



Cabinet

Date: Monday, 17 July 2017

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

Contact Officer: Andrew Mossop

Tel: 0151 691 8501

e-mail: andrewmossop@wirral.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

AGENDA

1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Cabinet are asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary 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.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting have been printed and published. Any matters called in will be reported at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: That the minutes be approved and adopted.

LEADER'S UPDATE

3. EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

Key Decisions – taken under delegated powers. Period 15 June, 2017 to date of agenda publication 7 July. No item(s) to report.

CABINET MEMBER REPORTS

4. HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH (POSTHUMOUS AWARD) TO THE 96 (Pages 1 - 6)

5. WIRRAL SCHOOLS STRATEGY (Pages 7 - 36)

6. PROPOSED PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS FOR 2017/18 (Pages 37 - 50)

7. REVENUE MONITORING 2017/18 QUARTER 1 (TO JUNE 2017)

Report to follow.

8. CAPITAL MONITORING 2017/18 QUARTER 1 (TO JUNE 2017)

Report to follow.

9. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (Pages 51 - 72)

Referral from the Audit and Risk Management Committee at its meeting on 12 June, 2017 (minute 11 refers), which:

Resolved – That

- (1) the report be updated to indicate the receipt of further letters from Ofsted and the guidance and input from the DfEE;**
- (2) the steps that will be taken to account for their observations be included in the revised report and action plan;**
- (3) subject to the above amendments, the Annual Governance Statement and action plan be approved and presented to the July 2017 meeting of the CABINET; and**
- (4) progress on the Annual Governance Statement action plan shall be reported to each meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.**

Minute, report and Annual Governance Statement attached.

10. INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE (Pages 73 - 80)

Referral from Audit and Risk Management Committee at its meeting on 12 June, 2017 (minute 19 refers), which:

Resolved – That the matter of Attendance Management be escalated to Cabinet, and that:

- (1) Assurance be sought on the issue of compliance regarding the recording of absences has been addressed, that these are properly recorded, lessons are learned, and appropriate actions taken, and**
- (2) CABINET be requested to track data in sufficient depth so that areas of concern are correctly identified to provide assurance.**

Minute and Internal Audit report, which references Attendance Management, is attached.

11. AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17 (Pages 81 - 104)

Referral from the Audit and Risk Management Committee at its meeting on 12 June, 2017 (minute 7 refers), which:

Resolved - That the Annual Report 2016/17 of the Audit and Risk Management Committee be approved and submitted to CABINET and to COUNCIL (for noting).

Minute and report attached.

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

To consider any other business that the Chair accepts as being urgent.

13. EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The following items contain exempt information.

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

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

To consider any other business that the Chair accepts as being urgent.

This page is intentionally left blank



COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES

CABINET

17 July 2017

**HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE
BOROUGH (POSTHUMOUS AWARD)
TO THE 96**

Councillor Phil Davies (Leader of the Council) said:

“On 15 April 1989 thousands of Liverpool fans made their journey across the Pennines to watch their football team play in an FA Cup Semi-Final. 96 of those fans did not come home. 9 of those fans were from Wirral. The tragic events at Hillsborough unfolded for the world to see but it was only in April 2016 that the outcome of the inquests were finally made public and the world now knows that the 96 were unlawfully killed and all fans have been completely exonerated from any blame. In discussions with the Mayor, I believe it is now right for this Borough to mark the heroic fight which overturned the huge miscarriage of justice but also to remember, and never forget, the 96 who lost their lives.

The families of the 96 have been campaigning for justice for nearly 30 years and I believe it is now right for us to bestow upon their family members, the offer of the Freedom of the Borough.

We owe the 96, the families and survivors a debt of gratitude for their commitment to Truth, Justice and Accountability.”

REPORT SUMMARY

Under the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to grant the title of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Borough to persons of distinction who have rendered eminent Service to the Borough.

In April 1989, 96 football fans, including 9 from Wirral, travelled to Sheffield to watch a football match and never returned.

The tragic events at Hillsborough and the ongoing fight for justice for nearly 30 years demonstrate the need to recognise and never forget the 96 fans who lost their lives. It is proposed to bestow the award of Freedom of the Borough (posthumously) on them.

This is a very significant step for the Council to take. Very few people have been awarded this status.

Past recipients of this award are:

1993	LT. Commander Ian Fraser, VC
1996	Mr. Joseph Lynch, GC, BEM (GAL)
2005	Mr. Ray Holmes
2006	The Right Reverend David Urquhart
2006	Lord Chan of Oxtou
2010	Mr. Stephen Maddox, OBE
2016	PC David Phillips

A scroll will be presented to a family representative of each of the 96 by the Mayor.

The Hillsborough Family Support Group have been consulted on a possible date for this meeting and it is proposed that the Council holds an Extraordinary meeting for the purpose of bestowing this award (posthumously) on the 96 at 5 p.m. on Friday 15 September 2017 in the Council Chamber at Wallasey Town Hall. It is also proposed that following this meeting, there will be a public event on the plateau at Wallasey Town Hall to dedicate a plaque and the gardens as the 'Memorial Gardens to the 96'. The evening would be concluded with a Civic reception for family representatives of the 96, when the scrolls and a commemorative gift would be given to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet recommends to the Council that:

1. in pursuance of the provisions of Section 249 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of the tragic loss of life and continued fight for justice on their behalf, the 96 named in paragraph 1.2, be posthumously admitted as Honorary Freeman / Freewoman of this Borough at an Extraordinary Council Meeting to be held on Friday, 15 September 2017 and
2. officers be requested to take all the necessary actions associated with (1) above and arrange for a public event and civic reception for family representatives of the 96 and some invited guests on the evening of 15 September 2017 and
3. to confirm agreement to costs estimated to be up to a maximum of £60,000 for these awards to be met from balances.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 To honour the 96 in recognition of their deaths in such tragic circumstances and the fight for almost 30 years by their families to seek Truth and Justice.

1.2 The 96 are:-.

- John Alfred Anderson (62)
- Colin Mark Ashcroft (19)
- James Gary Aspinall (18)
- Kester Roger Marcus Ball (16)
- Gerard Baron Snr (67)
- Simon Bell (17)
- Barry Sidney Bennett (26)
- David John Benson (22)
- David William Birtle (22)
- Tony Bland (22)
- Paul David Brady (21)
- Andrew Mark Brookes (26)
- Carl Brown (18)
- David Steven Brown (25)
- Henry Thomas Burke (47)
- Peter Andrew Burkett (24)
- Paul William Carlile (19)
- Raymond Thomas Chapman (50)
- Gary Christopher Church (19)
- Joseph Clark (29)
- Paul Clark (18)
- Gary Collins (22)
- Stephen Paul Copoc (20)
- Tracey Elizabeth Cox (23)
- James Philip Delaney (19)
- Christopher Barry Devonside (18)
- Christopher Edwards (29)
- Vincent Michael Fitzsimmons (34)
- Thomas Steven Fox (21)
- Jon-Paul Gilhooley (10)
- Barry Glover (27)
- Ian Thomas Glover (20)
- Derrick George Godwin (24)
- Roy Harry Hamilton (34)
- Philip Hammond (14)
- Eric Hankin (33)
- Gary Harrison (27)
- Stephen Francis Harrison (31)
- Peter Andrew Harrison (15)
- David Hawley (39)
- James Robert Hennessy (29)

- Paul Anthony Hewitson (26)
- Carl Darren Hewitt (17)
- Nicholas Michael Hewitt (16)
- Sarah Louise Hicks (19)
- Victoria Jane Hicks (15)
- Gordon Rodney Horn (20)
- Arthur Horrocks (41)
- Thomas Howard (39)
- Thomas Anthony Howard (14)
- Eric George Hughes (42)
- Alan Johnston (29)
- Christine Anne Jones (27)
- Gary Philip Jones (18)
- Richard Jones (25)
- Nicholas Peter Joynes (27)
- Anthony Peter Kelly (29)
- Michael David Kelly (38)
- Carl David Lewis (18)
- David William Mather (19)
- Brian Christopher Matthews (38)
- Francis Joseph McAllister (27)
- John McBrien (18)
- Marian Hazel McCabe (21)
- Joseph Daniel McCarthy (21)
- Peter McDonnell (21)
- Alan McGlone (28)
- Keith McGrath (17)
- Paul Brian Murray (14)
- Lee Nicol (14)
- Stephen Francis O'Neill (17)
- Jonathon Owens (18)
- William Roy Pemberton (23)
- Carl William Rimmer (21)
- David George Rimmer (38)
- Graham John Roberts (24)
- Steven Joseph Robinson (17)
- Henry Charles Rogers (17)
- Colin Andrew Hugh William Sefton (23)
- Inger Shah (38)
- Paula Ann Smith (26)
- Adam Edward Spearritt (14)
- Philip John Steele (15)
- David Leonard Thomas (23)
- Patrick John Thompson (35)
- Peter Reuben Thompson (30)
- Stuart Paul William Thompson (17)
- Peter Francis Tootle (21)
- Christopher James Traynor (26)
- Martin Kevin Traynor (16)
- Kevin Tyrrell (15)

- Colin Wafer (19)
- Ian David Whelan (19)
- Martin Kenneth Wild (29)
- Kevin Daniel Williams (15)
- Graham John Wright (17)

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options are being considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The origin of the Freedom of the Borough goes back to early medieval times, when with the growth of the great English towns, there emerged a class of citizen known as Freemen, who enjoyed important privileges in the government of their own and in the matter of corporate property, as against strangers and the rest of the inhabitants.
- 3.2 With the passing of the Honorary Freedom of the Boroughs Act 1885 the dignity attached to the Office of Freeman was revived and enhanced. This act conferred upon all Municipal corporations the power to admit as Honorary Freeman of the Borough “persons of distinction and any persons who have rendered eminent services to the Borough”. This can only be achieved by the Council voting at a specially called meeting.
- 3.3 The Freedom of the Borough is the highest award the Council can bestow.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The financial implications to be met from balances.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council may by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specifically convened for the purpose with notice of the purpose, admit to be Honorary Freemen or Freewoman of the place or area for which it is the authority persons/organisations of distinction and persons/organisations who have in its opinion rendered eminent services to the Borough. (Section 249 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972).

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no implications associated with staffing or ICT but regarding assets there will be some landscaping and remedial repairs to the outside of the Town Hall.

7.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

7.1 The Hillsborough Family Support Group has been consulted and is in favour of the proposals.

8.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no equality implications.

REPORT AUTHOR: Joe Blott
Managing Director for Delivery Services
Telephone 0151 691 8182
Email joeblott@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES: None

SUBJECT HISTORY

Council Meeting	Date



**COUNCILLOR
BERNIE MOONEY**

CABINET
17 July 2017

WIRRAL SCHOOLS STRATEGY

Councillor Bernie Mooney, said:

“We want every child to attend a good school, getting a good education which helps them live positive, happy lives where they achieve their aspirations. This strategy is about every school in Wirral working together, alongside the Council and other agencies, to support each other and improve.

“Wirral already performs very well – 9 in 10 of our children already attend a good school. Our ambition is for this number to be 100% by 2020. To get there we will deliver improvements in our early years, school and college education over the coming years to enable Wirral pupils to achieve their full potential.

“I am delighted to say our schools, partners and every related agency are fully behind this strategy. Everyone with an interest in improving local education has worked together to create this collective plan. I am incredibly proud of the work which has already been done, and I am excited at the potential for even better performance this strategy brings.”

REPORT SUMMARY

In line with the national agenda Local Authority School Improvement officers have been working with school leaders to develop a more autonomous and self-improving school system, enabling schools, irrespective of their status, to lead their own improvement. The conversion of schools to academies has resulted in increased autonomy for these schools who are answerable to the Regional Schools Commissioner’s office and the Education Funding Agency. The majority of Wirral secondary schools (76%) are academies. Currently only 7% of Wirral primary schools are academies.

The significant reduction of £3.2 million in the Education Services Grant received by the local authority to undertake statutory duties around school improvement has meant that schools cannot rely on the local authority to continue with these functions in the way they had been previously. Whilst there is now some reduced provision within the Schools Budget and a new grant from September the majority of national school improvement funding available can only be accessed through collaborative bids by Teaching Schools, local authorities and Multi Academy Trusts (MATs).

Achieving well at school is fundamental to improving the quality of life for all of our children and young people in Wirral. The strategy aspires for all of education settings to be rated as 'good or outstanding' by 2020, and we must deliver improvements in our early years, school and college education over the coming years to enable Wirral pupils to be the best they can be. The strategy aims to make sure there is consistent quality and levels of attainment across the borough, continuing our record of exceeding national averages for quality, achievement and attainment for all students.

The vision of the Schools Strategy is:

"For all Wirral children and young people to achieve their potential, contribute positively to society and lead fulfilling and successful lives"

To achieve this vision, it is essential for the whole school community including pupils, parents, carers and teachers and the local community to work together to help our children and young people to be the best they can be.

The strategy covers three broad priorities:-

1. All children and young people in Wirral attend schools which are good or outstanding
2. All children and young people are supported to achieve their full potential, with a particular focus on our most vulnerable pupils
3. Children and young people attend the school which best meets their needs

The Wirral Plan: A 2020 Vision sets out a partnership vision to improve outcomes for Wirral residents. Delivery of the priorities and outcomes described in the Plan are underpinned through the delivery of a set of key strategies.

