



Policy and Performance - Transformation and Resources Committee

Date:	Monday, 21 September 2015
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP

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

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 and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 10)

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July, 2015.

3. IT SERVICES BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND DISASTER RECOVERY UPDATE

(Report to follow)

4. CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (Pages 11 - 24)

5. ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY (Pages 25 - 70)

6. SCRUTINY OF THE COUNCIL PLAN DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS

To receive a verbal presentation.

7. 2015/16 QUARTER 1 DIRECTORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT (Pages 71 - 80)

8. FINANCIAL MONITORING 2014/15 END OF YEAR REPORT AND 2015/16 QUARTER 1 REPORT (Pages 81 - 92)

9. POLICY BRIEFING PAPER (Pages 93 - 116)

10. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT (Pages 117 - 120)

11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR

POLICY AND PERFORMANCE - TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 15 July 2015

Present:

Councillor J Williamson (Chair)

Councillors	P Doughty	J Walsh
	S Foulkes	A Sykes
	R Gregson	T Anderson
	B Kenny	B Berry
	C Muspratt	L Fraser
	M Patrick	T Pilgrim
	J Salter	C Carubia

1 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP

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

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

No such declarations were made.

2 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the Transformation and Resources Policy and Performance Committee meeting held on 30 March, 2015.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of 30 March, 2015 be approved.

3 LOCAL WELFARE ASSISTANCE SCHEME SCRUTINY REVIEW

The Chair introduced a report on the findings and recommendations of the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme Scrutiny Review, which she had chaired and which had been undertaken by six members of the Committee, Councillors Tom Anderson, Paul Doughty, Phil Gilchrist, Matthew Patrick, Joe Walsh and Janette Williamson.

As part of the Committee's work programme, Members agreed to undertake a Task and Finish Scrutiny Review of the Council's Local Welfare Assistance Scheme following news that there would be no direct funding from central government from 1 April 2015. As the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme provided awards to people who were in severe need, this contributed to meeting the corporate priority of protecting the vulnerable in Wirral.

On 10 February 2015, Cabinet agreed as part of its budget resolutions that £900,000 would be held in a reserve to determine how this should be allocated after the current Scheme expired at the end of July 2015. A scoping meeting for the review was convened on 25 February with an evidence day held on 9 April, 2015 to inform recommendations to Cabinet.

To avoid an additional meeting of this Committee being scheduled for the purpose of approving the final report, this Committee had agreed a recommendation at the meeting held on 30 March 2015 (minute 31 refers) to give delegated authority to the Scrutiny Review Panel to refer the final agreed report to Cabinet.

The final report contained six recommendations which the Cabinet considered and supported at its meeting on 29 June, 2015 (minute 14 refers) and a copy of the minute was circulated at the meeting.

The Chair stated that this review had been an excellent piece of cross-party working with one full day workshop gathering evidence from a variety of organisations, which had received a positive response from Cabinet. The review panel would meet again in six months to review progress and how the recommendations were taking shape.

Members suggested the need for the Scheme to dovetail into the recently approved Wirral Council Plan and to keep reviewing what the Council could offer bearing in mind the budgetary constraints of the Council. Future budget options should take account of any piece of work which could be done in time for that.

Resolved – That the contents of report be noted.

4 INTERIM REPORT ON RECONFIGURATION OF LIBRARY SERVICE

The Head of Business Processes provided an update on the library service available from the 15 community library sites following the Cabinet budget proposal of 15 December 2014 (reducing opening hours to 18 per week at these sites) which had been implemented from 16 March, 2015.

The report gave details of the impact of the changes over the months of April/May 2015 compared to the same period in 2014 with regards to customer usage at both community libraries and central and merged libraries.

Customer and staff feedback on the changes was also provided within the report.

Although there had been an impact of implementing the revised opening hours at community libraries this had largely been mitigated by actions taken by the service, flexibility of the staffing resource or acceptance by the majority of customers of the new opening pattern.

The approximate 33% reduction in overall average usage at these sites should be taken in the context of a wider declining site usage (experienced to a lesser extent at other libraries not affected by these changes) as other channels were becoming popular such as online self-service and e-books.

The commitment given to continuing current activities / auxiliary services provided by partner agencies had been largely met with 89% of these regular events continuing in the same or updated format. These changes had also acted as a catalyst for securing community/volunteer support at certain sites, ensuring the on-going provision of services and proving this was a model that could be adopted more widely in the future. The feedback from a minority of active library users showed that whilst these regular borrowers felt the new hours had reduced the number of times they used their local library there was a significant proportion (43%) who confirmed no impact or indeed a positive outcome of the changes.

Responding to comments from Members the Head of Business Processes made a number of comments, including:

- Several options as to reduced hours had been looked at but ultimately 18 hours was the decision taken by the Council to reflect the budget available.
- The possibility of extending opening hours for the 15 Community libraries could happen as was already the case at one of the sites with volunteer help. There was also a need to balance some demographic issues, where some libraries would not have as much support from volunteers as to those which did.
- With reference to the statistics in the report on average total and hourly usage he acknowledged there were differences between individual libraries and he would be able to provide a breakdown of the figures for each individual library.
- There was a need to make sure the libraries were being used as much as possible within those hours which they were open. All libraries were now advertising their revised opening times.
- There was no detail available as to the approximate 6% decrease in the usage of the central libraries, as this was only a three month snapshot and trends might be more easily identifiable with the six month review.
- This interim report was to cover the impact on usage following changes to opening hours as officers were working to an existing library strategy.

More time was needed to understand the impacts and a report would be brought to Cabinet and this Committee with a six month review.

- As regards the future of the library service officers would continue to engage with friends groups.
- He acknowledged the need for IT support to be available at libraries with more services now being offered online.
- There were a number of trained professional librarians as well as a reference specialist. The number of children's story times had been reduced because of the reduced opening times.
- He clarified the current situation in respect of DBS checks and the work undertaken with HR colleagues on this.

The Head of Legal and Member Services confirmed that the guidance on DBS checking referred to regular contact but there was a need to ensure safeguarding issues were properly addressed.

Members made some suggestions as to issues which could form part of the work programme and a Task and Finish Group to look at lunchtime and late afternoon opening times and how the Council can make best use of its libraries. In doing this it would be helpful to look at the comparisons with neighbouring authorities.

Resolved – That the report be noted pending a full review of the impact of the revised community library opening hours.

5 ASSET MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Head of Universal and Infrastructure Services submitted a report which updated the Committee on the current position of Asset Management in Wirral with particular focus on the strategic asset management policy and office accommodation.

The report gave details of the situation of major sites for disposal and on office rationalisation and he updated the Committee on the current situation in respect of these sites.

Responding to comments from Members the Head of Universal and Infrastructure Services made a number of comments, including:

- With the redevelopment of certain sites and the rationalisation of others there would still be the need for further office moves but these were now made simpler with the standardisation of desks, IT and communications.
- He was aware of the community interest which had been shown in The Grange, Wallasey and would hope this interest could still be accommodated.
- He acknowledged the difficulties and frustrations which could sometimes occur for groups or individuals putting expressions of interest in on

buildings or sites and the need to inform people sooner when these bids failed.

- Options as to the future of the Bebington Complex would be considered by the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, with it being at the commercial heart of Bebington.

Resolved – That the contents of the report and the comments of the Head of Universal and Infrastructure Services, be noted.

6 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development introduced a report on Performance Appraisals and the need to improve on performance in this area from the final outturn figure of 49% in 2014/15, the target having been 80%.

Details were given of the support offered by Human Resources and Organisational Development to improve Performance through:

- Additional support to Managers to assist them to undertake the Performance Appraisal more effectively such as Departmental Management Team (DMT) briefings and e-learning training;
- A targeted communication strategy to ensure staff and managers were fully aware of their responsibility to undertake Performance Appraisals;
- Monthly monitoring and report of progress towards targets at DMTs;
- On Line Management Development Training Needs Analysis for Managers to self-assess their knowledge and skills against the management expectations framework.

A timetable for completion of Appraisals in 2015/16 was included within the report with the target to be achieved by 30 September, 2015. The latest figures available were that 12% had been completed for all staff levels but the target date for completion by Senior Managers had not been achieved.

Responding to Members the Head of HR and OD and the Head of Financial Services commented:

- The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and Senior Managers had agreed to the approach which required a change in culture.
- As to why the targets had been missed there could be a whole variety of reasons including restructures within the Council and capacity issues.
- Approximately 300 staff had been lost through remodelling a number of whom had been redeployed but of these a number may not have had a PA. Those staff being redeployed would have had a lot of support through the change support programme.
- Discussions had been held with the SLT as to whether the target should be lower. The 80% was set to cover all staff but allowing leeway for

absence. Whilst this was challenging it was regarded as deliverable. In response to a further question from a Member as to whether the target should be set for different levels within the organisation this would be reflected upon as part of the six month review.

- Performance was reported by HR on delivery within Directorates. A lot was being done through communications to try and improve performance and discussions were being held with managers to keep up momentum. The recently approved Wirral Council Plan provided a further incentive for Managers to undertake PAs.

Members expressed a high level of concern at the poor performance in meeting this indicator's target and asked that their concerns be raised at Cabinet level.

Resolved – That the report be noted and the Chair write to the Cabinet Portfolio holder, Councillor Adrian Jones to pass on this Committee's concerns to Senior Managers at this target being missed.

7 HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY UPDATE

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development reported upon proposed changes to the Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure following a review and also outlined details of new legislation in relation to shared parental leave which had been incorporated into Council policies.

The Council had to operate a fair and legally compliant Disciplinary Process. The policy and procedure had been reviewed to ensure the Council's processes continued to comply with ACAS Codes of Practice and were consistent with policies in place in other Local Authorities and large organisations (best practice). A range of changes had been proposed to the policy and procedures on this basis and the report gave details of the key changes.

A copy of the proposed revised Disciplinary Policy and Procedure was appended to the report. Trade Unions had been formally consulted on the proposed revisions and they retained their objection to the decision taken by Council in January 2013 to delegate employment appeals (including Disciplinary Appeals) to the Chief Executive.

With regard to Parental Leave, in April 2015, new legislation had come into place which introduced Shared Parental Leave. This enabled eligible mothers, fathers, partners and adopters to choose how to share time off work after their child was born or placed for adoption. The Council had implemented shared parental leave as part of the existing policy framework. Guidance and FAQs had been developed and would be available on the Council's intranet.

A Member suggested that the non-completion of Performance Appraisals by managers could be termed a matter of misconduct.

Members referred to a letter circulated at the meeting from UNISON, which referred to a quarterly report from the Chief Executive on the operation of the arrangements for conducting employment appeals and the lack of such reports being produced following the removal of this function from the Appeals Sub-Committee of the Employment and Appointments Committee in January, 2013.

The Head of Legal and Member Services commented that he would look into the matter raised and ascertain what exactly Council did resolve in January 2013, although the remit and scope of the Employment and Appointments Committee had changed following revisions to the Council Constitution in 2013. He would circulate an advice note once the issue had been looked into.

A Member suggested that with the change in remit of the Employment and Appointments Committee a report should have been produced and circulated to a Policy and Performance Committee as Members should have oversight of disciplinary issues. Members reiterated their concerns if no reports on the outcomes / operation of the appeals process had been produced.

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development commented that the right to an employment appeal against dismissal, a disciplinary warning or for a grievance was a fundamental right and that all such appeals below Chief Officer level were delegated through the Chief Executive to Strategic Directors with two Heads of Service. She stated that she had only received a copy of the letter from UNISON just before the meeting and that the unions' principal objection to the delegation of employment appeals was noted in the report. She met with the Trades Unions every three weeks and at no stage recently had they raised concerns regarding the operation of the appeals process or on the reporting of these issues.

Resolved –

(1) That this Committee recommends to Council:

(a) Approval of the revised Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and;

(b) Approval that the legislative changes outlined in the report in relation to Shared Parental Leave are incorporated into Council existing policies.

(2) That this Committee notes the concerns expressed as to whether reports have been written in respect of the operation of the arrangements for conducting employment appeals and requests that

the Head of Legal and Member Services inform Committee Members of the situation.

8 POLICY BRIEFING PAPER

The Head of Financial Services introduced a report on the July Policy Briefing Papers. This included an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, bills presented to Parliament and emerging policies.

The Policy Briefing papers were intended to provide Members with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support the Committee's work programme and future scrutiny work. During the course of the 2015-16 municipal year, the Council's Policy and Strategy Team would prepare four policy briefing papers which would be reported to the Policy and Performance Committees for consideration.

The July Policy Briefing papers focussed predominantly on the policies and legislation that had emerged from the newly formed Conservative Government. The papers provided a high level summary based on the available information released by Central Government at this time. Future papers would follow key Government announcements including the Budget Statement, the Autumn Statement, Spending Review and Local Government Finance Settlement and consider the implications for Wirral.

Resolved – That the contents of the Policy Briefing Papers be noted.

9 DIRECTORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Head of Financial Services presented a report which outlined the year end performance against the Directorate Plan for 2014/15. The report also included appendices with exception reports on those seven items which had been 'red' rated for non-compliance against the specified target. The seven measures rated red were:

- Percentage of local SME suppliers paid within 10 days (TRDP07)
- Reduction in the issuing of general exception notices under the Access to Information rules (TRDP09)
- Reduction in the total number of published supplementary agendas for Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings (TRDP10)
- Percentage of Performance Appraisals completed (TRCP03)
- Sickness absence: the number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness (TRCP04)
- Percentage of Leadership Development Programmes completed (TRDP11)
- Percentage of Management Development Programme modules completed (TRDP12)

In response to Members' comments, the Head of Financial Services stated that the targets were reported by an individual officer but delivered by all managers. As with Performance Appraisals (see minute 6 above) it was within the role of managers and whilst challenging and aspirational they were targets which the Authority should be striving to achieve.

The Head of Legal and Member Services explained how the target for the issuing of General Exception Notices fluctuated and agreed that both the Chair of this Committee and of the Policy and Performance Coordinating Committee could look at the best approach as to where these performance targets should be reported to.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

10 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report from the Chair which updated Members on the current position regarding the Committee's work programme.

