill

There are no further developments at this time. The Enterprise Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Welfare Reform and Work Bill

[House of Commons, Briefing Paper- Welfare Reform and Work Bill, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) – Brief analysis of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill

[Welfare Reform and Work Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - Previous debates on all stages of the Childcare Bill and any latest updates

[Andrew Jones, The Welfare Reform and Work Bill: Welfare Reform Update, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#) – Brief overview of the Bill and any latest updates

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# POLICY INFORM: TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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## Directorate Policy: September 2015

The Directorate Policy briefings will provide an overview of key political events, ongoing and recent national legislation, and emerging policies. The Directorate Policy briefing will be produced specifically to inform Portfolio Holders and Elected Members and will be taken to Policy & Performance Committees for discussion.

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# Introduction

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The policy briefing paper is intended to provide Members of the Policy and Performance Committee with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support the committees work programme and future scrutiny work.

The following table outlines the timetable for the preparation and reporting of policy briefing papers:

<b>Policy &amp; Performance Committee Briefings</b>	
<b>July 2015</b>	The first policy briefing will focus predominately on the Queen’s Speech, which will establish the Government's legislative programme for the parliamentary year ahead.
<b>September 2015</b>	The second policy briefing will be produced in September and will focus on the Chancellor’s July 2015 Budget Statement. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>January 2016</b>	The third policy briefing will focus on the Autumn Statement and the local government finance settlement which informs the annual determination of funding to local government. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>March 2016</b>	The fourth policy briefing will focus upon the 2016 Chancellor of Exchequers Budget. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.

The September policy briefing outlines the key features of the Chancellor of Exchequers Budget Statement, which was announced on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The policy briefing also alludes to any potential implications that have been highlighted by relevant Officers for Wirral Council, and elaborates on any legislation or policy updates that have been implemented or developed since the last policy briefing in July.

The Committee may wish to identify specific policy areas to focus upon which are in line with the Committee’s work programme. Detailed briefing papers can be prepared for these subject matters at the request of the Committee which would be in addition to the regular policy briefing papers outlined above.

# Chancellors Statement- 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

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On 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015, the Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne gave his Budget statement to the House of Commons. The budget set out £17bn of savings and deferred announcements on another £20bn to the autumn's Spending Review. The key announcements outlined in the statement have been divided into themes and are displayed below:

## Social Housing

- The budget details plans to legislate to freeze working-age benefits, including tax credits and the Local Housing Allowances, for 4 years from 2016-17 to 2019-20. This is forecast to save £4 billion a year by 2019-20.
- Rents in social housing in England will be reduced by 1% a year for 4 years.

## Welfare

- Working-age benefits, including tax credits and Local Housing Allowance, will be frozen for 4 years from 2016-17 (this doesn't include Maternity Allowance, maternity pay, paternity pay and sick pay).
- The household benefit cap will be reduced to £20,000 (£23,000 in London).
- Support through Child Tax Credit will be limited to 2 children for children born from April 2017.
- Those aged 18 to 21 who are on Universal Credit will have to apply for an apprenticeship or traineeship, gain work-based skills, or go on a work placement 6 months after the start of their claim.
- From April 2017 the Budget will remove the automatic entitlement to housing support for new claims in Universal Credit from 18-21 year olds who are out of work.

## Housing

- Rents for social housing will be reduced by 1% a year for 4 years.
- £800 million of funding is designated for Discretionary Housing Payments over the next 5 years.
- Social housing tenants with household incomes of £40,000 and above in London, and £30,000 and above in the rest of England, will be required to "Pay to Stay", by paying a market or near market rent for their accommodation.

## Children and Education

- From the 2016-17 academic year, cash support for new students will increase by £766 to £8,200 a year. New maintenance loan support will replace student grants. Loans will be paid back only when graduates earn above £21,000 a year.
- From September 2017, the free childcare entitlement will be doubled from 15 hours to 30 hours a week for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds.
- Parents with a youngest child aged 3 or older (including lone parents) who are able to work will be expected to look for work if they are claiming Universal Credit.
- £30 million will be provided to further speed up the adoption process while paving the way for the introduction of regional adoption agencies.

## Pay

- From April 2016, a new National Living Wage of £7.20 an hour for the over 25s will be introduced. This will rise to over £9 an hour by 2020.
- Public sector pay will increase by 1% a year for 4 years from 2016-17.
- The budget details plans to increase the National Insurance contributions (NICs) Employment Allowance from £2,000 to £3,000 a year.

## Efficiency

- The budget supports plans to continue to pursue more efficient ways of working and further reform to public services. The government will provide funding for the Cabinet Office to explore a number of cross-cutting savings proposals. The Treasury, working with Cabinet Office, will develop specific proposals to inform the Spending Review.