This report provides Cabinet with the Wirral Schools Strategy; a key strategic document which articulates the ambition for children and young people to be the best they can be.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough and is therefore a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Cabinet is requested to approve the Wirral Schools Strategy which is appended to this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Wirral Schools strategy has been developed to support the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges, in particular Children are Ready for School; Young People are Ready for Work and Adulthood and Vulnerable Children Reach their Full Potential. The strategy has been developed with partners and stakeholders to ensure that there has been extensive engagement in the development of the strategy and its three priority areas.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options have been considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In July 2015, the Wirral Partnership agreed the Wirral Plan, a set of 20 pledges to be achieved by 2020, which focused on ensuring every child gets a good start in life, protecting the most vulnerable and making sure that vulnerable children reach their full potential, driving economic growth by young people leaving education equipped with the knowledge, skills and resilience to be ready for work and Wirral residents living healthier lives. Although two of the strategies contained key performance indicators related to children and young people achieving well in school and continuing education a strategy around schools was developed from September 2016. Young people were invited to contribute their views about what enabled them to learn and achieve well as well as the barriers to learning. Headteachers and school leaders were also given the opportunity to contribute their ideas to the strategy. In addition research was undertaken to determine the key factors that parents considered when choosing a school.
- 3.2 The strategy has been developed through a partnership steering group chaired by Sue Talbot, Lead School Commissioner, as well as representatives from Wirral Council School Improvement officers, National Leaders in Education, parents, governors, Wirral Headteachers who sit on the Locality Boards and the Senior manager for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The steering group has sought engagement with key stakeholders such as Headteachers, parents and children and young people. The strategy includes a set of partnership actions to be delivered over the course of the three-year strategy. The strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis with regular performance reporting taking place through appropriate governance arrangements.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. However the removal of the Education Services Grants (ESG) means that from April 2018 the funding available to offset salary costs for a number of Council employees who are responsible for facilitating the delivery of the strategy and ensuring the Council is able to meet its current statutory duties will be reduced by a further £940,000.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. As projects to deliver the strategy are developed the legal implications will be identified as part of the project plan.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Wirral Schools strategy will be co-ordinated in partnership by existing staff resource. However the direct ESG funding of this staff resource ceases in March 2018.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The Corporate Risk Register will be refreshed in line with the new Wirral Plan developments to ensure that any risks to delivery are understood and mitigating actions are put in place as appropriate.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Wirral School strategy has been developed through a partnership steering group and has been subject to wider consultation with partners and other stakeholders through the development of the strategy. The Wirral Schools strategy has been developed through a partnership steering group and has been subject to wider consultation with partners and other stakeholders through the development of the strategy.

A stakeholder event took place in March 2017 and the feedback from the event has been used to inform the final draft of the strategy.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The potential impact has been reviewed with regard to equality and the impact assessment can be found via link:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2017-1>

REPORT AUTHOR:

Sue Talbot

(Lead School Commissioner)

telephone: (0151 666 4335)

email: suetalbot@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Wirral Schools Strategy (to be included following final updates)

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Not applicable	

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL **SCHOOLS STRATEGY**

Working together to enable all our children and young people to be the best they can be



CONTENTS

FOREWORD	XX
SNAPSHOT OF SCHOOLS IN WIRRAL	XX
INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGY	XX
KEY AREAS IDENTIFIED	XX
1. ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN WIRRAL ATTEND SCHOOLS WHICH ARE GOOD OR OUTSTANDING	XX
2. ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SUPPORTED TO ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, WITH A PARTICULAR FOCUS ON OUR MOST VULNERABLE PUPILS	XX
3. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ATTEND THE SCHOOL WHICH BEST MEETS THEIR NEEDS	XX
HOW WE WILL DELIVER THIS STRATEGY	XX
ACTION PLANS	XX
CONCLUSION	XX



FOREWORD

Everyone in Wirral shares an ambition to inspire every child and young person to be the best they can be, to give them the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and independence they need to aim high and achieve their aspirations.

An excellent education is a crucial element of achieving this ambition.

By 2020 every child in Wirral will attend a school which Ofsted rate as good or outstanding. We made this Pledge in the Wirral Plan and we reaffirm it through this Schools Strategy.

We will work with school leaders and other partners to raise the aspirations of all children and young people and ensure they are well prepared to meet the challenges of the reformed curriculum. We will focus on Wirral's most vulnerable pupils, so they are ready to learn, are resilient to change and have the skills and confidence to lead successful lives.

We will work with all partners, parents and schools so that all Wirral's children and young people are educated in the school which is right for them and which best meets their needs. Children and young people will have knowledge, skills and resilience to be successful in anything they choose to pursue.

We want to be sure all children to achieve, regardless of where they live and their backgrounds.

We understand and value the role parents and carers play in the aspirations of their children. When parents were asked what would help them engage with their children's education, their greatest need was for advice and emotional support.

We will listen to what local children, young people and school leaders tell us, and we will use the best practice to do whatever we can to get it right for our young people. We know that children and young people's educational outcomes can vary depending on where they live or go to school. We want to be sure all children achieve well and are happy, regardless of where they live and their backgrounds.

I am proud of the work Wirral schools do, and I am delighted we have been able to work together to produce this Strategy – a collective, step-by-step plan to continue the excellent educational performance Wirral enjoys, and supporting every school and every child to be the best they can be.



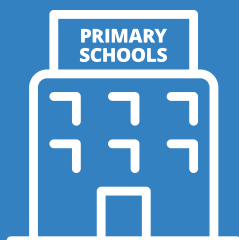
Cllr Bernie Mooney
Cabinet Member for
Children and Families.

SNAPSHOT OF SCHOOLS IN WIRRAL

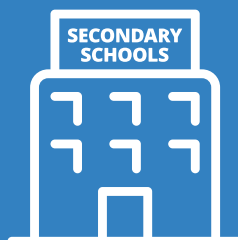


51,019
PUPILS

123
SCHOOLS



90



21



12

90% OF WIRRAL
SCHOOLS

RATED GOOD OR BETTER BY OFSTED

91% OF PRIMARY
SCHOOLS

RATED GOOD OR OUTSTANDING BY OFSTED



76%

OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS
RATED 'GOOD' OR 'OUTSTANDING'
BY OFSTED



52%

OF PUPILS AGED UNDER 11 FELT
'CARING FOR MY FAMILY' IS THE MOST
IMPORTANT THING IN THEIR LIVES



70%

OF OLDER PUPILS FELT, 'FUTURE
CAREER AND JOBS' IS THE MOST
IMPORTANT THING IN THEIR LIVES

INTRODUCTION

Our ambition: *For all Wirral children and young people to be the best they can be*

Achieving well at school is fundamental to improving the quality of life for all children and young people in Wirral. Our ambition is for every education setting in our borough to be rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' by 2020, and through the work of Wirral schools and the Wirral Partnership, we will enable our pupils to achieve their full potential and be encouraged to lead independent lives. This strategy has been developed to ensure there is an ongoing focus on improving the quality of education in Wirral and levels of achievement across the borough, and continuing our record of exceeding national averages for attainment for all students.

To achieve our vision, it is essential for the whole school community including pupils, parents, carers and teachers and the local community to work together to help Wirral's children and young people to achieve their full potential.

Our vision will be achieved through delivering the following aims:

- Ensure all of Wirral's children and young people attend schools which are judged as 'good' or better by Ofsted;
- Raise the aspiration of all children and young people, with a particular focus on Wirral's most vulnerable pupils, so they are ready to learn, resilient to change and have the skills and confidence to lead successful lives;
- Ensure all Wirral's children and young people are educated in the school which is right for them and which best meets their needs.

How has this strategy been developed?

This strategy has been developed in collaboration with Wirral schools, the Wirral Partnership, parents and young people. It has been developed to ensure through working together we can support all of our children to be the best they can be.

A steering group was established in July 2016 with a range of representatives including Primary Heads Consultation Group, Wirral Association of Secondary Head Teachers, Wirral Metropolitan College, Children in Care Council, Youth Parliament and Parent Groups and Wirral Council.

We have ensured that the voices of school head teachers and pupils have helped shape the priorities within this strategy. We have also completed surveys with Wirral Head Teachers and over 4,000 young people to ensure there has been wide involvement and engagement on its themes.

What will success look like?

- Every family will have the opportunity to send their child to a good or outstanding local school, full-time education provider, or college.
- Children who are looked after and those who have left care will achieve well and receive good support to gain employment or access training or further education.
- The gap in educational achievement between different groups of students will be significantly less than national averages.

- Mainstream schools will be equipped to support more children and young people with additional educational, mental health or physical health needs.
- All schools in Wirral will strive to achieve the benchmark standard when compared to similar schools.
- Using the national benchmark figures more pupils than expected pupils in Wirral will achieve good levels at GCSE in English and mathematics.
- Every young person will leave school with nationally recognised qualifications and a clear destination to continue their development, through an apprenticeship, further study or employment.
- Every young person is equipped with the skills so they are ready for transition into training, work or further study.
- School attendance rates will increase so that it is line with the national average.
- Wirral's school community, including parents, carers, governors and the local community, will work together, with a wide range of other professionals to develop and support the health and wellbeing of our students resulting in good educational achievement.
- Effective collaboration and networking with Teaching Schools, Multi Academy Trusts (MATs), standalone academies and all other schools raises pupil outcomes.

Who is the strategy for?

Children

This strategy will enable all our children and young people to be the best they can be. This means educating all our children in supportive environments which inspire them to reach their full potential. Parents and carers will work with schools to ensure they have access to the right information to help them decide the school which best meets their child's educational needs.

Schools and School Leaders

This strategy has school to school support at the heart of system wide school improvement helping to ensure a good school for every child in each locality. It is the responsibility of schools to be excellent at what they do. As a champion of young people schools provide a curriculum which challenge learning. Working in effective partnerships with parents and carers will give young pupil the optimum opportunity to be the best they can be.

Parents

This strategy will enable parents to support and appropriately challenges their child's setting or school to continuously raise standards and to meet the needs of their child. It means empowering parents to debate about how well their aspirations for their children are met and listening to their views on local need in terms of educational outcomes, access, inclusion and employability.

Local Authority

This strategy will enable Wirral Council's transition from one of leading and managing a service to one of system leadership, facilitating school leaders to lead school improvement and school to school support. During the transition from the current system the Local Authority will have four key strands in school improvement with schools and academies; to act as champion for families, as commissioner of key services, as partner with all agencies working with families and as a provider of a small number of statutory services.

Partners

Partners have a key role in enabling children and young people to be the best they can be. Feedback from employers on the qualifications, skills and attributes young people need to be successful in the workplace. The innovative work of organisations such as the Young Chamber of Commerce contributes to developing the aspirations of young people. Business partners have a key role working with schools. The Sixth Form College and Wirral Metropolitan College have key roles in providing aspirational courses which guide young people to career paths and employability.

In addition, Public Health's priority of working with all young people to reduce risk taking behaviour is crucial as is the commissioned work of the Clinical Commissioning Group in the early identification of mental health issues and the consequential support to improve to improve mental health.



1

All pupils in Wirral attend schools which are good or outstanding

There has been major progress in recent years to improve the quality of schools in Wirral, with 91% of primary schools and 80% of secondary schools currently assessed as good or outstanding. It is important to build on this positive picture and work with those schools which still require improvement to provide the right level of support.

National research shows schools in need of improvement make better progress when supported by peers who have substantial experience of improving assessment, learning and leadership. There is a strong history in Wirral of informal school to school support, currently led through school cluster groups working with local head teachers. It is important to continue to develop this collaboration between schools and maximise the benefit to Wirral's children and young people.

Analysing our schools survey, virtually all respondents (93.9%) stated schools working collaboratively was the most productive way in improving teaching and learning. Nearly three quarters (73.5%) highlighted the importance of developing links with schools in Wirral.

What do we already know?

- 91% of primary schools have been judged by Ofsted as good or better, a small number (11) still require improvement. Two schools are currently in special measures.
- In the secondary phase seven (33%) schools judged outstanding and seventeen (80%) schools now judged good or better by Ofsted. One school is in special measures.
- At the age of 5, 70% of Wirral children attained a Good Level of Development (GLD). This is in the top quartile for the North West local authorities.
- Progress and attainment measures for 11 year olds have shown year-on-year improvement for the last 5 years until 2016

when attainment was below the national average of 53%. 48.5% of Wirral pupils attained the expected standard.

- 66% of pupils currently achieve A*-C grades in English and mathematics at GCSE. Wirral ranks 3rd out of 23 North West local authorities.

How are we going to get there?

- We will build on recent success of improving the quality of schools in Wirral.
- We will continue to develop collaboration between schools and maximise the benefit to Wirral's children and young people.
- We will facilitate opportunities for school leaders to identify and share best practise.

What's already happening in Wirral?**Locality School Improvement Boards**

Locality Boards were set up in September 2015. Volunteer headteachers agreed to sit on the Boards. Collectively the Boards identified the strengths in each locality as well as the areas for development. Projects were initiated to address areas of underperformance. Using the 'Through the Lens' model headteachers evaluated the impact of key performance indicators in each other's schools through observing lessons, looking at students' work, and talking to staff and students. Where schools needed to improve outcomes headteachers were supported as well as challenged. The programme resulted in true collaboration and the sharing of expertise. The model was further developed to ensure cross phase working between primary and secondary school leaders.

Locality Boards determine key projects where a number of schools work collaboratively; for example the Wallasey Locality developed a Mathematics training programme to encourage pupils' deep learning and mastery of mathematical concepts and skills. The South and West locality focused on leadership development projects.

A recent consultation exercise has resulted in redesign of the locality boards with opportunities for more headteachers to become involved in the strategic design and delivery of school improvement.

Teaching schools

Teaching schools are outstanding schools that work with others to provide high-quality training and development to new and experienced school staff. They are part of the government's plan to give schools a central role in raising standards by developing a self-improving and sustainable school-led system. Three schools became designated teaching schools. All offer very different opportunities to support schools both locally and further afield. Initially each school advertised their offer and schools choose whether or not to engage in the training and support.

With the creation of localities a teaching school was allocated to each one. This did not preclude schools choosing support outside their own locality. Headteachers of the teaching schools were invited to sit on the School to School Partnership Board. The main purpose of the Board is to have a strategic overview of the strengths and areas of development at each key stage so that training and support can be appropriately coordinated, planned, delivered and the impact evaluated.

As a result of the significant reduction in the Education Services Grant which Local Authorities use to improve schools, the Locality Board model will play a greater role in school improvement. The Boards in partnership with teaching schools and the Local Authority are able to bid for funding from the Strategic School Improvement Fund. This demonstrates a significant shift from Local authorities determining priorities to facilitating change.

2

All children are supported to achieve their full potential, with a particular focus on our most vulnerable pupils

All children and young people in Wirral should be ambitious about their futures and enabled to feel happy, fulfilled and able to achieve their full potential. There must be a particular focus on our most vulnerable or disadvantaged children, who may be at risk of underperformance, to ensure all pupils receive the appropriate level of support to meet their needs.

Although Wirral schools perform strongly in many areas, the attainment of pupils in receipt of free school meals is lower than other pupils and this gap widens at the end of Year 11. Attainment gaps start early in life and tend to widen throughout a pupil's time in school. Research shows low income can have a negative impact on a pupil's attainment at school, which in turn results in young adults earning a low income.

Educational attainment for Children Looked After (CLA) in Wirral at the end of Year 11 was 14% in 2016 a gap of 48% with their Wirral peers. Pupils who are looked after achieve better in a local school than they do if they attend school further away and we will do all we can to ensure they are educated in the borough. We will work in partnership to improve the educational attainment of all of our pupils who are looked after.

A challenge for Wirral schools is to improve the attainment of our disadvantaged children, and there is strong commitment from school leaders to address this and ensure pupils from low income families achieve their full potential.

What do we already know?