Arrangements for setting the work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year had been discussed at the agenda setting meeting for this Committee. It was proposed that a workshop session be held with the Chair, Vice Chair, Group Spokespersons and any other Member of the Committee who would like to participate. Members would be notified of the arrangements for the workshop session once they had been formalised.

An update was also provided on previous and current scrutiny reviews.

Resolved – That the contents of the report be noted, including the arrangements for setting the Committee's work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

TRANSFORMATION & RESOURCES POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

21ST SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT:	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF BUSINESS PROCESSES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ADRIAN JONES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 At the work programme session on the 4th August 2015, Members requested a report on the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM).

This report seeks to inform Members about the journey the Council has taken so far with its current CRM system and the future plans it has for its replacement and the key role it will play in helping the Council to achieve its 2020 Vision: Taking Wirral Forward.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 Background

In 2005 Wirral Council began using the current Oracle Customer Relationship Management system in the Call Centre and One Stop Shops to capture customer and councillor contact relating specifically to Streetscene services. It also became the main back office business system for the division formerly known as Highway and Engineering Services, which later became Environment and Regulation.

Following successful implementation for Streetscene services CRM went on to become the main business system for Complaints, Compliments, Freedom of Information and Pest Control plus capturing customer contact for Building Control and Planning, some Children's Services and Anti Social Behaviour.

The CRM is also used by our partners; Biffa Waste Services, BAM Nuttall and Lairdsid Communities Together (LCT) to receive and complete work instructions relating to reports or requests submitted by customers, councillors, MP's and officers within Wirral Council.

In 2005 the CRM only captured the customer name and details relating to an issue reported but over the last 10 years it has been further developed taking advantage of functionality such task workflow (automation of business processes), automated scheduling, integration, mobile working, performance monitoring and customer self-service via the web.

2.2 CRM Go live

The Oracle E-Business system went live with the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) in July 2005.

20 Streetscene services were amongst the first set of services chosen during phase 1 that the Council would begin capturing customer contact for.

Staff within our Call Centre and One Stop Shops (OSS) captured the details from a customer relating to a Streetscene service and entered those details against a specific service request in CRM.

Reported issues entered into the CRM were printed out onto job tickets and given each morning to inspectors to visit and assess. For the defects that required repair a works instruction form was written out and handed back into the office at the end of the day.

The works instruction details were manually entered into the highway job costing system (ROCC Aramis Work Tickets) and printed out each day by the contractor. Following completion the contractor would update ROCC with costing details which would then be subsequently costed and paid for by the Highway Maintenance division.

Improvements:

- Single system to record customer contact relating to Streetscene services that gave visibility of all communication between staff and customers.
- Structured questions for each service capturing the right information at the right time
- Standardised approach to the way reports and requests were made across Streetscene services.
- Ceased using legacy Streetscene customer contact system.

2.3 Field Service and Install Base

This Oracle module replaced the old highway job costing system (ROCC Aramis Work Tickets) for issuing “job tickets” for both reactive and planned highway maintenance work in the former Technical Services Department. This meant that all tasks, from site inspection through to the contractor working on site, were held in CRM and visible to Call Centre/OSS and back office staff to respond to enquirers.

All work included estimated and actual costs for each job. Field Service extended the value of the CRM system to the “back-office” giving work planning and scheduling capability to operational teams using a “diary plan board” that enabled staff to monitor and progress work effectively.

Following the successful implementation work began to roll this out to other services.

Improvements:

- Ceased using 2 legacy systems - ROCC Aramis and MVM.
- Savings achieved in administration efficiencies and licence costs.
- Increased productivity – inspectors were able to carry out drainage inspections.
- Service levels improved, ERIC collections went from 67% to 98%
- Single system across client and contractor, keeping management, staff and customers informed for all services relating to Streetscene.
- Improved management information leading to better informed decisions and improved service levels.
- Increased data integrity.

During this phase Install Base went live. This module allows officers to record and monitor issues raised against highway sign assets.

2.4 Advanced Scheduler

The functionality introduced as part of this phase, Advanced Scheduler, provides state of the art comprehensive scheduling functionality for assigning activities to resources such as members of staff. This predominately worked by assigning tasks to inspectors within highways.

Two methods of scheduling were introduced, both of which were based on pre-defined constraints: Autonomous Scheduling, and Window-to-Promise (W2P).

Autonomous Scheduling was the most efficient and cost effective method of scheduling tasks. No manual intervention was required – a concurrent program periodically runs in the background, and picks up those tasks eligible for autonomous scheduling, and using the pre-defined constraints and available resources, schedules the task in the most cost-effective fashion. The result is a diary plan board pre-populated with tasks for each resource, which can be optimised manually by a manager (including re-assigning tasks) and then 'Committed' to the various resources to work on.

The Window-to-Promise scheduling option addresses a situation where the customer wants the option to dictate the date and time of a visit. The Window-to-Promise is specifically designed to provide the customer with just such a date and time slot. A time slot is the period in which a service representative/team visits the customer to perform a service task.

Improvements:

- Further administrative efficiencies gained both in the Call Centre, Environmental Services and Biffa Waste Management.
- Increased productivity - more inspections being carried out per day.
- Functionality rolled out to Pest Control, savings made around efficiencies and licence costs.
- Automated work scheduling optimised job allocation which improved Service Level Agreements.

2.5 Mobile Working and Microsoft Word integration

Oracle Mobile was part of the Oracle Field Service suite of products and went live in 2007. The application enabled an inspector to respond to a reported defect in a fully automated and computer-efficient way using a mobile device. This allowed tasks to be received and dealt with in a timely manner and service requests resolved quickly.

Tasks to inspect issues could be received and work to repair the defects could be raised using hand-held mobile devices. Inspectors no longer had to visit the office to collect their work or drop off work required for the contractor to do.

Improvements:

- Savings gained through less duplication, paper and travelling costs.
- Service levels improved, reduction in delays.
- Number of inspections carried out increased as inspectors were not having to return to the office during the day.

Unfortunately changes to the contractors pricing structure along with the age of the mobile devices led to the inspectors working remotely using laptops instead. However trials have been carried out recently using new mobile technology that should enable our inspectors to start using mobile devices again.

During this phase the council also went live with CRM/Word integration.

Improvements:

- Saved staff having to manually enter customer and service details each time correspondence relating to a service request was processed
- Customer correspondence held in one place

2.6 Integration with Biffa's own Management Information System

With the introduction of mobile working came the "integration hub". This gave the council the functionality to be able to integrate with the councils waste contractor management information system, Biffa Springboard.

Reports from customers relating to missed bin collections were input into CRM and automatically routed to Biffa's waste collection vehicle. By Biffa receiving this information direct they are able to respond, collect the missed bin and update the system accordingly as soon as the bin has been collected. This system was later rolled out to services relating to the supply of waste and recycling bins.

Improvements:

- Quicker response times;
- Improved service levels;
- Improved customer information;

- Improved customer satisfaction;
- Savings made by Biffa Waste Services;
- Saving of £75,000 per year relating to the supply of waste bins;
- Reduction in duplication, errors and improved data integrity.

2.7 Email centre

Email Centre is a module within the Oracle eBusiness Suite that provides:

- Provided full visibility of all emails in/out of selected council email addresses.
- Full visibility of email management and allocation.
- A tool that helps to manage email communication with Customers.
- Automated inbound email processing.
- Outbound customer emails and responses.
- The ability to efficiently handle email in a consistent and accessible email data store.
- Classification that allowed priority emails to be dealt with first.

2.8 Web including integrated eforms and text messaging

Over the years demand and expectation for council services has increased with customers expecting to contact the council at a time that suits them.

With this in mind the Council evaluated its customer contact and updated its Customer Access Strategy detailing the changes required that would enable those customers who wanted to, to self-serve at a time that was convenient for them whilst at the same time achieve the savings associated with customers self-serving.

Electronic forms were created and published on the council's website that integrated directly into the CRM system. Each time a customer reports or requests a service via an integrated CRM eform the details are automatically fed into CRM.

These changes allow customers to interact with Wirral Council 24/7, 365 days of the year. Customers no longer have to wait until office hours following a Bank Holiday to report their missed bin collection. By going online and reporting it themselves customers can be assured their bin will be collected by the contractor without having to wait and speak to a member of staff within the council.

A pothole reported on a Saturday evening is automatically scheduled for inspection as soon as it enters the system using the systems built in resource scheduler. Once scheduled an automatic email is sent to the customer confirming the timeframe the inspection will take place in. Customers are able to join and pay for the garden waste collection service via the web, the details are fed into the CRM and automatically sent to Biffa instructing them to add the property to their round.

More recent improvements to the CRM are allowing customers to track progress via the Wirral website of not only their own reported issues or requests but reports made by other customers. This again not only keeps our customers informed but allows us to target the resources available towards supporting those customers who are not able to get online themselves.

For the services that do not go through CRM a software package called AchieveForms has been used. AchieveForms has allowed the council to further extend the number of eforms available via the web. Information submitted via these forms is sent directly to the each service in the back office.

Improvements:

- **Simple to use** – no need to remember different telephone numbers or email addresses, eforms are streamlined and simple to use
- **Accountability** - a reference number confirming we have received the request is given along with an indication of when the request will be dealt with. Each task generated has a service level agreement and managers can at any time view outstanding tasks and performance against SLAs. There is a clear audit trail within the system allowing managers to identify who has been involved in the process at every stage.
- **Track progress** – the reference number can be used to track progress via the web, reducing unnecessary contact via the telephone relating to progress chasing.
- **Kept updated** - system automatically sends email updates about the Streetscene request
- **Convenient** – our web is available 24/7 therefore reports made via the web get actioned as soon as they reach the system. This means bins can be reported and emptied during Bank Holidays and reported defects can be scheduled for inspection automatically by the system during the weekend instead of having to wait until Monday when our staff are available to process the report.
- **Cost effective** - for the majority of services the information entered using an eform on the web is automatically entered into our CRM system at a substantially lower cost to the Council than had it been entered via traditional contact channels such as telephone, email or face to face.
- **Streamlined** - for those services that don't directly integrate with the CRM system, the eform ensures that the correct information is captured enabling it to be logged correctly into the CRM. (Often with emails we needed to contact the sender to find out more information).
- **Resourcing** – using the information captured we can monitor progress and volumes easily, which allows us to allocate resources more effectively.
- **Duplication** - updates provided direct to customers and councillors are displayed via the internet thus avoiding duplicate reports.

The Council's web has also been improved over the last couple of years giving customers better information about the services it provides plus

functionality that allows customers to easily find information out, such as “when will my bin be collected?” or “what time is the next keep fit class on?”. The Council’s website will become even more accessible to our customers after September following an upgrade that will see the Councils website becoming leaner, faster, easier to navigate around and easier to access using any device e.g. PC, laptop, smartphone or tablet.

Appendix A details the Streetscene services that can be accessed via the Councils web site using an eform.

Appendix B details the number of reports or requests made since the Councils first eform went live on the web.

To further improve the customers experience text messaging was introduced to the Bulky Item Collection service (ERIC). Customers now receive a text message about their collection the day before their collection is due reminding them to put their items out.

2.9 Future development

We continue to receive and act upon feedback, improving the system and eforms where we can.

The CRM system is now 10 years old and although it has helped the Council to achieve savings and make services more accessible than ever it lacks the technology that supports the Council’s vision going forward.

The Council’s 2020 Vision: Taking Wirral Forward promises to be a Council which is fit for the digital world. Our services must be accessible, delivered sometimes entirely online to help reduce costs and remove duplication, to improve speed and efficiency.

The Council will transform how it works with residents; driving integration and being as efficient as possible, with one point of contact able to solve every residents need. We will become a Council that is digital by default.

As pointed out by the Cabinet office in November 2012; by digital by default requires digital services that are so straight forward and convenient that all those who can use them will choose to do so whilst those who can’t are not excluded.

Over the coming months the Council will begin work to replace its current CRM system. Our new system will be fit for purpose and adaptable in order to respond to the ever changing advances in technology. It will place Wirral in an excellent position as a Council going forward with partners and the community one which is responsive to customer contact in the most efficient manner. It will be developed to enable it to be the ‘front door’ for our public, private and community sector partners if required to provide joined up response to Wirral residents.

It will be developed via thorough consultation with our users including Members to ensure it meets the needs and expectations of those people who deal with customer contact on a regular basis via focus groups. We will also speak with customers to ensure that the system meets their needs too.

Key deliverables:

- An online customer account with an autofill facility which saves customers having to enter common details each time they report or request a service. Customers able to update personal information themselves.
- All customer contact held in one place.
- Integrated tracking facility which allows customers to track progress for reports or requests made until resolution.
- Integrated payment/refund functionality enabling customers to pay for services or request refunds via the website.
- Integrated booking facility that will enable most bookings/appointments to be made via the website
- Integrated mapping that helps when reporting street location issues
- Integrated signposting to information provided via the website
- Integrated document management store
- A “sign up” facility that will keep customers informed of council news
- Single delivery system across all delivery channels used by customer service advisors, reducing training and improving support for customers
- System that is self-sufficient in adding or adapting processes to support new or modified services into the future.
- Improved business intelligence which will help the Council make better informed decisions
- Workflow to automate processes and assign tasks automatically
- Integration with key back office systems to provide a joined-up customer experience

Key principles:

- Design services around our customers, working closely with our partners
- Our website will be the primary channel for delivering Council services for customers and staff.
- Our customers will know what is happening at each stage of the process
- Our online services will be easy to find and use, effective, efficient and secure.
- Customer feedback will be easily captured and used to inform service improvements
- Wirral residents and staff will have the necessary access, confidence, skills and support to enable them to interact with us online
- Emails and SMS will be used to proactively reduce avoidable contact
- The telephone service will support our web offering for those people who need assistance in accessing our services, and for those enquiries that are too complex to transact online.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 The relevant risks associated with not taking this approach are:

- If we do not support people to go online it will cost the Council more and we will fall behind other councils and the way they interact with customers.
- Our customer contact strategy becomes outdated with current customer expectations.
- We are not in line with central government thinking.
- By not making self-serve channels available we risk isolating the more vulnerable that need our limited resources for mediated support.
- By not moving forward we become a council that lacks the digital capacity to interact with modern society resulting in higher council tax charges for Wirral residents due to the Council supporting obsolete ways of working.
- The Council does not achieve the budget cuts required over the next 5 years.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 Remain with the current CRM system.

