

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

3 December 2014

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b><i>WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT</i></b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b><i>THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE</i></b>

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report updates Members on the current position regarding the work programme for the Regeneration and Environment Policy & Performance Committee.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The Regeneration and Environment Policy & Performance Committee is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council and be informed by service priorities and performance, risk management information, public or service user feedback and referrals from Cabinet or Council.

2.2 The work programme is made up of a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports. This provides the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

### 3.0 REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

3.1 The work programme was presented to the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee held on 22 September 2014. The work programme was subsequently approved and is attached as Appendix 1. A summary of the work programme items is detailed below.

- DWP Work Programme – This report will provide details on the Department for Work and Pension's (DWP) Work Programme and has been included elsewhere on the agenda.
- Review of Street Cleansing Post Budget Options – An officer report is to be provided on the impact of this budget option, up to date performance figures, information around the new cleansing programme and the contractor's performance against the programme. The report will include any issues identified with the performance and how these have been responded to.
- Monitoring of the Highways Contract – A report is to be provided detailing the contract value and what the contract will specifically deliver, including what has been 'lost' from the previous contract with Colas. The report will include the

issues relating to the handover from Colas to BAM Nuttall and what outstanding issue remain

#### **4.0 PREVIOUS / CURRENT SCRUTINY REVIEWS – UPDATE**

##### **4.1 Car Parking Scrutiny Review**

At the meeting of this Committee held on 22 September 2014, Members approved the report of the Car Parking Scrutiny Review and the report was subsequently referred to the Cabinet meeting held on 6 November 2014. An extract of the agreed Cabinet minute is detailed below:

*Councillor Stuart Whittingham thanked the Car Parking Scrutiny Review Panel and everyone involved in the Review for the Final Report. He proposed that, because of the potential budget implications, that the Cabinet note the content of the Car Parking Scrutiny Review Final Report and it be considered in detail at the same time as the Cabinet considered the Council's budget options. Councillor Phil Davies informed the Cabinet that he considered it refreshing to see the recommendations that the Scrutiny Review Panel had made and he welcomed the Panel's proposals around looking at demand and the viability of shopping centres.*

*Councillor Stuart Whittingham addressed the Cabinet about the present cost of living crisis because wages had not kept up with prices and that, coupled with the rise in zero hours contracts, meant that many people were not feeling the benefits of any recovery in the economy. It was noted that this cost of living crisis was also having an adverse effect on local businesses in Wirral's shopping areas.*

*As an authority the Council was committed to supporting local town centres in its administrative area and Members were very aware that Christmas was an important time for both families and local businesses. With this in mind, Councillor Stuart Whittingham requested the Cabinet to support the following recommendations to the Council as they constituted a change to the Council's budgetary framework:*

*'That*

*(1) from Tuesday, 9 December until the end of December 2014 the Council cuts the cost of parking in Council owned car parks by introducing free parking after 3pm;*

*(2) on Boxing Day and New Year's Day the Council provides free all day parking in Council owned car parks; and*

*(3) Officers be instructed to evaluate any change in usage in Council owned car parks compared to previous years.*

*Councillor Whittingham told the Cabinet that he believed that if these recommendations were agreed by the Council, they would go some way to easing the burden on families and help support local businesses at this important time of year. The financial impact could be met from existing approved budgets.*

*Councillor Phil Davies reported that if the Council was to agree these recommendations, residents and local businesses would welcome the*

*announcement. The proposals provided a real lifeline to some businesses that were operating on the margin*

**RESOLVED: That**

***(1) the Cabinet will give consideration to the recommendations set out in Car Parking Scrutiny Review Final Report at the same time as it gives consideration to the Council's budget options for 2014/15; and***

***(2) Council be RECOMMENDED to agree: That***

***(a) from Tuesday, 9 December until the end of December 2014 the Council cuts the cost of parking in Council owned car parks by introducing free parking after 3pm;***

***(b) on Boxing Day and New Year's Day the Council provide free all day parking in Council owned car parks; and***

***(c) officers be instructed to evaluate any change in usage in Council owned car parks over the time periods set out in (a) and (b) above, compared to previous years.***

#### 4.2 Wirral Apprentice Programme Scrutiny Review

At the meeting of this Committee held on 22 September 2014, Members approved the report of the Wirral Apprentice Programme Scrutiny Review and the report was subsequently referred to the Cabinet meeting held on 6 November 2014. An extract of the agreed Cabinet minute is detailed below:

*Councillor Phil Davies informed the Cabinet that he considered the Final Report to be an excellent piece of scrutiny work and he congratulated Councillor Anita Leech and the other Panel Members on it.*

*Councillor Bernie Mooney made reference to the cross party task and finish work that had been undertaken. She considered that it illustrated that scrutiny was working well at Wirral Council and she offered her congratulations on a fabulous Final Report.*

*Councillor Tony Smith informed that more vocational schools were required to help children obtain practical skills at 14+ so that they would have a better chance of obtaining apprenticeships when they left school.*

*Councillor Anita Leech reported that readiness for work was one of the Scrutiny Review Panel's concerns.*

**RESOLVED: That:**

***(1) the contents and recommendations of the Apprentice Scrutiny Report be supported; and***

***(2) officers be requested to develop an Action Plan to implement the recommendations set out in the report.***

## 5.0 PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Implications of Benefit Reforms on Under Occupancy

A report will be presented to this Committee at the meeting scheduled for 20 April. This report will provide an update on all recommendations made in the scrutiny review that was completed in March 2013.

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Members are requested to approve the Regeneration and Environment Policy & Performance Committee work programme for 2014/15 as shown in the appendix, making any necessary amendments.

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