

BUSINESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 4 July 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	M Sullivan (Chair)	
	Councillors	P Hackett	T Pilgrim
		RL Abbey	J Stapleton
		G Ellis	KJ Williams
		A Leech	S Williams
		D Mitchell	G Wood
<u>In attendance:</u>	Councillors	C Muspratt (In place of J McManus)	
		B Berry (In place of E Boulton)	
		I Lewis (In place of J Hale)	
<u>Apologies:</u>	Councillor	J Stapleton	

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that no further apologies had been received other than for Councillors Eddie Boulton, John Hale, Julie McManus and Jean Stapleton, three of whom had deputies standing in for them.

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

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

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

No such declarations were made.

3 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 29 March, 2017.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 March, 2017, be approved.

RESIDENT PARKING TASK & FINISH SCRUTINY REVIEW

The Chair stated that Councillor Jean Stapleton was unable to attend the meeting but had asked that her thanks be recorded in respect of the officers who had facilitated and helped with the review and also Councillors Dave Mitchell and Chris Blakeley, who had sat on the Review Panel with her.

The Chair asked Councillor Dave Mitchell and, with the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Chris Blakeley to speak to the report on the findings and recommendations of the Resident Parking Scrutiny Review completed in June 2017. The Review was commissioned by the Committee at its meeting on 12 July, 2016, when the Committee had received a report on the Council's Resident Parking Policy. It had been a number of years since a review had been undertaken and they commented that with the review they had tried to come up with the easiest possible way to bring the resident parking scheme into line. A number of meetings had been held with officers and a small number of residents had also attended an evidence session.

The report gave details of the scope, methodology and key findings of the review and proposed a number of recommendations to ensure the Resident Parking Policy was fit for purpose.

Members expressed their thanks to the panel for all their work.

Keith Rodgers, Traffic Network Manager, addressed the Committee and referred to the fact that only 3 schemes had been introduced since 2007 mainly due to the inflexibility of the existing criteria.

Responding to comments from Members he stated that there were no proposals to change the criteria for there to be a minimum requirement of 80 per cent support from residents and the criteria that local businesses should not be disadvantaged would also remain.

The Chair suggested that there might be a lot of objections when the new policy was introduced and expressed concern at the reduced size of the department which would have to implement the proposed changes and asked how long it might take.

In response Mr Rodgers acknowledged that staff were fully committed but that, subject to Cabinet approval, a phased approach to the changes would get underway with some consultation within six months.

The Chair asked that Mr Rodgers report back to the Committee with an update on the latest position and thanked the Scrutiny Officer, Mike Lester, for all his work on the review.

It was then moved by Councillor Dave Mitchell, seconded by Councillor Steve Williams and –

Resolved –

(1) That the contents of the report and the findings and recommendations of the review be endorsed.

(2) That the report be referred to Cabinet for consideration of the recommendations made.

5 ROAD CONDITION UPDATE

Julie Barnes, Lead Commissioner (Transport and Technology) and Shaun Brady, Highways Asset Manager, introduced a report which provided an explanation into the current condition of Wirral's roads, how the information was captured, and how it was reported to the Department for Transport (DfT).

The maintenance of highways was a statutory duty for the Council under the Highways Act 1980 (as amended). Maintenance and improvement of highways contributed to the Wirral Plan pledge to provide transport and technology infrastructure fit for the future, and was key to delivery of the Connecting Wirral Transport Strategy.

Responding to comments from Members Shaun Brady stated that although he was not involved on a day to day basis with BAM Nuttall, the Council's contractor for the repair of roads, he was aware of a list of sites where work on repairs and maintenance was due to commence and he would be happy to share this list of remedial works with Members. He also referred to independent data which showed that 6 per cent of Wirral's unclassified roads were in need of immediate maintenance compared to 20 per cent in Liverpool.

Members referred to a number of sites within their wards where the quality of work had not been to a satisfactory standard and where repairs were now required. They also expressed surprise if there weren't quality checks prior to a job being signed off.

The Chair referred to an ever diminishing pot of money which the authority had to maintain the Council's roads in good order. More roads were being built and there were now more cars on the roads.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

6 UPDATE ON LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DEVELOPMENTS

The Strategic Commissioner for Growth introduced a report which gave a brief overview of latest developments at the Liverpool City Region (LCR), including

activity underway to implement the City Region devolution deal. The report also gave details of a number of appointments which had been made, including portfolio leads, the Mayor's advisory team and lead officers.

The Chair referred to the fact that central government had made it clear that there would be no extra resources for the LCR Mayor's office and that what may happen in future would be that the six local authorities might have to look at providing some resources for the Metro Mayor, as was the case in the Greater Manchester region.