Current system will become unsupported and obsolete; lacking the technology it requires to interact with other systems and customers.

This option is therefore not viable.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 The Council consulted during the What Really Matters consultation in 2013. An agreed budget option was Improving Access to the Council via call centre savings and improving online access for customers.

Full Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken for those budget options.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 By making our services available online we ensure our services are available 24/7, 365 days of the year which enables volunteer, community and faith groups to interact with the Council at a time and a place that suits them and the people they help.

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

7.1 Financial savings have been achieved by maximising the use of the web and will continue to be maximised using this channel.

There has been an overall reduction in staff through remodelling.

Although there is currently adequate IT in place to support self-serve via the web as it stands work is required to replace the current CRM system in order to

satisfy the increased customer expectations and achieve maximum savings over the next 5 years.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no legal implications.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

(a) Yes and impact review can be found by following the link below.

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-april-2014>

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no carbon or environmental issues.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no planning and community safety implications.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION

12.1 It is recommended that the report is noted.

13.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

REPORT AUTHOR: Julie Williams
Customer Services Manager
(0151) 691 8629
juliewilliams@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix A Streetscene eforms available via the Council's website
Appendix B Reports/requests made via the web since 2010

REFERENCE MATERIAL

What Really Matters Consultation 2013
2020 Vision: Taking Wirral Forward
Customer Access Strategy

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

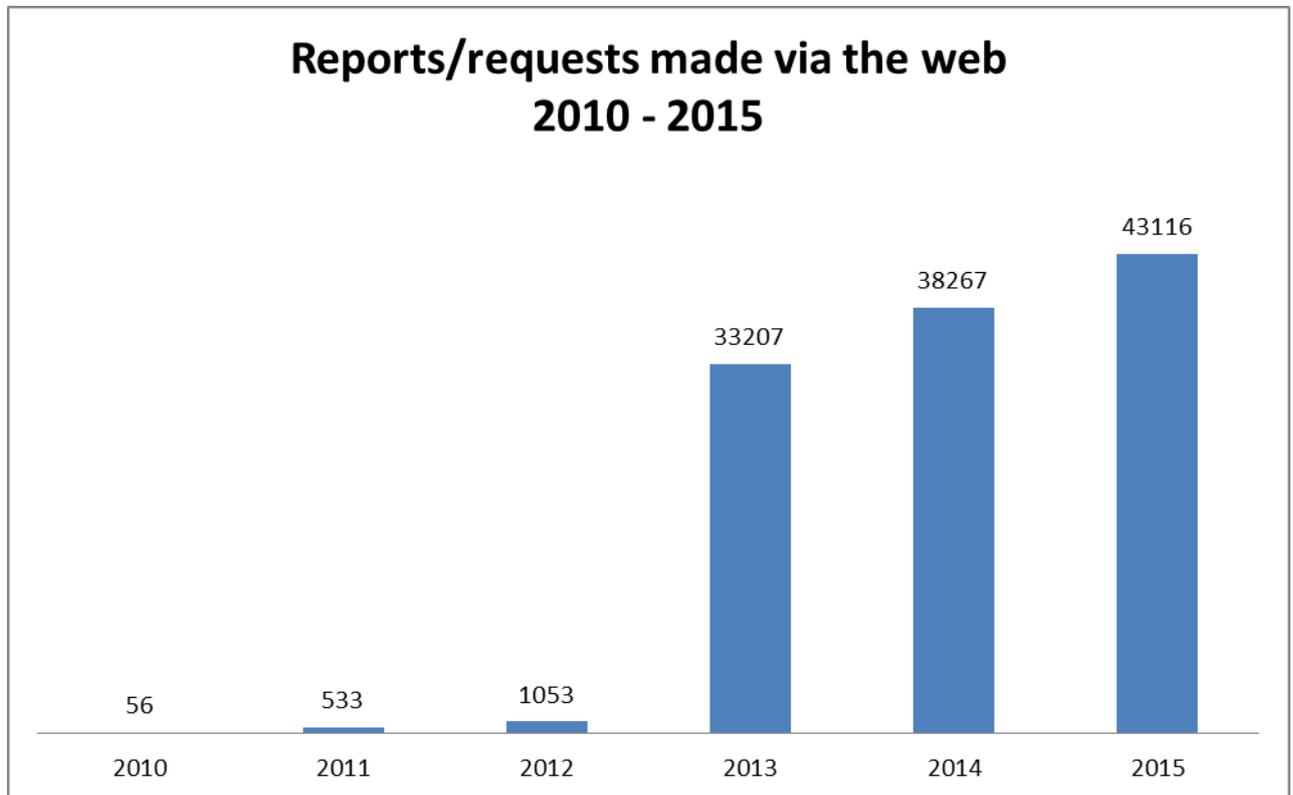
Council Meeting	Date

Appendix A

Access Protection Marking
Allotments
Bollard
Bridges and Structures
Car sale/repair on road
Coastal Protection
Cycling
Dead Animal - Highway/Property
Disabled Parking Bays
Dog Fouling
Flooding
Fly Posting Highways
Fly Tipping
Graffiti
Grounds Maintenance
Gully Defect
Help List Request
Household Waste - Cancel Bin
Household Waste - Remove Bin
Household Waste - Supply Bin
Household Waste - Collection Brown Bin
Household Waste - Collection Bulk Bin
Household Waste - Collection Green Bin
Household Waste - Collection Grey Bin
Household Waste - Garden Waste Collection
Highway Sign
Licensing & Permit Issues
Street Litter Bin
Memorial Bench
Needles and Syringes
Parking Issues
Parking Ticket Appeal
Parks and Countryside
Pavement Defect
Public Rights of Way
Recycling Bank
Recycling General
Resident Parking Permit
Road Adoptions
Road Closure Request
Road Defect
Road Markings
Road Safety
Roadworks

Skip Problem
Street Cleansing
Street Lighting
Street Nameplates
Street Naming/Numbering
Street Seats
Trade Waste
Traffic Conditions
Traffic Signal
Trees General
Trees Inspection
Vehicle Crossing
Visitor Parking Permit
Winter Maintenance

Appendix B



*2013 saw the introduction of the Garden Waste Subscription service

WIRRAL COUNCIL

TRANSFORMATION & RESOURCES POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

21 SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT:	ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF:	ACTING HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
RESPONSIBLE PORFOLIO HOLDER	CLLR A JONES
KEY DECISION	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out proposed changes to the Council's Attendance Management Policy and Procedure following a review.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

The Council's Human Resources policies are subject to an ongoing review to ensure that they remain fit for purpose, legally compliant and provide a valuable and workable resource for employees and managers on employment related issues in the workplace.

The Council's absence performance has been regularly reported to Policy and Performance Committee. In 2014/15, the average number of days lost per employee was 10.37 days against a target of 9.75 days.

Absence data provided by North West Employers shows that Wirral Council's performance in comparison to that of other North West authorities has improved. The average level of absence amongst 20 Authorities was 11.05 (up from 10.61 in 2013/14) with Wirral ranked seventh highest.

This demonstrates that absence is an issue for other Councils and the work we are doing is achieving some success in containing absence levels in context of significant change affecting Local Authorities. Quarter 1 in 2015/16 has seen an increase in absence levels although this has adjusted slightly in July. The average absence level in the public sector is around 8 days per year and we are committed to improving performance.

There has to be a holistic approach to managing absence. We must ensure that there are a range of support initiatives to assist employees to stay in work but also ensure our attendance management policy is fit for purpose and allows for management action to address concerning levels of absence both informally and formally when appropriate.

We have implemented a range of measures over past couple of years to manage absence in the workplace.

Training

Training	Employees who have undertaken this training
Attendance management e-learning	976
Stress awareness E-learning for staff and managers	3,574
Attendance Management Course	309
30 days to Fantastic management	26
Stress awareness and personal resilience	120
Resilient leadership (Managing Stress and Staying Resilient)	97
Working through change	281
Leading people through change	258
Coaching	153
WRAP training	187
Mental Health Awareness	105
Demystifying Mental Health	140

The Council has introduced a range of other interventions around stress to assist employees in returning to work as soon as possible.

Occupational Health contract/Employee Assistance Programme

The Council has a contract in place with an external provider and the Employee Assistance Programme also offers 6 'free' sessions of counselling for any employee without charge. We have the facility to refer employee to Occupational Health for medical advice.

Enhanced Management Information

We have also significantly increased the information available to managers via their desktop which can be broken down by Directorate, service area, team and individual level. This allows identification of employees who have met triggers or have concerning patterns of absence.

Case Management

HR Business Partners attend Departmental Management Teams on a monthly basis to discuss sickness absence cases, highlight trends and concerns and ensure there is a plan in place next to each long term case.

Chief Officer Briefings

In July 2015 Strategic Directors and Chief Officers, supported by HR, met line managers to discuss the Council's performance and make clear the line manager's role and responsibilities in managing absence. Feedback from those sessions has also helped inform proposed policy and procedure changes.

3.0 FURTHER ACTION

We have a number of initiatives in progress to continue to manage absence;

Refresh of training

We will be refreshing mandatory training (including e-learning) for line managers and developing the tools and guidance available to managers.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

We are developing a Health and Wellbeing strategy which will bring together all the actions we intend to take to address issues of health, wellbeing and absence in the workplace. We are working with colleagues in public health to access national and local health initiatives and events and ensure there is proactive support in place for employees. We are exploring bespoke mental health and stress interventions which can be targeted to employees in specific areas.

Proposed Policy and Procedure changes

Most large organisations have a policy and procedure in place to manage absence in the workplace. Under the policy and procedure managers are required to:

- record absence
- maintain contact with employee during absence
- make referrals to Occupational Health for long term sickness
- hold a back to work meeting with employees
- advise employees informally if attendance is a concern
- take formal action (issue warnings) where appropriate

Within the Council's policy, as is common in most policies, there are a series of 'triggers' which may result in formal action being taken.

Following a review, we are recommending a number of changes to the Council Attendance Management policy. The key changes are:

- A policy requirement that employees are referred to Occupational Health immediately (day 1) for stress related absence (this is currently practice but not a policy requirement).
- Adoption of the following triggers in relation to short-term absence.
 - Any period of unauthorised absence **OR**
 - 3 periods of absence up to 3 days within a 6 calendar month period **OR**
 - 2 periods of absence over 4 days within a 6 calendar month period **OR**
 - 2 periods of absence over 7 days within a 12 calendar month period **OR**
 - Unacceptable patterns of absence

Appendix One (a) and (b) sets out current and proposed triggers. The recommended changes to first stage of absence to specify a number of days rather than just occasions of absence will strengthen the operation of the policy and add clarity. It remains a fundamental principle of managing absence that an employee is made aware informally that their absence is a concern before formal action is taken and the policy retains this.

These 'triggers' are already in the policy in place for schools based employees. The policy changes would ensure consistency of application between the Council and schools in application of the attendance management policy.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

4.1 There are no specific risks arising out of this report.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 There are no other specific options to consider arising out of this report. There are a wide range of absence triggers that could be considered but adopting those already agreed for schools based staff is consistent.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 In developing the Attendance Management Policy feedback has been received from managers across the Council to identify how policy and practice may be improved.

6.2 Trade Unions were formally consulted on the revised Policy and Procedure. Unison has not agreed to proposed changes. Unite and GMB did not respond to consultation.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 There are no specific implications arising out of this report.

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

8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising out of this report. All expenditure involved has been contained within existing budgets or funded from other specific budgets or has been funded by external organisations. There are no specific staffing implications arising out of this report.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? Yes

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific implications arising out of this report.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no specific implications arising out of this report.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

That Policy and Performance Committee recommends to Council;

- a) Approval of the revised Absence Policy and Procedure

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 To ensure that Council's HR policies are up to date, legally complaint and relevant to the organisations requirements.

REPORT AUTHOR: Tony Williams
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 (a) Stages of Managing Absence - current
Appendix 1 (b) Stages of Managing Absence - proposed
Appendix 2 Attendance Policy
Appendix 3 Attendance Procedure

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

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Absence Trigger	Stage	Further Information	Sanction
Trigger of 3 occasions in 6 months is met. or 20 days continuous absence or Concerns over patterns of absence	Review Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss the employee's attendance. Provide appropriate support Agree Attendance Improvement Plan (AIP). Set review period (up to 3 months). 	Review Period 3 Months
Trigger of 4 occasions in 12 months is met. or Absence remains a cause for concern. or Employee's attendance does not improve in accordance with requirements of Attendance Improvement Plan. or Absence exceeds 3 months continuous absence.	Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would normally follow a review period. To make employee aware that attendance is below standard expected by Council. To encourage improvement in Attendance. 	Verbal Warning 6 months
Further episodes of absence Or Absence remains a cause for concern Or Employee's attendance does not improve in accordance with requirements of Attendance Improvement Plan. or Absence exceeds 6 months continuous absence.	Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make employee aware that attendance is below standard expected by Council. To encourage improvement in Attendance. 	First Written Warning 12 months
Further episodes of absence Or Absence remains a cause for concern. Or Employee's attendance does not improve in accordance with requirements of Attendance Improvement Plan. or Absence exceeds 9 months continuous absence (Previously Serious Incapability Stage 1).	Stage 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make employee aware that attendance is below standard expected by Council. To encourage improvement in Attendance. 	Final Written Warning 12 Months
Further episodes of absence Or Absence remains a cause for concern. or Employee's attendance does not improve in accordance with requirements of Attendance Improvement Plan. or Twelve months continuous absence. (Previously Serious Incapability Stage 2).	Stage 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager must evidence that all options to improve and sustain the employee's attendance have been explored and the employer has acted reasonably. Management case presented to justify dismissal recommendation 	Final Written Warning (Re-issued) Dismissal

NB: It is not within the spirit of the policy or in the Council's or employees' interest for formal action to be taken repeatedly taken to address an employees' level of attendance, only for further absence to occur once warnings have elapsed. In such cases, it may be reasonable to consider formal action at the next stage of the procedure.