## Devolution

- The budget commits to transport devolution in all of the country's city regions that elect a Mayor, as well as the country's counties. This includes the rollout of Oyster-style smart and integrated ticketing systems.
- The government is working towards further devolution deals with the Sheffield City Region, Liverpool City Region, and Leeds, West Yorkshire and partner authorities, to be agreed in parallel with the Spending Review. The Budget notes that agreement will be reached based on combined authorities agreeing to an elected mayor working with local leaders to oversee any new powers devolved from ministers.
- The Budget announces further devolution of powers to Manchester, including devolving Fire Services under the control of the new directly-elected Mayor, establishing a Greater Manchester Land Commission and granting the city region more powers over planning subject to the agreement of the Cabinet member representing the district in which the power is used.
- The Budget states that it will be offering towns and counties the opportunity to agree devolution deals.

## Economic Development

- The government is inviting bids for a new round of Enterprise Zones. The existing Enterprise Zones have supported the creation of over 15,000 jobs throughout England.
- To ensure that local areas have a greater say over their own economies, the government will consult on devolving powers on Sunday trading to city mayors and local authorities.
- The budget details plans to invest £23m in 6 Next Generation Digital Economy Centres over 6 sites (London, Swansea, Newcastle, Nottingham, York and Bath), leveraging £22 million of additional funding, and partnering with LEPs, regional councils, and local SMEs. These centres will exploit opportunities across sectors of the digital economy including the creative industries, finance, healthcare and education.

# Queen's Speech 2015- Designation to Policy and Performance Committees

On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the Queen unveiled the Government's legislative plans for the year ahead. Below is a list of each individual Bill which will have implications for local government that were announced during the speech. The list identifies the Policy and Performance committee with whose remit the legislation most closely aligns:

Legislative Plans	Policy and Performance Committee
National Insurance Contributions Bill/ Finance Bill	Transformation and Resources
Full Employment and Welfare Benefits Bill	All Policy and Performance Committees
Trade Unions Bill	Transformation and Resources
Housing Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Buses Bill	Regeneration and Environment
High Speed Rail Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Childcare Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Energy Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Education and Adoption Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Enterprise Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Policing and Criminal Justice Bill	Families and Wellbeing Transformation and Resources
Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill	Transformation and Resources
Psychoactive Substances Bill	Families and Wellbeing

Additional bills that have been announced are outlined below. These will be monitored in relation to any emerging implications for Local Government and reported to the relevant Policy and Performance Committee as appropriate.

Additional Legislative Plans
EU Referendum Bill
Scotland Bill
Immigration Bill
Extremism Bill
Investigatory Powers Bill
Charities Bill
Armed Forces Bill
Bank of England Bill
Northern Ireland (Stormont House Agreement) Bill

Wales Bill
Votes for Life Bill

The bills relevant to the Families and Wellbeing Committee are discussed in further detail below. The information provided has been sourced predominately from the LGiU, as well as SOLACE and the LGC and therefore solely represents a fact-based introduction to the bills.

# Queen's Speech 2015- Developments and Implications

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## Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The aim of this Bill is to reform and modernise the Public Service Ombudsman sector to provide "a more effective and accessible final tier of complaints redress within the public sector". It would absorb the functions of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Health Ombudsman, and the Local Government Ombudsman and potentially the Housing Ombudsman

#### **Key Points:**

- Allow the Public Service Ombudsman to absorb the functions of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Health Ombudsman, the Local Government Ombudsman and potentially The Housing Ombudsman.
- Ensure a robust process for accountability and reporting. The new Ombudsman will be independent of Government and directly accountable to Parliament
- Establish the relevant powers for a modern ombudsman organisation

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- There are no immediate issues arising. The impact of the Bill will be procedural rather than financial or increasing duties and responsibilities on the Council.

## National Insurance and Finance Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The bill is designed to enact a series of pledges made by the Conservatives during the general election campaign.

#### **Key Points:**

- No rises in income tax rates
- No VAT or national insurance before 2020
- No one working 30 hours on the minimum wage pays any income tax
- Enacts a commitment to raise the threshold before which people pay income tax to £12,500- A move Ministers say will benefit 30 million people.

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The National Insurance and Finance Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- There are no direct implications for Wirral arising from this bill. This bill is mainly concerned with Income and Corporate taxation which does not apply to local authorities. There are changes to Employers National Insurance contributions, coming into effect in April 2016, which will have a significant effect upon Wirral as an employer. These changes have already been legislated for and built into budget forecasts.

## Policing and Criminal Justice Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### Synopsis:

- This legislation is intended to continue the reform of policing with the aim of enhancing protections for vulnerable people

#### Key Points:

- The Bill would ensure 17 years olds who are detained in police custody are treated as children for all purposes under PACE.
- In particular, the amendments to the provisions of PACE concerning 17 year olds include:
  - Ensuring an appropriate adult is present for drug sample taking;
  - Ensuring appropriate consent is granted by both the 17 year old and parent/ legal guardian for a range of interventions, including intimate searches; and
  - The ability to impose conditional bail to ensure the welfare and interests of the 17 year old.
- Reforming legislation in relation to the detention of people under sections 135 and 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 to ensure better outcomes for those experiencing a mental health crisis.
  - Prohibiting the use of police cells as places of safety for those under 18 years of age and further reducing their use in the case of adults;
  - Reducing the current 72 hour maximum period of detention; and
  - Extending the power to detain under section 136 to any place other than a private residence.