- All pupils surveyed in the 2016 Pupil's survey claimed 'good attendance', 'extra support' or 'someone to talk to who can help with my problems' would help them to do better at school or college.
- Authorised absence for Wirral school pupils has reduced but still above the national average (primary schools 3.6% compared with the national average of 3.1% - secondary

schools 4.3% compared with the national average of 4.0%.)

- White British boys in receipt of free school meals do not achieve as well as girls and non-free school meal pupils. The attainment gap can be seen at the age of 5 and is at its widest by the age of 16.
- Boys do not attain as well as girls at the end of Reception. Whilst the boys make progress they do not catch up with the girls in reading and writing until secondary school.
- Nationally, permanent exclusions in secondary schools have increased which mirrors the Wirral picture. Most permanent exclusions are pupils in either Year 10 or 11. Permanent exclusions in primary schools have remained low nationally. Locally permanent exclusions in primary schools are very low.

What have schools told us?

- Early intervention / family support (55.5%) were highlighted as the best way to support vulnerable pupils. Services which were felt could make the biggest impact were: parenting support, education psychology, speech and language therapy and advice and support from the Early Help team.
- Mental health issues, change of placement, low aspiration of foster carers and low number of contact visits were ranked as the main barriers for Children Looked After (CLA) to progress.
- A significant number of respondents highlighted pupils in receipt of free schools meals (81.6%) being an important priority group, followed by pupils with special educational needs/ disabilities (67.3%).

How are we going to get there?

- We will improve the attainment of our disadvantaged children, and encourage school leaders to address this issue in Wirral schools.

- We will continue to prioritise educational progress and attainment of our pupils who are looked after and those with child protection plans.
- We will support pupils who have been excluded to access learning in an appropriate educational setting.

What's already happening in Wirral?

Get Real Intervention for Care Leavers

The objective of the Get Real intervention programme is to support young care leavers to move towards employment or to re-engage with education or training. The programme is designed to deliver the following:-

- To raise young adults' aspirations, confidence and self-belief
- To increase young adults' motivation and attainment
- To help young adults recognise their own strengths and skills, and how to use them in a positive way
- To support young adults in identifying personal clear pathways for education, employment and/ or training.

European Social Funded Supported Employment Programme – 'Ways to Work'

The programme offers employment grants to support the recruitment and employment of young people currently not in employment, education and/or training (NEET) and those with a special educational need and / or disability. This programme is known as an intermediate labour market opportunity (ILM) Ways to Work. The programme offers you people guaranteed employment for at least 7 to 13 months with the hope that the young person gets the opportunity to have their employment made permanent and progress to an Apprenticeship at the appropriate level.

Since April 2016, 104 vulnerable young people aged 16 to 25 have started on the programme with local Wirral employers and 55 percent have secured permanent employment year to date.

Young Chamber of Commerce

The Young Chamber programme has actively engaged with 19 out of 22 secondary schools. Recent successes have included, 'The Big Debate' hosted by Birkenhead High School Academy (BHSA) featuring 5 senior private sector employer representatives plus the BHSA headteacher making up the Question Time style panel. There have been a number of 'behind the scenes' events designed to encourage students to consider a number of varied career opportunities. Behind the scenes at Tranmere Rovers Football Club enabled students to see potential career opportunities in finance, catering, medical careers and hospitality. Behind the scenes with Contessa Hotels enabled students to gain insight into career opportunities in hospitality and customer services. The Wirral Skills Show which show cased 'have a go' employer led activities for young people.

The Young Chamber delivered Wirral Careers and Skills Show took place in March 2017, at Tranmere Rovers. The event was attended by over 600 young people from across Wirral primary, secondary and post 16 education institutions. Young people attending were met by more than 40 local employers and training providers offering excellent careers advice and 'have a go' activities. Feedback from the young people and teaching professionals has been excellent.

14-19 Skills Team

For the last three years the proportion of Wirral young people aged 16 to 18 Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET) has been progressively reducing, from 8.9 percent in 2011 to 4.5% percent in 2015. Wirral NEET is therefore a very positive news story set against reducing Liverpool City Region youth unemployment and new employment/ replacement opportunities for young people. The actual number of young people aged 16 to 18 NEET has also been reducing. The number of young people in the 16

to 18 year old NEET cohort was 467 (August 2016) compared to 1,089 (August 2014).

Support Programme for Young People at Risk of NEET pre 16 – 'Unlocking Potential'

The Youth Engagement Fund is a cross-government payment by results fund that aims to reduce the number of young people who become NEET by improving the education and employment outcomes of disadvantaged young people and those at risk of disadvantage aged 14 to 17 years of age in England. The programme is funded by Cabinet Office, Department of Work and Pensions and Ministry of Justice as a social investment bond initiative. Wirral Council have invested significantly into the programme as part of its upstream activity to stem/ reduce NEET post 16.

Career Connect are delivering the Unlocking Potential programme in Wirral and it is aimed at 14/15 year olds and 16/17 year olds developing their individual resilience, raising their aspirations, coping with stress and supporting students to achieve key goals and outcome. The key focus is on developing good mental wellbeing, improving attitude to learning, behaviour and attendance. To date the programme has engaged 474 young people across 17 secondary schools with programme outputs (as at October 2016) including, improved attitude to learning (+54%), behaviour (56%) and achievement of a first level 1 qualification (30%).

3

All children and young people attend the school which best meets their needs

Improving outcomes for all of Wirral's children so they have the optimum opportunity to be the best they can be will require involvement from schools, parents and carers and pupils. When young people make the transition to secondary school, parents should be able to make informed decisions to determine the most appropriate learning environment for their child. The current educational provision in Wirral includes single sex grammar schools, all ability mixed faith schools, single sex non-selective schools, secondary schools with small base provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and special schools.

Special educational needs or disability will never be a barrier to children and young people thriving and achieving in Wirral. Our aim through this strategy is to educate more children and young people with special educational needs in our mainstream schools and ensure they receive high quality education which allows them to work towards their long term aspirations.

It is essential for parents and carers to have the right information to help them decide which school will best meet their child's educational needs. This information will ensure they are confident to send their child to the school that is right for them, to help them to be ready to start school and to continually support them throughout their education to be healthy and well so they are able to attend school.

What do we already know?

- 17% more children and young people with SEN in Wirral are educated in special schools or special academies than nationally. Comparative data suggests that Wirral has 280 more young people in special school provision than the England average.
- When comparing Wirral with its 10 statistical neighbours Wirral has the 3rd lowest (9.8%) of young people with statements or Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) in mainstream schools.

- There are 16.8% of pupils with a statutory plan of Special Educational Needs and Disability. This compares to the national average of 13.7%.

What have parents told us?

- Parents believe that the 'right' school builds on pupils' academic, social and emotional skills, gathers a diverse group of classmates and potential friends, and helps to prepare children for the world of work later on.
- Although parents value academic achievement highly they are often more concerned about the safety and environment of the school.
- Parents value factors such as good discipline, the happiness of their child and good communication between home and school.

How are we going to get there?

- We will work in partnership to ensure the needs of Wirral pupils are met in a modern and appropriate setting.
- We will educate more children and young people with special educational needs in our mainstream schools and ensure they receive high quality education.
- We will ensure parents and carers have access to the right information to help them decide which school will best meet their child's educational needs.

What's already happening in Wirral?

Wirral Met College / Wirral Council Careers & Skills Support Programme for young people with SEND

Currently there is a bespoke pilot careers and skills education support programme for young people

in Key Stage 4 and 5 who attend a Wirral special school. The programme takes a holistic approach with this cohort of young people engaging both

young and parents / carers. The programmes aim to: to raise aspirations, challenge stereotypes, introduce employment opportunities. The programme also considers the identification of skills requirements and future development through the production of the 'My employment handbook'.

There are currently 4 special schools engaged in this project: Meadow side, Foxfield, Clare Mount and Wirral Hospital School.

Approximately 200 young people have benefited from work experience opportunities. They have also accessed career interviews, advice and guidance and had the opportunity to work with local businesses via enterprise days.

HOW WILL WE DELIVER THIS STRATEGY?

The School Strategy will provide a clear framework for partners to work collectively and make a real difference in each of the areas outlined within the strategy.

The following actions will be delivered over the lifetime of this strategy with detailed projects plans to be developed to ensure there is regular review and monitoring of the actions. An annual review of the strategy will take place assessing progress on each of the actions and reporting outcomes that have been achieved through the delivery of the strategy.

ACTION PLANS

1 All pupils in Wirral attend schools which are good or outstanding

What we plan to do	By when?	Lead Organisation
Implement new Locality Boards to move towards a self improving model	September 2017	Headteachers & School Improvement Locality Board Members
Review the Local Authority Schools Causing Concern policy in consultation with headteachers to take into account the move to peer to peer accountability	September 2017	School Improvement Officers
Facilitate work with headteachers and other system leaders to provide challenge and support to underperforming schools	June 2017	School Improvement Locality Boards
Facilitate opportunities for school leaders to identify and share best practice	October 2017	School Improvement Locality Boards
Facilitate opportunities for leaders to challenge one another regarding the implementation of the new revised curriculum and assessment processes	July 2018	School Improvement Officer through the Locality Boards

2 All children are supported to achieve their full potential, with a particular focus on our most vulnerable pupils

What we plan to do	By when?	Lead Organisation
Challenge schools to reduce authorised absence so that pupils spend more time in school	July 2018	Education Welfare Service
Review the Fair Access Protocol so that young people access education and alternative provision swiftly	October 2017	Local Authority
Embed the Guild for Wirral Alternative Education so that partnerships between schools, Alternative Provision providers and the LA are robust	December 2017	Local Authority
Facilitate challenge to schools to diminish the achievement gap by focusing on the attainment of more able disadvantaged pupils through the work of the School Improvement Locality Boards	September 2018	School Improvement Locality Boards
Explore ways in which Children Looked After can be best supported so that they make good progress and attainment	September 2018	Virtual Headteacher & LACES team
Improve the educational outcomes for Children in Need	September 2018	Schools
Review strategies to ensure that young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities make good progress from their starting points	July 2018	School Improvement Locality Boards
Ensure more young people make a successful transition to further education, employment or training	September 2018	Local Authority 14-19 Team

3 All children and young people attend the school which best meets their needs

What we plan to do	By when?	Lead Organisation
Establish a Local Authority Support Service that can respond effectively to schools' request for advice and guidance	March 2018	Local Authority
Develop expertise within mainstream schools to support a wider range of children and young people with special educational needs	September 2018	SEND Department
Review the LA finance model so that more pupils with SEND can be supported in mainstream schools	September 2018	SEND Department
Work with parents, carers and families to ensure that their child's needs can be met in their local mainstream school.	September 2018	SEND Department

CONCLUSION

Throughout its development, a key aim of the steering group has been to keep the voices of our children and young people at the centre of this strategy, to enable them to reach their full potential. We have worked collaboratively as a broad range of partners to provide as much representation of the many community groups and challenges that exist in Wirral and to enable us to gain insight and access to all relevant information. In addition, we have carried out detailed research to ensure that our objectives are fully supported with evidence.

Through partner networks and stakeholder consultation, we have engaged with the education sector and listened to their feedback to help develop an action plan, designed to meet Wirral's children and young people's current and future needs. We will ensure that Wirral's pupils are supported to reach their full potential, regardless of circumstances and attend the school which is right for them.

REFERENCES

1. Department for Education (2015): Special Educational Needs in England; <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2015>
2. OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (2015): PISA Results in Focus Survey; <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2015-results-in-focus.pdf>

To find out more:



search: Wirral 2020



@wirral2020



COUNCILLOR CHRIS JONES

CABINET
17 July 2017

PROPOSED PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS FOR
2017/18

Councillor Chris Jones said:

‘Giving every Wirral resident the support, opportunity and encouragement they need to live healthier lives is incredibly important. One of our key pledges, creating a healthier borough helps every resident enjoy a better quality of life.

‘We take our responsibilities in public health seriously. We work with our colleagues throughout the health sector, and we are creating innovative integrated services with the NHS. This report gives our commissioning intentions for the coming year, giving detailed information on where our resources will be invested and how we will seek to deliver major, ongoing improvements to residents’ health in the coming twelve months.’

REPORT SUMMARY

- The aim of this report is to seek agreement from Cabinet to progress Public Health’s proposed commissioning intentions for 2017/18.
- The proposals in this report link to the delivery of the Wirral Plan 2020 and the statutory responsibilities of the local authority in respect of public health.
- The proposed actions affect all Wards within the borough.
- The decisions requested are key decisions.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1. Cabinet is requested to note the contents of this report and agree the schedule of commissioning and contracting activities as set out in table 2 and Appendix 1.
2. It is requested that Cabinet agrees provision is made to meet contracts totalling £1,530,000 (£306,000 per annum) for the provision and delivery of the National NHS Healthchecks programme, for a 5 year contract (2018-23).
3. It is requested that Cabinet agrees provision is made to meet contracts totalling £685,000 (£137,000 per annum) for an initial 3 year contract (2017-20) with the option of two one-year extensions for the delivery of Third Sector Infrastructure and Support services.
4. It is requested that Cabinet agrees provision is made to meet contracts totalling £1,000,000 (£200,000 per annum) for an initial 3 year contract (2018-21) with the option of two one-year extensions for the delivery of Weight Management services.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 1.1 The Health and Social Care Act (2012) gave Wirral Council statutory duties across three “domains” of Public Health, as described in the Public Health Outcomes Framework. These duties cover the following components:
- Health improvement – including reducing lifestyle related ill-health and inequalities in health, and addressing the underlying determinants of health;
 - Health protection – ensuring that comprehensive plans are in place across the local authority, NHS and other agencies to respond to infectious disease outbreaks and other public health emergencies;
 - Health service improvement - providing NHS Commissioners, including Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), with expert advice and support to improve and evaluate the quality and efficiency of health services.
- 1.2 The Public Health grant awarded to the council is designed to deliver the responsibilities set out in the Public Health Outcomes Framework. It requires that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) should both inform and influence the commissioning plans of the council and so influence how the Public Health grant is attributed.
- 1.3. Those responsibilities are delivered through a combination of external contracts, internal investment, small grants and running costs.
- 1.4 This paper is intended to provide transparency in relation to our commissioning intentions that are delivered through external contracts, categorised as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Public Health Contractual Investments (2017/18)

Category	Current Expenditure (2017/18)
Drug and alcohol	£7,332,674
Smoking Cessation	£697,878
Sexual Health	£2,939,729
Children aged 0-19	£6,909,800
Weight Management	£200,000
Health Checks	£306,029
Mental Health *	£40,000
Miscellaneous	£1,614,027
Infection Control	£223,578
TOTAL	£20,263,715

** Mental health and wellbeing influence a wide range of health and other outcomes. The delivery of mental health provision is an integral and complementary part of a significant*

number of Public Health commissioned services. This contributes towards improved health and wellbeing, reduced mental disorder and provides effective pathways into specialist Mental Health services commissioned by the NHS.