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Absence Trigger	Stage	Further Information	Sanction
Trigger of 3 separate periods of absence of up to 3 working days within any 6 calendar month period or 2 separate periods of absence over 3 working days within any 6 calendar month period or 20 days continuous absence or Concerns over patterns of absence	Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make employee aware that attendance is below standard expected by Council. • To discuss the employee's attendance. • Provide appropriate support • Agree Attendance Improvement Plan (AIP). 	Verbal Warning 6 months
Further episode(s) of absence Or Absence remains a cause for concern Or Employee's attendance does not improve in accordance with requirements of Attendance Improvement Plan. or Absence exceeds 6 months continuous absence.	Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make employee aware that attendance is below standard expected by Council. • To encourage improvement in Attendance. 	First Written Warning 12 months
Further episode(s) of absence Or Absence remains a cause for concern. Or Employee's attendance does not improve in accordance with requirements of Attendance Improvement Plan. or Absence exceeds 9 months continuous absence (Previously Serious Incapability Stage 1).	Stage 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make employee aware that attendance is below standard expected by Council. • To encourage improvement in Attendance. 	Final Written Warning 12 Months
Further episode(s) of absence Or Absence remains a cause for concern. or Employee's attendance does not improve in accordance with requirements of Attendance Improvement Plan. or Twelve months continuous absence. (Previously Serious Incapability Stage 2).	Stage 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager must evidence that all options to improve and sustain the employee's attendance have been explored and the employer has acted reasonably. • Management case presented to justify dismissal recommendation 	Final Written Warning (Re-issued) Dismissal

NB: It is not within the sprit of the policy or in the Council's or employees' interest for formal action to be taken repeatedly taken to address an employees' level of attendance, only for further absence to occur once warnings have elapsed. In such cases, it may be reasonable to consider formal action at the next stage of the procedure.

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Attendance Management Policy

1. Policy Statement

The Council is committed to ensuring that we have employees who have good physical and mental health with maximum levels of attendance so that they are more resilient and engaged to deliver excellent services and outcomes for the people of Wirral.

This policy and supporting procedure sets out Wirral Council's approach to the Management of Attendance within the workplace.

2. Background

The Council recognises the value that good health and well being can have in developing positive working environments.

The Council is committed to effectively managing and reducing sickness absence as high levels of absence seriously impacts on the ability of the Council to provide appropriate levels of service to the people of Wirral and will impact on contracts and jobs.

When employees are ill or there are concerns about their health, managers should provide and arrange assistance, support and guidance that is sensitive, fair and appropriate.

High levels of sickness absence can significantly affect how teams and service areas perform. This in turn affects the level and quality of service we give the public and our partners. Most employees have very low levels of sickness absence and only take time off work through ill health when they are genuinely ill. The Council does not expect employees to work when they are unfit.

The Policy is underpinned by a commitment to the following principles:

- Give guidance and support to all employees on the arrangements that are in place to prevent occupational ill health and the arrangements in place to manage sickness absence.
- Provide a fair and consistent method of dealing with the absence of employees due to either repeated periods of short-term sickness or long-term sickness.

- Ensure employees are aware of the attendance standards that are required, are given the opportunity to improve where absence falls below these standards and aware of the consequences if they fail to meet standards.
- Ensure that every attempt is made to investigate the employee's ability to perform adequately in their, involving the Occupational Health Service fully, as appropriate.
- Ensure workplace absence is managed effectively and managers are clear about their role and responsibilities in doing so.
- Ensure that managers have appropriate support and guidance from the policy and related documents to make reasonable, justifiable and robust decisions in absence management cases.
- Automatic first day referrals to occupational health for stress and stress related illnesses.

Fit4Wirral

Fit4Wirral is a Council framework for the delivery of the health and well being agenda within the Council which aims to ensure our workforce is effective and resilient to deliver services to the people of Wirral now and in the future.

Legislation

The Council's attendance management practices comply with the following statutory duties:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010

3. Commitment to Equality

Please identify which, if any, of the following Equality Duties this policy addresses:

<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>To advance equality of opportunity</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>To foster good relations between different groups of people</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

One of the main purposes of the policy and procedure is to ensure that all absence management decisions follow a standard process which affords a fair, rigorous, consistent, transparent and legitimate assessment of an employee's level of attendance.

It aims to ensure that employees who work for the Council are not discriminated against in their work.

4. Procedures

The Attendance Management Policy and Procedure are designed to provide clear guidance and support for managers and employees to ensure that an employee's long-term absence is managed well and, where possible, employees can rehabilitate quickly and return to work.

Occasionally employees have a long-term absence or illness. Inevitably, there may be a small number of employees whose health or physical condition means that they are no longer capable of carrying out their contracted duties because of their high levels of absence.

The policy and accompanying procedure also provide a framework for managing employees with frequent short-term absences to ensure that any problems are identified and resolved at an early stage. It is recognised that very few employees experience this pattern of attendance. Formal action should be a final resort once all reasonable steps to support the employee to improve their attendance have been taken.

5. Supporting Documentation

- Attendance Management Procedure and Appendices
- Attendance Management Flowcharts
- Standard Formal Action Letters
- Attendance Management - Managers Guidance
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Fit Note Guidance
- Attendance Improvement Action Plan (M100)
- Keeping in Touch Form

6. Related Policies

- Occupational Health Policy
- Occupational Health - Appointments Cancellation and Notification of Charges Policy
- Annual Leave
- Special Leave
- Reasonable Adjustments
- Health and Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Management Arrangements for Risk Assessments
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Capability (Performance)

- Work-Life Balance

7. Consultation

Trade Unions were consulted on this policy.

8. Communication and Awareness

This policy is considered:

Internal

[For Members, Officers and Contractors]

External

[For our Residents, Customers and Service Users]

All employees must be made aware of, and understand the need for this policy. The Council will send out a clear message about its commitment to the well being of its employees and effectively managing sickness absence levels.

All employees and managers are expected to comply with the terms of this policy and the Council's attendance standards as outlined in the Attendance Management Procedure. Roles and responsibilities are outlined within the procedure.

9. Monitoring and Review

The Attendance Management policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the Human Resources and Organisational Development policy review programme. However, the policy may be reviewed as and when required, for example, due to legislative changes or if an issue arises around its effectiveness.

Document Ownership	
Policy owned by:	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Policy written by:	Tony Williams, Human Resources Manager
Date policy written:	23 rd March 2011
Date policy reviewed:	August 2015
Policy due for next review:	August 2018

Version Control Table			
All changes to this document are recorded in this table.			
Date	Notes/Amendments	Officer	Next Scheduled

			Review Date
November 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed and reformatted • Flowcharts for the supporting Procedure developed • Procedure and appendices reviewed and amended • Formal Action letters reviewed and amended 	Angels Santaeularia/Andrea Morrell-Foulkes	November 2016
August 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy document reviewed 	Jenny Woods	August 2018

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Attendance Management Procedure

Attendance Management Procedure

Content

		Page No.
1	Introduction	4
2	Roles and Responsibilities	4
3	Reporting Sickness Absence	5
	• Day One	5
	• Alternative Arrangements for Reporting	6
	• The Notification Call	6
	• Self Certification (Absences up to 7 Days)	6
	• Fit Note (Absences greater than 7 days)	6
	• Compliance with reporting procedures	7
4	Recording Sickness Absence	7
5	Keeping in Touch	7
	• Welfare Visits	8
6	Referral to Occupational Health	8
7	Return to Work Interview	9
8	Addressing Concerns about absence	10
	• Informal Action	10
	• Referral to Occupational Health	11
	• Reasonable Adjustments	11
	• Alternative Working Patterns	11
	• Absence Triggers	11
9	Formal Action	12
	• Sequence of Warnings	12
	• The Management Case	13
	• Formal Hearing	14
	• Stage 1	14
	• Stage 2	14
	• Stage 3	15
	• Stage 4 Consideration of Dismissal	15
	• Employee Rights	16
	• Right to be accompanied	17
	• Alternative Representation	17
	• Attendance at Formal Interviews	17
	• Appeals Procedure	17

10	Managing Long Term Sickness	18
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Principles (Managing Long-Term Absence) 18 • 20 days of continuous absence 19 • 6 weeks absence 19 • After 3 months absence 19 • After 6 months absence 20 • Case Conferences 20 • Phased Return 20 • Redeployment 21 • Ill-Health Retirement 21 • Proceeding to Formal Action 22 	
11	Managing Absence for Employees with Disabilities	22
12	Employee Assistance Programme	23
13	Annual Leave and Sickness	24
14	Other Absence Related Information	24
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to Attend Medical Appointments 24 • Pregnancy Related Absence 25 • Mental Health Related Absence 25 • Industrial Injury 26 • Domestic Abuse 26 • Terminal Illness 26 • Death in Service 26 • Medical Appointments 26 • Appointments for Elective Treatment 27 • Appointments for IVF Treatment 27 • Sickness following Treatment 27 • Medical Certificates 27 • Sick Pay Scheme 28 • Abuse of the Sick Pay Scheme 28 	
15	Further Guidance	28

Supporting Appendices

Appendix 1	Guidance - Conducting a Welfare Visit
Appendix 2	Guidance - Conducting a Return to Work Interview
Appendix 3	Summary of Trigger Points/Formal Action
Appendix 4	Guidance – Producing a Management Case
Appendix 5	Guidance – Conducting a Formal Hearing
Appendix 6	Dismissal Checklist
Appendix 7	Guidance – Ill health retirement

Attendance Management Procedure

1. Introduction

The Attendance Management procedure provides a framework for Managers to proactively manage sickness absence – both short and long-term.

The aim of the procedure is to encourage improvement, support employees to improve their health and well being and facilitate the employee's return to work.

There is an informal element to the procedure which allows concerns about attendance to be raised and provides employees with the opportunity to improve.

It also sets out the formal steps that should be taken if an employee's level of attendance continues to fall below the standard expected of the Council.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Managers may on occasions need to seek advice and work closely with Human Resources, Occupational Health and Trade Unions to attempt to reach a successful outcome for the Council and the employee.

Health, Safety & Resilience representatives will provide legislative and practical advice and guidance to managers and Human Resources to support the management of sickness absence cases.

The Occupational Health Service will provide independent medical advice and support to employees and managers to facilitate effective attendance management, in accordance with the service contract in place with the Council.

Trade Unions have an important part to play in providing advice and support to an employee and to facilitate a way forward, working in partnership with managers in minimising sickness absence in the Council. At all stages of the formal procedure employees are entitled to be accompanied by either a Trade Union representative, or a colleague.

Managers have a responsibility to:

- Ensure employees are aware of the Attendance Management policy and procedure.
- Promote a positive attendance culture and exercise a duty of care towards employees in providing a healthy and safe environment in which to work.
- Manage sickness absence issues and maintain contact with an employee who is absent from work.
- Be proactive and explore prevention and intervention measures that could assist employees to attend work through the Fit4Wirral framework.
- Ensure that employees are capable to undertake the duties and demands assigned to them to aid the prevention of stress related sickness absence.

- Record all periods of sickness absence and ensure that all associated documents/evidence are documented and stored appropriately.
- Monitor sickness absence levels in their teams, deal promptly and appropriately with concerns about attendance levels and seek to find solutions in consultation with the employee.
- Consider the circumstances of each sickness absence case and make fair and reasonable decisions.

Human Resources & Organisational Development are responsible for:

- Monitoring and reviewing the Attendance Management policy and procedure.
- Providing advice and guidance to managers to ensure that the Attendance Management policy and procedures are applied fairly and consistently.
- Supporting managers in respect of individual cases and identifying options and solutions for ensuring the maximum attendance of employees.
- Advising Managers on appropriate employee support interventions to prevent sickness absence and/or enable employees to return to work as soon as possible.
- Providing sickness statistics to Departmental Management Teams.
- Advising, briefing and training employees, managers, and trade union representatives, where appropriate, on all aspects of improving attendance, and to ensure compliance with this procedure.

Employees have a responsibility to:

- Comply with the Council's attendance standards as outlined in the Attendance Management Procedure.
- Report any sickness absence promptly in line with the reporting procedure.
- Keep in touch throughout any period of sickness absence.

3. Reporting Sickness Absence

It is fundamental to the relationship between an employee and the Council for an employee to make their line manager aware if they are unable to attend work. All employees are responsible for notifying their line manager on their first day of absence.

If an employee fails to follow the procedure for reporting absence without good reason this may be dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedure.

Day One

Employees must notify their immediate line manager or designated person on the first day of their absence at the earliest opportunity, but no later than one hour after they would normally start work. This should be by a telephone call from the employee personally unless there are exceptional circumstances that prevent this. Notification by text or e-mail is not acceptable.

Service areas that operate outside normal working hours may put in place different reporting arrangements so that there is sufficient time for a line manager to arrange cover. This will be communicated to all employees within these service areas.

It is imperative that the employee speaks directly to the line manager on the first day of absence. If the line manager is not available, a message must be left, with a contact number so that the line manager can make contact if this is required.

Alternative arrangements for reporting

If the employee does not have access to a telephone they must agree an alternative method of notifying the line manager of their absence as part of induction and supervision, which should be documented by the line manager and recorded on the employee's personal file.

In some cases an employee may request that alternative arrangements are made for notification e.g. a female member of staff may feel more comfortable speaking to another female.

The notification call

When making or receiving a notification call a line manager will ask the employee the following so that they can understand the cause of sickness and provide appropriate support:

- The nature of the illness.
- When the illness started (day and time).
- What the employee has done to alleviate symptoms.
- Whether the employee is seeking medical advice.
- Whether the employee requires access to any of the Council's support mechanisms such as the Employee Assistance Programme.
- The probable date of return (date, day and time).
- What work is outstanding/to be covered and any scheduled meetings that need to be covered or cancelled.
- Arrangements for next contact if no return to duty.

Self Certification (Absences up to 7 days)

An employee can self certify their absence up to 7 days.

During the first 7 days of the sickness absence the employee should contact their line manager regularly, unless alternative arrangements are made between the line manager and the employee, so that managers are able to manage operations in the employee's absence.

MED3 - Fit Note (Absence greater than 7 days)

If the period of absence continues beyond seven calendar days the employee must submit a MED3 (Fit Note), which should be received no later than three working days after the period of self certification has expired. Where an employee submits

successive MED3 notes, they must send the new note within three working days of the expiry date of the previous MED3.

Employees who require a medical certificate should ensure that they have a medical certificate covering the entire period of their absence. Where the employee remains off work, they should ensure that the medical certificate is sent to their line manager. The employee must ensure that their line manager is in receipt of an up-to-date medical certificate throughout their period of absence.