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The Policing and Criminal Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- **Appropriate Adult Provision-** The Youth Offending service is in support of this change and we have been anticipating it for over a year. For many years 17 year olds have not been treated as Youths in the Police custody suite / Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) arena, which is inconsistent with other youth justice parameters. Therefore this change supports and recognises 17 years olds as still being youths and not adults during PACE interviews, processing and charging stages of detention.

Our **Appropriate Adult** (AA) services are already in place and will accommodate this wider age group. YOS provides this service by day and EDT by night. This may involve an increase in workload, however some 17 year olds who are detained in custody can be deemed to be Vulnerable Adults and the existing AA service covers youths and vulnerable adults anyway, so the increased workload may not be large.

We will monitor any increase in use of AA in respect of 17 years olds but this extension of age group now represents the same 10-18 year age group YOS and the youth courts accommodate, so this is more in line and consistent with other such youth justice services.

### Wirral Implications Continued:

•**Identification of Accommodation for those Young People detained-** The Merseyside Criminal Justice Board **Youth Detention Protocol** may also need to include 17 year olds and this may have an impact on the requirements for Local Authorities to find accommodation for 17 year olds who have been refused Police Bail and the LA has a duty to accommodate them. The compliance of this protocol is monitored by the Police Crime Commissioner and the existing Policy may change to include 17 years olds, and this would then have an impact on CYPS Specialist Services and demands to accommodate 17 year olds at short notice who have been refused Bail. I have attached the existing protocol as this currently only covers 10-16 year olds but maybe amended.

## High Speed Rail Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The aim of this Bill is to provide the Government with the legal powers to construct and operate phase 1 of the High Speed 2 (HS2) railway.

#### **Key Points:**

- Give the Government deemed planning permission for the railway between London and the West Midlands.
- Give the Government compulsory purchase powers and the power to temporarily take possession of land required to construct and operate the railway.
- Help rebalance the UK economy and free up space on the UK rail network, improving connections between London, the Midlands, the North and Scotland

### Further Developments:

- On 2 July 2015, the Government published their response to the House of Lords' Economic Affairs Committee report on 'The Economics of High Speed 2'. Their overall conclusion is that there is a convincing and compelling case for investing in HS2. In response to the Committee's concerns about the final cost of HS2 being even higher than the £50.1 billion currently estimated, the Government says that they aim to deliver HS2 below this figure and that there are strong controls in place to ensure they remain within budget.
- The members of the current HS2 Hybrid Bill Select Committee were appointed on 8 June 2015. On 4 June 2015, the Secretary of State for Transport as promoter of the Hybrid Bill for the first stage of HS2, published his response to the 'First Special Report' (PDF document) which was published by the Bill Committee in March. Many of the Committee's recommendations related to specific local areas or concerns about the compensation arrangements for those whose properties are affected by construction of the line and much of the response focuses on how these issues will be addressed.
- The Government announced in June 2015, that it was instructing the HS2 Bill Committee to consider more than 120 amendments it wishes to make to the Bill. These amendments have resulted from discussions between HS2 Ltd and communities on phase 1 of the route. They include changes to the route near Lichfield which will avoid the need for two crossings over the Trent and Mersey Canal; altering the proposals for the relocation of the existing Heathrow Express depot at Old Oak Common to Langley near Slough; and the construction of sidings to the west of the Old Oak Common station, which could facilitate a future connection between Crossrail and the West Coast Main Line, if needed. These amendments were debated and agreed by the House of Commons without a vote on 23 June and will now be subject to a consultation which is expected to run from mid-July to late August. Anyone affected by the changes will also be able to petition the Bill Committee about them.

### Wirral Implications:

- The passing of this Bill confirms the start of the construction of Phase 1 of HS2. The significant investment in infrastructure should unlock growth but ensuring that these benefits are fully realised within the city region will require the progression of HS3 linking the key cities across the north including Liverpool.

## Trade Union Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The aim of this bill is to bring forward legislation to reform trade unions to ensure hardworking people are not disrupted by little-supported strike action and to pursue the Government's ambition to become the most prosperous major economy in the world by 2030.

#### **Key Points:**

- Introduction of a 50% voting threshold for union ballots turnouts (and retain the requirement for there to be a simple majority of votes in favour).
- In addition to the 50% minimum voting turnout threshold, introduction of a requirement that 40% of those entitled to vote must vote in favour of industrial action in certain essential public services (health, education, fire, transport).
- Tackling intimidation of non-striking workers during a strike.
- Introduction of a transparent opt-in process for the political fund element of trade unions subscriptions. This will reflect the existing practice in Northern Ireland.
- Introduction of time limits on a mandate following a ballot for industrial action.
- Making changes to the role of the Certification Officer

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The National Insurance and Finance Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- No implication for the Council as an employer directly. The legislation places requirements on trade unions to meet certain conditions before industrial action is taken.

