



## **Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 21 September 2016**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Transforming Wirral - Community Safety</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>The Chair of the Committee</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

At the previous meeting of this Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> July, the interim Director of Transformation presented a report relating to the involvement of scrutiny in reviewing new service models as they are developed. Committee agreed to the general proposals in that report and gave delegated authority to the Chair, Vice Chair and Spokespersons to agree arrangements for the scrutiny of specific transformation projects, as appropriate.

A business case, relevant to the remit of this Committee, is at a stage where review by scrutiny members is appropriate. The business cases relate to Community Safety.

As a result, a workshop was held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 at which the approach to the outline business case was explained and examined in further detail. The outcomes from the workshop are detailed in this report.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

It is recommended that:

- 1) Committee notes the contents of the report.
- 2) Committee refers the report to a future meeting of Cabinet when this proposal will be considered.
- 3) Further consideration is given to the optimal timing for the involvement of scrutiny in the development of future business cases.

## **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

To ensure that the views of scrutiny members on the business case are reflected to Cabinet prior to further relevant decisions being taken.

## **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Pre-decision scrutiny is regarded as good practice and is aimed at strengthening the decision-making process.

## **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Scrutiny workshop – 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016**

A workshop was held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 to review an outline business case which forms part of Wirral Council's Strategic Transformation Programme. The business case relates to Community Safety.

All members of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee were invited to attend. Seven Committee members attended the session: Councillors Phil Brightmore (Chair), Adam Sykes, Tracey Pilgrim, Louise Reece-Jones, Tom Usher, Irene Williams and Julie McManus. Apologies were received from Councillors Bruce Berry, Steve Foulkes, Christina Muspratt and Tony Jones. The Head of Corporate & Community Safety presented details of the business case following which a question and answer session was held and members had the opportunity to comment on the proposal.

It is intended that the comments provided by members at the session will be made available to Cabinet prior to further decisions being made regarding the future of the business case.

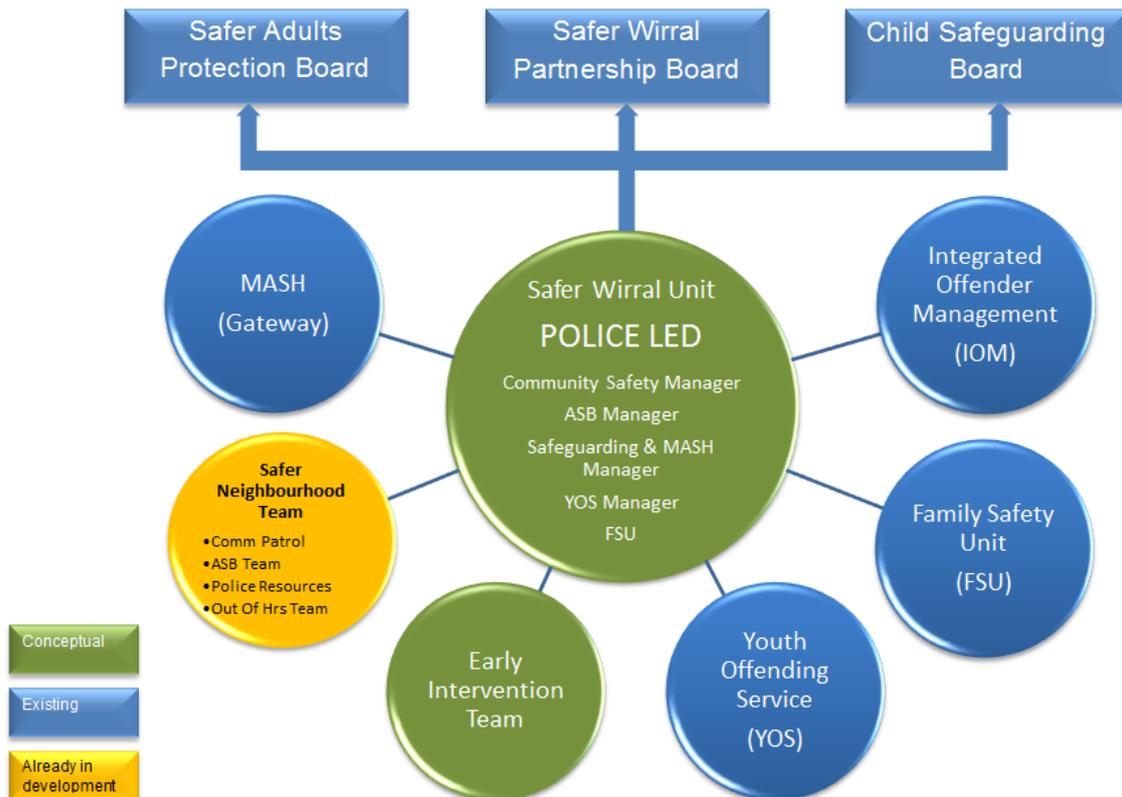
### **3.2 Summary of proposal**

The proposal is to fully integrate Community Safety services with Merseyside Police to create a new Delivery Vehicle, the Safer Wirral Unit. The aim is to make Wirral residents feel and be safer through reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. This has been identified as the number one priority by Wirral residents. All services and teams with a responsibility around community safety would be seconded into the new integrated unit. The new Unit would include Police neighbourhood resources, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service along with Council functions such as: community patrol, anti-social behaviour, youth offending, the family safety unit and the integrated offender management service which is made up of police and National Probation personnel.