The MED 3 (Fit Note) advises if the employee is either:

1. 'Not fit for work'
2. 'May be fit for work' (taking account of advice from the doctor)

The purpose of the Fit Note is to potentially remove any challenges that may be preventing the employee from returning to work, if adjustments can be made to accommodate this. Managers and employees must work together to find an arrangement that suits both parties as there are mutual benefits in doing so.

Please refer to the 'People' area on the Intranet for guidance on implementing recommendations from a Fit Note. Training is also available from the Organisational Development team.

Compliance with the Reporting Procedure

Failure to comply with any of the above conditions without previous agreement or good reason may be considered as an unauthorised absence and will be dealt with immediately. In some circumstances it may result in the loss of pay or action under the Council's Disciplinary procedure.

4. Recording Sickness Absence

The manager is responsible for recording every absence on Selfserve. This is important for payroll and performance reporting requirements. For further information please refer to the Manager's Guidance.

5. Keeping in Touch

Both employees and managers have a responsibility to maintain regular and appropriate dialogue throughout a period of absence. Managers should record all contact, receipt of associated documents and decisions made in relation to the sickness absence on the 'Keeping in touch form' (appendix ?)

For both short-term and long-term absences, employees must inform the line manager when:

- **They are fit to return to work** - this may be different from when they will return to duty if, for example, the employee is on a rest day, it is the weekend or they are due to take annual leave.

- **When they intend to return to work** – this should be at the earliest possible opportunity but as a minimum must be the day before they are returning to work so that their line manager does not arrange unnecessary cover.

During the first 7 days of the sickness absence the employee should contact their line manager regularly.

In cases of long-term absence it is particularly important that regular contact is maintained between the line manager and the employee through welfare visits and telephone contact. Employees may become isolated from the workplace unless there is regular contact and support.

The level of contact should be appropriate to the circumstances and not intrusive but it's expected that, as a minimum, contact should be fortnightly, unless alternative arrangements are agreed between the line manager and the employee.

Line managers should ensure that any in-house news information, employee newsletters etc are sent to the employee as part of this contact. However, it is acknowledged that this may not be appropriate in some circumstances.

All contact with the employee should be recorded on the Keeping in Touch Form.

Welfare Visits

Line managers should normally make arrangements for a welfare visit to an employee after 4 weeks continuous absence. The welfare visit can take place at an employee's home or a mutually agreeable location. The purpose of the visit is for the line manager to establish what progress the employee is making and any further assistance to facilitate their return to work.

After the first visit, Welfare Visits should be undertaken every 6 weeks.

Welfare Visits must be recorded on the Keeping in Touch Form

In exceptional circumstances, the employee and the line manager may agree that welfare visits are not appropriate and agree alternative methods of maintaining contact.

If required or requested by employee or manager, it may be appropriate for another person to be present during a home visit.

Line managers should refer to Appendix 1 for the procedure for conducting a welfare/home visit.

6. Referral to Occupational Health

The Council's Occupational Health Service may be used to help line managers establish whether there are any underlying problems that are contributing to an

employee's intermittent absence, or in cases of long-term absence, likely prognosis of absence and support that should be provided to assist the employee.

Referrals may be made even if an employee is not absent from work but there are concerns over their health and well-being.

If an employee is absent from work due to any mental health absence, including stress, the manager must make a referral to Occupational Health on the first day of absence.

The line manager has a responsibility to ensure that an employee is made aware that a referral has been made and the reasons for it. This is important as an employee should not receive an appointment from Occupational Health without any prior indication.

Before referring an employee to Occupational Health, the line manager should be clear about what information they wish to gain from the referral and include this in the Occupational Health Referral form (M31). Line managers may discuss a referral with Human Resources.

Through the referral the line manager may seek advice on:

- If the employee is fit to undertake duties of their current post (s).
- If any treatment is required and expected time period for recovery.
- Likely return to work date.
- If a period of phased return is advised.
- Whether the employee has a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act and if any reasonable adjustments or redeployment should be considered.
- What support or management intervention may assist an earlier return to work.
- Whether the employee meets the criteria for Ill Health Retirement as set out in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

7. Return to Work Interview

A Return to Work Interview is required for all absences. The purpose of the Return to Work Interview is to welcome the employee back to work, discuss the reasons for the sickness absence and consider what support may be appropriate.

It is also the first stage in managing an employee's short-term absence. One of the aims of the Return to Work Interview is to establish whether there are any underlying problems that are causing the absence, and discuss whether the employee requires further support to improve their attendance level. In longer-term absence, the Return to Work Interview is critical in assisting the employee to return to work as smoothly as possible and to discuss any relevant issues that may support that transition. Returning to work after a long-term absence can be difficult and line managers should commit time to ensuring the employee feels supported. Depending on the nature of the absence managers should consider whether a risk assessment is required and/or if

any reasonable adjustments are necessary. These should be discussed with the employee as appropriate.

In long-term sickness cases, an employee is likely to have accrued annual leave during the absence. As part of the Return to Work Interview, line managers should ensure that the employee is aware of this and there should be a discussion as to how the outstanding leave may be managed in accordance with the Council's policy. See Section 13 - Annual Leave and Sickness

After every absence, irrespective of the duration, a Return to Work Interview will be conducted when an employee returns to duty and should normally be no later than three days after the return to work and recorded on the Return to Work Interview form and logged on Selfserve. Line managers should also consider whether a Risk Assessment (form M34) should be undertaken. Please refer to the 'People' area of the Intranet for guidance.

It is a Line manager's responsibility to undertake the Return to Work Interview. This will be monitored by Human Resources.

The Return to Work Interview Form and Guidance are available on Council's intranet (See also Appendix 2)

8. Addressing Concerns about Absence

This section provides guidelines for line managers who have concerns about an employee's level of absence.

Informal Action

It is a principle of the Council's policy that an employee is advised that their attendance is a concern before formal action is taken.

As part of the Return to Work Interview, or in a separate meeting if required, a manager must inform an employee if they have concerns about their levels of attendance and/or if further absence within a specified period will mean they will breach one of the triggers in the Council's policy (see below).

The Manager should:-

- Point out the impact of the individual's absence on their work and their colleagues and encourage improvement.
- Explore any work, disability, welfare or domestic problems underlying the absence.
- Explore different working patterns (if appropriate).
- Ensure the employee clearly understands what improvement is required, how their performance will be reviewed and over what time period.

- Advise the employee that if their attendance does not sufficiently improve, or if any improvement is not maintained, they would move to the formal procedure and ultimately they could be dismissed on grounds of sickness absence capability.

As part of the informal action, the line manager may consider the following:

- **Referral to Occupational Health**

In cases of short-term (intermittent) absence Occupational Health could be used to help the line manager establish whether there are any underlying problems that are contributing to an employee's intermittent absence. This would be appropriate in cases where the cause of absence is reoccurring.

- **Reasonable Adjustments**

If an employee has a medical condition that may fall within the definition of disability under the Equality Act, the line manager should complete a risk assessment (form M34) with the employee to identify whether any reasonable adjustments can be made to assist in improved attendance. Line managers may seek advice from Occupational Health and/or Human Resources on these issues. Information on reasonable adjustments is available on the intranet.

- **Alternative Working Patterns**

The line manager and employee should consider if the employee's level of attendance may be improved through a change in working pattern (if this can be achieved).

The employee should be advised what the next stages of the procedure is should there be no improvement in their attendance levels.

Absence Triggers

The Council has absence triggers which indicate when levels of absence may be a concern and line managers may need to review an employee's absence levels.

The absence triggers are as follows:

- 3 separate periods of absence of up to 3 working days within any 6 calendar month period

Or

2 separate periods of absence over 3 working days within any 6 calendar month period **Or**

- Long term sickness (20 continuous working days or more)

Or

- Concerning patterns of absence

It is a line manager's responsibility to monitor an employee's level of absence and if the above triggers are met to take appropriate action to ensure that the employee is aware of concerns and is clear about the standards required.

Unauthorised Absence

The Council may consider taking formal action under the Council's Disciplinary Policy for any period of unauthorised absence. These include:

- When an employee has been absent and not submitted a medical certificate
- Failure to report an absence from work
- Failure to follow sickness absence reporting procedures

Under these circumstances the Council may consider suspending occupational sick pay and /or take disciplinary action for failure to comply with the sickness absence reporting procedures.

9. Formal Action

The Council may take formal action against an employee who has an unacceptable attendance record. This may be for short-term, intermittent absence or long-term absence.

An employee will be invited to attend a formal hearing with a manager (at the appropriate level) to discuss their absence record.

Employees should be given a minimum of five days' notice of this hearing. Employees are entitled to be represented at all stages of the formal procedure.

Appendix 3 sets out a summary of the potential formal sanctions that may be applied in the case of sickness absence and at what stage they may be applied.

This procedure and the potential sanctions set out above apply to both short-term and long-term sickness absence cases.

Sequence of warnings

Warnings will normally follow a period of review and should be issued in sequence.

However, in cases of long-term sickness absence, particularly when the employee remains absent from work, it may be appropriate to move to a higher stage of the procedure, without issuing a warning at a lower stage. **As outlined in Appendix 3 a formal hearing must however be held after three months continuous absence.**

It is not within the spirit of the policy or in the Council's or employees' interest for formal action to be taken repeatedly to address an employees' level of attendance, only for further absence once warnings have elapsed.

In such cases, it may be reasonable to consider formal action at the next stage of the procedure.

A line manager must be able to produce a Management Case to evidence that the employee has been given reasonable targets, sufficient opportunity and support to improve their attendance.

Normally warnings on an employee's personal file will be disregarded for the purposes of future warnings. However, in cases where there are concerns about persistent absence following the expiry of warnings they may form part of the management case. This allows an attendance record to be put in context and may allow a line manager to justify a higher stage of the procedure to be applied where appropriate.

The Management Case

At every stage of the process, line managers are required to produce a management case setting out the reasons why formal action under the Attendance Management Procedure is required.

This case should include the following information:

- Employees sickness absence record
- Log of contact during sickness absence
- Dates of Return to Work Interviews
- Dates, notes and outcomes from previous Review Meetings/formal hearings
- Attendance Improvement Plan
- Associated documentation such as occupational health reports, doctors notes

In addition, the line manager should indicate the impact that the absence has had on the workplace for example;

- Impact on Workloads
- Cover arrangements
- Effect on service delivery

This report will be used as part of the formal hearing and should be shared with the employee and/or their representative.

Line managers must ensure the case sets out the clear justification for formal action and contains accurate and up to date information.

In short-term (intermittent) absence, formal action should be taken at the earliest opportunity following the episode of absence that has resulted in the Formal Case being brought forward. It is not reasonable for there to be a delay in a case being brought.

Please refer to Appendix 4 for guidance on Producing a Management Case.

Formal Hearing

There are a number of stages to the Formal Process.

Line managers should refer to Appendix 5 for Guidance on Undertaking a Formal Hearing.

Stage 1

If following the Informal Stage of the procedure, the employee's attendance does not improve or the employee's absence exceeds three months of continuous absence, a formal hearing should take place at which the employee should be informed that their level of absence is not acceptable.

The line manager should explore the reason for the absence and should invite the employee to give their view as to the problem and how such issues might be resolved at the formal hearing.

The line manager will follow the process outlined in the Formal Action Stage 1 Flowchart.

At the end of the hearing, the options open to the line manager are:

- Issue a Verbal Warning which will be live for six months.
- Further period of review.

The line manager will continue monitoring the employee's attendance at work. If the employee improves their attendance but this is not maintained after the expiry of the warning, the line manager will extend the review period for a further three months and may proceed to take formal action in line with the Formal Action Flowchart.

Stage 2

If, following Stage 1 of the procedure, the employee's attendance does not improve or the employee's absence exceeds six months of continuous absence, then a Stage 2 formal hearing should take place at which the employee should be informed that their level of absence is not acceptable.

The line manager should explore the reason for the absence and should invite the employee to give their views as to the problem and how such issues might be resolved at the hearing.

The line manager will follow the process outlined in the Formal Action Stage 2 Flowchart.

At the end of the hearing, the options open to the line manager are:

- Issue a First Written Warning which will be live for twelve months.
- In exceptional circumstances re-issue Verbal Warning.

The line manager will continue monitoring the employee's attendance at work. If the employee improves their attendance but this is not maintained after the expiry of the warning, the line manager will extend the review period for a further three months and may proceed to take formal action in line with the Formal Action Flowcharts.

Stage 3

At this stage the hearing must be undertaken by a Senior Manager (Manager who reports to Head of Service)

If, following Stage 2 of the procedure, the employee's attendance does not improve or if the employee's absence exceeds nine months of continuous absence, a Stage 3 formal hearing should take place at which the employee should be informed that their level of absence is not acceptable.

The line manager should explore the reason for the absence and should invite the employee to give their views as to the problem and how such issues might be resolved at the hearing.

The line manager will consult with Human Resources and follow the process outlined in the Formal Action Stage 3 Flowchart.

At the end of the hearing, the options open to the line manager are:

- Issue a Final Written Warning which will be live for twelve months.
- In exceptional circumstances re-issue First Written Warning.

The line manager will continue monitoring the employee's attendance at work. If the employee improves their attendance but this is not maintained after the expiry of the warning, the line manager will extend the review period for a further three months and may proceed to take formal action in line with the Formal Action Flowcharts.

Stage 4 Consideration of Dismissal

At this stage the hearing must be undertaken by a Director or their Nominated Officer

If, following Stage 3 of the procedure, the employee's attendance does not improve or if the employee's absence exceeds twelve months of continuous absence, a Stage 4 formal hearing should take place at which the employee should be informed that their level of absence is not acceptable.

The line manager will consult with Human Resources and follow the process outlined in the Formal Action Stage 4 Flowchart.

The employee should be informed in advance in writing of the purpose of the meeting and advised that it could result in their termination of contract of employment.

Occupational Health advice should be obtained and considered before any decision is taken to dismiss. This is particularly important in long-term sickness absence cases.

Advice should be sought from Human Resources on the provisions of the Equality Act if the employee's inability to attend work is attributable to a disability.

At the end of the hearing, the options open to the Nominated Officer are:

- Dismissal.
- In exceptional circumstances re-issue Final Written Warning which would be live for a further twelve months.

