

WIRRAL COUNCIL

TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

30 MARCH 2015

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

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The Transformation and Resources 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 TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

3.1 The work programme was presented to the Transformation and Resources Policy and Performance Committee held on 16 September 2014. The work programme was subsequently approved and is attached as Appendix 2.

4.0 PREVIOUS / CURRENT SCRUTINY REVIEWS – UPDATE

4.1 Local Welfare Assistance Scheme

At the previous Transformation and Resources Policy & Performance Committee held on 4th February, it was agreed the Task & Finish Review should recommence. Furthermore, Cabinet agreed the following budget resolution on the 10th February:

“This fund provides financial assistance to people in dire need. The government transferred responsibility for administering this from DWP to the Council together with a grant of £1.1m. The government announced that this grant was being cut with effect from March 2015. The Council has £600,000 in a reserve for this fund. Cabinet intends to

make this available together with the anticipated underspend in 2014/15 of £300,000 to create a fund totalling £900,000 available in 2015/16. This will provide a local scheme to fill the gap left by the government's unwillingness to assist the most vulnerable in our communities. It is proposed that the 2014/15 policy be continued until the end of July 2015. In the interim, Cabinet asks the Scrutiny Review Group which has been set up to look at this fund to meet in order to make recommendations as to how this resource should be allocated."

- 4.2 On 25th February, the Panel convened for the scoping meeting for the review. One of the outcomes from this meeting was that the review would be carried out in a single evidence session over the course of a full day. It was also agreed that representatives from a small number of organisations would be requested to attend the evidence session to enable the Review Panel to arrive at its findings and recommendations.
- 4.3 The Panel's final report is to be referred to Cabinet in June for consideration of the recommendations made. To avoid an additional committee meeting being scheduled for the purpose of approving the final report, the Chair, Party Spokespersons and Members of the Review Panel agreed that this Committee should be requested to delegate authority to the Review Panel to refer the final agreed report to Cabinet.

5.0 PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Freedom of Information Scrutiny Review

At the agenda setting meeting held on 13 November 2014, it was agreed that a report providing an update to all recommendations made in the Freedom of Information Scrutiny Review that was completed in April 2014 would be presented to this Committee. The Chair, Party Spokespersons and officers agreed that the update would be presented to the Committee in a table and included as part of this Work Programme report (Appendix 1).

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Members are requested to approve the Transformation and Resources Policy & Performance Committee work programme for 2014/15 as shown in the appendix, making any necessary amendments.
- 6.2 Members are requested to vary the Terms of Reference of the Local Welfare Assistance Task and Finish Review Panel to give delegated authority to refer the final report directly to Cabinet.

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