

WIRRAL COUNCIL

Policy and Performance Coordinating Committee

01 April 2014

SUBJECT:	POTENTIAL TASK AND FINISH WORK THEMES FOR COORDINATING COMMITTEE
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	Head of Policy and Performance/Director of Public Health
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr Ann McLachlan (Governance and Improvement)
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out a number of potential work themes for task and finish work for the Coordinating Committee to consider. This is in response to a request at the last meeting of this Committee and follows a recommendation from a task and finish group convened in Autumn 2013, for the committee to consider practical pieces of work that could be delivered to support the wider Scrutiny Work Programme.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 An item on the Coordinating Committee's work programme was a review of the Impact of the budget options 2013/14 and options for 2014/15. A Scrutiny Review Panel was established in autumn 2013 and two meetings were held in November and December.

2.2 The review panel sought to develop a scope in response to this proposed review topic. However, the Panel had concerns that the subject had not been discussed at full Committee and there was some uncertainty about what outcomes the review was intended to achieve. The Panel also noted the budget options had been driven by the Council's three strategic directorates and as such had been reviewed by the other three policy and Performance Committees in November. The Panel agreed to refer this topic back to the wider committee recommending that it is not progressed at this time.

2.3 The panel also noted that being aligned to the Council's Directorates, the other Policy and Performance Committees appear to have a more clearly defined remit and list of topics for their work programmes. The Panel went on to discuss the role of the Coordinating Committee and agreed that the focus of the Coordinating Committee should be on reviewing the activity of the other

Committees, providing support and coordination where required as well as filling any gaps not being covered by the other committees.

- 2.4 The Panel recommended to the committee that the Budget Options Review should not progressed at this time and that more practical pieces of task and finish work be considered in support of the wider scrutiny work programme.
- 2.5 The Panel also recommended there is a need for greater discussion and engagement when ideas are being formulated and topics are being decided for inclusion in the work programme. At the Coordinating Committee on 15 January, it was requested that an officer report be brought back to the next meeting suggesting some ideas for the Committee to consider.

3.0 POTENTIAL ITEMS FOR FUTURE TASK AND FINISH WORK

- 3.1 There are a number of areas where Members of the Coordinating Committee could undertake pieces of work to support the wider Scrutiny Work Programme and assist in the continued improvement of the Council's scrutiny function. These are set out below.
- 3.2 **Review the content of the wider Scrutiny Work Programme.** This could be undertaken to ensure that the programme aligns with the Council's Corporate Plan to determine if there are any obvious gaps. There would also be an opportunity to consider topical issues to ensure the programme reflects current public concerns. On a practical level, there would also be an opportunity to review the availability and use of Member and officer capacity to best prioritise the items proposed for the work programme.
- 3.3 **Undertake Quality Assurance of the Reviews completed by all Policy and Performance Committees.** This would provide a means to highlight and promote good practice with a view to this being replicated consistently for future pieces of work. This would provide an opportunity to explore the best approaches to gathering evidence, engaging stakeholders and the public as well as bench-marking activity against other local authorities.
- 3.4 **Review the consistency of developing recommendations.** This would provide an opportunity to look at standardising the format of scrutiny review recommendations so they are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART). This will support improvement through more effective monitoring of the impact of scrutiny, demonstrating the value added.
- 3.5 **Review how Constituency Committee decision-making is scrutinised.** As more decision-making is devolved to Constituency Committees, there will need to be appropriate checks and balances to ensure robust processes are in place. A task and finish group could be established to examine how the relationship between scrutiny and Constituency Committees should be developed.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 4.1 There are none directly relating to this report.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 N/A

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 N/A

7.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

7.1 N/A

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 N/A

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

9.1 N/A

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 N/A

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

(c) No because of another reason which is - The report is for information to Members and there are no direct equalities implications at this stage.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 N/A

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 N/A

14.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 Members are requested to consider the task and finish work themes set out in section 3 of this report for potential inclusion in the Coordinating Committee's work programme in the new municipal year.

15.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

15.1 For Members of the Policy and Performance Coordinating Committee to consider potential items of task and finish work to be taken forward in the new municipal year.

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