The Chair also referred to a meeting which the Labour Group had held at which the Metro Mayor, Steve Rotherham, had spoken and that other political groups might think about inviting him to one of their meetings. He informed the Committee that the Metro Mayor had given an assurance that the LCR Combined Authority would not be Liverpool centric.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

7 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY SCRUTINY PANEL - VERBAL UPDATE

The Chair reported that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel was next due to meet on 26 July, 2017 and that there would be a development meeting in advance of this on 19 July, 2017. He stated that there would be more to discuss at the September meeting of the Committee.

The Chair also suggested that the Metro Mayor could be invited to give a presentation to a future meeting of this Committee and a Member suggested that this could be open to all Members to attend.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

8 BUSINESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' BRIEFING PACK

The Committee were invited to note the contents of the Members' Briefing Pack which provided an introduction to the purpose of scrutiny and included details of the Committee's remit and operational information.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

9 2016/17 QUARTER 4 AND YEAR END WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE - BUSINESS THEME

Alan Evans, Strategic Commissioner for Growth introduced a report which provided the 2016/17 Quarter 4 (January – March 2017) performance report for Wirral Plan pledges under the Business theme. The Quarter 4 report was

included as Appendix 1 to the report, and provided a description of the progress in Quarter 4 that included available data in relation to a range of outcome indicators and supporting measures.

The Year End closedown report was included as Appendix 2 to the report and provided a summary analysis of improvement of performance against measures and delivery of Pledge strategy actions at year end.

Responding to comments from Members Alan Evans elaborated on the collection of data to measure increases in visitor numbers and stated that he would bring a report to the September meeting on how the figures for visitor numbers were calculated and also how the numbers for cyclists were calculated as referred to in the performance indicators.

He also agreed to provide written responses in respect of the indicator on public transport satisfaction which showed an increase at a time when the number of bus routes were being cut and the target for capital receipts not being achieved. A response would also be provided on the number of surveys on the condition of Wirral's roads.

With regard to the Floral Pavilion he would provide a response on how this was impacted by the review of leisure currently being undertaken and the need to reduce the subsidy provided.

The Chair suggested that a spotlight session could be held with regard to the Wirral International Business Park and the amount of businesses there, which could also involve the Chamber of Commerce and businesses being invited to speak of their successes.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

10 **FINANCIAL MONITORING 2016/17**

Jenny Spick, Senior Manager, Financial Planning and Policy, introduced the report of the Assistant Director: Finance (Section 151 Officer) that set out the Council's revenue and capital monitoring position for 2016/17 year-end (31 March 2017).

The 2016/17 out-turn position was an overall underspend of £2.9 million (£0.4 million underspend was forecast at quarter 3) and that People (former Families and Wellbeing areas) had a significant forecast overspend that had been offset by largely one-off savings within Business Services Treasury Management.

The year-end capital report updated the capital programme and reflected significant re-profiling of schemes between years to reduce the 2016/17

capital programme to £30.7 million. The actual capital out-turn at year end was £25.3 million.

Responding to comments from Members, Jenny Spick confirmed that from 2017/18 Wirral Council would be retaining 100 per cent of all Business Rates collected as part of the Government pilot scheme. She also confirmed the level of irrecoverable debt write-offs was £4.6m and the level of provision figures for 2016-17 would include debts going back a number of years.

Jenny Spick also commented that the council could never say that debts would always come down in the future as if something were to change within the economy which was completely outside the Council's control then debt levels could go up. There was a need to try and mitigate against the risk as much as possible.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

11 **APPOINTMENT OF THE HIGHWAYS REPRESENTATION PANEL**

The Chair introduced a report on the need to keep panels under review and, in particular, at the first meeting of a Committee in each municipal year, in accordance with Standing Order 33(1). The Committee was requested to appoint Members to serve on the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel in 2017/18.

Resolved –

(1) That the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel be retained in 2017/18, with the terms of reference identified.

(2) That the following Members be appointed to serve on the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel in 2017/18, with Councillor Steve Williams appointed as Chair –

Members

1 Conservative – Steve Williams

1 Labour – Mike Sullivan

Deputies

**Gerry Ellis
Bruce Berry
David Elderton
David Burgess-Joyce
Ian Lewis
Lesley Rennie
Adam Sykes
Eddie Boulton**

**Pat Hackett
Ron Abbey**

**Anita Leech
Julie McManus
Jean Stapleton
Warren Ward
Jerry Williams
Gillian Wood**

**1 Liberal Democrat – Dave Mitchell Alan Brighouse
Chris Carubia
Phil Gilchrist
Stuart Kelly**

12 BUSINESS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT

The Committee considered a report from the Chair which explained the process of developing a scrutiny work programme for the new municipal year. The Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in cooperation with the other three Overview & Scrutiny Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges which were within the remit of the Committee.

Resolved -

- (1) That the proposed Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2017/18, be approved.**
- (2) That this Committee supports a proposal to convene a dedicated work programme planning session for the Chair, Vice-Chair and Party Spokespersons. The purpose of the session is to give further detailed consideration to the Committee's work programme prior to the next scheduled Committee meeting in September.**