## Welfare Reform and Work Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The overriding aim of the Bill is to reduce expenditure and “help to achieve a more sustainable welfare system.” A related aim is to support efforts to increase employment and “support the policy of rewarding hard work while increasing fairness with working households.”

#### **Key Points:**

- It is essentially a Bill of three parts. First, it will introduce a duty to report to Parliament on:
  - Progress towards achieving full employment.
  - Progress towards achieving 3 million apprenticeships in England.
  - Progress with the Troubled Families programme (England).
- Second, it will repeal almost all of the Child Poverty Act 2010 and introduce a new duty for the Secretary of State to report annually on “life chances”: children living in workless households and educational attainment at age 16, in England.
- Finally, the Bill allows for the introduction of extensive changes to welfare benefits, tax credits and social housing rent levels. These will account for around 70% of the £12-13 billion in welfare savings identified in the Summer Budget 2015. The welfare/housing measures include:
  - Lowering the benefit cap threshold and varying it between London and the rest of the UK.
  - A four year benefits freeze.
  - Limiting support through Child Tax Credits/Universal Credit.
  - The abolition of Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Component.
  - Changes to conditionality for responsible carers under Universal Credit.
  - Replacing Support for Mortgage Interest with Loans for Mortgage Interest.
  - Reducing social housing rent levels by 1% in each year for four years from 2016-17.

### Further Developments:

- The Welfare Reform and Work Bill was presented on 9 July 2015. The Bill passed its second reading on 20 July 2015. MPs also agreed a programme motion which schedules the Bill to be considered in a public bill committee. Proceedings in the public bill committee are scheduled to conclude by Thursday 15 October 2015, but could finish earlier.

### Wirral Implications:

- **Freeze Working Age Benefits** - This will impact on household disposable income, not previously frozen albeit uprating was nominal in 2014/15. This will potentially increase the strain on Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Local Welfare Allowance (LWA) with consequential harder to collect charges. This will affect all Revenues areas such as Personal Finance Unit charges, Benefits overpayments and Council Tax. Rent arrears locally will increase as with all cuts and will continue as (social) landlords maintain rent levels and annual increases.

## Wirral Implications Continued:

- **Freeze Working Age Benefits Continued** - This will increase pressure on LA Housing Benefit services from Social Landlords which is evident already via the rent shortfall in Bedroom Tax and insufficient DHP. In the private sector it may see a freezing of Local Housing Allowance rates which will give Private Sector landlords further issue with taking on tenants who rely on HB. This is likely to have a consequential impact on the levels of people being threatened with homelessness in the Borough.
- **Cutting Household Benefit Cap** – This will certainly impact locally, regrettably we cannot identify how many within present caseload will be affected, nor by how much in monetary terms on a weekly basis, as DWP consider circumstances of household and benefits in payment that LA are unable to identify from records held. The LA's HB service administers the Cap not the DWP who advise us of each situation. There are currently 72 cases live (but cases go on and off and DWP projected our numbers would be 130). The change would bring more case with a consequential impact on resources, both front and back of house. Those affected would have an increased reliance on other means of support, financial, Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP - annual cash limited budget) or the Local Welfare Assistance potentially (LWA - finite residual budget as scheme no longer nationally funded). Likely impact will see increased problems for those in temporary accommodation with large families and again, for LA, placing the homeless or those at risk etc., then reliance on the limited discretionary schemes (DHP).
- **General Issues for Wirral/Benefits Service** - As a consequence of these changes there will be a need to revise local schemes and policies with an increased reliance on any discretion the authority can, within its local policies and resources, exercise (again for example its LWA/DHP funds). The definition of 'vulnerable' will need review given the ratio of those reasonably deemed to be vulnerable which are those financially at risk, including dispossession. This will impact on key grant limited local schemes such as Council Tax Support Scheme which currently awards £27m pa. This will provide a significant challenge for officers reviewing the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2016/2017 onwards and will see collection issues increase as more people face difficulty paying, ultimately having their national benefits reduced at source to pay Council Tax. Broadly we can expect from these changes increased contact to services, both front facing public contact and back of house processing and decision making services with an increased need and reliance on knowledgeable, experienced, skilled resource, ensuring accessibility.
- **Remove Housing Benefit from Young People** 18-21 year olds, this will see more remain at home where it may not be appropriate to do so which will see issues for householder with Housing Benefit non dependant charges being applied and more rent to pay (as adult is meant to contribute as resident). These cases which will increase already provide issues for the LA with collection of information and provision of evidence of household occupants.
- **Troubled Families Programme-** It is expected that approximately 450 of the 600 families Wirral will work with this year, through the Troubled Families Programme (Family Intervention), will be affected by the Welfare Reform and Work Bill through changes to benefits and the implementation of Universal Credit. To support these families Wirral's provision of Advisors from JCP (Job Centre Plus) has increased from 1FTE (full time equivalent) to 2FTE. These staff will work specifically with