An employee may be fairly dismissed for persistent short-term (intermittent) sickness absence. A dismissal in these circumstances should be for capability, the reason being the Council's inability to cope with the employee's overall level of sickness absence.

For long-term sickness, the reason for dismissal would normally be on the grounds of capability.

Please refer to Appendix 6 for a Dismissal checklist to assist Managers in the decision making process.

Employee rights

During the formal process, an employee will also be entitled to the following:

- Advance notice of the time and date of the hearing (not less than five working days prior to the hearing).
- A copy of the Council's Attendance Management policy and procedure.
- A copy of the sickness absence case report no later than five days before the hearing, unless a shorter period is agreed with the employee or their representative
- An opportunity to present their case at a hearing.
- A right to appeal appropriate to the action taken.

Right to be accompanied

An employee has a right to be accompanied at a formal hearing; the employee can choose one of the following:

- A workplace colleague.
- A recognised workplace trade union representative.

An observer can be present as part of training/development, but only with the permission of both sides. An observer cannot take an active part in the hearing.

The employee may require reasonable adjustments due to a disability and it may be necessary for a companion or support advocate to attend. However, they will usually play a role similar to the observer.

The employee does not normally have the right to be accompanied to Review Meetings or Occupational Health sessions.

Managers should also be aware of any potentially personal or sensitive issues relating to the employee's absence that may be discussed at the hearing and there may be occasions where it may be appropriate for a manager or representative of the same gender to be present or to deal with the case.

Alternative Representation

In exceptional circumstances, consideration will be given to allowing an alternative representative to attend the hearing. In such circumstances, the employee must submit a written request to the Appropriate/Nominated Officer, giving at least five days notice. If an employee attends a hearing with an alternative representative without gaining permission, the hearing may be adjourned and an alternative hearing will be arranged within five working days.

Attendance at Formal Interviews

If the employee is not available to attend the hearing or does not attend when requested without good reason, a decision may be taken in their absence, based on the information available, which may result in a formal warning/dismissal. The Council may also review the employees' continued entitlement to pay if an employee does not comply with this policy.

Appeals Procedure

The employee has the right of appeal at every stage of the formal process. The appeal is to the next level of management.

Where an employee is dismissed they should be advised of the reasons for the termination of contract of employment in writing and that if they wish to appeal against the decision they should do so in writing to the Chief Executive within 10 working days.

Please refer to the Council's Officer Appeals Procedure.

10. Managing Long Term Sickness

Long-term sickness absence is defined as a period of 20 continuous working days.

There may be times when employees suffer from illnesses which cause them to be absent from work for longer periods of time. These cases can be difficult to manage and it is important that cases are handled sensitively and appropriately, ensuring that the line manager and employee maintain regular contact throughout a period of sickness.

The Long-Term Sickness Absence procedure has been designed to provide line managers with a framework to proactively manage long-term absence and provide appropriate support to the employee, and in some cases, their family.

The procedure includes a number of review points to ensure that long-term absence is dealt with in an effective and timely manner.

This procedure has been designed to enable line managers to take reasonable steps to address any issues which may be causing absence, in order to seek improvement in attendance.

The cause of the sickness on the Doctor's certificate can give an indication of the seriousness of the illness, and it may help to inform how long the employee may continue to be absent and therefore assist in managing their sickness absence.

Key Principles (Managing Long-Term Absence)

There are a number of key principles that line managers should observe when managing long-term sickness

- Line managers must maintain contact and ensure employees who are absent are supported and do not become isolated.
- There should be regular and timely referrals to Occupational Health to ensure management are updated as to an employee's condition and prognosis.
- Case Conferences should be arranged where appropriate to discuss complex cases.
- Line managers must take formal action at the appropriate time.

The long-term management procedure is outlined in the Managing Long Term Absence Flowchart. It has the following stages:

- Review Points
- Formal Action

Review Points

The purpose of having a number of Review Points is to ensure that line managers proactively manage long term absence and absences do not 'drift'.

They should be used as an opportunity to meet with the employee (where possible), or discuss over the telephone to establish;

- The progress the employee is making.
- Determine any additional support that may be required.
- Consider appropriate action required to manage the sickness absence.

There are four review points within this framework:

20 days of continuous absence

No later than 20 days after an absence commences, line managers will normally refer the employee to Occupational Health to ascertain an independent opinion on an employee's fitness for work.

If it is known that an employee is likely to be absent for more than 20 days then a referral should be completed as soon as this is known and not wait for the four week period to lapse.

Line managers must have maintained contact throughout the four week absence period and where appropriate, a welfare visit should be arranged.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees are aware that an Occupational Health Referral is to be arranged.

A summary of the action taken and any decisions made should be recorded on the Keeping in Touch Form.

6 weeks absence

It is important that line managers consider any recommendations from Occupational Health and the employee's MED3 (Fit Note) and discuss these with the employee, either personally at a welfare visit or over the telephone, to determine appropriate action.

A summary of the action taken and any decisions made should be recorded on the Keeping in Touch Form.

After 3 months absence

At this point the line manager will have gained a better understanding of the likely longer-term prognosis of an employee's cause of absence or an idea of a likely return to work date.

At this stage, at least two welfare visits should have been conducted and at least one Occupational Health report should have been received.

The line manager will have arranged a Stage 1 hearing as outlined in the Stage 1 Flowchart and informed the employee, either personally at a welfare visit or over the telephone. The contents of the Occupational Health Report, and any recommendations arising should also be discussed with the employee.

A summary of the action taken and any decisions made should be recorded on the Keeping in Touch Form.

After 6 months absence

At this stage three welfare visits will have taken place and a line manager should have obtained at least two reports from Occupational Health and also be seeking regular advice from Human Resources.

If there are concerns, based on advice from Occupational Health, that there is no prognosis for a return to work or the case is complex, the line manager may wish to arrange a case conference to review an employee's case.

In all cases of long-term absence, a decision on the appropriate options and potential action should be made, in conjunction with a Senior Manager and Human Resources, by the 6th month of absence.

Line managers will have arranged a Stage 2 hearing as outlined in the Stage 2 Flowchart and discussed the action to be taken with the employee, either personally at a welfare visit or over the telephone.

A summary of the action taken and any decisions made should be recorded on the Keeping in Touch Form.

Case Conferences

A case conference may be arranged by the line manager for dealing with cases of long-term absence at any stage but **no later than the 6 months**.

The purpose of the case conference will be for the line manager to seek guidance and advice to inform their decision. The case conference may include a range of professionals to provide advice and guidance, for example, Senior Managers, Human Resources, Health and Safety and trade union representatives.

Occupational Health case conferences could be arranged in exceptional circumstances where further clarification is required about how the sickness case may be managed.

Phased Return

The Council aims to support employees to return to work as soon as possible.

On the basis of GP or Occupational Health advice, employees who have been absent from work for a long period may have their return to work assisted through a phased return.

A phased return would not normally exceed two weeks in duration and may include:

- Shorter working days
- Flexible working hours
- Shorter working week
- Alternative duties
- Working from home

The employee would normally be paid their full pay for the duration of the phased return.

If after a phased return an employee requires a further period of reduced hours working, they should seek advice from Human Resources.

Redeployment

In disability related absences, it may become clear that the employee is unable to return to their substantive post but may be able to undertake alternative duties.

In such circumstances, the line manager must obtain specific advice from Occupational Health as to the nature of work that the employee may be able to undertake.

This issue should then be managed under the Council's Redeployment Policy.

This must be fully discussed with the employee and it must also be made clear that as they are unable to undertake their substantive role, should the Council be unable to find a suitable alternative, their employment is at risk.

Consideration of suitable alternative roles can also be vital in ensuring that any possible termination of the employee's contract of employment is handled fairly.

Please refer to the Council Redeployment Policy for further information.

Ill-health Retirement

In cases of long term sickness or if an employee is unable to maintain an acceptable level of attendance due to health issues, at the appropriate time, line managers must ensure that as part of the Occupational Health referral, the employee is assessed as to whether they meet the criteria for ill-health retirement under the Local Government Pension Scheme.

In the case of termination of employment being recommended on the grounds of ill health, the termination date will be agreed following consultation with Human Resources and consideration on the basis of the best interests of the employee and the Council in accordance with the pension regulations.

An Application for Early/Ill-health Retirement (M37) must be completed in all such cases.

Ill health retirement is a dismissal and therefore a dismissal hearing will then take place before employment from the Council is terminated.

See Appendix 7 for further information about Ill-health Retirement

Proceeding to Formal Action

Long-term sickness cases can be difficult and often raise emotional issues for line managers and employees. However, the level of absence from work may reach a point where it is unsustainable and the employee's job may no longer be held open

Given the nature of long-term sickness and the varied forms it may take and differing circumstances surrounding each case, flexibility and sensitivity is required in implementing the procedure.

11. Managing Absence for Employees with Disabilities

The Equality Act 2010 specifically identifies the provision of leave as a reasonable adjustment where a disabled person needs to be absent from work for "rehabilitation, assessment or treatment", (for example the routine assessment of hearing aids, hospital or specialist check-ups including monitoring of related equipment or treatment).

This form of approved absence is not sickness absence and it could be inappropriate and potentially discriminatory to manage it as such. In practice, this form of disability leave can be more appropriately managed along parallel lines with other relevant leave requirements e.g. requirements that pregnant women routinely attend ante-natal appointments, or in terms of relevant flexible working arrangements or special leave arrangements.

It is important to realise that disability is not synonymous with sickness. Confusion can cause offence to many disabled persons who quite rightly do not consider being disabled a 'sickness'. It is recognised that some employees with a disability often have far better attendance records than non-disabled employees.

However, in some instances a person's disability may in practice be associated with some level of sickness absence due to incapacity. For example, an employee with severe asthma or epilepsy who is unable to attend work, due to an attack or seizure, may be absent due to disability-related sickness. However, the period of absence is still recorded as sickness.

In some cases the failure of an employer to provide a reasonable adjustment for an employee may lead to deterioration in the employee's condition requiring absence from work.

The key issue in relation to sickness absence management is that where the effects of a person's disability results in a need to be absent from work due to illness or where a disabled person requires leave which is directly associated with their disability this may need to be accommodated within the terms of the Equality Act.

If disability related absence has caused an employee to breach the Council's triggers, managers must consider carefully whether it is appropriate for a warning to be issued and are advised to seek advice from Human Resources.

It is always appropriate to consider whether it is possible to reduce the extent of disability-related absences through reasonable adjustments. Often a reasonable

adjustment – providing the appropriate equipment, or allowing an individual to work from home or on flexible hours – can resolve the need for absence. Further information about reasonable adjustments is available on the intranet.

It may be that it is not possible to adjust the particular post to enable the absence problem to be resolved. In this case consideration should be given to redeployment. This may be particularly appropriate when dealing with long-term absences.

If the employee is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 i.e. they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, reasonable adjustments must be considered before any recommendation to terminate the employee's contract is contemplated.

If an employee makes a line manager aware that they have a disability or a line manager becomes aware that an employee has a disability it is the line manager's responsibility to undertake a Risk Assessment as soon as practically possible of the employee's job role and work environment. The line manager may need to make reasonable adjustments following the risk assessment. This should be recorded on the Risk Assessment form (M34) and the Record of Reasonable Adjustments form (M34.1), available on the intranet.

Further guidance on Reasonable Adjustments is available on the intranet.

12. Employee Assistance Programme

It is recognised that from time to time employees may struggle with issues either at home or at work.

Sometimes those pressures can have serious consequences on our health and we can become unwell as a consequence.

In order to help employees cope with situations or stresses in their lives, which are affecting their well-being, the Council has introduced an Employee Assistance Programme which allows all employees confidential access to a professional telephone counselling service and to a number of face to face counselling services where this is deemed appropriate by the counsellor.

The service is established as a confidential one and therefore permission need not be sought to make use of it.

Employees who wish to make use of the service may find the details and contact numbers on the 'People' area of the Intranet or through their Manager.

If an employee wishes to attend face-to-face counselling sessions during work time, they should notify their line manager in order that cover can be provided where necessary. If the employee wishes complete confidentiality, counselling sessions should be arranged in their own time.

Line managers should maintain a high level of confidentiality if they have been informed by the employees that counselling sessions are being attended.

The Council will undertake a confidential review of usage at yearly intervals to analyse the number of occasions of use (telephone and face to face) in order to ensure that the service provided continues to meet the needs of the organisation and the needs of the employee).

The review should not involve any personal details of those who have accessed the service, which should be a strictly confidential matter between the employee and the counsellor.

13. Annual Leave and Sickness

The House of Lords Ruling in June 2009 confirmed that employees have the facility to take annual leave whilst absent from work due to sickness. Within the ruling there are particular provisions for situations where employees are unable to take all, or part of their statutory annual leave entitlement for reasons relating to sickness.

All employee requests to take annual leave whilst absent from work due to sickness should be processed through Selfserve as usual. Carry over of annual leave due to sickness absence must be submitted on Selfserve for the manager to approve.

Please refer to the Annual Leave policy on the 'People' area of the Intranet for further guidance. Guidance is also available on Selfserve.

14. Other Absence related Matters

Failure to attend Medical Appointments

Employees have a duty to co-operate in all medical examinations as part of this procedure.

The employee may be charged for the cost of not attending the medical examination where there is not a good reason for doing so.

If the employee needs to cancel an appointment for any reason, they should seek agreement with the line manager to cancel the appointment at least 48 hours in advance of the appointed date and time, unless in exceptional circumstances.

If the employee is more than 15 minutes late for the appointment then this will be classed as non-attendance at the appointment.

If the employee fails to attend an appointment and does not notify the line manager in advance the line manager should contact the employee to find out the reason for non-attendance.

Under National Terms and Condition of service employees must attend a medical appointment when requested. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and/or

the Council may review the employees' continued entitlement to pay if the employee consistently refuses to attend occupational health appointments.

If an employee fails to attend an Occupational Health appointment without good reason, a line manager may need to make a decision about the application of the policy, including issuing of warnings, on the basis of the information that is available.

Please refer to the Occupational Health Appointments Cancellation and Notification of Charges Policy on the 'People' area of the Intranet for further guidance.

