



## Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Thursday, 21 September 2017</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>6.00 pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall</b>

**Contact Officer:** Lyndzay Roberts  
**Tel:** 0151 691 84248262  
**e-mail:** [lyndzayroberts@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:lyndzayroberts@wirral.gov.uk)  
**Website:** <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

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### AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP**

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

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

3. **MINUTES (Pages 1 - 28)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings held on 19 June 2017 (Call-In) and 5 July 2017.

**4. NOTICE OF MOTION - PAVILIONS IN SPORTS GROUNDS (Pages 29 - 30)**

At the meeting of the Council held on 20 March 2017 (minute 152 (2) refers), the attached Notice of Motion, 'Pavilions in Sports Grounds' proposed by Councillor Paul Hayes and seconded by Councillor Bruce Berry was referred by the Civic Mayor to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (6), Councillor Hayes has been invited to attend the meeting in order for him to be given an opportunity to explain the Motion.

**5. NOTICE OF MOTION - FAIR VOTES (Pages 31 - 32)**

At the meeting of the Council held on 10 July 2017 (minute 34 refers), the attached Notice of Motion, 'Fair Votes' proposed by Councillor Pat Cleary and seconded by Councillor Stuart Kelly was referred by the Civic Mayor to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (6), Councillor Cleary has been invited to attend the meeting in order for him to be given an opportunity to explain the Motion.

**6. THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANS FOR IMPROVING AIR QUALITY AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR WIRRAL**

To receive a presentation from Mr Mike Cockburn, Lead Commissioner – Environment.

**7. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 1 2017/18 (Pages 33 - 40)**

**8. 2017/18 QUARTER 1 WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE (Pages 41 - 60)**

**9. POLICY INFORM (Pages 61 - 90)**

**10. ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE (Pages 91 - 98)**

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

**12. EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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

#### RECOMMENDED

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

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

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## ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 19 June 2017

Present: Councillor P Stuart (Chair)

Councillors S Foulkes A Hodson  
T Jones I Lewis  
B Kenny T Pilgrim  
C Muspratt C Carubia  
L Reecejones M Sullivan (In place of J Walsh)  
T Usher A Sykes  
W Ward B Berry

Witnesses Councillors W Clements, P Davies and JE Green  
H Ellis, M Hornby, K McCallum and M Smith

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Walsh.

### 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.

The following declarations were made:

Councillor Mike Sullivan declared a personal interest in the Cabinet Minute 113 which was the subject of the meeting by virtue of his role as a voluntary helper at Pensby Library and his attendance at Library Forum meetings.

Councillor Ian Lewis declared a personal interest in the Cabinet Minute 113 which was the subject of the meeting by virtue of his being a Friend of Wallasey Library and a Friend of Harrison Park, Wallasey.

Councillor Christina Muspratt declared a personal interest in the Cabinet Minute 113 which was the subject of the meeting by virtue of her being member of a community group – the Friends of Manor Park.

Councillor Steve Foulkes declared a personal interest in the item under consideration by virtue of his representation as a member on Magenta Housing.

No declarations in respect of any whipping arrangement were made.

3 **CALL-IN OF CABINET MINUTE 113 - LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES- FUTURE PROVISION OF SERVICES**

Prior to consideration of the item the Chair welcomed members of the public, Elected Members and Officers, thanking them for their attendance.

The Chair then referred to the decision of the Cabinet taken on 27 March 2017 in respect of Leisure and Cultural Services – future provision of services (Minute 113 refers).

The decision had been called-in by Councillors Jeff Green, Tom Anderson, Bruce Berry, Chris Blakeley, Eddie Boulton, David Burgess-Joyce, Wendy Clements, David Elderton, Gerry Ellis, John Hale, Paul Hayes, Andrew Hodson, Kathy Hodson, Ian Lewis, Tracey Pilgrim, Cherry Povall, Lesley Rennie, Les Rowlands, Adam Sykes, Geoffrey Watt and Steve Williams, on the following grounds:

“The signatories wish to call-in the following recommendations from the decision:

**That**

- (1) the findings of the ‘Re-imagining Leisure and Cultural Services’ report, and the services this relates to, prepared by Bates, Wells & Braithwaite (BWB) (Appendix 1 of the report) be noted; and**
- (2) the Strategic Commissioner for Environment be requested to ensure these findings are given due consideration as part of the options appraisal and development of the Full Business Case for the future provision of specified services, to be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet in June 2017.”**

Reasons for Call-in:

There has been inadequate consultation with key stakeholders by the London based consultants, Bates, Wells, Braithwaite (BWB) in the preparation of their report “Wirral BC – Re-imagining Leisure and Cultural Services.”

Numerous Friends Groups, volunteer organisations, Trade Unions, Parks Friends Forum and Friends of the Libraries have all expressed significant concerns over the contents and accuracy of this report not least because the key stakeholders, who know our Leisure and Cultural Assets best, have not been involved or consulted over the production of this report.

We believe it is expensive folly to have spent £284,000 of Taxpayers money on a report without recourse to such important stakeholders as their knowledge and experience is vital in bringing out key issues in developing future options for our Leisure and Cultural Assets.

By disenfranchising these key stakeholders at this stage of the process the Council risks missing out on significant benefits and therefore this process should be paused to allow a period of consultation and engagement, which is missing from the BWB report, prior to moving to options appraisal and development of the full business case.

### **Explanation of Call-in by the Lead Signatory – Councillor Jeff Green**

Councillor Green referred to the previous independent consultation, undertaken during 2016 on the matter of libraries, leisure and culture services, which had not been made available to the public or Elected Members. He stated that the report had been completed in January 2017 and was dismayed that the content hadn't been circulated.

Councillor Green's idea of consultation was to involve and engage in the whole process. This had not occurred in this case.

He explained that it was the view of his Group that the decision based on the report had included the translation of an Outline Business Case into a Full Business Case, without the proper consultation or scrutiny. He added that the offering proposed, and focused upon an Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) and had, in essence, dismissed the option of an in-house service provision.

Councillor Green further explained that Mr Pat Cleary (Unison Representative) had requested information to share with colleagues / staff, which had arrived late, bringing into question the optimistic timetabling of this particular project and that it was a done deal. He believed that these actions had given the impression that the Council was not listening to what people were saying and that consultation was being mismanaged.

Councillor Green stated his acknowledgement of the required budget savings of 20% across the Council, but added that to achieve the best motivation of volunteer groups it was best practice to engage, listen and respond to people's views from the outset in order to take forward 'change'. He added

that the best results are also achieved by talking to people 'at the coal face' of services, and that the Leader had 'missed a trick'.

Councillor Green further stated that more importantly he was concerned that the move from an Outline Business Case to a Full Business Case was not appropriate, particularly when proper public engagement and consultation had not taken place.

Members of the Committee briefly questioned Councillor Green on a number of areas regarding the Call-In that included:

- Why the Call-In had been actioned given that the report clearly stated that further detailed consultation was due to take place, as well as pre-decision scrutiny involving the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which in turn would form part of the process for developing a Full Business Case (paragraph 8.3 of the Cabinet Report refers).
- Given the financial constraints and level of government cuts to Local Authority Budgets, it would be remiss of Cabinet not to explore all possible solutions.
- How he had consulted when he was Leader of the Council.
- Did he believe that the decision had been made and that there could be no further consultation?

A Member also pointed out that library service provision had been the subject of discussion over recent years, but no decision had been made on the provision of Library Services for Wirral residents.

### **Explanation of the decision taken by the Leader of the Council**

Councillor Phil Davies informed the Committee that it was his view that the key points of the report into the Libraries, Leisure and Cultural Services – Future Provision of Services covered all the points raised by Councillor Green and explained that the report advised Members of the findings of the recent external review of specific services and sought approval to develop a Full Business Case for a new service model.

He added that the services within the scope of review, were set out in section three of the report and played a fundamental role in the delivery of a number of Pledges and a whole range of key outcomes across the breadth of the Wirral Plan, but most notably in support of the 'Leisure and Cultural Opportunities for All' Pledge that "We will encourage more people to enjoy the wide range of leisure, cultural and sporting opportunities on offer across Wirral. He reaffirmed that the Council would listen to residents' ideas and

requests, and by 2020, will have increased access to events and activities to all our residents, regardless of age or income”.

Councillor Phil Davies stated that it must be clearly recorded that the reason for embarking on this particular review was the need to save £132million by 2021 as a result of austerity cuts to the Council’s budget and grant from Central Government. The Council had to balance its budget. It had to make the savings outlined. Consequently, it was looking at delivering services differently and Leisure and Cultural Services was part of this. The aim was to make savings but also to continue to offer good quality public services which are valued by Wirral people.

Further detailed consultation and engagement with a wide range of residents, staff, Elected Members and other stakeholders would be carried out in three phases, as was formal pre-decision scrutiny by this Committee as part of developing a Full Business Case. It was his contention that this Call-In was ‘jumping the gun’.

Councillor Phil Davies re-affirmed an earlier statement that the needs analysis work undertaken by BWB had included initial discussions with lead commissioners from other areas such as community safety, public health and social care.

He summarised his evidence saying that the irony of this Call-In was it was holding up the consultation exercise. No decisions had been made in terms of the provision of services and that all options remained open - only when the outcome of the consultation had been made available, pre-scrutiny had taken place, and all the facts were available would decisions be made.

The Chair invited questions to the Leader from the Committee and his responses included the following:

- It was always possible to improve communications;
- Options were proposed and included in the report, because in order to consult, there must be something to consult about;
- Paragraph 1.3 of the report made it quite clear that In-house provision was an option;
- Savings of £132million over the next four years must be achieved in order to agree a legal budget, to do otherwise would be burying one’s head in the sand;
- The proposal would fall under the joint portfolios of Cabinet Members responsible for a) Transformation and b) Implementation;
- The Labour Group had received a presentation by BWB;
- The Cabinet were investigating the impact of VAT status for each option, and had sought legal advice on the subject;
- Pre-Scrutiny too would be taking place (Para 8.3 of the Cabinet report made it clear;

- Consultants had been used, both now and in the past, providing good evidence, and making up specialist knowledge and expertise that had been lacking In-house;
- All statutory obligations to share information had been actioned, but Opposition Members also had an obligation to make their own enquiries as part of the process;
- It was a big challenge to make the case to keep non statutory services for the people of Wirral; and
- Engagement would be as inclusive as possible and if there was a further option it would be considered.

### **Evidence from Call-in Witnesses**

#### **1. Councillor Wendy Clements a member of the community and Friend of Greasby and Irby Libraries.**

Councillor Wendy Clements informed the Committee that as a service user and Friend of Greasby and Irby Libraries she had been aware that an assessment of library services had been undertaken and completed by consultants during 2016. Requests had been made by members of the public in the autumn and a request had been made to the Director of Transformation regarding the outcome.

Councillor Clements expressed her dismay that the volunteers i.e. members of the public, who can help deliver the service in an effective manner had not been allowed access to the information. She stated that these were the very people who care about the services, and who should have been consulted.

Councillor Clements stated that the whole proposal should have been consulted upon at an early stage, and asked the Committee if they were aware of how long the whole process would take as the proposal was very complex. She informed that it was not made clear to those individuals with a particular interest in the library service that it was possible to approach the consultants directly.

#### **2. Helen Ellis, Chair of Wirral Parks Forum.**

Helen Ellis informed the Committee that she was a relatively new member to the Wirral Parks Forum, having lived on the Wirral for 2-3 years. She informed Members that she had been tasked by the Forum to write to the Council's Cabinet, but had yet to receive a response. Ms Ellis agreed to provide details in respect of who the letter had been addressed to.

Ms Ellis stated that the Wirral Parks Forum had only been apprised of the consideration of the BWB consultants report 2 days in advance of the Cabinet meeting on the 27 March 2017. She stated that it was her view

that this was a clear demonstration of the lack of a consultative approach with a number of voluntary groups affected by the proposals. Ms Ellis further stated that it was also reflected in the lack of acknowledgement of the work of such groups.

Ms Ellis explained her concerns regarding the effect on, and loss of goodwill, particularly when a number of unsubstantiated statements with no clear evidence base, were rumoured. The Wirral Parks Forum were concerned that the BWB report favoured an alternative model of service delivery, and although the Forum was open to change, it had concerns that no one fully understood how such models worked in practice. The Forum believed that the structure of the report had been written in response to a request for contract tender.

Ms Ellis closed her statement by informing that there was tremendous energy and support for Parks and Open Spaces throughout Wirral and that the voluntary groups were keen to be part of the process.

A Member asked Ms Ellis if she was assured by the report as it informed that further detailed consultation and engagement with a wide range of residents, staff, elected members and other stakeholders was to be undertaken as well as formal pre-decision scrutiny by this Committee, as part of the process for developing a Full Business Case.

Ms Ellis stated that at the time of reading the report, a number of views and concerns had been expressed regarding the consultant's role and whether public consultation would take place, and at what stage. She added that given the current scrutiny of the matter she would accept the report as written.

### **3. Mike Hornby, Chair of Friends of Irby Library Forum.**

Mr Hornby explained he also served as a member of the Wirral Libraries Forum who had been in discussion regarding the future needs of the libraries service.

Mr Hornby informed that there had been a distinct lack of sharing of intelligence in the matter, and it was only after a number of difficulties had been overcome, that information was beginning to be shared. He further informed that publication of the report six weeks prior had given the Libraries Forum little time to digest the proposals contained within.

Mr Hornby apprised the Committee that a meeting of the Wirral Libraries Forum was scheduled to take place on the following Wednesday (21 June) and that a Councillor or an Officer of the Council was to be invited to attend and explain what had been said at this Call-In meeting.

In closing his statement, Mr Hornby stated that for whatever reason, groups had not been engaged to date and had not been able to advance community views, but he was relieved to hear that consultation will take place. He reminded the Committee that the Library Forum was composed of knowledgeable people.

#### **4. Kevin McCallum, Head of Communications.**

Mr McCallum re-affirmed the Leader's statement regarding the initial scoping work and reasons for the review. He explained that as a result of the phased approach – with the majority of detailed consultation taking part in phase two – the initial engagement approach had been 'light touch', and in hindsight communications could have been better organised.

The Committee were apprised that the initial base consultations had been covered, but a relatively small amount of information had been included about the process. As part of the next phase, 219 individual groups (excluding the many thousands of library users), football clubs, sports clubs, etc would be consulted on the proposals, forming an intensive four to five week programme of work, depending on the outcome of this meeting.

In response to a question from a Member, Mr McCallum informed that there was legislation in place that defined the types of consultation / engagement to be undertaken. Through the transformation project, the way the Council consulted, would be formalised. He added that it was also the Council's aim to avoid school holiday periods and to start the consultation phase immediately following the outcome of this meeting if appropriate.

A Member questioned what 'light touch' meant in terms of phase one? Mr McCallum explained that this had involved early contact with libraries, leisure facilities, the Williamson Art Gallery and Museum and the Floral Pavilion and that wider consultation / communication would follow.

A Member asked if it had been possible for Political Groups to engage with the BWB consultants. Mr McCallum informed that this had been possible and had not been kept secret, he added that a statement upfront would have made things easier for Members. He accepted that the process had not been mapped out well enough to differentiate between consultant's evidence gathering and the consultation that would be carried out.

In response to additional questions from the Committee Mr McCallum reported that a detailed project plan was in place and that the consultant's expertise and track record, and their process of evidence gathering was recorded. He added that every effort was being made to consult and communicate as effectively as possible.

A Member asked if the three options mentioned in the report were being presented as the only three choices or would consultation be more along the lines of what do service users want? Mr McCallum informed that the consultation would include the three proposed options, none of which would effectively change the customer facing service, but would focus on it's future delivery.

## **Evidence from Decision-Taker's Witnesses**

### **Mark Smith, Strategic Commissioner Environment.**

Mr Smith outlined the process which had been followed to date, and the requirements to review the future provision of the libraries, leisure and cultural service delivery. He explained that the use of consultants had followed a competitive tender process, and that BWB had demonstrated very strong credentials and followed an ethical framework which had been of importance to the Council. He apprised the Committee that the awarded contract as stated in the report amounted to £184k and that work to date had cost £148k. He added that the total budget for the service was £17million per annum and Council was looking to achieve savings and value for money on the service as a whole.

Mr Smith outlined a number key points of the process, that included:

- the approach to consultation – as detailed by earlier witnesses to the Call-In;
- Phase One of the process – to develop the concept;
- management of the customer journey, data gathering, community mapping and developing of future service provision as a result;
- the first step was to bring a report to Cabinet early in the process; and
- detailed work would follow, in the form of a co-design process that included professional views of the consultants and feedback from service users, staff, officers and Elected Members – all to be captured and used in the development of a Full Business Case.