- 1.5 Services are delivered by a range of providers. Currently (as at 30/05/2017) Public Health directly manages 90 contracts (with 86 providers – Appendix 1 illustrates Public Health contracts by provider for 2017/18). These contracts are proactively managed through the commissioning process.

2.0 COMMISSIONING

- 2.1 All Public Health contracts are subject to on-going evaluation as part of a clearly defined commissioning cycle approach (in line with the Commissioning Framework developed as part of the Council's Transformation programme), which is designed to maximise return on investment and improve outcomes. This methodology ensures that Public Health services (and contracts) are consistently and routinely tested against a range of criteria.

- 2.2 The main strategic criteria against which contracts are tested include the following:

- Evidence base e.g. academic research, engagement feedback, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Performance of targets e.g. financial and activity based and outcomes against plans and benchmarking information
- Value for money
- National policy and technical guidance e.g. Public Health Outcomes Framework
- Strategic direction e.g. Wirral Plan strategic aspirations (narrowing the gap in life expectancy), delivery of Public Health outcomes through council services
- Legal and contractual frameworks e.g. incorporate national updates to contract templates used for NHS providers

- 2.3 The output from this approach provides the intelligence to inform the development of commissioning/contracting options for approval by elected members and Cabinet.

3.0 CONTRACTING PROPOSALS (Please refer to Appendix 1)

- 3.1 Public Health's proposed commissioning intentions for 2017/18 are set out and summarised in Table 2

Table 2 – Summary of Commissioning Plans 2017/18

Action	Financial Value	Number of Contracts
Contracts subject to no changes	£19,571,654	20
Contracts being retendered in-year	£599,529	60
Contracts subject to evaluation and review.	£92,532	10
TOTAL	£20,263,715	90

- 3.2 **Contracts subject to no changes:** There are 20 Public Health contracts (with the value of £19,571,654) which will not be subject to any change during 2017/ 2018. This is because the contracts are in term, or are being extended for a further year. Subject to Wirral Council Contract Procedure rules it is intended to enact one year extensions from 1.2.2018 to 31.1.2019 for the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services and Children's 0-19 Services. These extensions have been previously approved and are allowed as part of the contractual terms and conditions.
- 3.3 All contracts will be subject to the service specifications (which underpin the contracts) being reviewed and renegotiated with providers as part of the 2017/18 contract negotiations. The updated specifications e.g. performance metrics, are designed to ensure that the contracts reflect the commissioning intentions of public health and maximise performance in terms of outcomes and value for money.
- 3.4 **Contracts forming part of retendering in-year:** A significant number of contracts will be retendered during the 2017/2018 financial year. These services account for £599,529 per annum (60 contracts). It is anticipated that the retendered contracts will be operational by April 2018. Those contracts will therefore continue during the recommissioning process so that there is no loss of service to residents. The future contract values will be determined by the commissioning process.
- 3.5 Services to be recommissioned will include the National NHS HealthChecks programme (£306,000 per annum) and services to provide Third Sector Infrastructure Support (£137,000 per annum) and Weight Management Services (£200,000 per annum)
- 3.6 In May 2017 an Executive Members Decision was taken to initiate the recommissioning of Healthchecks and the Third Sector Infrastructure. The following provides details of this for completeness.
- 3.7 In April 2013, the NHS HealthCheck became a statutory public health service in England. Wirral Council is responsible for making provision to offer an NHS HealthCheck to eligible individuals aged 40-74 years once every five years.
- The NHS HealthCheck is made up of three key components: risk assessment, risk awareness and risk management. The outcome of the assessment is then used to raise awareness of cardiovascular risk factors, as well as to inform a discussion on, and agreement of, the lifestyle and medical approaches best suited to managing the individual's health risk.
 - The programme aims to prevent heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, kidney disease, and raise awareness of dementia both across the population and within high risk and vulnerable groups.
 - The service is currently commissioned with 56 independent GP practices.
- 3.8 It is requested that Cabinet agrees provision is made to meet contracts totalling £1,530,000 (£306,000 per annum) for the provision and delivery of the National NHS HealthChecks programme, for a 5 year contract (2018-23).

3.9 Work is currently progressing to identify future need in relation to Third Sector Infrastructure support to enable the Wirral 2020 Plan.

- It is proposed to commission a third sector lead organisation able to inform and influence the work of the Wirral Partnership, enable the growth of the third sector marketplace, encourage economic growth in Wirral and develop volunteering for both individuals and organisations. This process aims to provide outcomes that support the delivery of the Wirral Plan.
- It is intended that this will integrate provision across the council and engage a broader partnership group. This will deliver a more coordinated approach and provide additional benefits as a result of the engagement of an enhanced partnership.
- Community Action Wirral is currently commissioned to deliver this service.

3.10 It is requested that Cabinet agrees provision is made to meet contracts totalling £685,000 (£137,000 per annum) for an initial 3 year contract (2017-20) with the option of two one-year extensions for the delivery of Third Sector Infrastructure and Support services.

3.11 It is proposed to jointly commission an integrated weight management service with Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group for an initial term of 3 years, with options for two further one year extensions. It is anticipated that the contribution from Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group will match the proposed funding of £1,000,000 from Wirral Council.

Weight Watchers and Slimming world are currently commissioned to deliver these services.

3.12 It is requested that Cabinet agrees provision is made to meet contracts totalling £1,000,000 (£200,000 per annum) for an initial 3 year contract (2018-21) with the option of two one-year extensions for the for the delivery of Weight Management services.

3.13 It is necessary to recommission the services highlighted in order to comply with Public Contract Regulations and Wirral Council Contract Procedure rules, as a result of the full term conclusion of applicable contracts.

3.14 It is recommended that the Director of Health & Wellbeing (DPH) be authorised to secure these services within the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, and to take appropriate action in respect of ensuring their effective implementation.

3.15 **Contracts to be evaluated and reviewed during 2017/18:** Contracts (10) with a value of £92,532 will be reviewed as part of normal business during the year. The outcomes of the review and evaluation will determine future commissioning intentions. These are listed in Appendix 1.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 4.1 It is necessary to recommission the services highlighted in order to comply with the Public Contract Regulations and Wirral Council Contract Procedure rules and as a result of the full term conclusion of a number of Public Health contracts.
- 4.2 There is always a risk of disruption to service provision during service redesign, recommissioning and commencement of new services. In order to mitigate against this and minimise disruption, adequate time to plan for, and implement the mobilisation of new services, is built into the procurement process between contract award and commencement.
- 4.3 The procurement process is also subject to scrutiny and at risk of legal challenge. Particular regard is given to contract procedure rules and relevant legislation at all stages of the process and the Public Health team works closely with the Procurement team to ensure compliance.
- 4.4 In the current challenging financial climate the impact of any future reductions in budget or policy implications on the amount of funding available for Public Health is unknown. The value of the Public Health grant for 2018 onwards is not yet known. It is important to acknowledge that the council will need to review all financial allocations in order to achieve a balanced budget over the next few years. Therefore, there is a risk associated with commitment to contracts for 5 years, in advance of funding settlements. This will be mitigated by the insertion of appropriate termination clauses in relevant contracts.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

No other options have been considered.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The following consultation has taken place in order to inform the recommissioning of the National NHS HealthChecks programme.
 - A market engagement event was held in April 2017 in order to capture the views of professionals from Wirral health services providers, the voluntary sector and several other organisations involved in relevant areas of work.
- 6.2 The following consultation has taken place in order to inform the commissioning of Third Sector Infrastructure and Support services.
 - Regular meetings have been held in order to discuss proposed joint commissioning and service design with co-commissioners.
 - A market engagement event was held in April 2017 in order to discuss proposed service design and outline the key service principles and vision with prospective providers. This allowed commissioners to obtain the views of service professionals, the Voluntary Sector and several other organisations involved in relevant areas of work.

6.3 The following consultation has taken place in order to inform the commissioning of Weight Management Services

- Regular meetings have been held in order to discuss proposed joint commissioning and service design with co-commissioners.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 There is currently no significant Voluntary, Community and Faith group involvement in the delivery of the NHS HealthChecks programme. The re-tender may present the opportunity for greater involvement.

7.2 There is currently Voluntary and Community Group involvement in the delivery of Third Sector Infrastructure and Support services. Although the recommissioning of this service will present opportunities for involvement, the retender will allow competition from a broader provider base and this can present a risk to current providers.

7.3 There is currently no significant Voluntary, Community and Faith group involvement in the delivery of Weight management Services. The re-tender may present the opportunity for greater involvement.

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

8.1 There is currently allocated funding for the services highlighted. The tendering exercises will enable more integrated and cost effective models to be developed. Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (T.U.P.E.) will be applicable.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Required Standing Financial Instructions will be followed.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Each area of re-commissioning will have an equalities impact assessment to support the recommissioning process.

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no carbon reduction implications based on the content of this report.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no planning or community safety implications based on the content of this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Ian Shaw**
Senior Commissioning and Contracts Manager
Telephone: (0151) 666 5174
Email: ianshaw@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Public Health contracts by provider 2017/18 (including commissioning intentions)

REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Proposed Public Health commissioning intentions for 2016/17	September 2016

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1 – Public Health Contracts by Provider 2017/18 (Including Commissioning Intentions)										
No Change: £19,571,654	Category	As per Report £	No of Contracts	Smoking & Other £	Sexual Health £	Rape and Sexual Abuse £	Drugs & Alcohol £	Infection Control £	Children's Resilience £	Info & Advice £
Action for Children	Children 0-19	111,002	1						111,002	
Wirral Brook	Children 0-19	135,600	1						135,600	
Xenzone	Children 0-19	101,320	1						101,320	
Liverpool John Moores	Drugs and Alcohol Substance Misuse	27,810	1				27,810			
Liverpool John Moores	Drugs and Alcohol Substance Misuse	35,279	1				35,279			
Cheshire & Wirral FT	Drugs and Alcohol Substance Misuse	59,220	1				59,220			
RASA	Sexual Health	49,920	1			49,920				
Sahir House	Sexual Health	99,850	1		99,850					
Wirral Community FT	Sexual Health	2,789,959	1		2,789,959					
Wirral Community FT	Infection Control	144,780	1					144,780		
Wirral University FT	TB Service	78,798	1					78,798		
No Change: £19,519,129 (continued)	Category	As per Report £	No of Contracts	Smoking & Other £	Sexual Health £	Rape and Sexual Abuse £	Drugs & Alcohol £	Infection Control £	Children's Resilience £	Info & Advice £
Wirral University FT	Drugs and Alcohol Substance Misuse	91,476	–				91,476			
Wirral Citizens Advice LTD	Miscellaneous	841,848	1							841,848
Community Connectors	Miscellaneous	418,622	1							418,622
Spider Project CIC Wirral	Miscellaneous	175,000	1							175,000

Wirral Change	Miscellaneous	52,525	1							52,525
Mids and Lancs CSU	Drugs and Alcohol Substance Misuse	7,833	1				7,833			
Change Grow Live (CGL)	Drugs and Alcohol Substance Misuse	7,091,056	1				7,091,056			
Wirral Community FT	Children 0-19	6,561,878	2						6,561,878	
A Better Life (ABL)	Smoking Cessation	697,878	1	697,878						
Subtotal with no change in 17/18		19,571,654	20	697,878	2,889,809	49,920	7,312,674	223,578	6,909,800	1,487,995

Retender Value: £599,529	Category	As per Report £	No of Contracts	Tier 2 Weight Mgt £	Health checks £	Mental Health £	Info & Advice £
Reader Organisation	Mental Health	25,000	1			25,000	
Slimming World	Weight Management	100,000	1	100,000			
Weight Watchers	Weight Management	100,000	1	100,000			
Community Action Wirral	Miscellaneous	68,500	1				68,500
GP Healthchecks	Health Checks	306,029	56		306,029		
Subtotal to be retendered		599,529	60	200,000	306,029	25,000	68,500

Evaluation / Review £95,532	Category	As per Report £	No of Contracts
Tomorrows Women Wirral	Drugs & Alcohol Substance Misuse	20,000	1
Tranmere Rovers IC	Miscellaneous	12,000	1
Wired	Miscellaneous	40,000	1
Pathfinders	Mental Health	15,000	1
Better Food Wirral	Miscellaneous	5,532	6
Subtotal for Evaluation/ Review		92,532	10
Total Public Health Contracts		20,263,715	90

This page is intentionally left blank

MINUTE EXTRACT

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

12 JUNE 2017

11 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2016-17

The Assistant Director: Finance and Section 151 Officer introduced the report of the Chief Executive that set out the draft Annual Governance Statement and Action Plan for 2016-17.

The Assistant Director: Finance and Section 151 Officer informed that the draft Annual Governance Statement 2016-17 covered the period from April 2016 to March 2017 and therefore the significant governance issues identified are those which relate to this period. He further informed that progress had been made in relation to the compliance issues including performance appraisal (item of separate report on the meeting agenda, minute 4 refers) and Contract Procedure Rules (minute 10 refers). The Statement recognises that compliance issues remained outstanding and were retained on the action plan.

Issues relating to IT (minute 9 refers) has been included in the Action Plan. Whilst progress has been made, and continues to be made, the issues were such that this merited inclusion in the Action Plan..

The report informed that the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 Action Plan outlined the progress that had been made to date on the aforementioned outstanding compliance issues. This progress had included regular updates to this Committee and the report set out the manner in which the Council would continue to ensure the issues were addressed during the current Municipal Year.

The Committee noted that the draft Annual Governance Statement followed the previously utilised format, summarising the significant governance issues identified during 2016/17, together with a detailed report that set out the following key points under the headings:

- Scope of Responsibility;
- What is Corporate Governance?
- The Purpose of the Governance Framework;
- The Governance Framework – monitored against the CIPFA/SOLACE framework that identified seven core principles of governance best practice;
- Review of Effectiveness – that included information on Internal and External Audit, Responsible Officer and key items of report namely the Children's Services Ofsted Inspection 2016, Serious Case Review and ICT Business Continuity and Resilience Planning;
- Significant Governance Issues and Action Plan; and
- Certification

Members commented on a number of matters of report, questioning the level of reputational risk that could occur should there be insufficient holding to account of Members, Officers and/or particular Service Areas.