### Wirral Implications Continued:

- those affected by the changes. They will also provide the wider Family Intervention workforce with updates and training about the roll out of universal credit and enable them to support their families better. A Manager has been appointed from JCP to oversee all work with Troubled Families across Merseyside and he will be joining Wirral's Troubled Families Board to provide quarterly updates on the progress of moving Troubled Families into employment.
- Wirral will continue to report to the DCLG on progress into employment for Troubled Families and to submit the cost benefit analysis for each of those families.
- At this stage it is hard to predict what the specific implications for families might be. This could be: more reliance on food banks, more families moving out of social housing into private housing, more families unable to secure tenancies, more applications for discretionary payments.
- Reports will be provided outlining the implications as time progresses.

# Policy Developments

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## Briefing: The first 100 days: impact on local government

August 14th 2015 marked 100 days since the election of the new government. As per tradition, this milestone provides an opportunity to review government actions during this period and assess the impact on local government.

Key areas of development have been in relation to devolution; social care and housing and planning.

### **Devolution and local government**

- Publication of 'Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill' about to go into the Commons from Lords.
- Cornwall is the first county to have negotiated a deal and groups of authorities are pressing ahead with new deals.

### **Health and Social Care**

- Postponement of cap on social care costs until 2020
- Councils affected by proposed £200m cut in 2015-2016 public health grant.
- Progress on improving mental health services.

### **Housing and Planning**

- Plans to extend the Right to Buy to 1.3m housing association tenants has been confirmed in the Queen's speech and forms part of the housing bill to be published in Autumn.
- A commitment to increase the housing supply by 200,000 homes
- Faster planning application processing

Significant developments have been the momentum behind the devolution bill; however, controversy and concern remain in areas such as Social care and the Environment.

**Source:** [Janet Sillett, Briefing: The first 100 days: impact on local government, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

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## Briefing: Managing the challenges of localised Council Tax Support

'Managing the challenges of localised council tax support' was commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and based on research conducted by the New Policy Institute (NPI) and explores the various Council Tax Support schemes brought in across England since April 2013.

In the report, Council Tax Support schemes are classified by their impact on council finances and on claimants. Examples are given for what makes a good Council Tax Support scheme, how it can be delivered effectively, and what are the major challenges facing councils. The report also highlights various implications in relation to Council Tax Support working alongside Universal Credit.

**Source:** [Andrew Jones, Briefing: Managing the challenges of localised Council Tax Support, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2015](#)

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### **Briefing: Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales – NAO report by the National Audit Office**

This report by the NAO looks at the risk of reducing police funding 2010-11 to 2015-16.

It describes reductions in police funding over the last five years, examines the impact of the reductions and the changing nature of policing and assesses the current oversight and accountability regime.

Government has stated it has a preference for ‘service transformation’ rather than further efficiency savings.

The key finding of the report is that there is a lack of understanding about the impact of funding cuts on police service levels and the latest cuts could mean that some police forces are unable to meet the demand for their services.

Gaining a comprehensive understanding of police performance and efficiency across all police forces is clearly a major challenge, but the report indicates that some progress is being made by police forces along with the College and HMIC. This should aid the Home Office in make judgements about future funding levels and interventions.

**Source:** [Tom Simon, Briefing: Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales – NAO report by the National Audit Office, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

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### **Briefing: Understanding age and the labour market**

In response to the ageing population the state has introduced measures to extend working life, such as increasing the pension age and introducing legislation to allow people to work longer, as well as measures to protect older workers against age discrimination. But little work has been done to understand the employment experience of older workers and the way generation, age and life-stage impacts on employment opportunities.

The report used data from the Labour Force Survey to examine the experience of workers of the same age in 1993, 2003 and 2013.

The report concludes that policy initiatives should focus low-skilled workers, improving the quality of flexible jobs and the range, relevance and quality of training.

This is an important report for local government, both because it employs significant numbers of people directly and indirectly through contracted-out services, but also because councils are pushing for greater involvement in employment and training provision such as the Work Programme as part of devolution deals.

The report makes the following recommendations:

- Councils must work with schools, colleges and employers to ensure that vocational training for young people is of high quality to prevent them being trapped in low-paid, low skilled jobs for life.
- Local Authorities must ensure that employees and contracted staff who work flexibly are not disadvantaged by it.

**Source:** [Rachel Salmon, Briefing: Understanding age and the labour market, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

# Useful Sources

---

## Chancellors Budget Statement

[Chancellor George Osborne's Summer Budget 2015 Speech, Government website, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) - Full speech

[Andrew Jones, July 2015 Budget Analysis, LGiU, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) - Brief analysis and key points emerging from the Chancellor Budget Statement

## Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill

There are no further developments at this time. The Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

## National Insurance and Finance Bill

There are no further developments at this time. The National Insurance and Finance Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

## Policing and Criminal Justice Bill

There are no further developments at this time. The Policing and Criminal Justice Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

## High Speed Rail Bill

[High Speed Rail Bill, Parliamentary Website](#) - Brief analysis of the High Speed Rail Bill

[Ruth Bradshaw, High Speed Rail Update: Summer 2015, LGiU, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2015](#) – Update on key developments and other related proposals since April 2015.

