

WIRRAL COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING 08 DECEMBER 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 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 There has not been a regular meeting of the Coordinating Committee since the last Council meeting. A decision was made during the last committee cycle to move the Coordinating Committee meeting to the end of the Policy and Performance committees, rather than hold it at the beginning. This will enable the Coordinating Committee to better reflect on the work of all committees.

3.2 There have been meetings concerned with the call-in of a decision on Early Years provision and the future of Children's Centres. The committee met and then re-convened to hold the hearing on 12th Nov. Over this year it has been difficult to accommodate all the requested call-in hearings within the agreed time limit and I think this is something which will need to be addressed when the review of the constitution takes place.

Councillor Moira McLaughlin

4.0 FAMILIES & WELLBEING CHAIR'S REPORT

- 4.1 The Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance committee agreed to establish a task and finish panel to look in detail at the Future Council proposals which fall within the remit of the committee. During September and October, the Panel met on six occasions to progress this review, with three sessions taking place in locations involved in the proposals.
- 4.2 It was testing to complete the work within the tight timescale, but this was achieved. I would like to thank all members, officers and staff who gave up their time to support the work and the Scrutiny Support Officer Alan Veitch who facilitated the work with his usual efficiency. As a result of the work a report was compiled by the panel, submitted and debated by the full committee, before it was referred to Cabinet for consideration.
- 4.3 In addition, we have held a meeting of the newly established Health and Care Performance Panel at which we followed up the recommendations that were made in our report into standards at Wirral University Teaching Hospital. At the next meeting of the Panel, we will follow up on our report on standards in care homes.
- 4.4 At the next Attainment Sub-group, we have agreed to address the theme of Early Years provision as well as monitoring school performance.
- 4.5 Cllr Clements and I have been attending a series of Joint Scrutiny meetings across the Cheshire and Merseyside authorities to look at the proposals for future delivery of care by Clatterbridge Cancer Centre. A verbal update will be provided to the next committee meeting in December.
- 4.6 The Vice-chair, spokespersons and myself have agreed to work with officers to identify areas that would benefit from pre-decision scrutiny and so develop the future agenda of the committee.

Councillor Moira McLaughlin

5.0 REGENERATION & ENVIRONMENT CHAIR'S REPORT

- 5.1 Since the last meeting of Council, we have been busy reviewing the budget proposals for 2015/16. Of the seventeen budget proposals out for consultation, eleven are from the Regeneration and Environment Directorate. The review panel chose to prioritise six options for more detailed examination based on the level of saving being proposed, the anticipated level of public interest and the impact of the saving if delivered.
- 5.2 A series of question and answer sessions provided the review panel with the opportunity to meet the key officers behind the proposals. It was clear from these sessions that due to year on year rounds of saving proposals and budget consultations, it is harder for officers to put forward cost savings without a significant impact on service provision.
- 5.3 The results of this exercise were reported to Committee on 4th November and this report and the outcome of discussions were referred on to Cabinet scheduled for 9th December. I would like to thank the officers involved and the Members of the review panel for their input into this scrutiny process which has

provided Members with an opportunity to contribute and highlight any concerns in advance of decisions being taken.

5.4 In terms of the work programme, the Committee is receiving a number of reports at its December and February meetings as the basis for considering potential task and finish work in the New Year. These include:

- Monitoring the highways contract
- Review of street cleansing performance
- The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Work Programme
- Dangerous dogs
- Investing in Wirral's infrastructure.

Councillor Mike Sullivan

6.0 TRANSFORMATION & RESOURCES CHAIR'S REPORT

6.1 The Committee has met once since last Full Council. The main purpose of this meeting was to discuss the reports produced following two separate Task and Finish panels, looking at budget options for Community Libraries and Over Seventies Council Tax Discount. As Chair I felt that the task and finish panels worked in a consensual and productive way and I am proud of the scrutiny work produced for both Budget Options.

6.2 The Task and Finish panel's findings were presented to Committee on 5 November 2014 as follows:

- Community libraries – it was recommended by the majority of the panel that local consultation should be carried out to determine preferred opening arrangements with Constituency Committees also having a role in deciding on the future of libraries in their area.
- Over 70s Council Tax discount – it was acknowledged that Wirral is the only Council still operating this scheme and if it is discontinued, consideration should be given to how the impact can be mitigated on those affected.

6.3 There are a number of items included in the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. The Committee has requested a report on Council Tax debts and Sundry Debtors and this is scheduled for February 2015. The report will detail what the Council does in terms of collection and debt recovery, including details on fair debt arrangements. An officer report on the development of the Council's ICT Strategy (currently being refreshed) is also due to be presented to Committee in February. The Committee has also requested a report in the New Year on the further implementation of the Future Council project. A task and finish review of the Council's approach to implementing guidance around the filming of committee meetings is scheduled for the New Year.

6.4 I would like thank all the Committee members for their participation and input and look forward to continuing our work together in the future.

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
Council – Reports from Policy and Performance Committee Chairs	20/10/14