The External Auditor provided additional information to Members, informing that the draft Annual Governance Statement can be updated prior to consideration by Cabinet and sign-off by the Leader of the Council, and that the use of 'significant' in the context of the Issues and High Level Action Plan referred to those issues in relation to the Council achieving its vision. Additional detailed information relating to the actioned may be found elsewhere in supporting documentation held within Internal Audit.

The Chair recommended that the reporting of the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan to each meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee would ensure progress on each issue be closely monitored.

Resolved – That

- (1) the report be updated to indicate the receipt of further letters from Ofsted and the guidance and input from the DfEE;**
- (2) the steps that will be taken to account for their observations be included in the revised report and Action Plan;**
- (3) subject to the above amendments, the Annual Governance Statement and Action Plan be approved and presented to the July 2017 meeting of the CABINET; and**
- (4) progress on the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan shall be reported to each meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.**

**AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 12 JUNE 2017**

REPORT TITLE:	ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2016-17
REPORT OF:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE

REPORT SUMMARY

The preparation of an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is necessary to meet the statutory requirement set out in Regulation 6 (1) (b) of the Accounts and Audit (England and Wales) Regulations 2015.

The report presents the Audit and Risk Management Committee with the final Annual Governance Statement and action plan for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Annual Governance Statement and action plan are considered by the Audit and Risk Management Committee and presented to cabinet for approval on the 17th July 2017.

That progress on the Annual Governance Statement action plan shall be reported to each meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The preparation of an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is necessary to meet the statutory requirement set out in Regulation 6 (1) (b) of the Accounts and Audit (England and Wales) Regulations 2015.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Council is under a statutory duty to prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 It is necessary for the Council to have approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance that complies with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2016; and to report publicly through the Annual Governance Statement the extent to which the governance processes outlined in the Code are operating effectively in practice.

- 3.2 The Framework identifies seven core principles of good governance:

- Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law.
- Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.
- Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
- Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
- Principle F: Managing risk and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
- Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

4.0 Annual Governance Statement 2016-17

4.1 The Approach

The Annual Governance Statement 2016-17 covers the period from April 2016 to March 2017 and therefore the significant governance issues identified are those which have occurred during this period.

Whilst positive progress was made in relation to the Council's compliance issues of absence management, Contract Procedure Rules and essential training in 2016-17, the statement recognises that these compliance issues

remain outstanding. Significant progress was made in the management of performance appraisals and the same is marked as “complete” by internal audit.

The Annual Governance Statement 2016-17 action plan outlines the progress that has been made to date on the aforementioned outstanding compliance issues and communicates the manner in which the Council will continue in its endeavours to ensure that these issues are addressed during this municipal year.

As the Council’s approach to Governance along with its digital management has improved, new issues have been identified in ICT relating to business continuity and resilience planning. The addressing of these issues is a facet of the Council’s ICT strategy and is more particularised in the statement action plan.

Following an inspection by Ofsted of Children’s Services in 2016, an Improvement Notice was issued by the Secretary of State for Education on the 30th September 2016. As a result of this notice the Council has created an improvement board and plan to address the identified findings. This is the final issue identified and highlighted in the statement action plan.

The production of the Council’s Annual Governance Statement is based on relevant supporting evidence provided by Internal Audit, with the overall direction provided by the Strategic Leadership Team to ensure high level corporate engagement and ownership.

The Council’s Internal Audit team has been responsible for undertaking the relevant assurance work; however, it is important to note that the Annual Governance Statement is not owned by the audit function and is a Council statement on the effectiveness of its governance processes.

The review of the Annual Governance Statement and the accompanying assurances are also important roles for the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

4.2 Evidence

Internal Audit has provided the following sources of evidence and documentation to support the production of the Annual Governance Statement:

- a) A review of the key governance processes in place.
- b) Collation and review of Chief Officers and Managers Assurance Statements (in which assurances are provided and weaknesses highlighted over a range of key governance processes within specific areas of responsibility).
- c) A review of reports by external review agencies has been completed.

4.3 Progress on significant governance issues: compliance

Despite the fact that 3 out of the 4 compliance issues from 2015-16 remain outstanding, there has been encouraging progress made from April 2016 to date, to address the issue of compliance. An overview of the current position is outlined within the statement action plan to provide Members of the Committee with assurance that action is being taken and is having a positive impact.

4.4 Significant governance issues identified 2016-17

4.4.1 Children's Services Ofsted Inspection 2016

Following the 2016 Ofsted report and subsequent Improvement Notice issued by the Secretary of State for Education (30th September 2016), the inspection recommendations were accepted as a significant issue and became a high priority for the organisation.

In response to the findings, an improvement plan was created and delivery of the same is underway, with oversight being provided by the independently chaired Wirral Improvement Board.

The Board meets every month to consider its progress against the Ofsted recommendations and monitor the impact of the delivery of the improvement plan.

Additional oversight for the improvement plan is provided by the Council's Children and Families Committee.

The Leader of the Council was also committed to the setting up of a Leader's Task Force to ensure oversight of the improvement plan.

4.4.2 Serious Case Review

The Audit & Risk Management Committee's attention is brought to the fact that a Serious Case Review is currently underway in relation to a specific case of child sexual exploitation. The Review is chaired by Jane Booth, who is nationally recognised and respected in the field of children safeguarding.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board undertakes the Serious Case Review in accordance with statutory guidance and is completely independent of the Council and other agencies. The scope of the review was determined by the governing Board and focuses on a single case and what learning can be taken following an in-depth analysis and review of the case. OFSTED is aware of the Review being undertaken. The final Serious Case Review report and response of the Board must be published.

4.4.3 ICT Business Continuity and Resilience Planning

Following a review of the Council's ICT Business Continuity plans in 2015-16 and a subsequent scrutiny review panel in November 2016, it was clear that the Council did not retain a fit for purpose I.T. disaster recovery plan.

The scrutiny review panel requested that a comprehensive I.T. disaster recovery plan be created. The panel request was approved by Cabinet, with all recommendations to be implemented by September 2017.

Following the aforementioned findings, the ICT business continuity and resilience planning were recognised as new significant governance issues for 2016-17.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising directly from this report. Any implications identified in the production of the Annual Governance Statement will be reported to the Council's Strategic Leadership Team, Cabinet and the Audit and Risk Management Committee to identify the appropriate action that will be taken.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The preparation of an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is necessary to meet the statutory requirement set out in Regulation 6 (1) (b) of the Accounts and Audit (England and Wales) Regulations 2015.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

There are none arising directly from this report. Any implications identified in the production of the Annual Governance Statement will be reported to the Council's Strategic Leadership Team, Cabinet and the Audit and Risk Management Committee to identify the appropriate action that will be taken.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Potential failure of the Council to comply with the statutory requirement set out in Regulation 6 the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, Regulation 4(3).

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

All appropriate Council stakeholders have been consulted by the author in the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

None identified

REPORT AUTHOR: Nicholas O'Neill
Governance and Practice Manager
Law & Governance
 telephone: (0151) 291 8495
 email: nicholasoneill@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Annual Governance Statement 2016-17

REFERENCE MATERIAL

- CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Guidance Note and Framework (2016).
- Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015.
- CIPFA The Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2015).
- CIPFA The Role of the Head of Internal Audit in Public Service Organisations (2010).

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Audit & Risk Management Annual Governance Statement	18th March 2015
Audit & Risk Management draft Annual Governance Statement	8th June 2015
Audit & Risk Management Annual Governance Statement	22nd September 2015
Audit & Risk Management Annual Governance Statement	15th March 2016
Audit & Risk Management draft Annual Governance Statement	13th June 2016
Audit & Risk Management Annual Governance Statement	26th September 2016
Audit & Risk Management Annual Governance Statement – Significant governance issues update	22nd November 2016
Audit & Risk Management Annual Governance Statement – Significant governance issues update	30th January 2017
Audit & Risk Management Annual Governance Statement	14th March 2017

DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2016-17

1. Scope of Responsibility

Wirral Borough Council has continued with its ambition to continually improve upon the manner in which it strives to discharge its governance responsibilities.

The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Council also retains a best value duty under the Local Government Act 1999, to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness

By discharging this responsibility (including as accountable body for the Merseyside Pension Fund), the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council has approved and adopted the Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFSA / SOLACE Framework for Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2016. A copy of the Code is available on our website: www.wirral.gov.uk.

This statement explains how the Council has complied with the Code and also meets the requirements of Regulation 6 (1) (b) of the Accounts and Audit (England & Wales) Regulations 2015, which requires all relevant bodies to prepare an Annual Governance Statement.

2. What is Corporate Governance?

Corporate Governance generally refers to the processes by which organisations are directed, controlled, led and held to account.

The Council's governance framework aims to ensure that in conducting business it:

- Operates in a lawful, open, inclusive and honest manner
- Ensures that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively
- Has effective arrangements for the management of risk
- Secures continuous improvements in the manner in which it operates.

3. The purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the culture, values, systems and processes by which the Council is directed and controlled. The framework brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, good practice principles and management processes.

Adhering to this framework enables the Council to monitor the success of its strategic objectives and to consider whether these objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate / cost effective services.

Both risk management and internal control measurements are a significant part of the Council's corporate governance framework and are designed to manage risk to a reasonable level.

These safeguarding processes cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve the goals set by our policies, aims and strategic objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable, rather than absolute assurances of their effectiveness.

The system of risk management and internal control are based upon an ongoing process, designed to identify and prioritise the risk to the achievement of the Councils' policies, aims and strategic objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of those risk being realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

This statement builds upon those of previous years. Many of the key governance mechanisms remain in place and are referred to in previous statements that are available on the Council's website. This statement therefore describes the key changes and developments within the Council's governance framework during 2016-17 and up to the date of the approval of the annual financial report.

The progress that has been made in dealing with significant governance issues last year is included and those governance issues that have been identified from the governance review are highlighted.

4. The Governance Framework

The CIPFA/SOLACE Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' identifies seven core principles of governance best practice. Wirral Council's governance framework is aligned to these core principles. The key elements of the systems and processes which comprise the Council's governance arrangements (as detailed in the Code of Corporate Governance) and where assurance against these is required are shown below.

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law

This is achieved by:

- Applying a set of standards (the Nolan principles) of conduct and behaviours expected from Members with constitutional oversight.
- Ensuring all Officers receive performance appraisals linked to the organisational priorities and values.
- Equality Impact Assessment is embedded in all decision making.
- Applying clear conflict of interest policy approaches for employees and Members and maintaining a Register of Interests.

Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

This is achieved by:

- Developing constructive relationships with stakeholders.
- Ensuring consultation responses inform future developments.

- Ensuring residents engage in budget proposals to influence decision making.
- Taking an active and planned approach to dialogue with the public.
- Utilising the Wirral View publication and associated website to communicate and share information with stakeholders.
- Using social media to reach a wider community demographic.
- Publishing an annual report which communicates the authority's activities and achievements, its financial position and performance

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

This is achieved by:

- Clearly communicating the outcome focused vision of the Wirral Plan.
- Continued working with all partners and stakeholders to provide outcome focused delivery.
- Making best use of resources and providing services that are good value for money including development of commercial opportunities.
- Seeking the views of residents to inform the development of planning and improvement.
- Ensuring the inclusion of the regional dimension to maximise outcome delivery.
- Effective medium term financial planning within a transparent financial framework, thus ensuring that the Council retains its commitment to stability, utilising available resources, whilst monitoring income and expenditure levels.

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

This is achieved by:

- Utilising insight to develop evidence based decision making.
- Robust reporting, monitoring and review to support delivery of impact and benefits.
- Optimise partnership approaches including integration to derive best value.
- Effective use of transformational expertise and capacity.

Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

This is achieved by:

- Clearly setting out the roles and responsibilities of Members and Officers.
- Setting out executive and non-executive functions and roles and responsibilities of the scrutiny function.
- Embedding the Councils restructured Operating Model approach.
- Providing appropriate training and developmental opportunities.
- Delivering the Wirral Leadership Programme – a shared partnership approach to developing leadership skills and behaviours.
- Delivering the Transformation programme.
- Ensuring clarity on what is expected from partners.
- Effective and regular strategic and operational communication.
- The Council is currently working in partnership with the LGA to develop the Member's Development Plan. The Members Development Steering Group has been convened to oversee this process.

Principle F: Managing risk and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

This is achieved by:

- Ensuring the risk management approach is effective and embedded in practice
- Delivering the Business Planning and Performance Management Framework
- Having rigorous and transparent decision making processes in place
- Maintaining an effective scrutiny process
- Acting within the law
- Effective medium term financial planning

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

This is achieved by:

- Providing good quality information, advice and support to Members and partners.
- Published information is accurate and reliable.
- Delivering an effective audit function.
- Adhering to the Transparency Code requirements.
- Publicising a robust complaints process and responding effectively to complaints.
- The Council's new complaints process "Customer Feedback" went "live" in April 2017, with the 1st reports to be available June 2017.
- Adhering to all access to information statutory requirements

The Council carries out regular review of the elements that make up the governance framework to ensure it remains effective. In 2016-17 key changes that impact on the framework include:

- The establishment of an Improvement Board to oversee improvement in response to the Ofsted inspection report published in September 2016 that provided an overall judgement of inadequate for Children's Services.
- The appointment of a new Wirral Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) Chair to oversee improvement in response to the Ofsted inspection report published in September 2016 that provided an overall judgement of inadequate for WSCB.
- A restructure of the Council in November 2016 resulting in an Operating Model approach designed to create a focus on delivery of the Council and Wirral partnership priorities and to modernise operations.
- The operating model also reflects the Ofsted findings in that Children's Services functions remain as one entity reporting directly to the Chief Executive to ensure robust focus on all requirements in relation to responding to inspection findings.
- The establishment of a new Transformation function reporting directly to the Chief Executive to enable the delivery of key initiatives.
- The establishment in June 2016 of a new Scrutiny model designed around the Wirral Plan themes of People, Business and Environment to ensure a focus on priorities.

- Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Mayoral Model was adopted by Wirral Council in December 2016 to allow powers to be transferred to the City Region and enable the Council to work collaboratively on a wider footprint.
- A review of the Code of Corporate Governance was carried out and agreed by Audit and Risk Management Committee in November 2016, this code ensures our commitment to the principles of good governance.

5. Review of Effectiveness

Wirral Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control.

This review is informed by the work of Internal Audit and the Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Report, findings and reports issued by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates. It also reflects feedback and comments provided by Chief Officers and managers within the Authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment.

Internal Audit

Internal Audit is a key component of the Council's governance framework. Internal Audit has completed a self-assessment of its compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Wirral is fully compliant with 88% of the standards with full compliance expected by the statutory deadline of March 2018.

