

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### COUNCIL EXCELLENCE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 31st January 2011

#### COMMUNITY BASED BUDGETS

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#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report provides a briefing note for Members as requested on the progress of 'Community Based Budgets', which build upon the progress made under the previous government's 'Total Place' agenda.
- 1.2. "Total Place" was a Communities and Local Government (CLG) pilot programme that looked at how public money was spent in a local area and how it could be used more efficiently to improve local services.
- 1.3. With the change of Government in May 2010, Total Place has begun to evolve into 'Community Based Budgets' where there appears to be more emphasis on de-ringfencing funding and providing greater powers of autonomy for all local authorities.
- 1.4. The Government intends to roll out 'Community Budgets' nationally in 2013-14.

#### 2. COMMUNITY BASED BUDGETS: NATIONAL UPDATE

- 2.1. In October 2010, sixteen<sup>1</sup> areas were chosen to take direct control over local spending in their area free of centrally imposed conditions. From April 2011, this first phase of 16 areas covering 28 councils and their partners will be put in charge of 'Community Budgets' that pool various strands of Whitehall funding into a single 'local bank account' for tackling social problems around families with complex needs.
- 2.2. CLG believe that Community Budgets, which the Government intends to roll out nationally by 2013-14, will pool funds into one budget so communities can develop local solutions to local problems.
- 2.3. The Government selected the 16 areas based upon evidence of strong local relationships that involve communities, the voluntary sector and partners from the public sector. CLG state that this puts them in a strong position to operate the first Community Budgets from 2011-12.
- 2.4. **ADDITIONAL 'PLACE BASED' WORK**
- 2.5. In addition to the formal 'Community Based Budget' work outlined above, CLG have also stated that Central Government departments will also be actively working with a further 20 areas to help push forward local flexibility and to address barriers.

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<sup>1</sup> Birmingham, Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, Bradford, Essex, Greater Manchester (a group of 10 councils), Hull, Kent, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, London Borough of Barnet, London Borough of Croydon, London Borough of Islington, London Borough of Lewisham, The London Boroughs of Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Wandsworth and Swindon

2.6. Other 'Place Based' initiatives that have evolved out of the 'Total Place' agenda include:

- **Place Based Budgeting** – Local Government Group working with councils to develop an evidence for Community Based Budgets. There is no official list of pilots – all interested places are capturing and building upon existing work.
- **Place Based Productivity** – Local Government Group programme of nine<sup>2</sup> work streams through which new ways of working will be identified, new practical tools for councils developed and barriers in the way of improvement will be challenged.
- **Local Integrated Services** – Four<sup>3</sup> local authorities have been working to get residents involved in spending decisions and in the design and operation of local services. Work began on these areas in May 2010.

2.7. The emphasis of these other initiatives appears to be identifying, building upon and sharing good practice, with the Local Government Group taking the lead. It will be important to ensure that the work being led by the Local Government Group has the engagement of the larger central government departments.

### 3. CONCLUSION

3.1. The formal 'Community Based Budget' pilots are not due to commence until April 2011, the findings of which will inform future policy developments.

3.2. At a local level, Wirral is developing its approach to localism whilst at the same time reviewing the LSP structure. The findings of the pilots will be considered through these work areas.

#### **Jim Wilkie**

Interim Chief Executive

This report was prepared by Gareth Latham, who can be contacted on 691 8030.

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<sup>2</sup> Procurement, capital and shared assets; Shared services across areas, tiers and partnerships; Data and transparency; Adult Social Care; Children's Services; Shaping markets and new models for service delivery; Democratic Leadership; Workforce and Skills; Tackling Central Government Barriers and Burdens.

<sup>3</sup> Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Blackburn with Darwin Borough Council; Cheshire West and Chester Council; Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Hull.