## Welfare Reform and Work Bill

[House of Commons, Briefing Paper- Welfare Reform and Work Bill, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) – Brief analysis of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill

[Welfare Reform and Work Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - Previous debates on all stages of the Childcare Bill and any latest updates

[Andrew Jones, The Welfare Reform and Work Bill: Welfare Reform Update, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#) – Brief overview of the Bill and any latest updates

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### COORDINATING COMMITTEE

30 SEPTEMBER 2015

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

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out the scrutiny work programme. The report includes the work programme of the Coordinating Committee which is included as Appendix 1. It also includes the work programmes of the three Policy and Performance Committees, see Appendix 2 – 4. This is to enable Coordinating Committee to undertake its constitutional role to ‘determine the overall work programme of the Policy and Performance Committees, including ensuring there is an overall planned approach to in depth review’.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 For each of the Policy and Performance Committees the work programme is made up of a combination of standing items, officer reports, items referred from other committees and scrutiny reviews. These are set out in a schedule at the start of the municipal year and reviewed at regular meetings of the committee.

2.2 The work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council. It should be informed by service priorities and performance, risk management information, public or service user feedback and referrals from the Executive.

2.3 Since the last Coordinating Committee on 23 June, a scrutiny review into Cumulative Impact Policy has commenced and is scheduled to report back to this committee in February 2016. A summary of the task and finish reviews currently in progress across the other three committees is set out below:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Review Title</b>
Families and Wellbeing	Safeguarding Children Reducing Hospital Admissions
Regeneration and Environment	Coastal Strategy Tourism
Transformation and Resources	To be confirmed

2.4 Further to the launch of the Wirral Council Plan: A 2020 Vision, Policy and Performance Committees have an opportunity to review the details set out in the associated Delivery Plan which is scheduled for publication in October. This will provide scrutiny members with a chance to influence the shape of that plan which is due to be finalised in February 2016.

2.5 In order to ensure consistency, this Committee should give consideration to proposing a coordinated approach to this work. This should involve considering which elements of the Delivery Plan should be prioritised for initial scrutiny and how those activities which align with the remits of more than one committee should be reviewed. An approach that could be adopted would be to have a single workshop for each of the three Council Plan priorities organised around question and answer sessions with the relevant lead officers.

### **3.0 PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 There are currently no outstanding recommendations, from previous scrutiny reviews that fall under the remit of this committee.

### **4.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

4.1 There are none arising from this report.

### **5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 N/A

### **6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 N/A

### **7.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS**

7.1 There are none relating to this report.

### **8.0 IMPLICATION FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

8.1 There are none arising from this report.

### **9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

9.1 There are none arising from this report.

### **10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are none arising from this report.

### **11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **12.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are none arising from this report.

## **14.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

14.1 Committee notes the content of the scrutiny work programme across all Policy and Performance Committees and highlights any areas requiring further clarification.

14.2 Committee proposes a coordinated approach to the initial scrutiny of the Wirral Plan 2020 – Delivery Plan.

## **15.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

15.1 For the committee to discharge its constitutional role to maintain an overview of the Scrutiny Work Programme.

### **REPORT AUTHOR: Mike Callon**

Team Leader – Performance and Scrutiny

telephone: 0151 691 8379

email: [michaelcallon@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:michaelcallon@wirral.gov.uk)

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Coordinating Committee Work Programme

Appendix 2 – Families & Wellbeing Committee Work Programme

Appendix 3 – Regeneration & Environment Committee Work Programme

Appendix 4 – Transformation & Resources Committee Work Programme

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL**

N/A

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

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Coordinating Committee	02 July 2014
Coordinating Committee	03 September 2014
Coordinating Committee	27 February 2015

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# Appendix 1 - DRAFT 2015-16 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
<b>Regular Committee Dates</b>				23rd			30th					16th	23rd		
<b>Scheduled Reviews</b>															
Approach to scrutinising Council Plan		Requested by Chair													
Cumulative Impact Policy		Requested by Member													
<b>Potential Reviews</b>															
Review Constituency Committee decision-making		Requested by Member													
Pre-decision scrutiny		Requested by Member													
<b>Officer Reports</b>															
Meeting Procedure Rules		Provided by officers													
Policy & Performance Committee Remits		Provided by officers													
Corporate Plan Performance 2014/15 Year End Report		Provided by officers													
Year End Budget Report		Provided by officers													
Council Plan		Provided by officers													
<b>Referrals from other Committees</b>															
Notice of Motion - Review of number of councillors and election cycle.		Referred by the Mayor at Council 20/10/14													
<b>Call-in meetings</b>															
<b>Standing Items</b>															
Work Programme Review															
Corporate Plan Performance Report															
Financial Monitoring															
Policy Update															

