

WIRRAL COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

20 OCTOBER 2014

SUBJECT:	Policy and Performance Committee Chairs' Reports
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	Policy and Performance Committee Chairs
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr Ann McLachlan (Governance & Improvement)
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides Members of the Council with an update on the work carried out by each of the Policy and Performance Committees. The report includes contributions from each of the Committee Chairs. Members of Council are requested to note the contents of this report.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The Policy and Performance Committees were established as part of the constitutional changes agreed by Council on 30 April 2013. There are three committees aligned to the Council's Directorates and a fourth Coordinating Committee which is responsible for corporate oversight and call-ins.

2.2 The committees are responsible for discharging the Council's scrutiny function. Formal meetings include performance management, budget monitoring and policy updates as standing items. Each committee has also developed a work programme which includes a combination of officer reports and scrutiny reviews conducted by smaller groups of committee members.

3.0 COORDINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT

3.1 The full Co-ordinating committee has met on two occasions since the start of the municipal year for regular meetings. In addition, there have been three call-in meetings scheduled, although at the time of writing this report only two of these have taken place. There have also been two meetings of the Chair, Vice Chair and Spokespersons, both for agenda setting meetings and officer briefings.

3.2 Corporate performance and financial monitoring reports have been received at regular meetings. There has also been a report reviewing progress implementing Individual Electoral Registration ahead of publication of the new electoral register in December 2014. This had been the subject of a Task and

finish review earlier in the year and the recommendation was that progress be monitored. A report on decision-making within constituency committees was received in September which has resulted in a request for a more in-depth piece of work being undertaken in the New Year.

- 3.3 Agreement was reached with Chairs / Vice Chairs and Spokespersons of all Policy and Performance Committees on a methodology to scrutinise the Future Council officer proposals in line with an approach taken by the Regeneration and Environment Committee last year. The suggestion was that this methodology is followed by all Policy and Performance Committees to ensure consistency and this was approved by Co-ordinating Committee and referred on to the other committees during the September round of meetings.
- 3.4 One of the functions of the Coordinating Committee is to provide an overview of the other Policy and Performance Committees. As such, members have decided to move their meetings to the end of the meetings cycle, rather than hold them at the beginning, so Coordinating Committee is better able to reflect on the work of all committees.

Work Programme for 2014/15

- 3.5 The committee has reviewed the work programme for the coming year and has agreed to a request from a member to carry out a Task and finish review on the cumulative impact of Council Policies in addressing health inequalities. It is also the intention to schedule a piece of work later in the municipal year to review the decision-making by Constituency Committees.

Councillor Moira McLaughlin

4.0 FAMILIES & WELLBEING CHAIR'S REPORT

- 4.1 At the start of this municipal year there were legitimate concerns about the workload of the Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee. In line with good scrutiny practice, Spokespersons from all parties are invited to attend agenda setting meetings and officer briefings. At an early meeting of the Chair / Vice Chair and spokespersons we formulated an approach to help address the committee workload, and I would like to thank them for their assistance.
- 4.2 The Committee has established two sub-groups, both of which report to the full Committee. One concentrates on Attainment and looks at educational matters and schools' performance across the Borough. This includes early years' services right through to employment opportunities for young people and levels of achievement amongst looked after children.
- 4.3 The second sub-group will concentrate on Health and Care performance, and will monitor the performance of all Health Care providers. It follows up on last year's review of the Implications of the Francis Report for Wirral to ensure that standards at Wirral University Teaching Hospital are maintained and improved where necessary. We will also be looking at how the recommendations of last year's review of Care homes are being implemented.
- 4.4 The committee has received reports on Departmental Plans for Children and Young People, Adult Social Services and Public Health and is provided with

regular updates on performance and financial monitoring. In July the committee also received a report on a proposed variation to the delivery of cancer services at Clatterbridge Cancer Centre. In the coming weeks, two Members of the Committee will contribute to a joint health scrutiny committee with other authorities from Cheshire and Merseyside to review these proposals in more detail. A plan of requested reports has been scheduled in for the remaining meetings of the year.

Work Programme for 2014/15

- 4.5 The scrutiny of the Future Council budget options is being prioritised. A scoping document has been completed and evidence gathering is under way. The findings will be reported to full committee for discussion in November. Evidence gathering is proceeding for a scrutiny review on Safeguarding Children that got under way in the summer. This is due to report later in the year. A further review on the impact of domestic violence on young people and the services that support them is set to get underway soon. We have also agreed to start a review in the New Year on the number of unnecessary hospital admissions, as this has been identified as a performance target persistently not met.