One of the key assurance statements the Council receives is the annual report and opinion of Internal Audit. The opinion of the Chief Internal Auditor for the 12 month period ending in March 2017 is:

On the basis of our programme of work for the year, Internal Audit can provide moderate assurance overall that there is a generally sound system of internal control, designed to meet the Council's objectives, and controls are generally being applied consistently. However some weaknesses in the design and inconsistent application of controls put the achievement of particular key objectives at risk.

Key areas of weakness have been included in the significant governance issues in Section 7.

External Audit

Grant Thornton is the Council's independently appointed External Auditor with a broad remit covering the Council's finance and governance matters. The annual work programme is set in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice ('the Code') issued by the National Audit Office and includes nationally prescribed and locally determined work. The Auditors work considers the Council's key risks when reaching its conclusions under the Code.

External audit of the Council's statutory financial statements for 2016-17 is currently being undertaken and will be reviewed by the Council's Audit and Risk Management Committee 21/11/17.

Responsible Financial Officer

This role is a member of the Senior Management Team which permits direct access to the CEO and other team members and has responsibility for delivering and overseeing the financial management arrangements of the Council. The role conforms to the good practice requirements within the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2015).

The Responsible Financial Officer has been involved in reviewing the Code of Corporate Governance and prepared this Statement. He is satisfied with the arrangements that are in place for managing finances and is satisfied that no matters of significance have been omitted from this statement.

Children's Services Ofsted Inspection 2016

In 2016 Ofsted completed an inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after, care leavers and the effectiveness of the Wirral Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB) and reported its findings in September 2016. The inspection provided an overall judgement that children's services are inadequate and made nineteen recommendations for action. They also concluded that WSCB was inadequate and made seven recommendations for action. An Improvement Notice was issued by the Secretary of State for Education (30th September 2016).

In response to the findings, an improvement plan has been established which is being overseen by the Improvement Board. The Board meets every month to consider its progress against the Ofsted recommendations and monitor the impact of the delivery of the improvement plan.

Following their inspection in 2016, Ofsted have and will continue to conduct quarterly monitoring visits, following which they have provided correspondence communicating their findings. This guidance is complemented by continuing input received from the Department for Education.

Additional oversight for the improvement plan is provided through the Council's Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Leader of the Council has established a Leader's Task Force for all three political group leaders, to consider the implementation of the improvement plan.

This has resulted in a new significant governance issue for 2016-17.

Serious Case Review

A Serious Case Review is currently underway in relation to a specific case of child sexual exploitation. The Review is chaired by Jane Booth, who is nationally recognised and respected in the field of children safeguarding. The Local Safeguarding Children Board undertakes the Serious Case Review in accordance with statutory guidance and is completely independent of the Council and other agencies. The scope of the review was determined by the governing Board and focuses on a single case and what learning can be taken following an in-depth analysis and review of the case. OFSTED is aware of the Review being undertaken. The final Serious Case Review report and response of the Board must be published.

ICT Business Continuity and Resilience Planning

In 2015-16 a review of ICT Business Continuity Plans for all 30 identified critical services was carried out. The findings are that a greater focus is needed by business plan owners and relevant Directors to ensure business continuity plans are kept up to date and subject to supportive challenge and review by advisers in the business continuity and IT teams.

In November 2016 the findings of the scrutiny review Panel set up to review the Council's IT disaster recovery arrangements were reported to Cabinet. The report noted that *'it was clear to the Panel that Wirral does not have a current, fit for purpose IT disaster recovery plan...* The IT disaster recovery plan presented to the Review Panel was out of date and did not provide a comprehensive overview of the Council's IT infrastructure. The plan did not outline steps to take to recover key systems in the event of an IT disaster and it was clear to the Review Panel that this plan had not been reviewed or tested for a number of years'.

Although a number of projects were underway or completed the Panel requested a need for this work to be consolidated into a comprehensive IT disaster recovery plan. Cabinet approved the recommendations, with the Chief Information Officer to report on progress to future Cabinet. The report noted that it is planned that the recommendations will be implemented by September 2017 which will increase IT resilience and reduce the risks of IT disaster. It is planned that preparation of a comprehensive disaster recovery plan will follow the successful completion of the project.

These findings have resulted in a two new significant governance issues for 2016-17:

- ICT Business Continuity Planning
- ICT Resilience Planning.

Information Commissioner's Office Voluntary Audit 2016

In January 2016 the Council agreed to a voluntary audit by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) of their processing of personal data, focussing on the areas of subject access requests and records management (manual and electronic). The overall conclusion of the review was that "there is a limited level of assurance that processes and procedures are in place and delivering data protection compliance". The Council meets its legal obligations in relation to information governance however the audit considers areas for improvement beyond the minimum legal obligations.

The Council chose to subject itself to the audit as part of its drive for continuous improvement.

The Council Information Governance Delivery Group (IGDG), which is an officer group led by the Acting SIRO, has oversight of the information governance / security issues and additionally reports into the Corporate Governance Group.

The Council delivered an update against the action plan to the ICO on the 12th May 2017. Since September 2016, 69% of the action plan has been completed. The follow up Data Protection ICO Audit report of the ICO confirmed in May 2017, concluded that significant improvement had been made by the Council in completing the action plan.

The outstanding action plan items will be addressed over the next 12 months to ensure that the Council continues with its information governance improvements. The action plan will also be amended to ensure the council completes all relevant actions to ensure compliance with the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Corporate Management Assurance

An officer Corporate Governance Group is chaired by the Strategic Director for Business Services.

The group includes strategic leads including Governance, Performance, Risk, Internal Audit and Strategy to ensure it has an appropriate profile within the organisation and significant governance issues are monitored and responded to in a timely manner. This group has managed the development of the Annual Governance Statement and oversees the monitoring arrangements of the action plan, holding officers at all levels accountable for delivery of actions.

A quarterly governance report will be prepared by the Corporate Governance Group, to be circulated to the Leader of the Council and Audit Risk Management Committee.

The Council's Strategic Leadership Team has approved the Annual Governance Statement to provide a level of corporate engagement and ownership.

Council

Council sets the authority's overall policies and budget each year and holds the Cabinet to account. Council has an agreed policy framework that is embedded within its constitution.

Cabinet

The Leader of the Council leads on ensuring the effective governance of the council on behalf of the Executive. However, all Cabinet Members along with Elected Members and officers play a vital role in ensuring good governance arrangements are in place across the Council.

Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Audit and Risk Management Committee has an important role in maintaining the Council's system of internal control. It provides an independent assurance and scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance, including an assessment of the adequacy of the Council's risk management arrangements.

Audit and Risk Management Committee receive and review internal and external audit reports and the Chair of the Committee produces an annual report. The Committee also complete an annual self-assessment based on CIPFA guidance.

Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee

The Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee is responsible for keeping the Council's constitutional arrangements under review and recommends constitutional amendments to Council which support the Council to better achieve its aims and objectives. The Committee also oversees and agrees minor changes to the Council's constitutional arrangements as recommended by the Monitoring Officer.

The Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee plays an important part in ensuring the council's governance arrangements are fit for purpose.

Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) supports good governance by holding the Council's Executive and key partners to account.

This function is discharged through four Overview and Scrutiny Committees which reflect the Wirral Plan themes of Business, People and Environment. Due to the large scope of the People

theme, this has been split across two committees: the Adult Care and Health Committee and the Children and Families Committee. This provides the extra capacity needed for oversight of children's safeguarding and the Ofsted Improvement Plan.

Each committee develops a work programme for the year prioritising topics for examination in support of improved outcomes for Wirral residents.

The committee work programmes ensure that statutory responsibilities for scrutinising local health provision, the Community Safety Partnership and flood and coastal erosion risk are effectively delivered.

Each committee meets at least five times a year, interspersed with workshops and task and finish groups to deliver the work programme.

Merseyside Pension Fund

Wirral Council is also the administering authority for the Merseyside Pension Fund which publishes its own statement of accounts on an annual basis and includes a "Governance Compliance Statement". The statement outlines compliance to industry specific governance principles.

As part of this review of effectiveness, progress against the issues identified in 2015-16 has been assessed and an update of the progress included in Section 6. Where sufficient progress has not been made, the issues and outstanding actions have been carried forward and included in the 2016-17 significant governance issues list for continued action. Three new key areas have also been included.

The significant governance issues, associated review and action plans are outlined below.

6. Progress of the Governance Issues from 2015-16

The table below describes the significant governance issues identified during 2015-16 and the progress that has been made against the implementation of actions to address these issues during 2016-17. Where evaluation determines that the progress is not sufficient for removal as a significant governance issue this is noted, and the issue will be carried forward into the 2016-17 statement.

Key Area for Improvement	Update on Position and Implication for the 2016-17 Annual Governance Statement
Organisational and Managerial Compliance (Including Council processes and procedures, performance appraisals, absence management, contract procedure rules and essential training).	<p><u>Performance Appraisals</u></p> <p>The percentage of performance appraisals completed has improved significantly (98% of managers and 96% of all staff at 31/03/17) and adequate explanations have been provided for the shortfall in completion compared to the 100% target. This no longer remains a significant governance issue.</p> <p>Complete</p> <p><u>Absence Management</u></p> <p>The overall 2016-17 target was achieved. However, an Internal Audit review identified that the application of the absence management policy is inconsistent; and managerial accountability for absence management requires strengthening.</p> <p>Carry forward</p> <p><u>Contract Procedure Rules (CPR)</u></p> <p>Compliance with the CPR was the reason for inclusion in the 2015-16 AGS. The introduction of electronic approval forms has helped to strengthen compliance with the CPR, alongside the procurement team's training for managers. The complexity of the current procurement procedures is acknowledged and the same is being retained as an issue for 2017-18.</p> <p>Carry forward</p> <p><u>Essential Training</u></p> <p>The requirement that 100% of management staff and employees complete 2016-17 corporate essential management training and corporate essential training by 31 March 2017 was not been met. Actions taken, to embed this practice across the organisation, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with all staff through a number of relevant channels to raise awareness of the training modules and completion dates. • Production of training materials in different formats to ensure all staff can access training effectively • Monthly monitoring reports to Senior Leadership Team. <p>It is clear that, in terms of training, this remains an issue.</p> <p>Carry forward</p>
Improvement Notice issued by the Secretary of State for Education (30th September	<p>Ofsted's "<i>Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board</i>", in July 2016 found significant weaknesses in each area reviewed.</p> <p>The Council has put in place and is delivering an Improvement Plan to address the</p>

Key Area for Improvement	Update on Position and Implication for the 2016-17 Annual Governance Statement
2016)	<p>identified findings.</p> <p>The Wirral Improvement Board meets each month to consider progress against Ofsted recommendations and monitor the impact of delivery of the Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Carry forward</p>

7. Significant Governance Issues and Action Plan for 2017-18

Based on the Council's established risk management approach, the following issues have been assessed as being "significant" in relation to the Council achieving its vision. In 2017-18 appropriate actions to address these matters and further enhance governance arrangements will be taken. These actions will address the need for improvements identified in the review of effectiveness and their implementation and operation will be robustly monitored.

Key Improvement Area and Actions for Implementation	Responsibility and Implementation Date
<p>Improvement Notice issued by the Secretary of State for Education (30th September 2016)</p> <p>Ofsted's <i>"Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board"</i>, in July 2016 found significant weaknesses in each area reviewed.</p> <p>In response to the Ofsted findings an Improvement Plan has been established and delivery of the same is underway with oversight provided by the Improvement Board which is independently chaired.</p> <p>The board convenes monthly to consider its progress against the Ofsted recommendations and monitor the impact of the delivery of the improvement plan.</p> <p>Additional oversight for the improvement plan is provided by the Council's Children and Families Committee.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council has also committed to the setting up of a Leader's Task Force to ensure oversight of the improvement plan.</p>	<p>Director of Children's Services</p> <p>March 2018</p>
<p>ICT Business Continuity Planning</p> <p>A greater focus is needed by business plan owners and relevant Directors to ensure business continuity plans are kept up to date and subject to supportive challenge and review by advisers in the business continuity and IT teams.</p> <p>ICT are supporting the Business Continuity team to ensure effective Business Continuity Plans are being put in place, should a disruptive incident occur. ICT have recognised a marked improvement in the ownership of the IT element of the Council's business continuity plans over the last quarter</p> <p>Six monthly and annual reviews are planned for all business critical plans.</p>	<p>Head of Community Safety / Acting Head of Digital</p> <p>September 2017</p> <p>March 2018</p>
<p>ICT Resilience Planning</p> <p>A Scrutiny review in November 2016 identified that the Council's IT disaster recovery arrangements required further work and that the Council does not have a current, fit for purpose IT disaster recovery plan.</p> <p>A working group is in place to monitor progress with the key project to relocate the Treasury Building Datacentre. It is planned that a comprehensive disaster recovery plan will be prepared following the successful completion of this</p>	<p>Acting Head of Digital</p> <p>September 2017</p>

Key Improvement Area and Actions for Implementation	Responsibility and Implementation Date
<p>project, scheduled to be completed by September 2017.</p> <p>The project remains on course for completion within the proposed timeline. The Council has successfully negotiated with Merseytravel to host the data centre and the network connection through the Mersey tunnel is in place. The tendering to relocate the data centre was won by SCC. The process to plan and then move the data centre to Merseytravel will shortly be underway.</p>	
<p>Compliance - Absence Management</p> <p>Ensuring compliance with the Council's sickness absence policy remains a Significant Governance Issue for the 2016-17 AGS.</p> <p>An action plan has recently been agreed and is being delivered in response to the audit review. The action plan includes a focus on support and training for managers including targeting of identified groups. Additional work is being put in place to strengthen the organisational approach and ensure that all managers recognise their accountability and accept and discharge their responsibilities to comply with all aspects of the Council policy.</p> <p>HR are realigning resources to provide further dedicated support and monitoring of management actions in relation to absence.</p>	<p>Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development March 2018</p>
<p>Compliance - Essential Training</p> <p>Compliance with supporting staff development through the provision of essential training remains a Significant Governance Issue for the 2016-17 AGS.</p> <p>A project plan to adopt a refreshed approach to the delivery of essential training in 2017-18 has been developed and is being implemented with a robust communication approach / monitoring to rapidly address non-compliance.</p> <p>In addition to the roll out of essential training for 2017-18 led by the Senior Leadership Team corporate ownership must be displayed by all management and staff to ensure routine compliance with training.</p> <p>There has been a complete refresh of the Ulearning portal, with a regular staff compliance report available to all managers. Essential training will subsequently be linked to appraisal accountability statements, to promote compliance across the organisation. This will in turn hold both staff and their managers accountable for the completion of the training program.</p>	<p>Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development March 2018</p>
<p>Compliance - Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's)</p> <p>Compliance with the Councils CPR's remains a Significant Governance Issue for the purposes of the 2016-17 AGS.</p> <p>Development work is underway in 2017-18 to address this issue; a number of actions are being implemented. These include a new procurement model structure to be in place by September 2017. Additional training will be provided to officers and a targeted approach based on insight of areas of non-compliance put in place.</p>	<p>Head of Procurement March 2018</p>

8. Certification

On the basis of the programme of work undertaken, the Chief Internal Auditor has concluded that he can provide moderate assurance overall that there is a generally sound system of internal control, designed to meet the Council's objectives, and controls are generally being applied consistently. However some weaknesses in the design and inconsistent application of controls put the achievement of particular key objectives at risk.