A Member expressed concern that enough time had been allowed to ensure engagement of service users and interested parties, particularly when there had been much mis-information circulating about the matter.

Mr Smith informed that it was important that the Council led on consultation and development of the Full Business Case and that work had been put on hold as a result of the Call-In. He explained that the next phase of works would include detailed co-design, consultation and preparation of the Full Business Case for the October meeting of the Cabinet.

A Member questioned the expenditure of £23k on a shared intelligence report that as far as he could gather had not been circulated. Mr Smith responded

and stated that the report had provided additional clarity on the strategic alignment of the services and key outputs for comparison. He added that its primary purpose had been to feed into the BWB work, and it had been deemed entirely appropriate to obtain an independent assessment, bearing in mind the Council's past experiences in these matters and the statutory requirements affecting such a service review.

A Member questioned whether the shared intelligence report had always been viewed as a separate, stand-alone report. Mr Smith stated that the commissioning of the report last autumn was to obtain information and assessment of the service as it stood, and its primary role of work was in that context. Questioned as to whether the BWB contract had been in place before the Intelligence report work had been actioned, Mr Smith responded that the commissioning of BWB had taken place in November or December last year (2016).

A Member asked if the leadership of the Council had requested a presentation on the report. In response Mr Smith explained that this was standard practice and officers often provided information in this way to opposition groups also. He added that without wavering from the purpose of the Call-In technical opinion was also included within the report as were such matters as the need for effective communications. Mr Smith commented that this had been the start of the process, which in turn would lead on to a more detailed piece of work. He explained that the service was currently subsidised to the level of £17million per annum (after taking into account grants and income) and that all Council departments had been tasked with being more cost efficient and adopting a commercial approach to their service provision, with the aim of achieving £90million of the £132million gap in Council's budget by 2020 in this way.

### **Summary of the Lead Signatory – Councillor Jeff Green**

Councillor Jeff Green thanked the Committee for consideration of this matter, adding that although the actions to date were fact finding, not consultation, it was clear from Helen Ellis' evidence that the Council had not engaged with Friends Groups at the present time. He added that the Political Groups would ensure effective use of any future consultancy briefings – but pointed out that contrary to consultation on a variety of options, the BWB report clearly recommended an alternative delivery model, and not continued in-house provision (page 22, para 1.8 of the agenda pack refers).

Councillor Green re-iterated a view expressed by the Union Branch Secretary that this felt like a 'done deal', and that unless full engagement with the public and Council staff took place the Council will make the same mistakes again. He added that he did not believe that the consultation to date had been sufficient. The way forward was with improved, effective and transparent public consultation over a longer period of time.

## **Summary of the Leader of the Council – Councillor Phil Davies**

Councillor Phil Davies informed that at any point in the past 6 months Councillor Green could have requested a presentation for his Members, he re-affirmed that consultation would formally take place under phase two of the project as detailed in the original Cabinet report (paras 8.0 to 8.4 refer).

Councillor Davies stated that he was entirely confident that the Council's Communication Team would achieve the four to five week timescale set aside for the consultation phase of the project, and reminded Members of the need to set a lawful budget and the £132million savings that must be achieved by 2020. He reiterated that a decision had not yet been made and it was most certainly not 'a done deal'.

### **Committee debate**

Councillor Steve Foulkes thanked all of the witnesses and volunteers who had come forward and brought clarity to the process. Having declared a personal interest by virtue of his membership of Magenta Housing, Councillor Foulkes informed that he believed a reasonable debate had taken place during the questioning of witnesses, and there appeared a much better understanding and clarity regarding the process, whereby Members may, or may not, take the view of the consultants at such a time as the decision falls due.

Councillor Foulkes added that Members should never rule out one option at this stage, and pointed out that using the case of Magenta Housing as an example of an outsourced service - staff pay had outstripped local government / public sector pay. He stated that the matter of the investigation into VAT exemptions would also play a big part in how a service could be run cheaper.

Councillor Adam Sykes thanked the witnesses and informed the Committee that he and other Members had been asking for a report on library services for nearly 2 years. It was necessary to obtain the best decision for Wirral. There was time to look at this properly and subject it to scrutiny. The Committee was ready to get involved.

Councillor Mike Sullivan also thanked witnesses for the clarity they brought to their evidence - he further thanked the Friends Groups and Volunteer Groups, paying tribute to the Trade Unions (Unison and Unite) for the work undertaken in the face of savage cuts to the Council's budget since 2010. He added that it was clear that from the evidence presented that there had been misunderstanding between 'fact finding' and 'consultation' during the early stage of the service review process, and extra clarity on this would address this in the future. He hoped that the service review would take into account that the areas of greatest need for libraries, leisure and cultural services fell

within the most deprived areas of the borough where usage is often the lowest.

The Chair thanked all those who had provided evidence for and spoken at the Committee.

Councillor Steve Foulkes moved a Motion, duly seconded that:

- (1) the Cabinet decision be upheld;
- (2) this Call-In has been premature as no decisions regarding future provision of Libraries, Leisure and Cultural Services have been made;
- (3) pre-decision scrutiny is to take place around the future provision of Libraries, Leisure and Cultural Services prior to consideration by Cabinet – this will provide all parties adequate involvement and ability to influence outcomes; and
- (4) this Committee agrees with the initial decision and the relevant Senior Officers and Cabinet Member move to Phase 2 of the review which will include a detailed consultation exercise.

An amendment was then moved by Councillor Adam Sykes and seconded by Councillor Steve Williams, that –

- (i) the Communications Plan, be circulated to the identified stakeholder list, and details clearly the consultations and feedback that will take place;
- (ii) Members be assured that the consultation still to take place, will allow for all stakeholder voices to be heard, taking account of the popular holiday periods, that it will take place over a long enough period to get a wide range of views heard. Where possible consultee wishes be included in the forthcoming plans for final decision making without being restricted to the current proposals detailed in the report as now; and
- (iii) in future, consultation procedures be set out at the beginning of any reviews, and after identifying stakeholders, those people or bodies be kept up to date with the plans and also any feedback is fed back within an appropriate timescale to be determined.

With the agreement of the Committee (14:0 – one abstention), the following motion was then moved by Councillor Steve Foulkes, seconded by Councillor Adam Sykes it was:

**Resolved (14:0 - one abstention) That**

- (1) the Cabinet decision be upheld;**
- (2) this Call-In has been premature as no decisions regarding future provision of Libraries, Leisure and Cultural Services have been made;**
- (3) pre-decision scrutiny is to take place around the future provision of Libraries, Leisure and Cultural Services prior to consideration by Cabinet – this will provide all parties adequate involvement and ability to influence outcomes;**
- (4) this Committee agrees with the initial decision and the relevant Senior Officers and Cabinet Member move to Phase 2 of the review which will include a detailed consultation exercise;**
- (5) the Communications Plan, be circulated to the identified stakeholder list, and details clearly the consultations and feedback that will take place;**
- (6) Members be assured that the consultation still to take place, will allow for all stakeholder voices to be heard, taking account of the popular holiday periods, that it will take place over a long enough period to get a wide range of views heard. Where possible consultee wishes be included in the forthcoming plans for final decision making without being restricted to the current proposals detailed in the report as now; and**
- (7) in future, consultation procedures be set out at the beginning of any reviews, and after identifying stakeholders, those people or bodies be kept up to date with the plans and also any feedback is fed back within an appropriate timescale to be determined.**

The Chair then informed the Committee that there was no urgent business to transact and no exempt items requiring consideration and closed the meeting at 20:30hrs.

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# ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 5 July 2017

Present: Councillor P Stuart (Chair)

Councillors S Foulkes B Berry  
T Jones A Hodson  
B Kenny I Lewis  
C Muspratt C Carubia  
T Usher A Leech (In place of J Walsh)  
W Ward K Hodson (In place of T Pilgrim)  
A Sykes

In attendance: Councillor P Brightmore, Cabinet Member Environment

Apologies: Councillors L Reecejones, T Pilgrim and J Walsh

## 4 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.

## 5 MINUTES

Councillor Chris Carubia pointed out that his attendance had not been recorded for the meeting held on 28 March.

**Resolved – That, subject to the above correction, the Minutes of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 28 March 2017 be approved as a correct record.**

## 6 NOTICE OF MOTION - GREEN BELT

The Chair of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee reported that at the meeting of the Council held on 20 March 2017 (minute 152 (1) refers), the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley and seconded by Councillor Adam Sykes was referred by the Mayor to this Committee for consideration –

“Council welcomes and supports the Leader of the Council’s resolute commitment to protect Wirral Green Belt when he stated, “I am not prepared to allow our green belt land to be built on. I am resolute about that commitment. It is the jewel in Wirral’s crown and greatly valued by our residents.”

Council recognises the valuable part green belt provides in halting urban sprawl and protecting our much loved green spaces, including Council owned land in Saughall Massie which is under attack from the Fire Service, and the land in Hoylake and West Kirby earmarked for housing and a golf resort.

Council therefore resolves to confirm its unconditional guarantee to protect Wirral’s green belt and further resolves that it will not release or allow Council owned green belt land to be developed under any circumstances.

Council also looks forward to the Housing Bill, giving extra protection to Green Belt as outlined in the Housing White Paper.”

Prior to consideration of the matter, the Chair informed the Committee that he had been advised by the Assistant Director: Law and Governance that members should not be discussing particular sites or planning applications, which are for the Planning Committee to decide.

The Chair further informed that those members of the Committee who were also on the Planning Committee be reminded that they should not say anything that might be seen as pre-judging any planning application, nor should members of the Planning Committee say anything that might give the impression that they had closed their minds to applications to develop Green Belt sites. In law, development was allowed in special circumstances which had to be considered on a case by case basis.

Councillor Blakeley tabled the Motion, and expressed knowledge of the sensitivities of matter at hand and that the purpose of raising this matter was not to debate or discuss specific planning applications, but to extract clarity on the Council’s standing relating to preservation of the Green Belt. He stated that there were currently 20 policies on this particular matter and he believed there was a perceived lack of consistency in the policy application i.e. Council owned sites permitted development where private developers were being refused. He added that it was important to retain the Green Belt due to the shortfall in leisure green space on the Wirral.

The Chair thanked Councillor Blakeley and opened discussion on the subject.

A debate on the motion took place. Members expressed a broad range of views on the policies and planning process and their application to matters of development on the Green Belt. A number of Planning Committee members clarified that their role expressly forbid any pre-decision of, or consideration of, such applications until all evidence had been presented to them in the form of written reports (with optional site visits beforehand) at the Planning

Committee meetings. It was further mentioned that it was not the role of the Scrutiny Committee to act as a quasi-Planning or Planning Policy Committee, particularly given that the emerging Core Strategy Plan was due to be presented for consultation in the coming weeks. Members noted that a national review was also under consideration and such issues as ‘the greater good’ and ‘special circumstance’ could override local planning policies, as had happened in the past e.g. with the development of Arrowe Park Hospital on the Green Belt. Members also noted that the Clatterbridge NHS Trust site also fell entirely within the Green Belt.

Members further debated the merits of well thought out policies and the importance of consultation in their development, but also recognised that many local authorities included scope for good development as part of their plans e.g. garden villages but recognised the value of the Green Belt as a special place worthy of protection in law for the future. Members re-iterated that the Planning Committee was duty bound by law to assess each individual application on its merits.

A member pointed out that the Motion under consideration included a number of phrases that caused concern, in so far as paragraph 2 included references to a specific application, and paragraph 3 included the phrases that Council “confirm its unconditional guarantee” and that it prevented the release of land “under any circumstances”.

Members were apprised that in legal terms the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had a right to debate the matters, but had no jurisdiction over any specific planning applications or policies, in these cases the Committee could only make ‘observations’.

A Member pointed out that the original motion had been presented for consideration and debate by Council as a whole, and was not about pre-empting an application, but more about the release of Council owned land and clarification of policy. He stated that the core strategy was still awaited and that clarification from Government was also awaited regarding the matter of special or exceptional circumstances.

Members were in agreement that, wherever possible, developers should be guided toward brown-field sites i.e. utilisation of old car parks and pre-granted planning permissions before the Green Belt be even considered for release for development.

A Member highlighted that the Motion as presented had been agreed by the Assistant Director: Law and Governance as fair, reasonable and legal prior to submission to Council, and requested that the Motion be referred back to Council in its original form for debate – to seek the clarity on what was and was not acceptable in terms any Green Belt development. The Council Solicitor explained that the Motion had been referred to this Committee by the Civic Mayor.

A question of classification and the definition of exceptional circumstance was raised, and the Council Solicitor explained that this would be determined by the Planning Committee when considering an application on a case by case basis taking into account all aspects of the application i.e. policy, local plan designations, type of application, design, etc. A Member commented that even so, in his experience, most housing developments proposed would not even include an element of affordable housing - being primarily focused on the commercial benefit to the developer. Another Member commented that it was the Council's duty to ensure the use of brownfield sites and to protect the Green Belt for future generations.

Councillor Blakeley responded, stating that many of the points raised during discussion could not be disagreed with, however there remained the need for clarity on the Green Belt, and pointed out that the Council had already approved sufficient numbers of new home applications (which included Wirral Waters) that exceeded Wirral's targets for 2020.

Councillor Blakeley's motion was put to the vote and lost (5:8) (One abstention).

A motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Foulkes was tabled, that:

"Council recognises the value of the Green Belt, and that it should only be developed in special circumstances. We await the emerging Core Strategy Local Plan and the consultation around this."

The substantive motion was then put to the vote and carried (9:5). It was:

**Resolved (9:5) - That**

#### **RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**

**"Council recognises the value of the Green Belt, and that it should only be developed in special circumstances. We await the emerging Core Strategy Local Plan and the consultation around this."**

#### **7 ATTRACTIVE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT FOR WIRRAL RESIDENTS - PLEDGE UPDATE**

The Committee considered a presentation introduced by Mr Mike Cockburn, Lead Commissioner - Environment. The presentation informed on the Council's actions with regard to its key strategies that underpin its efforts to provide an attractive local environment for Wirral residents. Councillor Phill Brightmore, Cabinet Member also in attendance for this item stated he would be happy to respond to any questions Members may have arising from the presentation.

The Lead Commissioner – Environment informed that a Steering Group had been established to monitor work undertaken focusing of 2 main themes,

maintaining local environmental quality and achieving 50% waste recycling. He summarised the various actions against priorities as follows:

- Priority 1 – Neighbourhoods taking responsibility: ongoing work on the 'love where you live' project – utilising volunteers, publicity and elected member involvement funded from fines arising from prosecutions.
- Priority 2 – Responsibility for Actions: Taking action on environmental crimes, high profile deterrents and publicity. Engagement and listening to residents in identification and targeting of littering hot spots.
- Priority 3 – Resources: As a result of a 25% cut in budgets several years ago, the service had had to use intelligence to prioritise deployment of resources, and had achieved a 'most improved' award from APSE despite not even being aware of the nomination.
- Priority 4 – Informing residents of the 'Grot Spot' campaign at Constituency Committee meetings across the borough, with some positive results. The project had been funded from prosecution income and had identified 26 sites, 18 of which had been actioned, with others ongoing 5 of which were under investigation / development for action.
- Priority 5 – Waste Management Strategy: Future generation planning, working with schools, eco-schools and plans for improved approach to recycling. Members were apprised of the Eco Enterprise project, to develop ideas to reuse items to make and sell to raise money for a 'hedge fund' - to plant a hedge with HYPE (Helping Young People Everywhere).
- Priority 6 – Public Consultation on proposals for addressing a reduction in waste going straight to landfill: it will soon be one year on from the completion of the full business case for future waste mgt. Recommendations have as yet not been agreed by Cabinet, but actions are likely to include a restriction to the volume of waste allowed in the general (Green Bin) collections and the introduction of food waste collections. An interim plan is being developed to assist the increasing of waste that can be recycled.
- Priority 7 – Kerbside collections: as above, a more targeted method of promotion and communications plan is required (part of the interim plan) which includes increasing the level of recycling for the Council itself i.e. leading by example.
- Priority 9 – Garden Waste Subscriptions: the Council currently has a subscriber base totalling 40 thousand households (the highest subscription level since 2013), with an additional 1400 households registering for the service compared to this time last year.

Members questioned the Lead Commissioner – Environment on the Council’s enforcement actions with regard to dog fouling, littering and fly tipping. The Committee were informed that the current regime for dog fouling enforcement and fining had been in existence for one year and that work was underway in the development of an interactive mapping tool in 2017/18 that will be accessible to residents. This would enable residents to view on-line where enforcement action had been taken, where clean-up operations had taken place. Further development would include the expansion of existing on-line reporting tools for the reporting of littering / dog fouling / fly tipping using the same online mapping function.