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
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# APPENDIX 2 - 2015-16 Families and Wellbeing Policy & Performance Committee - Work Programme

Updated - 09/09/2015

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	April 2016	Outcome
<b>Committee Dates</b>				Tues 30th			Tues 8th		Mon 2nd	Tues 1st	Tues 19th		Tues 8th		
<b>Scheduled Reviews</b>															
Safeguarding Children	Cllr Moira McLaughlin	Agreed by P&P Committee on 5th Dec 2013							Committee report due						Commenced July 2014. To complete.
Reducing hospital admission and dependency on nursing and residential home for older people (To be known as the Avoiding Admissions review)	Cllr Moira McLaughlin	Agreed by P&P Committee on 2nd February 2015													12/08/14 - Spokespersons agreed to prioritise this review for early 2015. 02/02/15 - Committee agreed to establish a Task & Finish Group to work during the 2015/16 municipal year.
Early Years / Children's Centres		Agreed by P&P Committee on 20th March 2015													
Budget options	Cllr Moira McLaughlin	Part of the Council's budget process													
Council Plan - Development of delivery plan	Cllr Moira McLaughlin	Proposed by Spokespersons, 21st July													
<b>Impact Report from previous In-depth Reviews</b>															
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. Future updates will be provided.
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. Future updates will be provided.
<b>Reports Requested to Committee</b>															
School Traded Services - proposed changes to service delivery	Clare Fish / David Armstrong														Committee (02/12/14) requested future progress updates, which will be provided in 2015/16 municipal year.
Safeguarding Children Annual Report 2014/15	Simon Garner														
All-age Disability Service	Julia Hassall / Graham Hodkinson														Deferred until 2015/16 municipal year
Child Poverty Strategy - update	Julia Hassall														Committee (02/02/15) requested future updates re effectiveness of the child poverty strategy.
Disability service for children: budget option - progress report	Julia Hassall	Agreed by Spokespersons, 24th Feb 2015													Deferred from 2014/15 municipal year
CRI - Follow-up from Spotlight session on 21st Jan 2015															

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Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	April 2016	Outcome
Public Health Annual Report - 2014	Fiona Johnstone	Agreed by Spokespersons, 4th June 2015													Complete
Draft protocol to promote more effective working between Health & Wellbeing Board, Healthwatch and health scrutiny	Clare Fish	Agreed by Spokespersons, 4th June 2015													
Healthwatch Annual Report	Karen Prior														To be arranged
Day centres and the establishment of Wirral Evolutions - progress report	Chris Beyga	Agreed by P&P Committee, 8th Sept 2015													
Childcare Bill - update	Julia Hassall	Agreed by Spokespersons, 3rd Sept 2015													
Adults Safeguarding Annual Report	Simon Garner														
<b>Reports to be distributed to Members for information</b>															
Fostering Annual Report	Julia Hassall / Simon Fisher														Outstanding
Adoption Annual Report	Julia Hassall / Simon Fisher														Outstanding
Health & Wellbeing Strategy	Fiona Johnstone														
Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control - update	Julie Webster	Agreed by Spokespersons 7th January 2014													Complete
<b>Referrals from other Committees</b>															
NOM - Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control	Fiona Johnstone	Agreed by P&P Committee 28th Jan 2014													Follow-up report distributed to members in March 2015. Is a further follow-up required?
NOM - Becoming a 'Dementia-friendly' Council	Proposed: Cllr Tom Anderson; Seconded: Cllr Tracey Smith	Referred from Council, 14th July 2014													Committee (Sept 2014) requested a follow-up report in approx one year.
NOM - Mental Health Challenge	Proposed: Cllr Tom Anderson; Seconded: Cllr Lesley Rennie	Referred from Council, 6th July 2015													
<b>Standing Items</b>															
Performance Dashboard															
Financial Monitoring															
Policy Inform - Update															
Special Budget meeting															
<b>Spotlight Sessions</b>															
Vanguard Project	John Develing / Jo Goodfellow / Clare Fish	Proposed by Spokespersons 4th June 2015			20th										Complete
All-age Disability Service	Clare Fish / Julia Hassall / Graham Hodgkinson	Proposed by Spokespersons 4th June 2015					???								