Pregnancy Related Absence

In some cases an employee's absence could be related to pregnancy. Line managers must ensure that in these instances they are dealt with in the appropriate manner, referring to the Council's Maternity policy and New and Expectant Mothers Health and Safety Arrangements available on the 'People' area of the Intranet.

Advice and guidance should be sought from Human Resources.

Mental Health Related Absence

As a Mindful Employer the Council is committed to the following aims:

- Show a positive and enabling attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues.
- Not make assumptions that a person with mental health issues will be more vulnerable to workplace stress or take more time off than any other employee or job applicant.
- Provide non-judgmental and proactive support to individual staff that experience mental health issues.
- Ensure all managers have information and training about managing mental health in the workplace.
- Make it clear in any recruitment or occupational health check that people who have experienced mental health issues will not be discriminated against and that disclosure of a mental health problem will enable both the employee and employer to assess and provide the right level of support or adjustment.

For more information visit www.mindfulemployer.net/charter.

Absence relating to mental health must be dealt with promptly and sensitively. Advice and guidance should be sought from Human Resources.

Industrial Injury

If Industrial Injury has been given as the reason for absence this must be fully investigated. Line managers should seek advice from Human Resources in such cases.

Line managers must also refer to the Health & Safety Management Arrangements for Accident and Incident Reporting and Investigation (Including Industrial Injury/Illness) procedure available on the 'People' area of the Intranet.

Domestic Abuse

Line Managers may be the first to become aware that an employee is experiencing domestic abuse because they have the role of monitoring and investigating sickness, attendance and work performance. In this instance line managers should refer to the Domestic Abuse policy on the 'People' area of the Intranet.

Terminal Illness

Cases relating to terminal illness should be handled sensitively and with compassion. The line manager must maintain regular contact with the employee and ensure adequate support is available to the employee and their family.

The line manager must contact Human Resources when dealing with terminal illness so that arrangements can be made for the appropriate advice to be obtained for the employee in respect of ill-health and pension benefits.

Death in Service

In the event that an employee dies whilst in service the line manager must inform Human Resources at the earliest possible opportunity. Line managers should consider referring employees affected by the death of a colleague to the Employee Assistance Programme to access support and counselling.

Medical Appointments

Employees may be required to attend medical appointments.

For employees who are on flexi-time, all non-urgent appointments, check ups etc. for the doctor, dentist, hospital out-patients or any other special appointments should be taken outside core time and employees should at all times return to work as soon as possible or take flexi-leave where it can be planned.

Where the flexi-time scheme does not apply or where it has not been possible to make an appointment outside core time, employees will be required to produce an appointment card and reasonable time off will be given where appropriate. This should be discussed and agreed with the line manager prior to attending the appointment. Employees on flexi-time must sign in at the time that they arrive at the workplace, they will be credited for the hours actually worked on that day and must ensure that time is

recouped within the normal flexi-time limits. Employees will not be credited with a standard working day.

Where the line manager is satisfied that the time and duration of the appointment is outside the control of the employee and it would be unreasonable for the employee to recoup the time within the normal flexi-time limits some or all of the time may be credited to the employee. This would usually apply to non-routine or specialist appointments. Time off in these circumstances should be granted on an occasional basis only.

Medical appointments and procedures which render the employee unfit for work should be recorded as sickness absence.

Please refer to the Flexi-Time Policy on the 'People' area of the Intranet.

Appointments for Elective Treatment

Annual leave should be used by employees undertaking elective (non essential) treatment, for example, cosmetic surgery and this must be agreed in advance with the line manager.

Appointments for IVF Treatment

The Council will wherever possible make reasonable time off arrangements for employees undergoing fertility treatment. There is no requirement to provide paid leave and such occurrences do not meet the requirements of the Special Leave policy. Line managers are advised to consider authorised unpaid leave, annual leave, accrued time/TOIL or flexible working.

Sickness following Treatment

If an employee becomes ill as a result of an appointment (Elective or Non-Elective) this must be recorded as sickness absence and employees must ensure they comply with the Attendance Management absence reporting procedure.

Medical Certificates

Occasionally, an employee may be required or asked to produce a medical certificate for all absences for a specified future period. The cost of the medical note will be reimbursed to the employee concerned by the department upon the provision of a receipt.

Sick Pay Scheme

For details of the Sick Pay Scheme please refer to the 'People' area of the Intranet.

Abuse of the Sick Pay Scheme

Abuse of the Sick Pay Scheme will be dealt with under the Disciplinary procedure.

Abuse of the Council's Sick Pay Scheme could include:

- Sickness attributable to deliberate conduct.
- Falsification of sick notes.
- The employee undertaking conduct that could hinder their early recovery.
- Employees own misconduct or neglect.
- Active participation in professional sport or injury while working in the employee's own time on their own account for private gain or for another employer.
- The employee has been undertaking other work whilst declaring they were incapable of work due to sickness.

This is not an exhaustive list but an indicative guide for line managers. For further advice and guidance the line manager should contact Human Resources.

15. Further Guidance

Further guidance on the application of this policy and procedure is available from Human Resources.

Supporting Appendices

These are available on the 'People' area of the Intranet.

Document Ownership	
Policy owned by:	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Policy written by:	Tony Williams, Human Resources Manager
Date policy written:	23 rd March 2011
Policy reviewed:	August 2015
Policy due for next review:	August 2018

Version Control Table			
All changes to this document are recorded in this table.			
Date	Notes/Amendments	Officer	Next Scheduled Review Date
November 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed and reformatted • Flowcharts for the supporting Procedure developed • Procedure and appendices reviewed and amended • Formal Action letters reviewed and amended 	Angels Santaeularia/Andrea Morrell- Foulkes/Susie Warwick	November 2016

August 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy and procedure reviewed and amended• Appendices, flowcharts and supporting documentation reviewed and amended	Jenny Woods	August 2018
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WIRRAL COUNCIL

TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

21ST SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT:	2015/16 QUARTER 1 DIRECTORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	JOE BLOTT (STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES)
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:	CLLR ANN MCLACHLAN, DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR GOVERNANCE, COMMISSIONING & IMPROVEMENT CLLR ADRIAN JONES, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CENTRAL SERVICES CLLR CHRIS MEADEN, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEISURE, SPORT & CULTURE
KEY DECISION?	NO

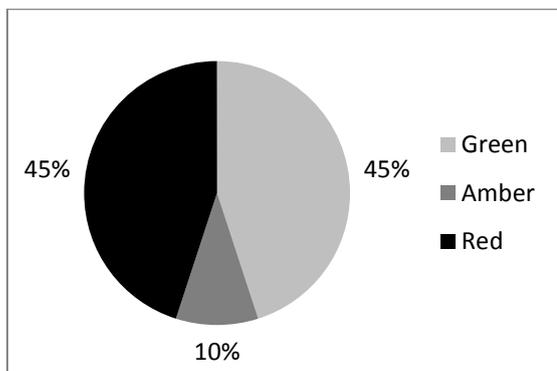
1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out Quarter 1 (April – June 2015) performance against delivery of the Transformation and Resources Directorate Plan. The Directorate Plan was reported to this committee on 30 March 2015. The performance report is attached as Appendix 1 and sets out progress against a suite of agreed key performance indicators.
- 1.2 The report also sets out a series of amendments to the Transformation and Resources Directorate Plan 2015/16. These are as a result of the impact of the final 2014/15 year-end performance data and the development of the technical specification for the performance measures within the plan. These amendments are set out as Appendix 2.
- 1.3 Whilst the Corporate Plan 2015/16 (and supporting Directorate Plans) have been superseded by the Wirral Council Plan 2020 Vision, they still form 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.

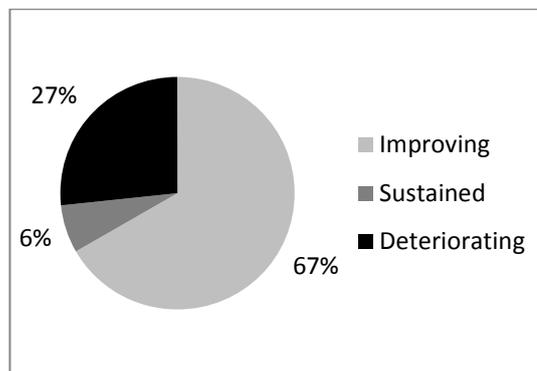
2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Transformation and Resources Directorate Plan performance is reported through a set of agreed performance measures aligned to priorities identified in the plan. Performance is monitored against the targets set at the start of the year.
- 2.2 For each measure, a Red, Amber or Green (RAG) rating is assigned depending on the performance level against the target. A number of measures are annual, and these will only be reported when the data is available. The report (Appendix 1) also shows the direction of travel for each measure to illustrate whether performance is improving, deteriorating or sustained.

2.3 Of the 20 reportable indicators, including the Directorate revenue budget and capital programme, 9 are rated Green, 2 are rated Amber and 9 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 15 measures where it is possible to indicate the Direction of Travel, 10 are improving, 4 are deteriorating and 1 is showing performance being sustained. The charts below show the breakdown in terms of the RAG and Direction of Travel ratings:



RAG Rating Breakdown



Direction of Travel Breakdown

2.4 The Appendix 1 report has been re-designed to streamline performance reporting to make it both more user-friendly for those receiving reports and more efficient to produce in terms of officer time.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 The performance management framework is aligned to the Council's risk management strategy and has been considered as part of the Directorate planning process.

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 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 have the opportunity to review delivery of the Transformation and Resources Directorate Plan.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Carol Sharratt**
Performance Management Officer
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Email: carolsharratt@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Directorate Plan Performance Report Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2015/16

Appendix 2 – Amendments to Transformation & Resources Directorate Plan 2015/16

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Transformation & Resources Policy & Performance Committee	30 July 2013
Transformation & Resources Policy & Performance Committee	23 September 2013
Transformation & Resources Policy & Performance Committee	29 January 2014
Transformation & Resources Policy & Performance Committee	14 April 2014
Transformation & Resources Policy & Performance Committee	15 July 2014
Transformation & Resources Policy & Performance Committee	16 September 2014
Transformation & Resources Policy & Performance Committee	4 February 2015
Transformation & Resources Policy & Performance Committee	30 March 2015
Transformation & Resources Policy & Performance Committee	15 July 2015

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2015-16 T&R DP Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	June (Q1)			YE Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	RAG			
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.
TRDP06	Suppliers paid within 30 days or payment terms	90.00%	90.00%	82.41%	Red	90.00%	↑	The following are being put into place to improve supplier payment performance: 1. Centralise the Purchasing Coordinator function and implement No Purchase Order (PO) No Pay policy. 2. Introduce processes to ensure all invoices and Accounts Payable transactions are dealt with by the Payments Team.
TRDP07	Local SME suppliers paid within 10 days	60.00%	50.00%	39.19%	Red	60.00%	↑	3. Filling of vacancies within payments. (2 FTE out to recruitment now, so 16% of posts are currently unfilled.) 4. Introduce a new Asset Management system (September 2015) to streamline process for payment of Asset Management invoices.

2015-16 T&R DP Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	June (Q1)			YE Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	RAG			
TRDP08	The total number of extraordinary Council, special cabinet and committee meetings	15	4	0	Green	15	↑	
TRDP09	Reduction in the issuing of general exception notices under the Access to Information Rules	8	2	1	Green	8	↑	
TRDP10	Reduction in the total number of published supplementary agendas for Cabinet and Committee meetings	25	4	3	Green	25	↔	
TRDP13	Client finance recovered by end of month following billing	80.00%	65.00%	51.20%	Red	80.00%	↑	Performance against this target is dependent upon timely assessment of charge and subsequent issue of invoice and ultimately customers' ability to pay, but some staffing shortages has impacted on performance. In order to improve performance, we have increased resources in this team, and improvements are expected from Q2 as a result.
TRDP14	Recovery of Council Tax	95.6%	27.9%	27.7%	Amber	95.3%	↓	Addressing outstanding Council Tax work items has hampered the delivery of this indicator. However management action is being taken, including recruiting to full staffing level and assessing alternative delivery models, and improvements are expected from Q2 as a result.
TRDP15	Recovery of National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR)	98.3%	27.4%	30.8%	Green	98.3%	↑	
TRDP16	Spend allocation of Discretionary Housing Payment	100%	25% £259,142.5k	20% £208,174k	Red	100%	↑	Prioritising cases of those in imminent need and steadily clearing oldest applications is reducing the current position. The number of applications dealt with steadily increased during June 2015 and it is forecast that the target will be met if not exceeded by year end.

2015-16 T&R DP Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	June (Q1)			YE Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	RAG			
TRDP17	Directorate Revenue Budget	£31.391m	-	£42.53m	Green	£30.391m	N/A	<i>Underspend of £1.2m forecast for directorate mainly from Treasury Management activity. There is higher spend than target as a large amount of recharge income comes in only at year end.</i>
TRDP18	Directorate Capital Programme	£3.004m	-	£0.115m	Green	£30.004m	N/A	
TRDP19	Directorate Savings achieved	£3.918m	-	£2.578m	Green	-	N/A	
TRDP20	Number of Information Governance Incidents (including reported vulnerabilities which could potentially result in a breach)	30	8	6	Green	30	N/A (New PI for 2015/16)	<i>There have been no breaches which require reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office.</i>
TRDP22	Average number of days to accurately process new Benefit claims	24	29	51	Red	24	↓	Measures including use of agency staff, the ringfencing of oldest claims, adapting working procedures and the recruitment and training of new staff have been put in place or are being implemented to tackle outstanding claims and improve processing times, and improvements are expected from Q2 as a result.
TRDP23	Average number of days to accurately process change in circumstance Benefit claims	14	18	28	Red	14	↓	Measures including use of agency staff and the recruitment and training of new staff, have been put in place or are being implemented to tackle outstanding claims and improve processing times, and improvements are expected from Q2 as a result.
TRDP24	% grant income achieved	99.99%	99.99%	99.33%	Red	99.99%	↑	We are in the process of clearing the outstanding change in circumstances claims so that new claims can be considered in a timely manner, helping to ensure that the full grant income is achieved. Measures including targeting of resources, use of agency staff and the recruitment and training of new staff have been put in place or are being implemented, and improvements are expected from Q2 as a result.