Councillor Phillip Brightmore, Cabinet Member for Environment informed the Committee that increasing intelligence reporting was key to tackling waste issues, and encouraged Elected Members to e-mail the relevant officers or himself if particular locations were becoming identified as ‘hot spots’ for these activities. He added that Parks in particular were benefitting from enforcement actions and clean-up campaigns.

A Member questioned what was being done to educate young people, particularly with regard to 10-18 year olds. The Committee noted that work of the Eco Schools officer was progressing well in terms of engaging with local schools on the raising awareness of littering and its impact on the environment.

Members also commented on the Council’s weed spraying regime, its limitations and the impact on wildlife due to the chemicals used (i.e. insects, a food source for birds). The Lead Commissioner – Environment informed that there was careful adherence to legislation and health & safety guidance as to what products could be used and that weed spraying was carefully monitored and actioned at certain times during the year when weather conditions would not disrupt the efficient use of the products.

A Member highlighted the success of the pilot project to introduce access to dog waste plastic bags in Harrison Park, thanking the Cabinet Member and Officer. The Committee was informed that the pilot project had worked well and plans were in place to extend the scheme to Wirral beaches. The Committee was further informed that in terms of dog fouling fixed penalty enforcement, the Council operated a ‘3 strikes and you’re out’ policy, that had also shown great success with regard to fixed penalty payment and collection rates. Members noted that additional plans for Wirral’s beach areas also included the replacement of open top waste bins - that provided limited protection from emptying by seagulls, and also contributed to wind-blown rubbish if overfilled.

Further discussion took place on policy development, and the engagement of schools and residential household involvement in waste recycling.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

## 8 DOMESTIC REFUSE COLLECTION SERVICE UPDATE

Mark Smith, Strategic Commissioner Environment provided the Committee with a verbal update on the subject of the Council's Domestic Refuse Collection Service. Mr Smith informed that evidence collated indicated that almost 40% of rubbish by weight discarded into Wirral's green waste bins was food, and that by investing in a food recycling collection service, the Council would significantly boost its recycling rate. In Wirral, it was estimated that the Council would need to reduce residual waste by over 16,000 tonnes to help achieve a challenging target of recycling 50% of household waste by 2020. Members were informed that there was compelling evidence from other local authority areas which had invested in a household food waste collection service to confirm the benefits of introducing this approach. He further informed that current recycling figures had 'flat-lined' over recent years at 36% and although an Outline Business Case had been presented to Cabinet in the Summer of 2016, there were two options available at this moment in time to enable the Council to achieve its target, namely the constraining of residual capacity by either the use of smaller (140 litre) bins or by less frequent (3 weekly) collections. A decision on these options had been deferred due to the establishment of the 'Liverpool City Region' that would ultimately be responsible for waste disposal and could lead to benefits to all constituent Councils as a result of collective bargaining and governance arrangements for waste disposal.

The Committee noted that the Council currently faced an annual bill of over £15 million for its waste disposal, and that a significant opportunity existed to reduce costs and maintain quality by full engagement in the Liverpool City Region planning process. The Committee further noted that the outcome of discussions was expected in the coming weeks and that, subject to the receipt of a consultant's report, a Full Business Case would be developed in advance of a submission to Wirral Council Cabinet for a decision.

A Member questioned the Strategic Commissioner Environment on the outcome of the consultation that had already been undertaken. He reported that in the region of 9000 responses had been received along with a number of petitions. Mr Smith informed that the information would be used to develop the Full Business Case and that this information could be shared with Members.

A Member also requested that the outcomes of the consultation be summarised and / or be made available to residents who had contributed to the process. The Cabinet Member – Environment concurred, stating that he wished as full a picture as possible to be presented as part of the decision making process.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

## 9 STREET LIGHTING - MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

Simon Fox, Interim Commissioned Services Manager (Highways and Traffic) introduced the report of the Strategic Commissioner Environment that provided an update on the current position with respect to the maintenance and improvement of the Council's street lighting stock within the Borough.

The report informed that Wirral has approximately 37,500 street lights on the adopted highway network and that at the end of March 2017, approximately 2,000 lights (less than 6%) were identified as not working. As with many Council service areas, the street lighting service in Wirral had seen a reduction in resources over the last few years, reducing revenue budget (excluding staffing) by 21% and capital budget provision for life-expired stock (excluding capital programme and LED funding) by 80% since 2008. Dedicated street lighting staffing support had also reduced from eight full time equivalents (FTE) in 2009 to two FTE.

The report further informed that street lighting operational service provision in Wirral was delivered by external suppliers. The service was now managed within the Commissioning Support Unit (CSU) in Business Services. Routine and reactive maintenance was supplied by BAM Nuttall Ltd (BAMN) under the Highway Services Contract (HSC), which expires in March 2018 but was potentially extendable by a further two years subject to performance. Other contracts were delivered by suppliers appointed following competitive tender in accordance with the Council's procurement rules.

The Committee was informed of the key performance indicators on the contract, expected outcomes, current plans for routine and reactive maintenance, and proposals to deal with a current backlog of works. Members noted the existence of a potential total value of £950k in failed equipment, including lanterns, lighting columns and underground cable supplies, and that the work must be prioritised to make best use of currently available financial resources. The Committee was apprised that a contract was being drafted to deliver some of this work from a total budget of £500,000 provided through the Council's Capital Programme.

Members questioned the Interim Commissioned Services Manager (Highways and Traffic) on a number of matters and provided examples based on their past experiences. Members further suggested the use of intelligence gathering to help prevent future damage to street lighting arising from vandalism and road traffic collisions in specific locations. Members also reiterated their previous concerns with regard to the report logging system used and potential for loss of data if not closely monitored.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

## 10 HIGHWAY TREES MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Simon Fox, Interim Commissioned Services Manager (Highways and Traffic) introduced the report of the Strategic Commissioner Environment that provided an update on the current position with respect to the maintenance of the Council's highway tree stock within the Borough. The report informed that Wirral had approximately 25,500 trees on the adopted highway network and that a full survey was conducted in 2012 to identify the number and species of trees. The tree maintenance operational service provision in Wirral was delivered by external suppliers and the service was now managed within the Commissioning Support Unit (CSU) in Business Services.

A Member questioned the Interim Commissioned Services Manager (Highways and Traffic) on whether a list existed to identify locations being prioritised for tree / shrub management e.g. where trees may overhang junctions / crossings, or may interfere with the working of solar powered road signage.

Mr Fox informed that this formed part of the Council's maintenance strategy and that the results of the recent survey had been submitted to Man Coed VM Ltd (the Council's specialist arboriculture and tree surgeon service supplier) and an order had been placed for the immediate removal of all dead, dying or sick trees. All other highway trees requiring attention as a result of the survey had been programmed for planned maintenance on a RAG status priority basis using a risk-based approach, and will be attended over the course of the contract with Man Coed VM Ltd. Reactive maintenance (as a result of public reports of storm damage or road traffic accident collisions, for example) was also prioritised and issued to the supplier accordingly.

In response to a Member question, the Committee was informed that a contract had been awarded to Man Coed VM Ltd in September 2016, for the maintenance of the Council's highway trees for a two year term, potentially extendable by a further one year. A contract for a full condition survey of all the Council's highway trees at a cost of approximately £21,000 had also recently been completed by Amenity Tree Care Limited. The results of the survey had been prioritised using a risk-based approach and all statutory clearances were recorded.

Members debated the varied issues associated with street trees – inappropriate locations, damage to footways and vehicles, programmed replacement and the difficulties arising when dealing with problems caused by privately owned trees causing similar damage i.e. insurance policy exemptions and costs arising.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

## 11 **ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' BRIEFING PACK**

The Chair introduced the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Briefing Pack that provided Members with an introduction to the purpose of scrutiny and includes details of the Committee remit and operational information. Members were requested to note the contents of the Briefing Pack.

The document pack contained a summary of the following key areas:

- The Purpose of Scrutiny
- The Scope of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Committee Membership and Meeting Schedule
- The Work Programme
- Relevant Wirral Plan Pledges, Strategies and Plans
- Officer Support Arrangements
- Key Contacts

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

## 12 **ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Chair introduced his report that set out the process of developing and managing the scrutiny work programme for the municipal year. The report informed that the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in cooperation with the other three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, was responsible for the proposing and delivery of an annual scrutiny work programme.

The Chair informed that it was anticipated that the work programme would be delivered through a combination of:

- Scrutiny reviews undertaken by task and finish groups
- Evidence days and workshops
- Committee reports provided by officers
- Standing committee agenda items, for example, performance monitoring and financial monitoring
- Spotlight sessions
- Standing panels (where deemed necessary)

He explained that some of the selected topics may cut across the Wirral Plan themes and it was anticipated that some of the scrutiny topics may be of interest to members of more than one committee. In these circumstances, opportunities for members of more than one committee to work jointly on an item of scrutiny work would be explored. Regular work programme update

reports will provide the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the Municipal Year.

The Chair's report included a summary of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme Items, namely:

**Modern Slavery Scrutiny Review** - a scoping meeting for the scrutiny review of the implications of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 had been held on 27th March and the Panel had formulated and agreed the scope of the review - attached as an appendix to the report. Members noted that although a number of contacts had been made with leading regional organisations in this field and evidence sessions had been scheduled for April and May, the election period and changes to Committee membership had delayed further progress with the review. The remaining panel members, Cllrs Carubia, Muspratt and Pilgrim confirmed their wishes to continue their involvement with the review and informed that they were preparing to conduct the first evidence session in the coming weeks. Cllr Usher was nominated as a fourth member, and it was agreed that the membership of the Task and Finish Group be confirmed accordingly.

**Flood Risk Standing Panel** - at a meeting of the Wirral Flood and Water Management Partnership (WFWMP) in May 2017, it was agreed that the WFWMP would provide an appropriate forum for the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to carry out its statutory scrutiny of flood and water management arrangements. It was further agreed that the three elected representatives on the WFWMP should be members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The WFWMP Terms of Reference were being revised to reflect the strengthened scrutiny role. These were to be agreed at the next WFWMP meeting and presented to the following meeting of Committee for approval. Members were requested to nominate three cross-party Members of the Wirral Flood and Water Management Partnership. Membership nominations were agreed as follows: Cllrs Cllr P. Stuart (Labour), Cllr B. Berry (Conservative) and Cllr C. Carubia (Liberal Democrat).

**Development of the Scrutiny Work Programme** - in consideration of how best to further develop the work programme for the 2017/18 municipal year, The Chair informed that it was proposed that a dedicated work programme planning session, open to all Members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be arranged prior to the next Committee meeting in September. Members unable to attend were invited to suggest possible topics for inclusion in the Work Programme.

#### **Resolved – That**

- (1) the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2017/18 be approved;**
- (2) membership of the Task and Finish Group for the Modern Slavery Act scrutiny review be confirmed as:**

**Cllr C. Muspratt (Labour)**  
**Cllr T. Pilgrim (Labour)**  
**Cllr T. Usher (Labour)**  
**Cllr C. Carubia (Liberal Democrat);**

- (3) **membership of the cross-party Wirral Flood and Water Management Partnership be confirmed as:**

**Cllr P. Stuart (Labour)**  
**Cllr B. Berry (Conservative)**  
**Cllr C. Carubia (Liberal Democrat); and**

- (4) **a Work Programme Planning Session, open to all Members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee be convened - to allow further detailed consideration of the Work Programme in advance of the next scheduled Committee meeting in September.**

**13 2016/17 QUARTER 4 AND YEAR END WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE - ENVIRONMENT THEME**

Mark Smith, the Strategic Commissioner, Environment introduced the report of the Executive Director for Strategy that provided the 2016/17 Quarter 4 (January – March 2017) performance report for Wirral Plan pledges under the People 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 and provided a summary analysis of improvement of performance against measures and delivery of Pledge strategy actions at year end.

The Strategic Commissioner, Environment informed that following restructure of the Council's Scrutiny function, future reports would be broken down to align with the Adult Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference.

Members thanked the Strategic Commissioner Environment for his report and requested further detail on a number of areas, namely working with the private rented sector to discharge homelessness statutory duties and monitoring of the cumulative impact of welfare reforms – where Members' experience had identified challenge in achieving targets. Members also commented on the negative trend in relation to excess weight in adults (worsening) but noted that the indicator still flagged as green. The Strategic Commissioner Environment informed that a number of the indicators could be affected by a time lag caused by the availability of data, but advised that he would respond to the specific points raised by Members after the meeting.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

14 **FINANCIAL MONITORING 2016/17**

Pete Molyneux, Senior Manager, Corporate Finance 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 Senior Manager, Corporate Finance informed that 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 Environment had a forecast underspend of £1.3 million.

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.

Members attention was directed to Table 4 within the report (reproduced below) that identified the main budget variations within the revenue out-turn:

<b>Major Variations Budget to Out-turn 2016/17</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b>People:</b>		
Children’s Services - Looked After Children placements	+2.3	
Children’s Services - Agency spend on social workers	+3.3	
Adult Social Care- Increased Community Care costs net of reductions in staffing and non-commissioned spend	+3.9	
<b>Environment</b>		
Contract efficiencies – Supporting People		-0.7
Income – Waste and Litter Charges		-0.6
<b>Business:</b>		
Treasury Management - one off MRP adjustment		-6.9
Treasury management – one-off interest savings		-2.5
Revenue Budget Contingency – unallocated		-0.7
Contract and various corporate savings		-1.0

Members noted that overall a net underspend of £2.9 million at the year-end has been transferred to General Fund Balances. Members further noted the detail with regard to the Council’s Earmarked Reserves Statement 2016/17 that identified a reduction in balances of £18.9 million from £73.9 million to £55 million.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

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**NOTICE OF MOTION: PAVILIONS IN SPORTS GROUNDS** *(as referred by the Civic Mayor to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee)*

**Proposed** by Councillor Paul Hayes  
**Seconded** by Councillor Bruce Berry

Council notes that, among the 2020 Pledges, is a commitment to ensure 'leisure and cultural opportunities for all'.

Council is therefore concerned with the poor condition of many of the sports pavilions and changing rooms within our parks, sports grounds and open spaces.

Council requests that a review of provision be undertaken by the Environment Scrutiny Committee, including visits to sites and evidence from sports clubs, football teams and other users, to enable a full assessment of the condition to take place and to explore opportunities for attracting external funding for refurbishment and repair.

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**NOTICE OF MOTION: FAIR VOTES** *(as referred by the Civic Mayor to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee)*

**Proposed** by Councillor Pat Cleary  
**Seconded** by Councillor Stuart Kelly

Council believes that a Parliament that more accurately reflects the views of the nation, enabling people to feel that their votes count, is more likely to develop an economic, social and environmental agenda that benefits Wirral's residents.

Following the recent general election, this Council agrees that the 'First Past the Post' voting system:

- has again failed to live up to its reputation to provide strong and stable government;
- has again yielded a wildly disproportionate allocation of seats with, for example, the Democratic Unionist Party gaining 10 seats from 292,316 votes compared with 12 seats from 2.4 million votes for the Liberal Democrats;
- has spectacularly failed to match votes to seats with 27,930 votes required to elect one MP from the Scottish National Party compared with 525,371 votes to elect one Green Party MP.

This Council:

- (a) recognises that a robust democracy must include a fair voting system and that nobody should be disenfranchised because of where they live;
- (b) applauds the many groups and organisations campaigning for fair votes including the Electoral Reform Society, Make Votes Matter and the Labour Campaign for PR;
- (c) notes that the Single Transferable Vote system is already used for local elections in Scotland and in both Northern Irish local elections and the Northern Ireland Assembly while proportional electoral systems are used to elect the devolved parliaments and assemblies in Scotland, Wales and London;
- (d) therefore calls for the introduction of a proportional voting system
  - (i) for local elections in England and Wales;
  - (ii) for Westminster elections; and
- (e) directs that a copy of this motion be forwarded to the Leaders of all political parties represented in the UK Parliament.

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## Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 21 September 2017

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2017/18</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Assistant Director: Finance</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the financial monitoring information for Environment in a format consistent across the Overview & Scrutiny Committees. The report provides Members with detail to scrutinise budget performance for this area of activity. The financial information is at close of quarter 1 2017/18.

Information has been drawn from the relevant sections of the most recent Cabinet revenue and capital monitoring reports and combined with additional relevant service information to produce a bespoke report for this Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The report includes the following:

- Performance against the revenue budget (including savings, income and debt)
- Performance against the capital budget

### RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1 The quarter 1 revenue forecast overspend of £1.1 million be noted.
- 2 The performance of the capital projects within this area be noted.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

1.1 To provide members with details of the financial performance of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's area.