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	April 2016	Outcome
Mental Health	Clare Fish	Proposed by Spokespersons 4th June 2015							???						
Proposed implementation of the Care Act 2014	Graham Hodgkinson	Proposed by Spokespersons 4th June 2015						???							
Health Inequalities	Fiona Johnstone	Proposed by F&W P&P Committee 8th July 2014													Date to be arranged in 2015/16 municipal year
<b>Attainment Sub-Committee</b>															
<b>Sub-Committee meetings</b>								23rd		16th			30th		
'Giving Wirral children the best start in life'	Julia Hassall / Deborah Gornik	Officer report prior to possible task and finish work													
School standards report regarding outcomes for Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2, GCSE and A Levels, including impact on 'narrowing the gap'	Deborah Gornik / Sue Talbot	Officer report requested													
Children social care reorganisation	Julia Hassall / Lisa Arthey	Officer report requested													
Exception reports highlighting positive and negative aspects arising from school Ofsted inspection reports	Deborah Gornik / Sue Talbot														
<b>Health &amp; Care Performance Panel</b>															
<b>Panel meetings</b>						20th	28th		25th		12th		16th		A meeting to review the draft Quality Accounts of health partners is scheduled for Tues 10th May 2016
Care home and domiciliary care – performance report (Amanda Kelly)	Amanda Kelly	Proposed by H&CPP, 19/11/14													
The impact of changes to Out of hospital services	Jacqui Evans	Proposed by H&CPP, 01/04/15													
Preparations for winter pressures	Jacqui Evans	Proposed by H&CPP, 01/04/15													
Quality framework and performance measures for the health sector in Wirral	Lorna Quigley	Standard agenda item													
Feedback from Quality Surveillance Group	Lorna Quigley	Standard agenda item													
Francis Scrutiny review – review of recommendations	Lorna Quigley, Jill Galvani, Alan Veitch	Proposed by H&CPP, 20/10/14													
Care Homes Scrutiny Review – review of recommendations	Amanda Kelly	Proposed by H&CPP, 19/11/14													
Social care complaints report, to include domiciliary care	Amanda Kelly	Proposed by H&CPP, 04/02/15													

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	April 2016	Outcome
WUTH: Follow-up report relating to issues arising from the CQC action plan (Sept 2014)	Jill Galvani, Evan Moore, Jean Quinn	Proposed by H&CPP, 01/04/15													
WUTH: Follow-up report relating to issues arising from the Cost Improvement Plan and A&E targets	Anthony Hassall	Proposed by F&W P&P Committee, 02/02/15													P&P Committee (02/02/15) requested future updates
The implementation of the Better Care Fund (H&CPP, 01/04/15)	Jacqui Evans	Proposed by H&CPP, 01/04/15													

## APPENDIX 3 - 2015-16 Regeneration & Environment Committee Work Programme

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	April 2016	Outcome
<b>Committee Dates</b>					14th		15th		3rd	2nd	18th		2nd		
<b>Scheduled Reviews</b>															
Coastal Strategy	Cllr Bernie Mooney	Requested by Members													In Progress
Tourism	Cllr Chris Meaden	Requested by Members													
Homelessness	Cllr George Davies	Requested by Members													
<b>Potential Reviews</b>															
Scrutiny of the Council Plan and Delivery Arrangements															
<b>Reports Requested</b>															
Tourism	Juggy Landay	Requested by Members													T&F Review agreed
Homelessness / Impact of removal of Housing Benefit for under 21s	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
Merseytravel	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
Enterprise Zone Investment and Property Development Fund	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
Devolution	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
Wirral Waters	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
Birkenhead Town Centre	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
Flood Risk Management	Kevin Adderley	Requested by Members													
<b>Notice of Motion</b>															
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority		Referred from Council													
Wirral's Economic Success		Referred from Council													
<b>Standing Items</b>															
Performance Dashboard															
Financial Monitoring															
Policy Inform															
Recommendations from Highways Representation Panels															

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# APPENDIX 4 - 2015-16 Transformation and Resources Policy & Performance Committee Work Programme

Key Activities	Lead Member / Officer	Reason for Review	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	April 2016	Outcome
<b>Committee Dates</b>					15th		21st		4th	3rd		1st	22nd		
<b>Scheduled Reviews</b>															
Libraries	Cllr Chris Meaden	Requested by Members													
<b>Potential Reviews</b>															
Debt Recovery processes	Cllr Phil Davies	Requested by Members													
Impact of Implementation of Universal credit / Removal of Housing Benefit for under 25s	Cllr Phil Davies	Requested by Members													
Disaster Recovery arrangements	Cllr Phil Davies	Requested by Members													
Scrutiny of Council Plan and delivery arrangements		Requested by Members													
<b>Notice of Motion</b>															
<b>Reports Requested</b>															
Reconfiguration of library services	Joe Blott	Requested by Members													
Asset management Strategy	Joe Blott	Requested by Members													
Performance Appraisals	Joe Blott	Requested by Members													
Disaster Recovery Arrangements	Joe Blott	Requested by Members													
Customer Relationship Management	Joe Blott	Requested by Members													
Security access to Council issued devices	Joe Blott	Requested by Members													
Local Welfare Assistance Scheme Scrutiny Review Update Report	Joe Blott	Requested by Members													
Community Safety Partnership	Joe Blott	Requested by Members													
<b>Spotlight Sessions</b>															
<b>Standing Items</b>															
Performance Dashboard															
Financial Monitoring															
Policy Inform															

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