2015-16 T&R DP Performance Indicators		Year End Target 2015/16	June (Q1)			YE Forecast	DoT	Corrective Actions (Red or Amber) Context (Green/where provided)
PI Ref	PI Title		Target	Actual	RAG			
TRDP25	£ Identification of Fraud and Error (FERIS)	£768K	£192k	£199k	Green	£768K	↑	
Direction of Travel (DoT) Key		↑	Performance Improving		↓	Performance Deteriorating		↔ Performance sustained

Appendix 2

Amendments to Transformation & Resources Directorate Plan 2015/16 made as a result of the impact of final 2014/15 year-end performance data and the development of the technical specifications for the performance measures.

Section	Amendment	Reason
2.2 Savings Amendment	Addition of saving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising 110 	To ensure that this Council saving is reported
	Change to Total Savings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3808 to 3918 	To take account of the above saving
3.1 Delivery Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2015/16 Target Changes 	TRDP15 – Recovery of National Non Domestic Rates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 96.5% to 98.3% 	To reflect 2014/15 actual performance of 98.2%
	TRDP19 – Directorate Savings achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £3.808m to £3.918m 	To reflect savings amendment made in Section 2.2
	TRDP22 – Average number of days to accurately process new benefit claims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 to 24 	To re-set the targets to one day below the baseline targets set by the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP)
	TRDP22 – Average number of days to accurately process change in circumstance benefit claims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 to 14 	
	TRDP24 - % grant income achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 99.9% to 99.99% 	To ensure that the target reflects the maximum grant income achievement
3.1 Delivery Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2015/16 measure Deletion 	TRDP21 – Number of Information Governance (IG) Breaches	Combined with TRDP20 – Number of IG Incidents, details of IG breaches will be included within the commentary

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

TRANSFORMATION & RESOURCES POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

21 SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT	FINANCIAL MONITORING 2014/15 2014/15 OUTTURN
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF	ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the financial monitoring information for this Committee in a format consistent across the Policy and Performance Committees. The report aims to give Members sufficient detail to scrutinise budget performance for the Directorate. Financial information for the outturn 2014/15 which was reported to Cabinet on 13 July is included.

2 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Throughout the financial year Cabinet have received updates in respect of Revenue and Capital 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. These reports have then been used to provide a basis for reports to Policy & Performance Committees.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 The actual Out-turn was an underspend of £0.5 million. The improvement was essentially due to the underspends within 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.

3 REPORTING TO POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEES

- 3.1 The relevant sections from the most recent revenue and capital outturn reports reported to Cabinet are summarised into a bespoke report for each Policy and Performance Committee. This will include the following:
- Performance against revenue budget
 - Performance against capital budget

3.2 The following sections have been extracted from the Financial Monitoring outturn reports presented to Cabinet on 13 July 2015.

4 PERFORMANCE AGAINST REVENUE BUDGETS 2014/15 OUTTURN

CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET

4.1 2014/15 Original & Revised Net Budget £000's

	Original Net Budget	Budget Changes	Revised Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000
Transformation & Resources	20,199	-1,342	18,857
Net Cost of Services	20,199	-1,342	18,857

4.11 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 the table (4.1) 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 accounting adjustments.

4.2 VARIATIONS

4.2.1 The report uses RAGBY ratings to highlight under and overspends and place them into 'risk bands'. The 'risk band' classification is:

- Extreme: Overspends - **Red** (over +£301k), Underspend **Yellow** (over - £301k)
- Acceptable: Amber (+£141k to +£300k), Green (range from +£140k to - £140k); Blue (-£141k to -£300k)

4.2.2 2014/15 Budget variations £000's

Directorates	Revised Budget	Outturn	(Under) Overspend	RAGBY Class	Change from prev
Transformation & Resources	18,857	16,320	-2,537	Y	-1,778
TOTAL	18,857	16,320	-2,537		-1,778

4.2.3 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.

4.2.4 Analysis of the Directorate Variations

The table below shows the main areas of budget to actual variations within the Transformation & Resources Directorate. There are over/under spends that make up the total underspend of £2.5 million.

Directorate	Description	Over £m	Under £m
Transformation and Resources	Treasury Management including Capital Financing		2.0
	Reduced staffing expenditure and increased income in various areas		0.5
Total			2.5
Grand Total			2.5

5 PERFORMANCE AGAINST CAPITAL BUDGETS OUTTURN 2014/15

5.1 Capital Programme 2014/15 Outturn

5.1.1 The capital spend for the year on the accruals basis amounted to £1 million compared to the Revised Programme of £2.5 million which was reported in January (Month 10). This is summarised the table below.

Spend	Original Approval	Revised January	Actual Out-turn
	£000	£000	£000
Transformation & Resources	4,000	2,500	1,096
Total Programme	4,000	2,500	1,096

5.1.2 £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.

6 RELEVANT RISKS

6.1 There are none relating to this report.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

8 CONSULTATION

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

9 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

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

10 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

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

11 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL, IT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 11.1 In respect of the Revenue Budget the Transformation & Resources Directorate outturn for 2014/15 was a £2.5m underspend.

12 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

13 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The report is for information and there are no direct equalities implications at this stage.

14 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

15 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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

15 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 Members are requested to review the information presented to determine if they have any specific questions relating to the budget for the Transformation and Resources Directorate.

16 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.1 To ensure Members have the appropriate information to review the budget performance of the directorate.

REPORT AUTHOR

Telephone

E-mail

APPENDICES

Peter Molyneux

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SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Monthly financial monitoring reports for Revenue and Capital have been presented to Cabinet since September 2012.	

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

TRANSFORMATION & RESOURCES POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

21 SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT	FINANCIAL MONITORING 2015/16 QUARTER 1 (APRIL - JUNE 2015)
WARD/S AFFECTED	ALL
REPORT OF	ACTING SECTION 151 OFFICER

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the financial monitoring information for this Committee in a format consistent across the Policy and Performance Committees. The report aims to give Members sufficient detail to scrutinise budget performance for the Directorate. The financial information is for Quarter 1 (April-June 2015) and was reported to Cabinet on 27 July.

2 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Members of the Policy and Performance Committees have previously requested that financial monitoring information is provided as a standard item at each Committee.
- 2.2 Since September 2012 regular revenue and capital monitoring reports have been submitted to Cabinet as a means of providing regular, detailed updates on budget performance.
- 2.3 The Coordinating Committee has agreed that in order to fulfil its corporate and strategic scrutiny role, it will continue to review the full versions of the most up to date monitor reports at its future scheduled meetings.
- 2.4 The relevant sections from the most recent revenue and capital monitoring reports reported to Cabinet are summarised into a bespoke report for each Policy and Performance Committee and include the following:
- Performance against the revenue budget
 - Performance against in year efficiency targets
 - Performance against the capital budget

3 PERFORMANCE AGAINST REVENUE BUDGETS QUARTER 1 (APRIL-JUNE 2015)

CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET

3.1 Changes to the agreed Transformation & Resources Budget for 2015-16

	Original Net Budget	Approved Budget Changes Prior Mths	Approved Budget Changes Quarter 1	Proposed Budget Changes Quarter 1	Revised Net Budget
Transformation & Resources	31,947	-	-556	-	31,391
Net Cost of Services	31,947	-	-556	-	31,391

3.1.1 The Approved Budget Changes reflect the impact of the completion of the ongoing remodelling and restructuring of Council services. The changes for quarter one in Transformation and Resources focus mainly around Infrastructure Services and Community Safety.

4.2 VARIATIONS

4.2.1 The report will use RAGBY ratings that will highlight under and overspends and place them into 'risk bands'. The 'risk band' classification is:

- Extreme: Overspends - **Red** (over +£301k), Underspend **Yellow** (over - £301k)
- Acceptable: Amber (+£141k to +£300k), Green (range from +£140k to - £140k); Blue (-£141k to -£300k)

4.2.2 2015/16 Projected Budget variations £000's

Directorates	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	(Under) Overspend Quarter 1	RAGBY Class	Change from prev
Transformation & Resources	31,391	30,202	-1,189	Y	
TOTAL	31,391	30,202	-1,189		-

4.2.3 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.

5 IMPLEMENTATION OF SAVINGS

- 5.1 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 Transformation & Resources in 2015/16 included £3.9 million of efficiency measures.

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	8	2,578	2,578	0
G – on track	4	302	0	302
A - concerns	5	1,060	0	1,060
R - high risk/ not achieved	0	0	0	0
Total at Quarter 1 2015-16	17	3,940	2,578	1,362

6 PERFORMANCE AGAINST CAPITAL BUDGETS QUARTER 1 (APRIL-JUNE 2015)

6.1 Capital Programme 2015/16 at end of Quarter 1 (30 June)

	Capital Strategy	Revisions Since Budget Cabinet	Revised Capital Programme	Actual Spend June 2015
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Transformation Resources	1,600	1,404	3,004	115
Total expenditure	1,600	1,404	3,004	115

6.2 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.

7 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 There are none relating to this report.

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.

10.0 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 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

12 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL, IT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

12.1 In respect of the Revenue Budget the Transformation and Resources Directorate is projecting a £1.2m under spend as at the 30 June 2015.

13 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

14 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

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 Members are requested to review the information presented to determine if they have any specific questions relating to the budget for the Transformation and Resources Directorate.

18 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 To ensure Members have the appropriate information to review the budget performance of the directorate.

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APPENDICES

Extracted from the Capital Monitoring report to Cabinet on 27 July 2015:-
Annex 1 Revised Capital Programme and Funding 2015/16

SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date
Monthly financial monitoring reports for Revenue and Capital have been presented to Cabinet since September 2012.	

Annex 1 Revised Capital Programme

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

WIRRAL COUNCIL

TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

MONDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT:	POLICY BRIEFING PAPER – SEPTEMBER 2015
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	GOVERNANCE, COMMISSIONING & IMPROVEMENT
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report presents Committee Members with the September Policy Inform Briefing paper which includes 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 the committees 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:

Policy & Performance Committee Briefings	
July 2015	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.
September 2015	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.

January 2016	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.
March 2016	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 briefing outlines the key features of the Chancellor of Exchequers Budget Statement, which was announced on the 8th July 2015. The Policy Inform briefing also alludes to any potential implications for Wirral Council, and elaborates 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.

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 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.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 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.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 Committee Members are requested to note the contents of the Policy Briefing papers and identify any area 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

1. Policy Papers – September 2015

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Not applicable	N/A

POLICY INFORM: TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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.

Contents

	Page Number
Introduction	p.1
Chancellors Statement- 8 th July 2015	p.2
Queens Speech 2015- Designation to Policy and Performance Committees	p.4
Queens Speech 2015- Developments and Implications	p.6
Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill	p.6
National Insurance and Finance Bill	p.7
Policing and Criminal Justice Bill	p.8
High Speed Rail Bill	p.10
Trade Union Bill	p.11
Welfare Reform and Work Bill	p.12
Policy Development	p.15
Useful Sources	p.18

Introduction

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:

Policy & Performance Committee Briefings	
July 2015	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.
September 2015	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.
January 2016	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.
March 2016	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 8th 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- 8th July 2015

On 8th 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 27th 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

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

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, 19th August 2015](#)

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, 21st July 2015](#)

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, 6th August 2015](#)

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, 11th August 2015](#)

Useful Sources

Chancellors Budget Statement

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

[Andrew Jones, July 2015 Budget Analysis, LGiU, 14th 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, 23rd 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, 16th 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, 20th August 2015](#) – Brief overview of the Bill and any latest updates

WIRRAL COUNCIL

TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

21 SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT:	<i>WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT</i>
WARDS AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>N/A</i>
KEY DECISION:	<i>N/A</i>

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report updates Members on the current position regarding the work programme for the Transformation and Resources Policy & Performance Committee.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The Transformation and Resources Policy & Performance Committee is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council and be informed by service priorities and performance, risk management information, public or service user feedback and referrals from Cabinet or Council.

2.2 In determining items for the Scrutiny Work Programme, good practice recommends the following criteria could be applied:

- Public Interest – topics should resonate with the local community
- Impact – there should be clear objectives and outcomes that make the work worthwhile
- Council Performance – the focus should be on improving performance
- Keeping in Context – should ensure best use of time and resources

2.3 The work programme is made up of a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports. This provides the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The current work programme for the Committee is attached as **Appendix 1**.

3.0 TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

3.1 At the previous Transformation and Resources Policy & Performance Committee meeting held on 15th July, the Committee was informed that a work

programme session would be scheduled to identify items for the 2015/16 work programme. The work programme session has now taken place and the following items were agreed by Members to be included on the work programme:

Task & Finish

- Libraries (Scope undetermined at this time).
- A review of the impact of implementing Universal Credit and the removal of Housing Benefit entitlement for 18 - 25 year olds following potential changes in government legislation.
- A review of the Council's disaster recovery arrangements.
- A review of the Council's debt recovery processes.

Reports Requested

- An update on the Customer Relationship Management System (Report included elsewhere on this agenda).
- The Council's disaster recovery arrangements (Report included elsewhere on this agenda).
- Security of access to Council issued devices – (Scheduled for the Committee meeting on 3rd December 2015).
- An update report on recommendations made in the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme Review (Scheduled for the Committee meeting on 1st February 2016).
- A detailed report covering the Community Safety Partnership (Scheduled for the committee meeting on 22nd March 2016).

4.0 PREVIOUS / CURRENT SCRUTINY REVIEWS – UPDATE

4.1 Local Welfare Assistance Scheme

The final report of the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme was presented to this Committee for information at the previous meeting held on 15th July. As previously stated above, an update report is to be presented to this Committee for the meeting scheduled for 1st February 2016.

5.0 PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 There are no further progress updates to be presented at this time.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Members are requested to approve the Transformation and Resources Policy & Performance Committee work programme for 2015/16 and to determine the prioritisation of Task & Finish Scrutiny Reviews.

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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
Committee Dates					15th		21st		4th	3rd		1st	22nd		
Scheduled Reviews															
Libraries	Cllr Chris Meaden	Requested by Members													
Potential Reviews															
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 Ann McLachlan and Adrian Jones	Requested by Members													
Scrutiny of Council Plan and delivery arrangements		Requested by Members													
Notice of Motion															
Reports Requested															
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													
Spotlight Sessions															
Standing Items															
Performance Dashboard															
Financial Monitoring															
Policy Inform															

Page 19

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