### 2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 Not applicable

### 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### 3.1 PERFORMANCE AGAINST REVENUE BUDGETS QUARTER 1 (APRIL 2017- JUNE 2017)

##### 3.1.0 CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET

3.1.1 The 2017/18 Budget was agreed by Council on 6 March 2017. Any increase to the overall Council Budget (but not use of the existing budget contingency) requires agreement by full Council. Changes to the Budget since it was set are summarised in Table 1.

**Table 1: 2017/18 Original & Revised Net Budget by Wirral Plan Themes**

	Original Net Budget	Proposed Budget Change Quarter 1 Use of Contingency	Proposed Budget Change Quarter 1 Use of Balances	Approved Budget Changes Qtr 1	Revised Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Environment	60,719	-	1,225	-	61,944
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>60,719</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,225</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>61,944</b>

##### 3.2.0 PROJECTIONS AND KEY ISSUES

3.2.1 The projected outturn position as at the end of June 2017 and Wirral Plan: 2020 Vision Themes updates are detailed in the following sections.

**Table 2: 2017/18 Projected Budget variations by Wirral Plan Themes**

Directorates	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	(Under) Overspend Quarter 1	RAGBY Class	Change from prev
Environment	61,944	63,033	1,089	R	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61,944</b>	<b>63,033</b>	<b>1,089</b>		<b>0</b>

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

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

### 3.2.2 Environment

- Within Waste & Environment the £0.5 million overspend relates to the 2017/18 saving to reduce the cost of the Waste contract. Whilst unlikely to be realised in year officers are developing a series of options that may deliver the saving in subsequent years.
- There is a £0.6 million projected overspend in Sports & Recreation. This includes £0.35 million relating to savings from a previous Leisure review. Whilst deliverable there have been delays in the implementation of the operational changes at Woodchurch Leisure Centre and the development at of the West Kirby Marine Lake at a cost of £0.2 million. Income levels are proving challenging across all services including golf. At this stage a £0.2 million shortfall is projected and actions are being taken to increase income and include Parks & Countryside staff working closely with Leisure Officers to improve the quality of the golf courses and enhance the golf offering.
- The Council has responsibility for 129 sites which have trees adjacent to the highway. A sample of these has been surveyed by the appointed highway tree inspection contractor and a significant amount of work identified to make some trees safe and to maintain others. The total cost is estimated at £0.725 million. In addition the Council has 91 sites with trees not adjacent to highways that also require inspection and maintenance work. It is estimated that the cost of this will be £0.5 million. Following the completion of the inspection and priority works programme there will be a need for £0.125 million per annum to ensure that the condition of these trees is maintained.
- Cabinet 17 July 2017 agreed that the £1.225 million 'one-off' funding from General Fund balances for an extended borough wide programme of tree maintenance works be referred to Council for approval. Also that the £0.125 million for a rolling programme of tree inspection and maintenance be added to the Council budget projections from 2018/19 onwards.

### 3.3.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF SAVINGS

3.3.1 A summary of the position of 2017/18 Environment savings at 30 June 2017 is below.

**Table 3: Savings Implementation 2017/18 (£000's)**

BRAG	Number of Options	Approved Budget Reduction	Amount Delivered at Q1	To be Delivered
B - delivered	6	3,810	3,810	0
G – on track	9	2,705	1,030	1,675
A - concerns	5	590	0	590
R - high risk/ not achieved	1	500	0	500
<b>Total at Quarter 1 2017-18</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7,605</b>	<b>4,840</b>	<b>2,765</b>

3.3.2 The savings tracker contains an assessment of the 2017/18 savings by the ratings below.

- **Blue:** Represents savings which have already been realised.

- **Green:** Savings on track to deliver.
- **Amber:** Some concerns regarding delivery and will require closer scrutiny and monitoring.
- **Red:** High risk of not being achieved.

### 3.4.0 INCOME AND DEBT

3.4.1 The table below shows the outstanding debt by Wirral Plan Theme category and then by invoice raised date. This is a different way of showing the debtor information for 2017/18 to make the monitoring report more accessible and informative. At the end of June 2017 total Council arrears stood at £24.7 million with £1.1 million of this relating to Environment.

**Table 4: Accounts Receivable Outstanding Arrears Analysis**

Theme	Less than 30 days	More than 30 days	2016/2017	2015/16	Pre 2015/16	Total at 30.06.17
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Environment	415,002	54,727	192,867	52,067	370,854	<b>1,085,517</b>

3.4.2 In accordance with proper accounting practice, income is credited to the relevant financial year's accounts of the service area at the point invoices are raised. A provision for bad debt is maintained and is assessed each year. Should non-payment occur after proceeding through all necessary recovery procedures, any properly authorised write off will be charged against the bad debt provision.

### 3.5.0 PERFORMANCE AGAINST CAPITAL BUDGETS QUARTER 1 (April-June 2017)

#### 3.5.1 Capital Programme 2017/18 at end of Quarter 1 (30 June)

	Revised Programme	Spend to Date June 2017	Funded by: Council Resources	Funded by: Grants
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Environment	<b>17,028</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>11,922</b>	<b>5,106</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>17,028</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>11,922</b>	<b>5,106</b>

3.5.2 The largest areas of spend so far this year relate to Aids, Adaptations and Disabled Facilities Grants (£0.2 million) and Home Improvements (£0.1 million).

3.5.3 Expenditure has also been incurred on the Oval Sports Centre redevelopment. West Kirby Marine Lake and Flaybrick cemetery.

3.5.4 Further detail regarding the programme and spend is contained within Appendix 1 of this report.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The financial implications of this report are discussed throughout the report. This is essentially a financial monitoring performance update report.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

6.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 The possible failure to deliver the Revenue Budget is being mitigated by:

- Senior Leadership Team / Management Teams reviewing the financial position.
- Tracking system of savings options to monitor progress.
- Use of temporary additional support to assist with revenues collection.
- Use of earmarked reserves and General Fund Balance savings risk contingency.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

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

#### **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

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

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Christopher Kelly  
Principal Accountant  
Telephone (0151) 666 3417  
Email [chriskelly@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:chriskelly@wirral.gov.uk)

#### **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Capital Programme and Funding 2017/18

## SUBJECT HISTORY

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Budget Council	6 March 2017
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 1	17 July 2017
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 1	17 July 2017

**Capital Programme and Funding 2017/18****APPENDIX 1**

<b>Environment Theme</b>	<b>Revised Programme £000</b>	<b>Spend to Date £000</b>	<b>Council Resources £000</b>	<b>Business Rates £000</b>	<b>Grants £000</b>	<b>Total Funding £000</b>
Park depot rationalisation	303	55	303	-	-	303
Parks vehicles replacement	47	-	47	-	-	47
Cemetery extensions and improvements	260	-	260	-	-	260
Transport museum	257	-	257	-	-	257
Flaybrick cemetery	-	81	-	-	-	81
Soft play areas at leisure centres	300	-	300	-	-	300
W.K. Marine Lake integrated accommodation	711	86	711	-	-	711
Bidston tennis centre re-roofing	21	11	21	-	-	21
Leasowe Leisure Centre outdoor 3G	820	-	820	-	-	820
Oval Sports Centre redevelopment	105	60	105	-	-	105
Beechwood skate park	80	-	-	-	80	80
West Kirby flood alleviation	100	13	100	-	-	100
CCTV cameras and other equipment	100	-	100	-	-	100
Aids, adaptations and DFGs	3,639	181	-	-	3,639	3,639
Restore empty homes	652	-	-	-	652	652
Clearance	1,330	30	595	-	735	1,330
Home improvements	988	100	988	-	-	988
New house building	567	11	567	-	-	567
Housing infrastructure fund	1,000	-	1,000	-	-	1,000
Wirral sailing centre	62	6	62	-	-	62
Waste vehicles	5,686	-	5,686	-	-	5,686
	<b>17,028</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>11,922</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,106</b>	<b>17,028</b>

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**Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Thursday, 21 September 2017**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>2017/18 Quarter 1 Wirral Plan Performance</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Assistant Director: Environmental Services</b>

**REPORT SUMMARY**

This report provides the 2017/18 Quarter 1 (April – June 2017) performance report for the Wirral Plan pledges under the remit of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report, which is included as Appendix 1, provides a description of the progress in Quarter 1 as well as providing available data in relation to a range of outcome indicators and supporting measures.

**Quarter One Wirral Plan Performance Summary**

- Wallasey Beach has been awarded a Blue Flag, which is the Gold standard for beaches and brings international recognition of the hard work that the Council and environmental groups have been doing to meet stringent standards to make Wirral’s coast clean and safe.
- We have won another Green Flag for one of our local parks with the Breck in Wallasey Village recently awarded which is the result of Wirral Council and volunteers working together. This is fantastic news for Wirral which has the most Green Flag Awards (24) in the North West region.
- Sport England have recently released their annual reports which show that adult participation in sport (at least once per week) in Wirral has increased from the start of the Wirral Plan, and is higher than both regional and national figures which is extremely positive news given the many health benefits of exercise.
- Through the Festival of Beautiful Ideas in April, we actively encouraged residents to present creative ideas which would help contribute to the regeneration of Woodside and the Birkenhead area. Forty ideas were presented and many of those who participated were awarded small pots of funding for development.
- At the end of June, we held our second Wirral Culture Tank, this time focusing on Visual Arts, at the Williamson Art Gallery with over 100 people in attendance. This provided a real opportunity to find out what’s happening across Wirral, a chance to network and to provide feedback to the Wirral Cultural Partnership about how well people feel connected and how they can get involved with future events.

- In partnership with the Liverpool City Region we have delivered key events such as the Mersey River Festival in May and our communities have hosted a whole host of summer events such as the Egremont Festival and the Love New Brighton Parade.
- The latest update regarding alcohol admission episodes shows an increase compared to the previous year and Wirral is compared to our regional Local Authority areas. Delivery of the alcohol strategy which sets out an action plan for reducing alcohol consumption is now underway.
- Smoking prevalence in adults has reduced from 18.9% in 2015 to 15.7% in the latest 2016 data; this is an improvement compared to both the North West average and national figures.
- The number of pregnant women known to be smokers at the time of delivery has remained relatively static in Wirral but continues to be below the national target. To improve effective oversight in this area a new measure has been introduced in 2017 to monitor the number of pregnant women helped to stop smoking.
- In recognition of the major contribution volunteering makes in local communities, the Council has recently approved a new policy on staff volunteering enabling Council employees to take time to contribute more in their local communities.
- Continuing focus on bringing empty properties back into use means we continue to exceed target with 665 in quarter 1 2017-18 compared to 388 in quarter 1 2016-17.
- Both the homeless prevention and the number of home adaptations completed have reduced compared to comparison with the same time last year. Significant activity is underway in both areas and constant monitoring of progress is in place.
- Reports of anti-social behaviour to the Police have fallen by 11% to 2,466 in the first quarter of 2017/18, compared to the 2,764 reports for the first quarter of 2016/17.
- The number of crimes recorded by the Police has increased by 13% to 5,550 for the first quarter of 2017/18, compared to the 4,906 crimes recorded for the first quarter of 2016/17. However the increase is below average for Merseyside or demographically similar Community Safety Partnership areas.
- Although the most recent data release shows a reduction in the number of first time entrants into the youth justice system the number of youth re-offences has increased by 7% compared to the April 2014-March 2015 cohort. It is also 24% higher than the average for the Merseyside Youth Offending Team peer group.
- In the first quarter 2017-18 both the number of crimes, and violent incidents recorded by the police have increased compared to the previous year quarter one figure. However in both cases the increase is below the average for Merseyside.

- Improving recycling rates remains a significant challenge in Wirral and performance in 2016-17 has decreased compared to the previous year, following the national trend. Development work is underway to put measures in place to deliver improvements.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report and highlights any areas requiring further clarification or action.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 To ensure Members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee have the opportunity to scrutinise the performance of the Council and partners in relation to delivering the Wirral Plan Environment Theme.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 This report has been developed in line with the approved performance management framework for the Wirral Plan. As such, no other options were considered.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Wirral Plan is an outcome-focussed, partnership plan which has 18 supporting strategies that set out how each of the 20 pledges will be delivered. For each pledge, a partnership group has been established to drive forward delivery of the action plans set out in each of the supporting strategies.
- 3.2 A Wirral Plan Performance Management Framework has been developed to ensure robust monitoring arrangements are in place. The Wirral Partnership has a robust approach to performance management to ensure all activity is regularly monitored and reviewed.
- 3.3 Data for the identified indicators is released at different times during the year. As a result of this, not all Pledges will have results each quarterly reporting period. Some indicators can be reported quarterly and some only on an annual basis. Annual figures are reported in the quarter they become available against the 2017/18 year end column.
- 3.4 For each of the indicators, a trend is shown (better, same or worse). In most cases, this is determined by comparing the latest data with the previous reporting period i.e. 2016/17 year end. In some cases, i.e. where data accumulates during the year or is subject to seasonal fluctuations, the trend is shown against the same time the previous year. This is indicated in the key at the end of the report.
- 3.5 For some indicators, targets have been set. Where this is the case, a RAGB (red, amber, green, blue) rating is provided against the target and tolerance levels set at the start of the reporting period, with blue indicating performance targets being exceeded.

**3.6 All Wirral Plan performance reports are published on the performance page of the Council's website. This includes the high level Wirral Plan overview report and the detailed pledge reports which include updates on progress on all activities set out in the supporting strategy action plans. The link to this web page is set out below:**

**<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/council-performance>**

**3.7 Each of the Wirral Plan Pledges has a Lead Commissioner responsible for overseeing effective delivery. The Lead Commissioners for the Pledges in the report at Appendix 1 are as follows:**

- Leisure and culture opportunities for all – Mark Smith
- Wirral residents live healthier lives – Fiona Johnstone
- Community services are joined up and accessible – Mark Smith
- Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents – Graham Hodgkinson
- Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe – Mark Smith
- Attractive Local Environment for Wirral residents – Mark Smith

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** There are no legal implications arising from this report.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

**6.1** There are none arising from this report.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

**7.1** The performance management framework is aligned to the Council's risk management strategy and both are regularly reviewed as part of corporate management processes.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

**8.1** The priorities in the Wirral Plan pledges were informed by a range of consultations carried out in 2015 and 2016 including the Wirral resident survey.

#### **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

**9.1** The Wirral Plan equality impact assessment can be found at:

**REPORT AUTHOR:**

***Nancy Clarkson***  
*Head of Intelligence*  
telephone: (0151) 691 8258  
email: [nancyclarkson@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:nancyclarkson@wirral.gov.uk)

**APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Wirral Plan – 2017/18 Quarter 1 Pledge Reports

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

N/A

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>21 September 2016</b>
<b>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>30 November 2016</b>
<b>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>28 March 2017</b>
<b>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>5 July 2017</b>

# Appendix 1

## Wirral Plan Environment Theme 2017-18 Quarter 1 Reports

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Wirral Plan 2020

## Leisure and cultural opportunities for all

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

#### Leisure Strategy

Over the last quarter, we have had some notable achievements worth celebrating. Wallasey Beach has been awarded a Blue Flag, which is the Gold standard for beaches and brings international recognition of the hard work that the Council and environmental groups have been doing to meet stringent standards to make Wirral's coast clean and safe. □

In addition we have won another Green Flag for our local parks, now totalling 24, with the Breck in Wallasey Village recently awarded. This is fantastic news for Wirral, which has the most Green Flag Awards in the North West region, and is the result of Wirral Council and volunteers working together. Congratulations go to James Ashcroft from our Parks and Countryside team who was presented with Green Flag's Employee of the Year. □

Another congratulations goes to our former Parks NVQ Level 2 Apprentice, Charlotte Roberts, who won the award for Horticultural Apprentice of the Year from Wirral Met College recently. Charlotte successfully applied for a full time post with Parks, earlier this year, and is now a valued member of the Wallasey Area Team. Also, some well-deserved recognition for the Wirral Wildlife group, who have been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service for their work over 46 years in caring for wildlife.

Sport England have recently released their annual reports which show that adult participation in sport in Wirral has increased from the start of the Wirral Plan, and is higher than both regional and national figures which is extremely positive news given the many health benefits of exercise. Our Active Wirral social marketing campaign is going from strength to strength and encouraging groups who tend to have lower participation rates to take responsibility for their physical and mental wellbeing. Plans are also in place to pilot a physical activity referral scheme with patients directed by the GP to support from leisure services. Utilisation of outdoor space for exercise / health reasons has decreased since the previous period. A communications plan is now in place linking promotion of Wirral's parks and open spaces with activities and events which includes Active Wirral. □

In October, Wirral will host the World Urban Parks Congress at Birkenhead Park. This provides another opportunity to showcase our borough to an international audience including Doug Blonsky, President and CEO of Central Park, New York who will be speaking at the event. There will be a Public Opening of the Congress on Monday 16th October so I encourage you to stay tuned for more information over the coming weeks.