Councillor Moira McLaughlin

5.0 REGENERATION & ENVIRONMENT CHAIR'S REPORT

- 5.1 There have been two committee meetings in July and September. At the July meeting a report was received on the scrutiny arrangements that will be in place to review the work of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA). Three Members of the Committee will sit on the LCRCA scrutiny committee ensuring a direct link between the Council and City Region scrutiny arrangements. The LCRCA will be a standing item on the Committee's agenda. In July the Committee also appointed Members to the Highways Representation Panel, the role of which is to review objections to Highways and Transportation proposals.
- 5.2 At the September Committee, reports were received on the outcome of two scrutiny reviews. The Car Parking Scrutiny Review was supported by Members from all political groups. The review was set up following scrutiny of last year's budget options in response to the standardisation of parking charges across the borough. The final report presented to committee set out a series of principles to act as a framework for setting car parking charges going forward. The Wirral Apprenticeship Scheme Scrutiny Review Panel was also supported by all political groups. The review recommended a number of areas of improvement for the scheme. Both reports were referred to Cabinet for endorsement.
- 5.3 In September the Committee also considered and debated the following Notices of Motion from Council:
- Underground Coal Gasification
 - Private Rented Sector Reform
 - Investing in Wirral's Infrastructure

The first two were supported and in terms of the last, a report was requested in order that at a future meeting to proper consideration is given to the issues highlighted.

- 5.4 The September Committee also received a report into Wirral's Climate Change Strategy and this was endorsed as the agreed framework to encourage and co-ordinate local climate-related action in Wirral.

Work Programme for 2014/15

- 5.5 The Committee has prioritised the Scrutiny of the Future Council budget options as the focus of its immediate work. A scoping meeting was held with the Chairs and Spokespersons on 29th September at which Members determined which options they plan to focus on in terms of scrutinising in more detail. A series of evidence gathering sessions are scheduled during October and will report to the next Committee meeting in November.

Councillor Mike Sullivan

6.0 TRANSFORMATION & RESOURCES CHAIR'S REPORT

- 6.1 The Committee has met twice in the current municipal year, with full member attendance and participation. Additionally the Chair, Vice-Chair and spokespersons have met on a number of separate occasions to discuss agenda setting and the Work Programme.
- 6.2 Regular reports on performance and financial monitoring are presented to the Committee. More recently a presentation was given by the Strategic Director – Transformation and Resources setting out the scope of the Directorate and the remit and areas of responsibility that fall under the committee. This was especially helpful for newer members.

Work Programme for 2014/15

- 6.3 At its September meeting, the Committee endorsed the proposed approach for scrutinising the Future Council budget options agreed at a meeting of the Policy and Performance Committee Chairs and Spokespersons. There are two options falling within the remit of this committee:
- Council Tax Over 70s discount
 - Community Libraries
- 6.4 Two scrutiny panels have been established to undertake task and finish work exploring these proposals in more detail. A scoping meeting has been held and evidence gathering sessions scheduled to take this work forward.
- 6.5 There were two review topics that were outstanding from the previous municipal year: Sickness Absence and the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme (LWAS). It was decided by the Chair, Vice Chair and Spokespersons that there was no value in setting up a task and finish group to scrutinise sickness absence because of the current upheavals being experienced by Council employees. The Task and Finish group set up to look at the LWAS review is currently on hold pending a Cabinet decision. I would like to thank all committee members for their contributions and hard work to date.

Councillor Janette Williamson

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 N/A

8.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 N/A

9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 N/A

10.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

10.1 N/A

11.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

11.1 N/A

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

12.1 N/A

13.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 N/A

14.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

14.1 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.

15.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

15.1 N/A

16.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

16.1 N/A

17.0 RECOMMENDATION

17.1 Members are requested to consider the contents of this report and whether they have any questions for the Chairs of the Policy and Performance Committees.

18.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

18.1 To update Members on the progress with Policy and Performance Committees.

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APPENDICES

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Council – Revisions to the Constitution	30/04/13
Council – Reports from Policy and Performance Committee Chairs	14/10/13
Council – Reports from Policy and Performance Committee Chairs	16/12/13
Council – Reports from Policy and Performance Committee Chairs	10/03/14
Scrutiny Annual Report to Council	14/07/14