To the best of our knowledge, the governance arrangements, as outlined above have been effectively operating during the year with the exception of those areas identified as requiring improvement. We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified during the review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our annual review.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Eric Robinson, Chief Executive

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Phil Davies, Leader of the Council

MINUTE EXTRACT

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

12 JUNE 2017

19 MATTERS FOR ESCALATION TO CABINET

Reference minute 5 above (Internal Audit Update), at the request of Councillor P Gilchrist, duly seconded, it was

Resolved – That the matter of Attendance Management be escalated to Cabinet, and that:

- (1) Assurance be sought on the issue of compliance regarding the recording of absences has been addressed, that these are properly recorded, lessons are learned, and appropriate actions taken; and**
- (2) CABINET be requested to track data in sufficient depth so that areas of concern are correctly identified to provide assurance.**

This page is intentionally left blank

**AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
12 JUNE 2017**

REPORT TITLE:	INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE
REPORT OF:	CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITOR

REPORT SUMMARY

This report identifies and evaluates the performance of the Internal Audit Service and includes details of any issues arising from the actual work undertaken during the period 1st March to 31st May 2017. There are four items of note concerning audit work undertaken that are brought to the attention of the Members for this period and these are identified at Section 3.2.

RECOMMENDATION

Members note the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To provide the Members with assurance that the Council is taking appropriate measures to ensure that the control environment is effective and to comply with statutory requirements to provide an adequate and effective internal audit service.
- 1.2 To ensure that risks to the Council are managed effectively.
- 1.3 To ensure that the Council complies with best practice guidance identified in the CIPFA publication 'A Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees'.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND AND AUDIT OUTPUT

- 3.1. Internal Audit operate an effective reporting mechanism for Members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee that summarises audit work completed and identifies issues raised on timely bi-monthly basis. This report supports these arrangements by focussing on the following:

- Any items of note arising from audit work conducted,
- Any issues arising that require actions to be taken by Members,
- Performance information relating to the Internal Audit Service,
- Developments being undertaken to improve the effectiveness of the Internal Audit Service.

The information contained within this report is for the period 1st March to 31st May 2017.

3.2. Items of Note

3.2.a Attendance Management

An audit review of Attendance Management (Sickness Absence) was undertaken during the period evaluating compliance with corporate policy and procedure across the organisation. The audit opinion identified that there remains a major organisational risk, with a number of significant issues being identified from a sample of three operational areas across the Council. In a number of sickness cases entered into the Selfserve system and examined by Internal Audit, individual managers had not been taking actions in accordance with current policy requirements when trigger points had been reached. The Action Plan from the audit report identifying areas for improvement has been completed and the actions reported to, and agreed by, the Strategic Leadership Team with agreed timescales.

Internal Audit will follow up this Action Plan later in the calendar year and report the outcome to this Committee, although it must be emphasised that the responsibility to effectively manage attendance is with all levels of managers rather than expecting HR to identify issues and regularly monitor, or Internal Audit to provide ongoing compliance work on the system. Members will note that this issue remains a significant governance issue and is included in the Annual Governance Statement.

3.2.b Personal Finance Unit (PFU)

An audit has been conducted of PFU with the objective to determine whether the controls over the developments within the Unit provide reasonable assurance that effective operations are maintained. The audit focussed on:

- The continuing effectiveness of the recommendations implemented following the independent review of sundry debt previously reported;
- The issues identified from the work completed by Internal Audit in March 2016.
- Any other emerging risks and issues.

It is our opinion that PFU have considered the findings identified from the independent review and in our subsequent audit reports and has made good progress in implementing effective actions. There is a commitment to retaining sufficient resources and to a long term strategy in order to improve both income collection and debt recovery. However the delay in embedding the service level agreement between PFU, Adults and Legal Services at a practical level remains a barrier to the performance of some PFU operations and until it is fully implemented we consider there is a Moderate risk to the organisation. The audit concluded with an agreed action plan to address all the issues identified from this review and follow-up work has been scheduled within the Audit Plan for 2017/18.

3.2.c General Data Protection Regulations

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will be replacing the current EU Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC following agreement of the new framework by the European Commission, the Parliament and the Council. The Regulation will apply to all EU Member States and is expected to come into force in May 2018. The GDPR brings harmonisation by applying the same set of Data Protection rules across the EU.

As the GDPR introduces a number of obligations, it is important for all organisations to be aware of the new requirements and be prepared for when it comes into force. The potential fines for infringement are substantial, up to 4% of annual global turnover or €20 million

The ICO have developed guidance including a checklist and a '*12 Steps to Take Now*' document that the Authority should utilise. Internal Audit are scheduled to undertake a review a review of progress by the Council towards compliance in Qtr3 and in the meantime have recommended that failure to

comply with GDPR be included on the Corporate Risk Register to ensure it is mitigated in a timely manner.

3.2.d ICT/Digital Outstanding Actions

Members will recall that a number of outstanding actions arising from audit reports in this area of operations have been reported to this Committee previously and that the former Head of Digital presented a report to this Committee in March 2017 identifying progress being made towards the implementation of these actions to improve the overall control environment.

Since this report Internal Audit has been working with the Acting Head of Digital and the Senior Information Reporting Officer (SIRO) to assist them in this task. It is pleasing to note that at this moment in time good progress is being made and a separate report by the Acting Head of Digital and the SIRO detailing this is being presented to Members of this Committee elsewhere on tonight's agenda.

3.3 Outstanding Audit Recommendations

3.3.a Attached at Appendix 1 is a table identifying information relating to those audits where recommended actions included in audit reports for 2016/17 and the current year to date have not been fully implemented within agreed timescales and yet still present a serious risk.

3.3.b Where items are addressed by officers those entries are removed from the report on a rolling basis.

3.3.c All of the reports identifying outstanding actions are currently BRAG rated as 'amber' indicating that progress is being made to address identified issues

3.4 Internal Audit Performance Indicators

3.4.a The Service constantly evaluates and measures the effectiveness of its performance in terms of both quality and productivity by means of a number of performance indicators in key areas as identified below. These include delivery of the annual Internal Audit Plan and ensuring that all of the audits identified in the plan are completed on schedule. This is particularly important at the present time as the requirement for Internal Audit involvement in a number of important corporate initiatives has increased dramatically.

IA Performance Indicator	Target	Actual
Percentage delivery of Internal Audit Plan 2017/18.	20	19
Percentage of High priority recommendations agreed with clients.	100	100

Percentage of returned client survey forms for the reporting period indicating satisfaction with the Internal Audit service.	90	99
Percentage of internal audit reports issued within 10 days of the completion of fieldwork.	100	100

3.4.b There are currently no significant issues arising.

3.5 Internal Audit Developments

3.5.a Continuous Improvement

This is important to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Internal Audit Service and as such a Continuous Internal Audit Improvement and Development Plan has been formulated that incorporates new and developing areas of best practice from across the profession, ensuring that the service continues to constantly challenge how efficient and effective it is at delivering its service to all of its stakeholders and making any relevant changes and improvements as required. Some of the actions currently ongoing include:

- Ongoing development and implementation of a more streamlined and dynamic AGS working to allow for further changes made to the CIPFA/SOLACE best practice guidance;
- Ongoing improvement of corporate counter fraud awareness across the Council;
- Further developments in reporting arrangements for stakeholders;
- Further development of the Mersey region Counter Fraud group led by Wirral Internal Audit to include joint fraud exercises and training;
- Continuing development of the use of computer assisted auditing techniques in the evaluation and testing of system controls for more effective and efficient auditing;
- Ongoing development and implementation of a new automated planning and management system for the service;
- Ongoing implementation of paperless working environment
- Implementation of more streamlined planning process for 2017/18.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are none arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are none arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are none arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Appropriate actions are not taken by officers and Members in response to the identification of risks to the achievement of the Council's objectives.
- 7.2 Potential failure of the Audit and Risk Management Committee to comply with best professional practice and thereby not function in an efficient and effective manner.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Members of this Committee are consulted throughout the process of delivering the Internal Audit Plan and the content of this regular report.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none arising from this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Mark P Niblock
Chief Internal Auditor
telephone: 0151 666 3432
email: markniblock@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Audit Recommendations Status Report

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Internal Audit Plan 2017/18

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Audit and Risk Management Committee	Report presented to all meetings of this Committee.

MINUTE EXTRACT

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

12 JUNE 2017

7 ARMC ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

The Chair, supported by the Chief Internal Auditor, introduced the Audit and Risk Management Committee Chair's Annual Report 2016/17.

Prepared in consultation with Internal Audit, the Chair's Annual Report for 2016/17 had been compiled in accordance with the CIPFA best practice publication 'A Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees'.

The report informed how the Audit and Risk Management Committee had fulfilled its terms of reference during a challenging year and noted Member's commitment to helping the development of standards and protocols across a wide range of governance areas, further assisting with improvements across the Council's governance and control environments in a timely manner.

The Chair's Annual Report further informed Members of specific matters regarding the Audit and Risk Management Committee's core activities during the year.

Resolved - That the Annual Report 2016/17 of the Audit and Risk Management Committee be approved and submitted to CABINET and to COUNCIL (for noting).

This page is intentionally left blank

**AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
12 JUNE 2017**

REPORT TITLE:	ARMC ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17
REPORT OF:	CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITOR

REPORT SUMMARY

To comply with statutory and best professional practice requirements the Audit and Risk Management Committee is required to complete an annual report to Cabinet on the work undertaken by the Committee.

Attached at Appendix A is the Annual Report prepared by the Chair in consultation with Internal Audit.

RECOMMENDATION

That the draft Annual Report be approved and submitted to Cabinet.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To comply with statutory requirements and best practice identified in the CIPFA publication 'A Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees'.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options considered as this is a statutory and best practice requirement.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations require public bodies to regularly review their systems of internal audit, and for the findings to be considered by a committee of the body or by the body as a whole.
- 3.2 Advice from CIPFA includes the assertion that the "systems of internal audit" can be considered to include the role and effectiveness of the Audit Committee which therefore should be assessed and evaluated. This evaluation should include consideration of an annual report on its activities prepared by the Committee for the organisation
- 3.3 To assist Councils in this evaluation exercise CIPFA has provided a checklist and report template and recommended that this be completed annually by the Committee.
- 3.4 An annual report for 2016/17 has been prepared by the Chair in consultation with Internal Audit and is attached at Appendix A for consideration and approval by the Members.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are none arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are none arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are none arising from this report.

6.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Potential failure of the Audit and Risk Management Committee to comply with best professional practice and thereby not function in an efficient and effective manner.

7.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Members of this Committee have been consulted throughout the process regarding the content of the annual report and their views are reflected in the final document attached.

8.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none arising from this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Mark P Niblock
Chief Internal Auditor
telephone: 0151 666 3432
email: markniblock@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Audit and Risk Management Committee Annual Report 2016/17

REFERENCE MATERIAL

CIPFA Publication 'A Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees'

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Audit and Risk Management Committee	Annual Report
- Annual Report 2013/14	23 June 2014
- Annual Report 2014/15	8 June 2015
- Annual Report 2015/16	13 June 2016

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX A

DRAFT

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

Page 87

Councillor A Jones, Chair
Councillor A Davies, Vice-Chair

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

CONTENTS_

	Page
--	------

1. FOREWORD	4
2. BACKGROUND	5
2.1 What drives Governance Policy	5
2.2 Why do we need an Audit Committee	5
2.3 What does the Audit Committee do	6
2.4 How do officers support the Committee	6
3. 2016/17 FINANCIAL YEAR	7
4. SOME KEY INFORMATION	7
4.1. Audit and Risk Management Committee Membership	7
4.2. Key features of the Audit Committee and its operation	8
4.3. Meetings and attendance	8

C O N T E N T S		Page
5.	CORE ACTIVITY 2016/17	9
5.1.	Terms of Reference	9
5.2.	Number & Type of Reports Considered by Committee	12
6.	OTHER ACTIVITIES	13
7.	OUTCOMES	14
8.	PLANS FOR 2017/18	15
9.	APPENDIX 1:	
	ARM COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE	16

1. FOREWORD

By the Chairman of the Audit & Risk Management Committee Councillor Adrian Jones

"I am pleased to present the Audit and Risk Management Committee's Annual Report for 2016/17. It records the extent of the work undertaken by the Committee in providing the degree of independence, questioning, and thoroughness necessary across a wide range of control and corporate governance matters.

During the year, the Committee met on five occasions and received reports in connection with the full range of issues that fall within its remit.

This report identifies the breadth of the Audit and Risk Management Committee's activities in ensuring that every aspect of the Council's work is compliant with standards and transparent to its stakeholders. I believe that this Annual Report demonstrates very clearly the enormous value that the Committee brings to the Council and the public in ensuring that improvements to the governance of the authority are being delivered.

Looking forward, the Council is facing a further period of unprecedented change and the need to maintain effective controls and standards in our public services is even more important than ever. I believe that a strong Audit and Risk Management Committee is essential to ensure that the Council achieves its objectives effectively in these areas. It is my intention in the future that the Audit and Risk Management Committee will operate in a proactive manner regarding risks to the organisation, in conjunction with officers, identifying key risks and ensuring that appropriate actions are taken in direct response to these in a timely manner.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the sterling work of the Members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee and the supporting officers, during the past year"

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 What drives Governance Policy?

The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

Effective corporate governance is a fundamental feature of any successful public sector organisation.

A sound corporate governance framework involves accountability to service users, stakeholders and the wider community, within which authorities take decisions, and lead and control their functions, to achieve their objectives. It thereby provides an opportunity to demonstrate the positive elements of an authority's business and to promote public confidence.

Wirral Council has adopted the revised local Code of Corporate Governance based on seven core principles which underpin and define the meaning of good governance:

2.2 Why do we need an Audit Committee ?

While there is no statutory obligation to have such an arrangement, Audit Committees are widely recognised as a core component of effective governance and therefore reflect good practice. Wirral's Audit and Risk Management Committee is properly constituted and, as such, is given sufficient authority and resources by the Council. In effect, the Committee has the right to obtain all the information it considers necessary and to consult directly with senior managers. In line with best practice from both the public and private sectors, the Audit and Risk Management Committee can report its observations and concerns directly to the Council.