Our parks, coast and countryside are some of the main attractions for those visiting Wirral. The Council are looking at what more can be done to take advantage of our natural resources to generate more income for the Council and we look forward to sharing these ideas with you as they develop.

#### Culture Strategy

I am delighted to report that we have made excellent progress in delivering our Culture Strategy actions over these last three months and the Wirral Cultural Partnership have been working with local groups in new and innovative ways to develop a better understanding of our creative sector. In March we launched a survey to Wirral creatives which yielded over 100 replies. As a response to feedback provided we launched a Creative Wirral bulletin which provides a way in which we can better interact with those involved in culture and creativity and provide a forum for promotion, feedback and involvement.

Through the Festival of Beautiful Ideas in April, we actively encouraged residents to present creative ideas which would help contribute to the regeneration of Woodside and the Birkenhead area. Forty ideas were presented and many of those who participated were awarded small pots of funding to help them to develop their ideas further. For me, this clearly demonstrates the link between creativity, entrepreneurship and the potential for artist-led regeneration and the need to invest in our many residents who have good ideas to help grow our local economy and make Wirral a better place to live and work. We are continuing to work with those who received awards to develop their ideas.

In June, a 'Cultural Conversations' session was held, Chaired by Phil Redmond who is leading the development of a 30-year Liverpool City Region Culture strategy. This provided people with the chance to take part in important discussions and provide feedback about what was important to them. This is just the beginning of the journey and I hope that the next sessions will attract even more residents who are passionate about championing culture across the region.

At the end of June, we held our second Wirral Culture Tank, this time focusing on Visual Arts, at the Williamson Art Gallery with over 100 people in attendance. This provided a real opportunity to find out what's happening across Wirral, a chance to network and to provide feedback to the Wirral Cultural Partnership about how well people feel connected and how they can get involved with future events. I was particularly inspired to hear the number of people who offered their time and expertise to help with organising future events and I want to continue to encourage others to work with us in the future to deliver events.

In partnership with the Liverpool City Region we have delivered some key events such as the Mersey River Festival in May and our communities have hosted a whole host of summer events such as the Egremont Festival and the Love New Brighton Parade. For National Armed Forces Day, this year held in Liverpool, organisers ran a poetry competition dedicated to the armed forces across the regions' schools. Congratulations go to Jack Appleby, a Wirral student who won the competition and had his poem inscribed on a plaque presented to Prince Edward and the Vice Chief of Defence General Sir Gordon Messenger.

Over the next quarter, we will be focusing on developing Wirral's Year of Culture and building a calendar of events for 2018. We are also continuing our conversations with the Arts Council and looking at a number of potential funding bids so I look forward to reporting progress on these areas in my next report.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Increase the number of people who regularly use the boroughs parks and open spaces	Annual Higher is better	67% 2015-16					n/a	This data will be reported later in 2017/18.
Increase the number of events in Wirral's parks, beaches and open spaces	Quarterly Higher is better	300 n/a		332	103		Better	Last year saw a sizeable increase from the baseline (Wirral Plan start) for the number of events held in Wirral's spaces (300 to 332) and this year is on track to achieve slightly higher results again which is positive news.  The total number of events delivered in Quarter 1 2016/17 (103) was slightly higher to the comparative period last year of 101.
Adult (14+) Participation in sport (at least once per week)	Annual Higher is better	38.2% 2014-15	England: 36.9% (2015-16) North West: 36.3% (2015-16)	39.2%			Better	Sport England have updated their data from the Active People Survey with a more up to date figure relating to the financial year 2015-16. Whilst it is based on a small sample of 500 people and there is a time lag on the release of the data it's encouraging that adult participation in sport has increased from the start of the Wirral Plan and is also higher than participation nationally and across the North West region.
Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Increase the number of national quality awards for Wirral's parks, coastal sites and open spaces: Green Flags	Annual Higher is better	22 2015-16		24		29	Better	We're delighted to announce that Wallasey Beach has recently been awarded a Blue Flag, the Breck in Wallasey Village was awarded a Green Flag and Wirral Country Park has gained the Natural England Country Park Accreditation.  The hard work of our individuals has also been rewarded by winning the Green Flag Employee of the Year and Wirral Met College Apprentice of the Year.
Utilisation of outdoor space for exercise / health reasons	Annual Higher is better	20.7% 2013-14	England: 17.9% (Mar 15-Feb 16)  North West: 17.5% (Mar 15-Feb 16)	26.5%		23.4%	Worse	Utilisation of outdoor space for exercise / health reasons continues to improve on the baseline figure from the start of the plan and is also performing considerably better than North West and nationally despite decreasing since the previous period.  It's worth noting that there is a time lag for this data which comes from the Public Health Outcomes Framework. The data released in quarter 1 was for March 2015 to February 2016. Also, the data comes from a relatively small sample size (less than 100) which may not give an accurate representation of overall activity in Wirral. This measure should therefore be viewed alongside other data for an overall picture of progress.
Increase the number of residents who say they regularly volunteer / support community groups in Wirral	Annual Higher is better	26% 2015-16					n/a	This data will be reported later in 2017/18.

## Wirral residents live healthier lives

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

#### Action to tackle Tobacco Misuse:

We're delighted to report that the latest figures from the Public Health Outcomes Framework Annual Population Survey show that smoking prevalence in adults (age 18 and over) in Wirral has decreased significantly from 18.9% to 15.7%. This improvement is more than double the progress seen nationally which really highlights the work being done locally is having a positive impact. This data is an average for the borough and masks the higher rates of smoking that we see in some of our communities where rates can be over 30%. This illustrates the importance of targeting our services in areas where we have a high number of people smoking. The Wirral Tobacco Strategy was approved in May and sets out the actions that partners will take to reduce the impact of smoking on the health and wellbeing of local people even further.

#### Action to tackle Alcohol Misuse:

The 2015-16 figures for Admission episodes for alcohol related conditions show that Wirral needs to maintain a strong focus on addressing the alcohol culture in the borough. The new Wirral Alcohol Strategy that was approved at the May Cabinet meeting sets out an action plan for partners to reduce the impact of alcohol misuse on the health and wellbeing of local people and the Strategy Group has been approved. The Reducing the Strength (RtS) campaign continues to grow with 65 direct RtS sign-ups now no longer selling the very cheap yet potent 'super-strength' ciders and beers so linked with street drinking and other forms of anti-social behaviour. The percentage of off-licences signed up is now 24% with a target of 30% in 2020. The Custodians project has now trained 36 off-licence staff to identify and safely broach the issue of problematic drinking with their customers, then giving them information on where they can find help. A Cumulative Impact Policy has been adopted for Birkenhead town centre which addresses the potential impact on the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm of a significant number of licensed premises concentrated in one area.

#### Increase the number of people with a healthy weight in the borough:

Two weaning groups are currently being piloted in West Wirral and Wallasey to provide advice and support for parents around healthy weaning. Our weight management service, which has been running since April 2016, has had 2,081 referrals. The next step will be to join up our commissioning of these services with the Clinical Commissioning Group.

#### Support people to take more control of their health and wellbeing:

Ask Us Wirral was launched on the 3rd April and has had over 8,000 people using the service in April and May. ConnectUs programme launched and has knocked on 7613 doors across the Wirral. Move On Up has 73 active members with 45 enrolling in quarter 1 and now offers over 40 different activities each week.

#### New Measures:

A number of new measures have been added this year to measure the number of people being helped by various service providers across the Wirral. It's important to look at wider systems in place when interpreting this data as providers are only responsible for a small part of the referral process. The new measures include the completion of drug treatment. Individuals successfully completing drug treatment can achieve a significant improvement in their health and well-being in terms of increased life expectancy, reduced blood-borne virus transmission, improved parenting skills and improved physical and psychological health.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Admission episodes for alcohol related conditions	Annual Lower is better	853.0 2013-14	England: 647.0 (2015-16) North West: 737.0 (2015-16)	819.0		901.0	Worse	There is a 12 month time lag on validated data being released. This data from the Public Health Outcomes Framework relates to 2015-16.  Performance has declined from the previous reporting period (2014-15) however Wirral's Alcohol Strategy sets out an action plan for reducing alcohol consumption to improve public health outcomes.
Smoking prevalence in adults (age 18 and over) in Wirral	Annual Lower is better	17.2% 2014	England: 15.5% (2016) North West: 16.8% (2016)	18.9%		15.7%	Better	We're delighted to report that smoking prevalence has reduced from 18.9% 2015 to 15.7% in the latest (2016) Public Health Outcomes Framework Annual Population Survey.  Smoking prevalence across Wirral has improved significantly more than the North West average and has seen more than double the improvement than the national average for the same period. This is an average for the borough, we still have areas of the borough with smoking rates above 30%, it is these areas that activity will focus on.  There is a time lag on this data and the latest data available is for 2016. The Smoke Free Wirral Strategy sets out an action plan for the borough to tackle smoking prevalence and the local provider for stop smoking services has been working with GPs and practice nurses to improve referral pathways for their services.
Excess weight in adults	Annual Lower is better	66.2% 2012-14	England: 64.8% (2013-15) North West: 66.6% (2013.15)	66.7%			n/a	The latest figure from Public Health England is 66.7% for 2013-15. This was against benchmarks of North West (66.6%) and England (64.8%).  2017/18 figures are due to be published by Public Health England in September 2017.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Smoking status at time of delivery	Annual Lower is better	10.5% 2014-15	England: 10.5% (2016-17) North of England: 14.0% (2016-17)	10.4%		10.5%	Worse	The number of pregnant women known to be smokers at the time of delivery remained at a constant rate in 2016-17 but we're pleased to report that it continues to be below the national target of 11%.  It's also very encouraging that number of pregnant women known to be smokers at the time of delivery in Wirral is significantly less than the average for the North of England.
Number of smokers helped to stop smoking	Quarterly Higher is better			2,253			n/a	This is a new measure that counts the number of people setting a quit date recorded through a local contract. It's important to look at wider systems in place when interpreting this data as providers are only responsible for a small part of the process. There is a 6 week follow up period which delays the provision of this data. The 2016-17 figure sets a baseline for this measure and the Q1 figures are due to be reported in September 2017.
Number of smokers still quit at 4 weeks	Quarterly Higher is better			1,195			n/a	This is a new measure that counts the number of people that have still quit after 4 weeks as recorded through a local contract. It's important to look at wider systems in place when interpreting this data as providers are only responsible for a small part of the process. There is a 6 week follow up period which delays the provision of this data. The 2016-17 figure sets a baseline for this measure and the Q1 figures are due to be reported in September 2017.
Number of pregnant women helped to stop smoking	Quarterly Higher is better			47			n/a	This is a new measure that counts the number of pregnant women helped to stop smoking recorded through a local contract. It's important to look at wider systems in place when interpreting this data as providers are only responsible for a small part of the process. There is a 6 week follow up period which delays the provision of this data. The 2016-17 figure sets a baseline for this measure and the Q1 figures are due to be reported in September 2017.
Number of people helped to lose weight	Quarterly Higher is better			1,553	525		n/a	This is a new measure that has been chosen to track how many people in Wirral are accessing a weight management service to reduce their BMI. An increase in the number of people eating healthily in Wirral should reduce the prevalence of excess weight and obesity which is a key contributor to premature mortality and avoidable ill health. It's important to look at wider systems in place when interpreting this data as providers are only responsible for a small part of the process. The 2016-17 figure sets a baseline for this measure.
Successful completion of drug treatment - opiate users	Quarterly Higher is better						n/a	This is a new measure to count the successful completion of drug treatments by opiate users. Individuals achieving this can demonstrate a significant improvement in health and well-being in terms of increased longevity, reduced blood-borne virus transmission, improved parenting skills and improved physical and psychological health. Data is due in Q2 2017.
Successful completion of drug treatment - non-opiate users	Quarterly Higher is better						n/a	This is a new measure to count the successful completion of drug treatments by non-opiate users. Individuals achieving this can demonstrate a significant improvement in health and well-being in terms of increased longevity, reduced blood-borne virus transmission, improved parenting skills and improved physical and psychological health. Data is due in Q2 2017.
Successful completion of alcohol treatment	Quarterly Higher is better						n/a	This is a new measure to count the successful completion of alcohol treatments. Individuals achieving this can demonstrate a significant improvement in health and well-being in terms of increased longevity, reduced blood-borne virus transmission, improved parenting skills and improved physical and psychological health. Data is due in Q2 2017.

## Community services are joined up and accessible

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

The Wirral Together Strategy was officially launched in June 2017 following approval by Cabinet. However, partners have been working together throughout the strategy development process to implement actions included within the strategy and this is reflected in the progress against the priorities.

A partnership steering group has now been established to drive forward the on going development of the strategy and delivery of the action plan. There has been a strong start in terms of progress. The Wirral in Bloom initiative, that took place over the summer and which included 30 partnership projects across Wirral, has been a particular highlight. Residents dedicated a huge amount of volunteer time to work with agencies to improve local areas, clean up grot spots and introduce planting in neighbourhood centres and communal areas.

During the summer we have also been talking to a range of people and organisations about how we can work with local communities to deliver the Wirral Plan and encourage people to become more involved in their local communities. In recognition of the major contribution volunteering makes in local communities, the Council has recently approved a new policy on staff volunteering enabling Council employees to take time to contribute more in their local communities.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Increase the number of residents who say they regularly volunteer / support community groups in Wirral	Annual Higher is better	26% Nov 2015					n/a	This data will be reported later in 2017/18.

## Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

During this first quarter of 2017-18 we have continued to focus on our longer term objectives and introduced focus on new ones included in our delivery plans for the year. Key priorities for delivery have remained as Building more homes in Wirral to meet our economic growth ambitions, Improving the quality of Wirral's housing offer for our residents and Meeting the needs of our most vulnerable people to enable them to live independently.

Highlights for Quarter 1 include:

- 50 new affordable homes have been built and completed; all of these units have been funded by the Government's Help to Buy initiative.
- Local Partnerships are continuing to provide support to the Council, in particular on working up bids for the Government's recently launched Housing Infrastructure Fund
- We have continued to exceed our expectations in bringing empty homes back into use, improving local environments and reducing blights in neighbourhoods.

Challenges have included the delay to the negotiations with the Department of Communities and Local Government regarding the funding for the Liverpool City Region (LCR) homelessness offer as part of a Trailblazer approach whilst the general election took place and due to the volume of contracts and legal implications, the commissioning of new services for homelessness and socially excluded groups may now be phased. The anticipated completion date for the final version of the Core Strategy Local Plan has now been revised from March to December 2018 in line with a Cabinet decision.

Our focus for Quarter 2 will include,

- Continued partnership working internal and external to the Council to maintain or increase progress of initiatives.
- Negotiations for the LCR homelessness funding offer will move forward at pace.
- Negotiating with the Council's procurement team will continue to mitigate challenges experienced because of the volume of contracts and legal implications concerning the commissioning of new services for homelessness and socially excluded groups.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
3,500 new homes will be built by 2020	Annual Higher is better	n/a		Amber Actual: 946 Target: 1342			n/a	New house building will always be subject to external factors influencing supply such as funding availability, viability, and confidence of local housing markets, however encouragingly in April 2017, 1315 homes were under construction compared to only 475 under construction in April 2016 therefore the overall number of new homes built in 2017/18 will increase significantly. Work is also underway to identify opportunities to support the acceleration of developments in the borough including maximising funding opportunities such as the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund. Over 280 units of affordable homes are being funded through the 2016- 21 Homes and Community Agency Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes funding programme of which 54 units are due to start on site during quarters two and three of 2017/18. The remaining schemes within this programme are currently at the design stage and will be completed over the next few years. Work is also underway to identify a pipeline of potential housing sites in both Council and private ownership which Registered Providers would be interested in developing. Detailed discussions are currently taking place focusing on deliverability and potential funding of schemes.
Improve 2,250 private sector properties	Annual Higher is better	n/a		928			n/a	
Bring 1,250 empty properties back into use	Quarterly Higher is better	n/a		597	Blue Actual: 665 Target: 589		Better	Bringing back 68 empty properties into use during Quarter 1 means we have again exceeded our expectations and remain on track to achieve our goal for the year and over all target by 2020. Performance for Quarter 1 2016-17 was 388.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
1,200 homes requiring mandatory or additional licenses will be inspected by 2020	Annual Higher is better	n/a		304			n/a	
An increase in the percentage of people over 50 living in appropriate housing, that meets their needs	Annual Higher is better	52.3 2015-16					n/a	This data will be reported later in 2017/18.
Number of home adaptations completed	Quarterly Higher is better	2,257 2014-15		3,047	671		Worse	Although data is less than performance achieved when compared to the same time last year (762), performance still exceeds the increased target set for Quarter 1 2017-18.
Reduce homelessness through prevention	Quarterly Higher is better	707 2014-15		1,291	272		Worse	Recruitment of a long-standing vacancy together with a review of the current operational system to ensure rota staff are deployed with maximum efficiency to improve future performance. The provision of laptop PC's is to be implemented later this month to enable more flexible working. However, the retendering of supported accommodation contracts may still have an impact on prevention figures throughout the rest of 2017-18 due to the re configuration of service provision which will have a temporary impact on service availability. Performance for Quarter 1 last year was 387.

## Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

During the first quarter of 2017-18 the latest data available is showing a mixed picture. The reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) to the Police have continued their downward trend and have fallen by 11% compared to the first quarter in 2016/17. However, the number of crimes recorded by the Police has increased by 13%, and the number of violent incidents has increased by 2% compared to the first quarter of 2016/17. Despite this, these increases are below the average for Merseyside and Wirral has improved its ranking from 6th in March – May 2016 to 5th in March – May 2017 for 'violence with injury' amongst 15 demographically similar Community Safety Partnership areas for the period.

The rate of first-time entrants to the youth justice system for the rolling year January 2016-December 2016 has fallen by 2%, compared to the October 2015-September 2016, and is 38% lower than the Merseyside Youth Offending Team peer group. However the average youth justice system re-offences per re-offender for the July 2014-June 2015 cohort has increased by 7%, compared to 3.75 for the April 2014-March 2015 cohort, and is 24% higher than the Merseyside Youth Offending Team peer group

Initiatives to improve community safety and engage with local communities have been implemented, including:

- The establishment of a Community Advisory Group
- A programme of Community Pay Back projects to help rehabilitate young offenders and improve the local environment
- Undertaking action focussed intelligence led interventions to resolve ASB.
- Door knocking exercise, to identify vulnerable community members and refer to appropriate support networks.
- Target hardening and security programme for vulnerable premises.
- Post-Manchester 'Solidarity' community meeting and invitation to all for a 'Taste Ramadan - share food, share friendship' meeting.

Merseyside's Police Commissioner has released £45,000 from the Police Property Act Fund (PPA), which allows money raised from the sale of unclaimed stolen goods or property recovered by the police to be used for good causes. This has provided community groups that work to divert young people away from crime and anti-social behaviour the chance to bid for grants for projects running during the autumn half-term. The Commissioner said: "Once a young person gets a criminal record it can blight their future prospects. If we can prevent them from making mistakes at a young age we can look forward to their positive contribution to their neighbourhoods." Details of the fund are being circulated around the Safer Wirral Partnership to ensure full take up.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) to Merseyside Police	Quarterly Lower is better	11,837 2014-15		9,930	2,466		Better	Reports of anti-social behaviour to the Police have fallen by 11% to 2,466 in the first quarter of 2017/18, compared to the 2,764 reports for the first quarter of 2016/17.
Proportion of residents who state they feel safe when outside in their local area (daytime)	Annual Higher is better	88% Nov 2015		0%			n/a	This data will be reported later in 2017/18.
Proportion of residents who state they feel safe when outside in their local area (After Dark)	Annual Higher is better	55% Nov 2015		0%			n/a	This data will be reported later in 2017/18.
Number of crimes recorded by the police	Quarterly Lower is better	19,061 2014-15		19,724	5,550		Worse	The number of crimes recorded by the Police has increased by 13% to 5,550 for the first quarter of 2017/18, compared to the 4,906 crimes recorded for the first quarter of 2016/17. However the increase is below average for Merseyside or demographically similar Community Safety Partnership areas.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
First-time entrants to the youth justice system (10-17 year olds, as a rate per 100,000 of the local general population)	Quarterly Lower is better	177 Apr 2015-Mar 16	Merseyside Youth Offending Teams (Police Crime Commissioner area): 287 (Jan 2016-Dec 16)	180	177		Better	This data relates to October 2015- September 2016
Reduce Youth Re-offending (Average number of re-offences per re-offender)	Quarterly Lower is better	3.92 Jan 2014-Dec 14	Merseyside Youth Offending Teams (Police Crime Commissioner area): 3.22 (Jul 14-Jun 15)	3.75	4.00		Worse	The average youth justice system re-offences per re-offender for the July 2014-June 2015 cohort has increased by 7% to 4.00, compared to 3.75 for the April 2014-March 2015 cohort. It is 24% higher than the 3.22 average for the Merseyside Youth Offending Team peer group
Violence that causes an injury to an individual victim (not including homicide) recorded by the Police	Quarterly Lower is better	1,982 2014-15	Ranking within 15 Most Similar Community Safety Partnership Groups: 5 (Mar 2017-May 17)	2,359	659		Worse	The number of violent incidents recorded by the Police has increased by 2% to 659 for the first quarter of 2017/18, compared to the 647 incidents recorded for the first quarter of 2016/17. However the increase is below average for Merseyside and Wirral has improved its ranking from 6th in March – May 2016 to 5th in March – May 2017 for 'violence with injury' amongst 15 demographically similar Community Safety Partnership areas for the period.

## Attractive local environment for Wirral residents

### Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

It is the third year since the introduction of our Attractive Local Environment Pledge and it is important that we start to see signs of behaviour change in terms of the way residents act within their local environment. During the first quarter of 2017/18 we found that, along with other authorities regionally and nationally, our recycling and household waste collection rates were disappointing, however we will introduce a number of measures including utilising the behavioural intelligence collected by the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) to identify where we can build improvements in key areas over the coming months.

During the next few months we intend to actively pursue joint initiatives with residents to assist people to be involved and active in their neighbourhood, this year we will support as many community groups as possible with their local activities and help others get started.

During the next quarter we will focus on the following:

- We will consider and where possible act upon the recommendations of the BIT report concluding the fly tipping behaviour change pilot exercise and determining how to implement them as a way forward.
- We intend to Launch the Love Where You Live campaign.
- Establish our Grot Spot Action Plan 2.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Maintain local environmental quality (LEQ) via the street cleansing of litter, detritus, graffiti. (Main Gateways and Retail Areas)	Quarterly Higher is better	97.5% 2014-15		95.2%	<b>Blue</b> <b>Actual: 97.9%</b> <b>Target: 93.2%</b>		Better	During Quarter 1 local environmental quality levels across the borough have been recorded well above target and an improvement on the same period last year (94.2%). This demonstrates that the actions taken to address issues identified during Quarter 4 last year have been successful, for example identifying opportunities and improvements in the way and times during which Biffa collect leaves allows for staggering of additional resources.
Achieve 50% kerbside recycling of domestic waste by 2020.	Quarterly Higher is better	36.30% 2014- 15		<b>Red</b> <b>Actual:35.90%</b> <b>Target: 40%</b>			n/a	End of year 2016/17 performance (data released during quarter 1 2017/18). Q1 2017/18 data will be available in time for next quarter reporting.  Performance for 2016-17 has decreased further since last year (36.1% for 2015-16) despite an increase in garden waste collected for recycling. This is consistent with the national trend. Further analysis will be carried out to put measures in place to try to reverse the current declining trend in recycling across Wirral.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Number of FPN's issued for environmental offences (Littering)	Quarterly Higher is better	n/a		11,458	<b>Blue</b> Actual: 2,389 Target: 2,000		Worse	The Council's environmental enforcement operations have been consolidated through the extension of the existing contract with Kingdom Securities Ltd. Resource levels and the base of intelligence developed highlight that the performance target for littering this year will be met. There has been a slight reduction in level of performance when compared to the same period last year (2631).
Number of FPN's issued for environmental offences (dog fouling)	Quarterly Higher is better	n/a		208	<b>Green</b> Actual: 48 Target: 45		Better	Dog fouling enforcement arrangements are now fully embedded and this year we will establish better use of intelligence and feedback from residents to address hotspot locations; an improvement in performance compared to the same period last year has already been evidenced with a 100% improvement on Q1 2016/17 data (24).
People who think litter is a problem in their local area.	Annual Lower is better	45.0% 2015-16					n/a	This data will be reported later in 2017/18.
People who think dog fouling is a problem in their local area.	Annual Lower is better	56.0% 2015-16					n/a	This data will be reported later in 2017/18.
Reduce the total amount of waste produced by each household.	Quarterly Lower is better	502.15 2014-15			<b>Amber</b> Actual: 531.84 Target: 502.15		n/a	Quarter 4 / end of year 2016/17 performance (data released during quarter 1 2017/18). Q1 2017/18 data will be available in time for next quarter reporting.  The overall quantity collected during 2016/17 is higher than anticipated (509.90 kh/hh for 2015-16). Further analysis will be carried out to try to reverse the current increasing trend in waste collected across Wirral.
Increase level of school recycling	Annual Higher is better	35.00% 2014-15		45.00%			n/a	
Increase the number of garden waste subscribers	Quarterly Higher is better				36,065		n/a	The number of garden waste collection subscriptions is on schedule to reach this year's target and is ahead of last year's Quarter 1 performance position.

## Report Key

Trend - Performance is shown as Better, Same or Worse compared with the last reporting period except for: Increase the number of events in Wirral's parks, beaches and open space, Bring 1,250 empty properties brought back into use, Number of home adaptations completed, Reduce homelessness through prevention, Reports of ASB to Merseyside Police, Number of crimes recorded by the police, Violence that causes an injury to an individual victim (not including homicide) recorded by the Police, Maintain Local Environment Quality (LEQ) and Number of environmental offences (Littering and Dog Fouling) which are compared with same period the previous year.

Target - Where targets apply, these are shown as either Blue, Green, Amber, Red based on the agreed tolerance range for individual measures.

Action - These are shown as either:

- Green (on track to deliver on time)
- Amber (off track but action being taken to deliver on time)
- Red (off track and won't deliver on time)

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# POLICY INFORM: Environment

Policy Inform- September 2017

*The Policy Inform briefings will provide an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, bills presented to Parliament and emerging policies.*

The Policy Inform briefings have been produced specifically to inform Portfolio Holders and Elected Members and will be taken to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees for discussion.



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# INTRODUCTION

## The Wirral Plan:

A 2020 Vision which sets out a shared partnership vision to improve outcomes for Wirral residents.

## The Plan focuses on three key theme areas:



## The Wirral Plan Environment Theme states:

*“Wirral has an attractive and sustainable environment, where good health and an excellent quality of life is enjoyed by everyone who lives here.”*

## Environment Policy Briefing:

This policy briefing focuses specifically on policies and legislation relating to the Environment Priority and is intended to provide Members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support the committees work programme and future scrutiny work.

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

Overview & Scrutiny Briefings	
September 2017	This policy briefing will provide an overview of emerging policy and legislation outlined within the Queen’s Speech, with a particular focus on legislation emerging as a result of the UK’s exit from the European Union. This policy briefing will also provide an initial analysis of any opportunities and implications for Wirral as a result of emerging policy and legislation.
November 2017	This policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant opportunities and implications for Wirral.
January	This policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will

<b>2018</b>	consider relevant opportunities and implications for Wirral.
<b>March 2018</b>	This policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant opportunities and implications for Wirral.

The September policy briefing focuses on the key announcements from the Queen’s Speech and provides an overview of emerging policy and legislative developments that have been aligned to the Wirral Plan pledges for consideration.

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

## QUEEN'S SPEECH 2017

On Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017, the Queens Speech was delivered, outlining the Government's programme of legislation and policies for the coming year.

Below is a list of each individual Bill that will have implications for local government that was announced during the speech, including those Bills carried over from the 2016-17 session. The list identifies the Overview and Scrutiny Committee remit that the legislation most closely aligns:

Legislative Plans	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Repeal Bill	<b>EU Exit - All Committees</b>
Customs Bill	<b>EU Exit - All Committees</b>
Trade Bill	<b>EU Exit - All Committees</b>
Immigration Bill	<b>EU Exit - All Committees</b>
Fisheries Bill	<b>EU Exit - All Committees</b>
Agriculture Bill	<b>EU Exit - All Committees</b>
Nuclear Safeguards Bill	<b>EU Exit - All Committees</b>
International Sanctions Bill	<b>EU Exit - All Committees</b>
Automated and Electric Vehicles Bill	<b>Business</b>
High Speed 2 Phase 2A Bill	<b>Business</b>
Good Mortgages Bill	<b>Environment</b>
Smart Meter Bill	<b>Environment</b>
Draft Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill	<b>Children and Families</b>
Courts Bill	<b>Environment</b>
Data Protection Bill	<b>Business</b>
Draft Patient Protection Bill	<b>Care and Health</b>

Draft Tenants' Fees Bill	<b>Environment</b>
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Additional Bills that have been announced are outlined below. These will be monitored in relation to any emerging implications for Local Government and reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

Additional Legislative Plans
Space Industry Bill
National Insurance Contributions Bill
Travel Protection Bill
Civil Liability Bill
Financial Guidance and Claims Bill
Armed Forces Bill

The Bills relevant to the Environment priority are discussed in further detail in this paper.

## EU EXIT BILLS

*This year's Queen's speech came in the wake of a General Election that left the Conservative Government without a majority. Below are the bills within the 2017 Queen's Speech which directly relate to the EU Exit.*

### REPEAL BILL

The Repeal Bill will be introduced to repeal the European Communities Act and provide certainty for businesses and individuals; this affects a wide range of laws from workers' rights to the environment. It will allow for a smooth and orderly transition as the UK leaves the EU. This will convert EU law into UK law, this will enable some continuity after what the bill calls "exit day". The UK Parliament will be free to make any future changes to its laws, and where appropriate the devolved legislatures.

It will create temporary powers for Parliament to make secondary legislation, allowing corrections to be made to the laws that do not operate appropriately after exiting the EU. It will also maintain the scope of devolved decision making power immediately after exit and replicate the common UK framework created by EU law.

The Bill includes a clause, "The charter of fundamental rights is not part of domestic law on or after exit day", it is thought this will be opposed by opposition parties. Both Scottish and Welsh governments have said they will try to block the bill, they do not have the power to block Brexit but refusing legislative consent would be difficult for the government.

The Repeal Bill could be an opportunity for local government, if shares of repatriated powers are devolved to local government there is an opportunity to shape legislation.

The Government recognises that the following fields will be particularly affected by Brexit and therefore more extensive legislative intervention will be required at the domestic level.

### CUSTOMS BILL

The Customs Bill will ensure that the UK has a standalone UK customs regime on exit. It will establish a degree of flexibility to accommodate future trade agreements with the EU and others. The changes can be made to UK's VAT and excise regimes on exit from the EU, whatever the outcome of negotiations.

It will ensure the government can collect payments of customs duties, tackle duty evasion and administer the customs regime. It will also bring control over the UK's import and export of goods.

### TRADE BILL

This Bill will put in place to allow Britain to strike free trade deals with countries around the world while ensuring domestic businesses are protected from unfair trading practices. It will establish an independent trade policy on exit from the EU. It will cement the UK as a leading trading nation, "driving positive global change through trade".

## IMMIGRATION BILL

The Immigration Bill will end the free movement of people of EU nationals into the UK and allow the government to control the number of incomers from Europe. However the Bill would still allow the country to attract “the brightest and the best”.

It will allow for the repeal of EU law on immigration (primarily free movement), that will otherwise be saved and converted into UK law by the Repeal Bill. It will also ensure that the migration of EU nationals and their families are subject to relevant UK law upon exiting the EU.

## FISHERIES BILL

The Bill will ensure the UK controls access to its waters and sets UK fishing quotas once it has left the EU. It will bring control of its waters back to the UK and allows the government to set its own fishing quotas after Brexit. It is claimed that this will “help ensure prosperity for a new generation of fishermen as well as preserve and increase fish stocks”.

## AGRICULTURE BILL

The Agriculture Bill will ensure there is an “effective system” in place to support UK farmers and protect the natural environment after the UK leaves the EU, i.e. leaving the Common Agricultural Policy. It wants to bring about “stability” for farmers.

## NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS BILL

This Bill will ensure a nuclear safeguards regime is established as the UK leaves the EU and Euratom (Brexit may require the UK to leave the auspices of Euratom). The UK continues to meet its international obligations for nuclear safeguards, as applies to civil nuclear material through the International Atomic Energy Agency.

This Bill will give the Office for Nuclear Regulation the powers to take on the responsibilities to meet international nuclear rules.

## INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS BILL

This Bill will ensure that as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the UK continue to play a central role in negotiating global sanctions to counter threats of terrorism, conflict and the proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as bringing about changes in behaviour.

This Bill will establish a new UK framework to implement international sanctions on both a multilateral and unilateral basis. It will also return decision making powers on non-UN sanctions back to the UK.

## WIRRAL PLAN ENVIRONMENT PLEDGES- POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

### GOOD QUALITY HOUSING THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS

*A safe and secure home is vital to all Wirral residents. We are working to improve the quality and supply of Wirral's housing stock, providing more affordable homes and specialist housing solutions, including extra care homes and supported living accommodation*

#### **Our Pledge Ambition:**

We will build and improve 7,000 houses over the lifetime of this five year plan. Our plans include building 3,500 new homes, improving 2,250 private sector properties and bringing 1,250 empty homes back into use by 2020. We will also continue to tackle the challenges and causes of homelessness in Wirral.

#### **Outcome Strategy:**

**Wirral Housing Strategy Priorities:** 1 Building more homes in Wirral to meet our economic growth ambitions 2. Improving the quality of Wirral's housing offer for our residents 3. Meeting the housing and support needs of our most vulnerable people to enable them to live independently



#### **Associated Legislation:**

##### **Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation and Liability for Housing Standards) Bill**

**Reporting stage:** The Bill is expected to have its second reading debate on Friday 19 January 2018.

#### **The purpose of the Bill is to:**

To amend the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 to require that residential rented accommodation is provided and maintained in a state of fitness for human habitation; to amend the Building Act 1984 to make provision about the liability for works on residential accommodation that do not comply with Building Regulations; and for connected purposes.

#### **Concerns and progress so far:**

The Bill was presented to Parliament through the ballot procedure on Wednesday 19 July 2017. The Bill was presented by Ms Karen Buck, supported by Luciana Berger, Jess Phillips, Matthew Pennycook, Shabana Mahmood, Heidi Allen, Marsha De Cordova, Andy Slaughter, Alex Sobel, Kate Green, Diana Johnson and Clive Efford.

As a Private Member's Bill, it is unlikely to be enacted into legislation.

**Associated Legislation:**

**Local Housing Authority Debt Bill**

**Report Stage:** Second reading of the Bill is yet to be scheduled.

**The purpose of the Bill is to:**

A Bill to replace the current regime of limits on local housing authorities' debt with limits determined by the existing prudential regime for local authority borrowing for non-housing-related purposes.

**Concerns and progress so far:**

The Bill was presented to the House of Lords by Lord Sharkey on Tuesday 4 July 2017. It was read a first time and ordered to be printed.

**Associated Legislation:**

**Goods Mortgage Bill**

**The purpose of the Bill is to:**

Continue the Government's work to deliver a consumer credit market that functions well and delivers a good deal for consumers by modernising outdated, Victorian-era legislation.

**The main benefits of the Bill (according to the Government's rationale):**

- To provide increased protections to borrowers who have taken out a mortgage on goods that they own, such as their car (a "logbook loan"). Borrowers will be better informed about their loan and the Bill would provide safeguards if borrowers get into financial difficulty.
- To remove unnecessary burdens on firms that raise the cost of logbook lending.
- To create new opportunities for sole traders and partnerships to access finance by reforming goods mortgages and helping these businesses raise finance against their assets. It will also provide greater confidence to invoice financiers to lend to small, unincorporated businesses, and will make lending cheaper.
- Repealing the Victorian-era Bills of Sale Acts and replacing them with a Goods Mortgage Act which enables individuals to use their existing goods (such as a vehicle) as security for a loan, while retaining possession of the goods.
- Increasing protection for borrowers who get into financial difficulty, by introducing a new requirement for a lender to obtain a court order before seizing goods where a borrower has made significant repayments (where one third of the loan has been paid) and wants to challenge the repossession.

**Associated Legislation continued:**

**Goods Mortgage Bill**

**The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Helping borrowers in financial difficulty by giving borrowers the right to voluntary termination by handing over their vehicle or other goods to the lender.
- Providing protection for innocent third parties who buy a vehicle subject to a logbook loan that may be at risk of repossession, and making it clearer that borrowers who knowingly sell goods with a logbook loan attached could be committing fraud.

In line with the Law Commission's recommendations, the Bill would apply to England and Wales.

**Associated Legislation:**

**Smart Meter Bill**

**The purpose of the Bill is to:**

- Allow the Government to continue to support the effective and efficient completion of the smart meter rollout.
- Allow the Government to oversee implementation and ensure the successful realisation of the £5.7 billion of net benefits delivered by smart meters.
- Enable the continued secure provision of the national smart meter infrastructure in Great Britain.

**The main benefits of the Bill (according to the Government's rationale):**

- The successful rollout of smart meters, which puts consumers in control of their energy use, helping them understand their energy and bills, bringing an end to estimated billing and transforming the experience of pre-payment customers.
- Protecting the operation of the national data and communication service to safeguard smart services at all times.
- Deliver the manifesto commitment to ensure that "smart meters will be offered to every household and business by the end of 2020, giving people control over their energy bills that they have not had before" (p.57).

**The main elements of the Bill are:**

- To extend the Government's ability to make changes to smart meter regulations by five years, making sure the rollout is delivered effectively, and that benefits are maximised into the future.
- To introduce a Special Administration Regime which will provide insurance for the national smart meter infrastructure in the unlikely event that the company responsible for it were to become insolvent. The availability of a Special Administration Regime is standard practice for energy network companies, energy suppliers, and in other sectors such as water and rail.

### **Associated Legislation continued:**

#### **Draft Tenants' Fees Bill**

##### **The purpose of the Bill is to:**

- Ban charging tenants 'letting fees' to improve transparency, affordability and competition in the private rental market.

##### **The main benefits of the Bill (according to the Government's rationale):**

- To increase competition in the private rental sector, resulting in lower costs overall and a higher quality of service for renters.
- Reduced upfront costs for tenants.
- To deliver on the manifesto commitment to "shortly ban letting agent fees" (p.59), and make renting fairer and more affordable for millions of tenants. Banning letting agent fees will improve transparency for renters – currently, these fees are not explained clearly, meaning tenants are charged very different, and sometimes very high, fees for similar services.

##### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Measures to ban landlords and agents from requiring tenants to pay letting fees as a condition of their tenancy.
- Measures to enforce the ban with provision for tenants to be able to recover unlawfully charged fees.

The ban would apply to England only. However, some minor amendments to the Consumer Rights Act 2015 may apply to England and Wales.

### **Associated Legislation – Royal Assent:**

#### **Neighbourhood Planning Act**

Following agreement by both Houses on the text of the Bill it received Royal Assent on 27 April 2017. The Bill is now an Act of Parliament (law).

##### **The purpose of the Bill is to:**

A Bill to make provision about planning and compulsory purchase; and for connected purposes.

##### **Summary:**

The Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 brings into law changes to neighbourhood planning, local development documents, compulsory purchase and planning conditions. The Act comes into force on such day as the Secretary of States appoints by regulations, apart from provisions set out in the Act.

Full details of the Act, including explanatory notes, are available at Legislation.gov.uk through the following link: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/20/contents/enacted>

**Associated Legislation – Royal Assent:**

**Homelessness Reduction Act 2017**

Following agreement by both Houses on the text of the Bill it received Royal Assent on 27 April 2017. The Bill is now an Act of Parliament (law).

**The purpose of the Bill is to:**

A Bill to make provision about measures for reducing homelessness; and for connected purposes.

**Summary:**

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 enacts and amends legislation in respects to the following:

- meaning of “threatened with homelessness”
- advisory services
- assessment and plans
- duties to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness
- failure to co-operate by an applicant for assistance
- local connection of a care leaver
- reviews of local housing authority decisions
- duty on public authorities in England to refer cases
- codes of practice, and suitability of accommodation.

The Act comes into force on such day or days as the Secretary of State may by regulations made by statutory instruments appoint.

Full details of the Act are available at Legislation.gov.uk through the following link:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/contents/enacted>

**Associated Emerging Policy:**

**Investment in infrastructure for new housing**

[Gov.uk, 04/07/2017](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/infrastructure-for-new-housing)

**Summary-**

A £2.3 billion fund has potential to unlock 100,00 new homes in areas of high demand has been launched by Communities Secretary. The investment will help to fund vital physical infrastructure projects like the building of roads, bridges, energy networks and other utilities.

The Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) is now open for bids from local authorities. The HIF is part of the wider £23 billion National Productivity Investment Fund.

Sajid Javid said “by investing in local infrastructure, we can help unlock building thousands of new homes in the areas where they are needed most”.

The LGA commented “we’re pleased that the government has followed through on its commitment to invest in infrastructure linked to housing and that this to be led by Council’s.

**Associated Emerging Policy:**

**Homelessness predicted to rocket**

[The MJ, 10/08/2017](#)

**Summary-**

Research has found that rough sleeping is predicted to rocket by 76% in the next 10 years, according to Crisis. At any one time last year 9,100 people were sleeping rough while more than 37,000 households were living in hostels. More than 68,000 households were 'sofa surfing' while 12,000 were living in squats. The report claims that unless policies were changed, the most acute forms of homelessness are likely to keep rising.

Crisis claim that increased prevention work could reduce levels by 34% by 2036. A spokesperson for the LGA said "homelessness is everyone's business, and councils need the help of health, employment and housing partners to deliver ambitions to end it... Government needs to allow councils to borrow to invest in genuinely affordable housing and to keep all of their receipts from Right to Buy sales so that money can be reinvested into delivering genuinely affordable homes".

Chartered Institute of Housing said "homelessness has been steadily rising in all its forms since 2010, partly because of the pressures on the housing market but also some of the welfare changes that have come into force over the past few years".

**Associated Emerging Policy:**

**Housing: State of the nation – Report of the Public Accounts Committee**

[LGiU, 20/06/2017](#)

**Summary-**

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) published results into effects of the continuing overall shortfall in housing supply including analysis of whether current government policy was addressing the problem. The Committee looked at housing policies and welfare benefits to establish if money spent on housing were delivering on government's stated aims.

Demand has increased since 1980's, housebuilding has not kept pace with this increase. Public sector housebuilding has fallen and private sector output has been variable. Between 2001 and 2010 an average of 144,000 new homes were completed annually, 100,000 fewer per year than in the 1970's. output needs to increase, current projections suggest at least 227,000 new households be formed each year between 2011 and 2021. There has been an increase in home ownership and private rented homes, reduction in social rented homes. However, around a third of homes in private rented sector are non-decent according to the government's 2001 definition of decency, compared with 14% in the social rented sector.

**Associated Emerging Policy Continued:**

**Housing: State of the nation – Report of the Public Accounts Committee**

[LGiU, 20/06/2017](#)

**Summary-**

Housing has become more affordable in recent years, but for first time buyers it has become less affordable. First time buyers need larger deposits (21% on average, compared with 13% in 1990) and have to borrow an average of 3.2 times income in 2014.

The total estimated government spending on housing in England was approximately £28 billion in 2015-16, £20.9 billion of total housing expenditure was for housing benefit. Two of the government's strategic objectives for this Parliament is to increase supply and increase home ownership. The Department's objective of delivering a million new homes by 2020 does not require a substantial change in the number of homes delivered in England each year.

**Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:**

*There are currently no potential implications as the emerging legislation is in the early stages of development.*

*The legislation will continue to be monitored and implications will be captured in the next Policy Inform paper which will be published in November 2017.*

## LEISURE AND CULTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

*We will encourage more people to enjoy the wide range of leisure, culture and sporting opportunities on offer across Wirral. We will listen to residents' ideas and requests, and by 2020, will have increased access to events and activities to all our residents, regardless of age or income.*

### **Our Pledge Ambition:**

We will review the borough's leisure and cultural offer to make it fit for the future, and optimise the use of public spaces, parks and gardens across Wirral as community assets.

### **Outcome Strategy:**

**Wirral Leisure Strategy Priorities:** 1. Promote and celebrate Wirral's parks, coast and countryside for leisure activities 2. Encourage people to take part in sports, leisure and social activities 3. Increase pride in Wirral's communities and encourage more residents to volunteer

**Wirral Culture Strategy Priorities:** 1. Develop creative partnerships and a cultural events programme to promote arts, culture and heritage in Wirral 2. Increase resident and visitor participation in Wirral's arts, culture and heritage offer to promote its educational, social and wellbeing benefits 3. Promote Wirral on a global stage as part of the Liverpool City Region to attract world class arts, culture and heritage events and exhibitions 4. Maximise the contribution of the arts, culture and heritage to the local economy.



### **Associated Legislation:**

*Currently there is no emerging legislation aligned to this Wirral Plan Pledge. The Pledge will continue to be monitored for any developments.*

### **Associated Legislation – Royal Assent:**

#### **National Citizen Service Act**

This Act was granted Royal Assent on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

#### **Summary:**

The National Citizen Service Act is designed to make sure NCS is delivered efficiently, effectively and transparently. The NCS programme brings young people from different backgrounds together and gives them the opportunity to take part in new experiences, develop skills and volunteer in communities across England. The Act will enable the staff and assets of the NCS Trust to transfer to a Royal Charter Body, allowing government to provide grant-in-aid funding to the NCS Trust. It will also promote NCS by giving Government the power to send a letter to young people as they turn 16 on behalf of the NCS Trust.

**Associated Emerging Policy:**

**£15 million Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund to boost region's tech, creative and cultural industries**  
[Gov.uk](http://Gov.uk), 04/08/2017

**Summary-**

Towns and cities across the North of England will be able to bid for a share of a new £15 million fund to help build a lasting regional legacy from the Great Exhibition of the North. The Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund will make grants up to £4 million available to support major culture and tech capital projects, the fund will pave the way for future investment in the Northern Powerhouse and build on next year's Great Exhibition.

Culture Secretary Karen Bradley said, "This £15 million fund is a fantastic change for towns and cities to develop inspirational projects that could have transformative local effect particularly in communities that have seen less cultural or creative investment in the past.

We want as many people as possible to benefit from the Great Exhibition of the North, and this fund will boost the Northern Powerhouse and help build a lasting legacy across the whole region".

The first round of bids will be coordinated by Local Enterprise Partnerships, with successful projects being announced in March 2018. Successful bids will encourage sustainable cultural and creative regeneration in the North of England and will benefit areas that have historically had low levels of cultural and creative investment.

**Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:**

*There are currently no potential implications as the emerging legislation is in the early stages of development.*

*The legislation will continue to be monitored and implications will be captured in the next Policy Inform paper which will be published in November 2017.*

## WIRRAL RESIDENTS LIVE HEALTHIER LIVES

*We want all of our residents to have a good quality of life and lead healthy lifestyles in clean and safe environments*

### **Our Pledge Ambition:**

We remain committed to addressing health inequalities in Wirral through encouraging residents to lead healthier lifestyles, and promoting physical activity and healthy eating. We will also continue to reduce the prevalence of smoking amongst our residents and the level of alcohol related ill-health and anti-social behaviour through restricting availability of 'super-strength' alcohol. We want to see 30% of Wirral off licences retailers sign up to the council supports 'reduce the strength' campaign.

### **Outcome Strategy:**

**Wirral Healthier Lives Strategy Priorities:** Reduce the number of smokers in Wirral 2. Reduce the impact of alcohol misuse on individuals and communities 3. Promote healthy eating 4. Support local people to take control over their own wellbeing.



### **Associated Legislation:**

*Currently there is no emerging legislation aligned to this Wirral Plan Pledge. The Pledge will continue to be monitored for any developments.*

### **Associated Legislation – Royal Assent**

#### **Soft Drinks Industry Levy**

The Soft Drinks Levy was granted Royal Assent on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

#### **Summary -**

This is a new levy, under the Finance Act 2017, that applies to the production and importation of soft drinks containing added sugar. The levy applies to the producers and importers of these types of drinks; it entails a lower rate which will apply to added sugar drinks with a total sugar content of 5 grams or more per 100 millilitres and a higher rate for drinks with 8 grams or more per 100 millilitres, but will not apply to any drink where no sugar is added. Alcoholic drinks with an Alcohol by volume of up to 1.2% are also included in the levy.

**Associated Emerging Policy:**

**Funding for 'new and novel' healthcare solutions**

[Gov.uk, 02,08,17](#)

**Summary:**

The government announced on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August £12 million of funding for UK businesses for projects that support the development of healthcare technologies and processes, made available by Innovate UK and the Medical Research Council and under the scheme Biomedical Catalyst.

The funding has been put in place to support technologies and processes in areas such as disease prevention and proactive management of health and chronic conditions, earlier and better detection and diagnosis of diseases and tailored treatments that either change the underlying disease or offer potential cures, and is available to UK micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

**Associated Emerging Policy:**

**New roles to be created from mental health workforce plan**

[Gov.uk, 31.07,17](#)

**Summary:**

The Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt announced on the 31<sup>st</sup> July a plan to expand the mental health workforce; to address the historic imbalance in workforce capacity in order to treat and extra one million patients by 2020 to 2021.