A local authority has a duty to ensure that it is fulfilling its responsibility for adequate and effective internal control, risk management, and governance, as well as the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of its activities. The Audit and Risk

Management Committee has a key role in overseeing and assessing the internal control, risk management, and corporate governance arrangements and advising the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

2.3 What does an Audit Committee do ?

The Audit and Risk Management Committee's main responsibilities are to oversee the Council's corporate governance arrangements, the work of internal audit, and the Council's response to external audit and other external inspections.

This purpose is reflected in the committee's terms of reference which are reviewed and adopted each year (Attached at Appendix 1).

2.4. How do Officers Support the Committee?

The Audit and Risk Management Committee is supported by:

- The Director for Business Services (Assistant Chief Executive) who has overall responsibility for the arrangements;
- The Monitoring Officer who is required by law to ensure that the Council acts within its legal powers at all times; and,
- The Assistant Director: Finance, as Section 151 Officer who is responsible under the law for ensuring the proper administration of the council's financial affairs.
- The Chief Internal Auditor who has a key role to play in supporting the Committee because of the importance of the Internal Audit service to governance.
- Any other officer of the Council as required.

3. 2016/17 FINANCIAL YEAR

This Annual Report for 2016/17 produced by the Audit and Risk Management Committee has been prepared in accordance with the CIPFA best practice publication '*A Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees*'. The report demonstrates how the Audit and Risk Management Committee has fulfilled its terms of reference during a very difficult year and how it is fully committed to helping to improve the Council's governance and control environments during what should prove to be a very challenging year ahead.

The Committee's activities during 2016/17 were designed to make a positive contribution to the continual improvement of governance arrangements across the Council, as well as performing the statutory roles as identified in the Constitution.

4. SOME KEY INFORMATION

4.1. Audit and Risk Management Committee Membership

During 2016/17 the Audit and Risk Management Committee had the following 9 Members:

Councillor Adrian Jones – Chair
 Councillor Angela Davies - Vice-Chair
 Councillor John Hale - Spokesperson
 Councillor Phil Gilchrist – Spokesperson
 Councillor Christine Muspratt

Councillor David M Elderton
 Councillor Les Rowlands
 Councillor Ron Abbey
 Councillor Paul Doughty

4.2. Key Features of the Audit Committee and its Operation

The Committee meets CIPFA's definition of best practice as illustrated below:

Best Practice	Expectation	Met	Comment
Independence	Independent from the executive and scrutiny	√	The Committee reports to the Council
Number of Members	3 to 5 members	√	The Committee has 9 Members
Number of meetings	Aligned to business needs	√	The frequency of meetings, 5 times a year complies with best practice.
Co-option	To be considered relative to skills	√	Training is currently provided to increase Members' skills, an evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of this is conducted annually as part of the self-assessment exercise undertaken against CIPFA best practice template and relevant action taken to address any shortcomings.
Terms of Reference	Accord with suggested best practice	√	The Committee has adopted the CIPFA recommended model.
Skills and training	Members have sufficient skills for the job	√	General and specific training is provided to increase Members' skills, an evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of this is conducted annually and actions to address any shortcomings taken.

4.3. Meetings and Attendance

The Audit Committee normally meets 5 times per year in January, March, June, September and November.

Attendance by Members and approved deputies was over 90%.

5. CORE ACTIVITY 2016/17

5.1. Terms of Reference

The Audit and Risk Management Committee's Terms of Reference are comprehensive, comply with best practice, cover all key areas and are attached at Appendix 1 to this annual report. The Committee's work and outcomes in each of its areas of responsibility are summarised in the following subsections.

Internal Audit

The Audit and Risk Management Committee:

- Approved the Chief Internal Auditor's Audit Plan,
- Considered regular reports produced by the Chief Internal Auditor, highlighting internal audit work completed, internal audit performance against key indicators and any significant issues arising during the period,
- Approved amendments to the reporting arrangements to Members including summary reports from Internal Audit,
- Considered the Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Report and assurance opinion on the Council's control environment,
- Considered reviews of the effectiveness of the systems of internal audit,
- Ensured internal and external audit plans were complementary and provided optimum use of the total audit resource,
- Received updates on the Internal Audit Counter Fraud Teams' remit and activities undertaken,
- Received and considered implications of the introduction of the first UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards,
- Approved and endorsed the Internal Audit Charter and Strategy,
- Received updates on the new Audit and Accountability Act 2013 and considered the implications for the Council,
- Considered reports on audit investigations conducted,
- Considered and approved revisions to Chief Internal Auditors Audit Plan.

We continue to provide support to the Internal Audit service to ensure management is responsive to recommendations made and agreed.

External Audit

The Audit and Risk Management Committee:

- Considered the external auditor's Audit Plan,
- Considered progress against the plan presented by the external auditor
- Received and considered all external audit findings and inspection reports issued in the year and considered management's response to them, ensuring robust and thorough responses,
- Reviewed the external audit Committee Update reports and took appropriate actions in response to issues presented,
- Reviewed the Council's progress on all external audit and inspection recommendations on a regular basis and asked managers to explain progress where appropriate, thereby holding them to account,
- Received and considered all of the external auditors reports on the Merseyside Pension Fund,
- Considered the external auditor's Annual Audit Letter,

We continue to provide support to external audit to ensure management is responsive to recommendations made and agreed.

Risk Management

The Audit and Risk Management Committee:

- Considered regular reports on the Corporate Risk Registers,
- Promoted risk management across the Council,
- Considered reports on Corporate Risk and Insurance Management,
- Considered reports on the Corporate Risk Management Policy and the management of risk.

We continue to provide support to promote effective Risk Management policy and procedures across the Council and ensure best practice is achieved.

Internal Control and Governance

The Audit and Risk Management Committee:

- Agreed the Council's Annual Governance Statement,
- Agreed and supported the development of a reporting and monitoring mechanism for significant governance issues identified in the Annual Governance Statement,
- Agreed a mechanism for escalating any items of note to Cabinet,
- Supported the ongoing development of a Mersey region Counter Fraud Group,
- Engaged with and supported the annual Counter Fraud Awareness Week initiative,
- Supported work undertaken as part of the Audit Commission's National Fraud Initiative,
- Considered and supported amendments to the Council's counter fraud arrangements,
- Approved the revised Code of Corporate Governance,
- Approved the updated Audit and Risk Management Committee self-assessment checklist.

The Annual Governance Statement is a key document which summarises the Council's governance arrangements and the effectiveness of the arrangements during the year.

Accounts

The Audit and Risk Management Committee:

- Agreed the Council's accounting policies,
- Agreed the Annual Statement of Accounts,
- Received and considered the external auditor's reports, and ensured that the Council responded to the auditor's comments,
- Agreed the annual Merseyside Pension Funds accounts,
- Received and reviewed reports on the Insurance Fund Budget and Annual Report.
- Considered a report on the Grant Claims and Returns Certification

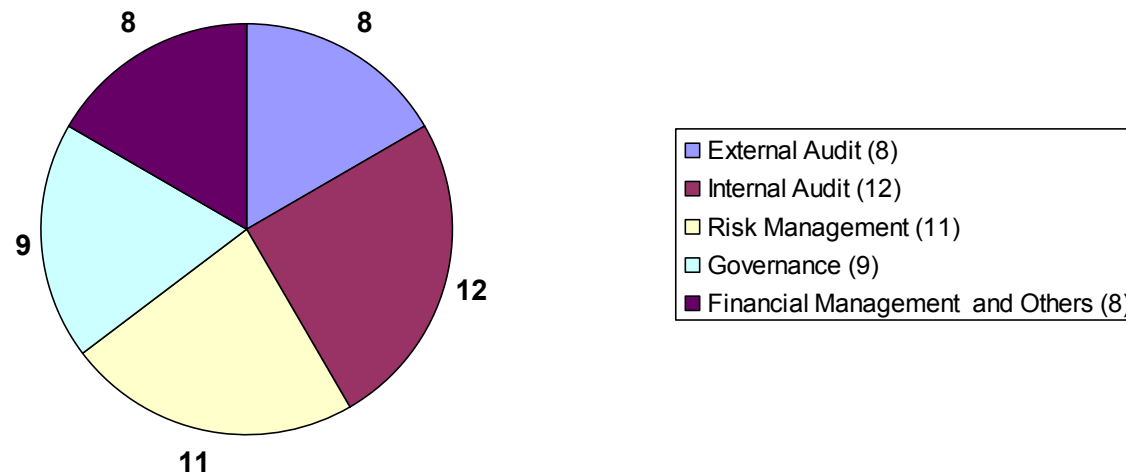
Specific Issues

The Audit and Risk Management Committee also considered reports and presentations on the following specific issues which arose in the period:

- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000,
- Insurance arrangements and performance,
- Information Governance Update

To give a flavour of our business during the year, the following shows the types and numbers of reports considered between April 2016 and March 2017:

5.2. Numbers & Types of Reports Considered by the Audit Committee



6. OTHER ACTIVITIES

During the year, the Committee demonstrated its commitment to good governance by:

- a) Authorising amendments to the draft Annual Governance Statement.
- b) Devoting significant resource to addressing governance issues arising including the development of a reporting mechanism for monitoring actions taken to address significant governance issues.
- c) Referring matters to Cabinet for attention as appropriate.
- d) Asking Chief Officers to attend as appropriate and present reports on issues identified which affected governance.

7. OUTCOMES

The Audit and Risk Management Committee aims to focus on adding value through its activity. By concentrating on outcomes the Committee can identify the benefits of its work. In particular this year the Committee:

- Oversaw and agreed work on the Statement of Accounts;
- Received reports which showed how improvements had been planned, and delivered, to the Statement Of Accounts;
- Encouraged and presided over a strengthening of the control environment, specifically by overseeing various targeted reviews and the production of the Annual Governance Statement;
- Presided over significant changes in the structure of the organisation including officers with statutory responsibilities to ensure the proper administration of financial affairs and systems of internal control;
- Encouraged and presided over significant developments and improvements to strengthen the delivery of the Internal Audit service, including further development of the Quality Assurance Improvement Plan and other initiatives designed to ensure compliance with the new Public Sector Internal Audit Standards;
- Introduced an enhanced system for escalating any items considered to be of note by ARMC to Cabinet for their attention;
- Presided over the introduction of an improved system for routinely reporting actions taken by officers in relation to items identified as being significant governance issues in the Annual Governance Statement;
- Endorsed the strengthening of the governance arrangements through the consideration and approval of the revised Code of Corporate Governance;
- Encouraged a strengthening of the Council's overall control environment specifically by overseeing various targeted reviews and the production of and challenge to the Annual Governance Statement;
- Oversaw the development and implementation of the Committee reporting mechanism for significant governance issues;
- Oversaw development of the Corporate Risk register.

In addition, individual Members and the Audit Committee collectively continued to develop and learn about our roles including attendance at professional training sessions targeted specifically at Audit Committee Members, and enabling us to deliver our roles more effectively.

8. PLANS FOR 2017/18

During 2016/17 the Audit and Risk Management Committee has consolidated the progress that has been made in previous years, and going forward will look to develop further and cement our role as the recognised champion of good governance for the Council, helping to address any identified issues in what promises to be again a very challenging and difficult environment. Our priorities for 2017/18 are to continue to meet our duties as specified in the Constitution by developing and building on our current status as well as responding to and implementing any new requirements as they arise. For 2017/18 we will:

- Continue to develop the Wirral Council Audit and Risk Management Committee to review all governance issues identified,
- Continue to develop our working relations with officers to improve our understanding of the respective roles and improvement opportunities available,
- Oversee actions required to ensure that the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 are met,
- Continue to drive up standards and meet the demanding requirements of the external inspection and assessment regime,
- Continue to review all governance arrangements to ensure the Council adopts the very latest best practice,
- Continue to support the work of Internal and External Audit and ensure appropriate responses are given to their recommendations,
- Continue to ensure that all aspects of the new Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards are complied with,
- Continue to help the Council to manage the risk of fraud and corruption by supporting the work of Internal Audit and colleagues in this area,
- Continue to develop the Wirral Council Audit and Risk Management Committee to review risk and partnerships' issues and safeguard public sector interests,
- Continue to oversee the development of audit plans to evaluate and test controls in respect of services delivered either by trading companies run by the Council or on behalf of them,
- Equip existing and any new Members to fulfil our responsibilities by providing more detailed and effective training on all key areas of responsibility including financial arrangements and risk management, governance and internal audit operations.

Councillor Adrian Jones (Chair)

9. APPENDIX 1

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process.
2. The Committee has the following duties, powers and authorities:
 - 2.1. approval of the Council's statement of accounts;
 - 2.2. the responsibilities of the Council under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make proper provision for its financial affairs;
 - 2.3. to consider and make recommendations to Council or Cabinet as appropriate on:
 - 2.3.1. the annual Audit Report and the Management Letter of the external auditor;
 - 2.3.2. any other statutory report of the external auditor;
 - 2.3.3. any internal audit report that may be referred to the committee by the Chief Executive, the Director of Resources, the Chief Internal Auditor or the Head of Legal and Member Services (as Monitoring Officer);
 - 2.3.4. summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested;
 - 2.3.5. the effectiveness and adequacy of the response by the Council, the Cabinet, any committee or sub-committee of the Council or of any officer to any internal or external audit report or management letter;

- 2.3.6. the systems of control and the arrangements for the prevention of fraud and corruption within the Council;
- 2.3.7. any other matter relevant to the audit of the Council's accounts and financial records or its systems for the control and safeguarding of all the Council's assets;
- 2.3.8. a report from Internal Audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale; and
- 2.3.9. the Head of Internal Audit's annual report and opinion, and a summary of internal audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance it can give over the Council's governance and control arrangements;
- 2.4. to approve (but not direct) the strategy, plan and performance of the Council's internal audit service;
- 2.5. to oversee the production of the Authority's Annual Governance Statement;
- 2.6. to maintain an overview of the Council's Constitution in respect of contract procedure rules, financial regulations and codes of conduct and to make recommendations to Council or Cabinet, as appropriate;
- 2.7. to monitor the Council's policies on "Raising Concerns at Work", to the anti-fraud and corruption strategy and the complaints procedure;
- 2.8. to liaise with the Audit Commission over the appointment of the Council's external auditors.
- 3. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee shall act as the Council's Risk Management Champion.
- 4. Executive Members will not normally be members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee

This page is intentionally left blank