Jeremy Hunt's announcement also sets out his plan to provide mental health services 24 hours a day, 7 days and week and to integrate mental health and physical health services for the first time. These new roles will translate into an estimated 21,000 new posts in priority growth areas in order to deliver these improvements, as set out in the NHS's Five Year Forward View for Mental Health.

**Associated Emerging Policy:**

**Hexavalent 6-in-1 vaccine to be made available to newborn babies**

[Gov.uk, 01,08,17](#)

**Summary:**

Public Health England announced on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017 that all babies born on or after 1 August 2017 will be offered protection against hepatitis B as part of our universal childhood immunisation programme. In essence, this new hexavalent 6-in-1 vaccine will replace the 5-in-1 vaccine, providing continued protection against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio and Hib along with protection against hepatitis B.

This announcement follows the news that the UK government has signed up to the WHO global hepatitis strategy to work towards elimination of viral hepatitis as a major public health threat by 2030.

**Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:**

*There are currently no potential implications as the emerging legislation is in the early stages of development.*

*The legislation will continue to be monitored and implications will be captured in the next Policy Inform paper which will be published in November 2017.*

## ATTRACTIVE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT FOR WIRRAL RESIDENTS

*We are committed to empowering residents to help them create great neighbourhoods where communities are proud of their area and love where they live. We will work with communities to develop locations, taking advantage of assets and local characteristics to create a sense of identity that people can relate to and want to uphold.*

### **Our Pledge Ambition:**

We want to increase residents' pride in their local communities, and increase personal responsibility to keep Wirral 'clean and green'. We will listen to local residents and act on their suggestions to ensure more residents see their quality of life improve over the five years of this plan by supporting communities to deal with local environmental issues such as litter, fly-tipping and dog fouling.

### **Outcome Strategy:**

**Wirral Environment Strategy Priorities:** 1. Love where you live  
2. Driving behaviour change 3. Put resources where they are needed  
4. Tackle untidy land

**Wirral Waste Strategy Priorities:** 1. Waste Prevention and re-use; 2. Residual collections; 3. Kerbside Recycling; 4. Food and garden waste collections.



### **Associated Legislation:**

#### **Carbon Emission Reductions Bill**

**Second Reading Debate Stage:** Second reading in the House of Lords is yet to be scheduled.

#### **The purpose of the Bill is to:**

A Bill to amend the target for reducing net carbon emissions in the UK to 100% by 2050.

#### **Concerns and progress so far:**

The Bill was presented to the House of Lords by Baroness Featherstone on Tuesday 18 July 2017. It was read a first time and ordered to be printed.

**Associated Emerging Policy:**

**Think Tank report says Councils need to tackle 'killer fumes' in the North**

[Local Gov, 18/07/2017](#)

**Summary -**

UK's regional cities are in breach of legal limits on air quality by up to 150%. [Gearing up for the transition: The role of transport in a Northern energy strategy](#), report by Think Tank IPPR North, warned that while London's air quality has risen on the political agenda, pollution in the North of England "threatens the lives of children and adults".

Around 40,000 deaths per year in the UK are attributable to exposure to outdoor air pollution with an estimated overall economic cost in excess of 3.7% of GDP. The Government has been under pressure to do more to tackle air pollution after the courts ruled previous plans to improve air quality were illegal. In response to this Whitehall published draft plans to introduce compulsory clean air zones in certain cities. This has been criticised that Government plans will fail unless more is done to tackle congestion. The report identified congestion as a serious issue in the north, it estimates the cost of congestion in Manchester and Liverpool alone in 2015 at £2 billion.

The think tank concluded their report by calling for Whitehall, local authorities and transport bodies to "radically improve" green public transport links, especially rail connections and hydrogen powered trains. Should also pledge to phase out diesel cars over the coming years and introduce a new car stoppage scheme. On current projections only 5% of UK cars will be powered by electricity rather than petrol or diesel by 2030.

IPPR North said, "this is one of the biggest problems of our time, but too little attention is paid to this key issue, especially outside the capital...To prevent more avoidable deaths, need to see big incentives for those buying a car to go electric".

**Associated Emerging Policy:**

**Tree Planting Fund announced**

[Local Gov, 21/07/2017](#)

**Summary -**

The Government has made a £13 million fund available to help Councils plant more trees and reduce the flood risk to communities. The Woodland Creation Grant is designed to protect wildlife, boost timber sector and reduce flood risk. The Grant will be open to local authorities, farmers, foresters and other land managers up to £6,800 per hectare to plant, wood and protect more trees. The Fund is part of the Countryside Stewardship scheme, it will help plant more than 3 million trees, creating 1,900 hectares of new woodland.

DEFRA minister, Therese Coffey, said "our forests and woodlands are vital for providing timber, improving the environment and protecting our wildlife".

**Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:**

*There are currently no potential implications as the emerging legislation is in the early stages of development.*

*The legislation will continue to be monitored and implications will be captured in the next Policy Inform paper which will be published in November 2017.*

## COMMUNITY SERVICES ARE JOINED UP AND ACCESSIBLE

*We are already integrating public sector and community services to make sure they are fully joined up, but we will integrate more services with our partners, and work with voluntary and community groups to transfer local assets for them to manage directly, providing the services residents need.*

### **Our Pledge Ambition:**

We will enable our already thriving communities to realise their full potential and unlock the skills and expertise within them to deliver more for themselves.

### **Associated Legislation or Associated Emerging Policy:**

*At present there are no policy or legislative developments as associated with this pledge. We will continue to monitor any developments in legislation or emerging policy.*



**Community Services  
are Joined Up and  
Accessible**



## WIRRAL'S NEIGHBOURHOODS ARE SAFE

*Unfortunately, the actions of a small minority can have a negative impact on the majority of residents. We are increasing our efforts to quickly and effectively deal with anti-social behaviour, including street drinking and neighbourhood noise issues.*

### **Our Pledge Ambition:**

Over the next five years we will place a greater emphasis on activities which will positively engage young people and communities to prevent anti-social behaviour, and support people that have been affected. We will also look at improving potential licensing and planning enforcement powers.

### **Outcome Strategy:**

**Wirral Safer Neighbourhoods Strategy Priorities:** 1 Build stronger and more confident communities where people feel safe. 2. Improve Community Safety by tackling the cause and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour. 3. Protecting the most vulnerable people in our communities. 4. Deliver greater integration with all relevant partner agencies to achieve a Safer Wirral.



### **Associated Legislation:**

#### **Courts Bill**

#### **The purpose of the Bill is to:**

- To end direct cross examination of domestic violence victims by their alleged perpetrators in the family courts and allows more victims to participate in trials without having to meet their alleged assailant face to face.
- Enables those charged with less serious criminal offences to plead guilty, accept conviction and pay a statutory fixed penalty to free up court time.
- Introduction of digital services that allow businesses to pursue cases quickly
- Better working environment for judges, allowing more leadership positions in the judiciary to be offered on a fixed term.

#### **Concerns and Progress so far:**

This Bill is looking to reform the Courts system in England and Wales and embrace more modern technology. The Bill applies to England and Wales and in part to Northern Ireland and Scotland.

## **Associated Legislation – Royal Assent:**

### **Policing and Crime Act**

The Policing and Crime Act became law on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017. The main provisions of the original Bill made it to the statute book intact, despite criticism and attempted amendments from the opposition benches in both Houses. Changes to the Bill included extending to combined authority mayors the ability of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) to take on the function of Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA).

The most high profile part of this Act is the 'Alan Turing Law' which provides a posthumous pardon for thousands of gay men prosecuted under historical homophobic legislation.

#### **Key provisions:**

- Collaboration agreements between emergency services;
- Police and Crime Commissioners taking on role of Fire and Rescue Authorities;
- Abolition of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority;
- Police complaints;
- Police volunteers and powers;
- Mental Health;
- Others – changes to pre-charge bail, tightening of regulations regarding alcohol licensing and reform of Police Federation.

The main impact of this Bill will be the administration of the emergency services. The Act means a reduction of the role of local authorities in the administration of emergency services in favour of PCCs.

## **Associated Emerging Policy:**

### **Powers to ban anti-social behaviour**

[LocalGov, 31/07/2017](#)

#### **Summary-**

Councils have used new powers to curb a range of anti-social behaviour from begging to swearing. 107 local authorities issued a total of 189 Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) between March 2016 and June 2017.

Nineteen Councils have restricted begging, these include Coventry, Southampton and Wigan. Eighteen Councils have banned loitering or standing in groups and four have criminalised busking. Eleven Councils have restricted cycling or skateboarding in public spaces or streets. Thirty local authorities have restricted dog walking in the past 16 months.

#### **Brief Analysis-**

PSPO's allow Councils to create catch all crimes, such as the crime of standing in a group. This means that Council officials and police officers have the power to fine or disperse anyone they want.

**Associated Emerging Policy:**

**New National Police Welfare Service**

[Gov.uk](http://gov.uk), 12/07/2017

**Summary-**

The Home Secretary has awarded £7.5 million of funding for a national police welfare service. Amber Rudd said that the professionalism of the police during the recent terrorist attacks had been “truly humbling” and emphasised the “massive impact” the police have had on crime and keeping the country safe.

The new service will complement the support already delivered at force level to serving police officers and staff, covering mental health advice and welfare support. Plans will be developed with the College of Policing, working closely with the Police Federation. The service will initially be tested in a pilot and if successful will be rolled out across the country between 2018 and 2020.

**Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:**

*There are currently no potential implications as the emerging legislation is in the early stages of development.*

*The legislation will continue to be monitored and implications will be captured in the next Policy Inform paper which will be published in November 2017.*

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**Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
21st September 2017**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Environment Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee - Work Programme Update</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Paul Stuart</b>

**REPORT SUMMARY**

This report explains the process of developing and managing the scrutiny work programme for the municipal year. The Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in cooperation with the other three Overview & Scrutiny Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual scrutiny work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges which are within the remit of the Committee.

It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items on committee agendas and requested officer reports. This report provides the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

**RECOMMENDATION/S**

Members are requested to:

1. Approve the proposed Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2017/18, making any required amendments.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

To ensure members of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

### 2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not Applicable

### 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### 3.1 THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND THE WIRRAL PLAN

The work programme should align with the priorities of the Council and its partners. The programme will be informed by:

- The Wirral Plan pledges
- The Council's transformation programme
- The Council's Forward Plan
- Service performance information
- Risk management information
- Public or service user feedback
- Referrals from Cabinet / Council

The Wirral Plan pledges and strategies of particular relevance to the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee are:

<b>Pledge</b>	<b>Strategies</b>
Leisure and cultural opportunities for all	Wirral's Leisure Strategy Wirral's Culture Strategy
Wirral residents live healthier lives	Wirral's Residents Live Healthier Lives Strategy
Community services are joined up and accessible	Wirral Together Strategy
Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents	Housing Strategy
Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe	Ensuring Wirral's Neighbourhoods are Safe Strategy
Attractive local environment for Wirral residents	Managing our Waste Strategy Loving our Environment Strategy

### 3.2 PRINCIPLES FOR PRIORITISATION

Good practice suggests that, in order to maximise the impact of scrutiny, it is necessary to prioritise proposed topics within the work programme. Members may find the following criteria helpful in providing a guideline towards ensuring that the most significant topics are prioritised:

<b>Principles for Prioritisation</b>	
Wirral Plan	Does the topic have a direct link with one of the 2020 pledges?
	Will the review lead to improved outcomes for Wirral residents?
Public Interest	Does the topic have particular importance for Wirral Residents?
Transformation	Will the review support the transformation of the Council?
Financial Significance	Is the subject matter an area of significant spend or potential saving?
	Will the review support the Council in achieving its savings targets?
Timeliness / Effectiveness	Is this the most appropriate time for this topic to be scrutinised?
	Will the review be a good use of Council resources?

By assessing prospective topics using these criteria, the Committee can prioritise an effective work programme that ensures relevance and the highest potential to enhance outcomes for residents.

### 3.3 DELIVERING THE WORK PROGRAMME

It is anticipated that the work programme will be delivered through a combination of:

- Scrutiny reviews undertaken by task & finish groups
- Evidence days and workshops
- Committee reports provided by officers
- Standing committee agenda items, for example, performance monitoring and financial monitoring
- Spotlight sessions
- Standing panels (where deemed necessary)

As some of the selected topics may cut across the Wirral Plan themes, it is anticipated they may be of interest to members of more than one committee. In these circumstances, opportunities for members of more than one committee to work jointly on an item of scrutiny will be explored.

Regular work programme update reports will provide the committee with an opportunity to plan and review its work across the municipal year.

### **3.4 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS**

#### Modern Slavery Scrutiny Review

A new panel of Cllrs Chris Carubia, Christina Muspratt, Tracey Pilgrim, Paul Stuart and Tom Usher was agreed at the last Committee meeting in July. A meeting of the panel took place on 4<sup>th</sup> September where the Panel agreed to continue with the review based on the previously agreed scope. Contact will be made with potential witnesses in the coming weeks.

#### Flood Risk Standing Panel

At the last Committee meeting in July, Councillors Bruce Berry, Chris Carubia and Paul Stuart were nominated as the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee representatives on the Wirral Flood and Water Management Partnership (WFWMP). The next meeting of the WFWMP is scheduled for October and minutes of the meeting will be reported back to this Committee in November.

#### Further Development of the Scrutiny Work Programme

A dedicated work programme planning session took place on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September. This session was open to all Members of the Environment O&S Committee. Members not able to attend were invited to suggest possible topics for inclusion in the work programme. As the session was scheduled after the reports deadline for this Committee, a draft work programme incorporating Member suggestions, will be circulated prior to Committee for approval as part of this agenda item.

#### Leisure, Libraries and Cultural Services Transformation Scrutiny

Members will be aware that a scrutiny session was scheduled for Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September to scrutinise proposals regarding the transformation of Leisure, Libraries and Cultural Services. It is intended that a report detailing the outcomes from this session will be presented for Cabinet to consider alongside the full business case. Members will recall that on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2017 Committee delegated authority to the Chair and Party spokespeople to approve this report and refer it directly to Cabinet.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not Applicable

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not Applicable

### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

The delivery of the scrutiny work programme will be met from within existing resources.

### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

Not Applicable

**8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

Not Applicable

**9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

This report is for information to Members and there are no direct equality implications.

**REPORT AUTHOR:**

**Patrick Torpey**  
Scrutiny Support  
0151 691 8381  
email: [patricktorpey@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:patricktorpey@wirral.gov.uk)

**APPENDICES:**

**Appendix 1:** Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Work programme

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

Council Meeting	Date

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**PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017**

Item	Format	Officer
Notice of Motion – Pavilions in Sports Grounds	NoM	Cllrs Hayes / Berry
Notice of Motion – Fair Votes	NoM	Cllrs Cleary & Kelly
Air Quality	Officer Report / Presentation	Mike Cockburn
Performance monitoring Q1 Report	Report	Mark Smith – Strategic Commissioner, Environment
Financial monitoring Q1 Report	Report	Peter Molyneux - Senior Manager, Finance
Policy Inform	Report	Policy Team
Scrutiny Work Programme Update	Report	Report of the Chair
Deadline for reports to be with Committee Services: <b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2017</b>		

**PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS – Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

Item	Format	Officer
Scrutiny Work Programme Update	Report	Report of the Chair, Patrick Torpey to provide report
Performance monitoring – 2016/17 Q2	Report	Mark Smith – Strategic Commissioner, Environment
Financial monitoring – 2016/17 Q2	Report	Peter Molyneux - Senior Manager, Finance
Policy Inform	Report	Policy Team
Deadline for reports to be with Committee Services: <b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017</b>		

**ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED**

Item	Format	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer
Wirral’s Residents Live Healthier Lives Strategy	Committee Report / Presentation	November 2017 TBC	TBC
Wirral’s Waste Management Strategy	Committee Report / Presentation	TBC	TBC
Wirral Together Strategy	Committee	TBC	TBC

	Report / Presentation		
Climate Change Strategy	Committee Report / Presentation	January 2018 TBC	TBC
Coastal Strategy Scrutiny Review follow-up report	Officer Report	TBC	TBC

#### WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

Item	Format	Timescale	Lead Departmental Officer	Progress / Comments
Wirral Flood & Water Risk Management Partnership	Standing Panel	2017	David Ball	Next partnership meeting October 2017.
Modern Slavery Act	Task & finish group	Commenced March 2017	Andrew Elkington	Meetings to re-commence 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2017
Transforming Wirral – Leisure and Cultural Services, Future Provision of Services	Workshop	TBC	Mark Smith	Provisional date: 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2017
Transforming Wirral – further business cases	Workshops	TBC	TBC	