The Operational Management of the Safer Wirral Unit will be led by Merseyside Police but Wirral Council would retain responsibility for the Strategy, commissioning the services and providing the oversight and governance through the Safer Wirral Partnership board.

The new model is shown below (Fig 1).

Fig 1:



The integrated Unit is being delivered in two phases. Phase 1 is 'Lift & Shift' which includes the transfer of some services into the new model and the agreement of the scope of pooled budgets. Phase 2 is the 'Transformation' stage of the delivery model which will enable the service to mature and highlight areas for ongoing development and change. It will also include the transformation of services, and the development of the Early Intervention Team.

### 3.3 Elected member comments

#### Operational Delivery

It was explained to Members that under the Local Government Act, there is requirement for local authorities to administer community safety partnerships and to bring relevant partners together to make sure that plans are in place to make a place safe. Members queried the criteria for what makes a place safe and how the perception of people feeling safe is dealt with. It was explained that this proposal is about bringing resources into one place which will provide more options for how the public is engaged and that the community would get a more appropriate person liaising depending on the issue to be resolved.

The levels of crime would still be with the Police to manage, in terms of statutory responsibility, and will be part of the indicator set that sits within the Unit and managed through the Police. Members learned that there is a drive by the Police and partners nationally to move away from purely numerical data around success and crime but to capture perception indicators and issues to identify how they are dealt with. The Unit will not work in isolation

from other services but there will be a greater combined resource to respond and reassure the public and deal with any perception issues.

A Member commented that moving away from raw numerical data was a concern but recognised that there may be some instances where this data, in isolation, could be important. Specifically, it was queried how the actual perception of crime doesn't mask what is really going on. The Head of Corporate & Community Safety responded by informing Members that, in terms of the Safer Wirral Partnership Board, they have inherited the whole suite of crime indicators and they will still be accountable for reviewing them. The Board will see dashboard reports on crime indicators on a regular basis and if a trend is identified, they will then direct appropriate resources to deal with that specific area. The Safer Wirral Partnership Board will include commissioners and representatives of both public health and health services (alcohol services, drug and misuse services). There is also representation from Children's Services and a designated Safeguarding Nurse for both children's and adults. Members agreed that if the Police are moving away from statistical data, consideration needs to be made to retaining some to ensure effective scrutiny can take place to ensure issues can be identified that would otherwise be hidden.

Members queried a risk of the Police potentially handing off some of their responsibilities to Wirral officers, such as Wirral Community Patrol responding to burglary calls. Members were reassured that this would not happen as it is not appropriate. However, it was explained that Wirral Community Patrol, directed by a police officer, may work together in responding to certain appropriate incidents. As community patrols and Police patrols cover the same area at the same time, it was explained that there is a benefit to pairing up at certain times and specific areas to enhance the ability to send a response to the community.

Members were informed that the Police would be operationally responsible for deploying Council officers in response to calls from the community. It was argued by the Head of Corporate & Community Safety that the positive outcome from this would be that it would address the existing issue of police resources being requested, such as for a disturbance, and nobody turning up due to other higher priority demands.

In response to questions relating to the training of officers being appropriate and sufficient for their roles, particularly in high risk situations, reassurance was suitably provided. It was explained that all officers have the appropriate personal protective equipment, similar to that of a PCSO, and that risk assessments are carried out to enable them to carry out their job safely.

As part of the integration, there is an expectation that there will also be improvement in cross-training from the Police to Council staff as well as Council staff to the Police. Members were ultimately assured that Council staff would only undertake roles in which they were adequately trained, provided with appropriate equipment and where risk assessments were in place.

It was reported to Members that the most recent survey completed by Wirral residents highlighted that 88% felt safe during the day. A Member commented that against three other comparative local authorities, the margin of difference was extremely small (91%, 91% and 86%) and whether this is enough to make a significant difference with teams simply being integrated and working closer together. An argument was put forward by the Member that Wirral Council could have looked at this proposal in a different way but the business case does not include any apparent consideration to a completely different model using the same resources. The Head of Corporate & Community Safety responded by stating that 'Phase 1' is simply a relocation of teams but 'Phase 2' in 2017 will see the opportunity to review the model at regular intervals to assess feasibility as well as the outcomes from the Ofsted inspection. With all partners integrated, there would be an opportunity to see what innovation can be achieved and what can be done differently to provide better outcomes for the residents and businesses of Wirral.

### Intervention Work

Members commented that the business case to integrate Community Safety services with the Police appears to focus more on being reactive when offending occurs rather than looking at more proactive intervention to stop people offending in the first place. The business case makes no clear reference to specific teams such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), Public Health or services related to drug and alcohol.

It was explained to Members that these proactive services were part of the early considerations when developing the delivery model and will be part of a transition over the next few years. It was explained that there is an Ofsted review currently being carried out on Children's Services. Additionally, Members highlighted the Taylor review on the Youth Justice System, which has yet to be released. Members understand that the outcomes and recommendations from these will need to be considered in the Final Business Case. Members were also informed that key staff from Children's Services wanted to engage in this process but there was no capacity due to involvement with Ofsted. It is understood that the 'Transformation Phase' in 2017 will allow some of this thinking to take place. Additionally, it was also explained that by moving the Youth Offending Service and Anti-Social Behaviour Team over, the appropriate plans and intervention strategies can be captured at the earliest stages of criminality, such as gangs or general bad behaviour.

### Priority Setting and Targets

Members identified a risk of competing priorities between what the Council, the Police and other agencies want to deliver and that some Police priorities may not be shared with the Council. It was explained that the priorities for the Safer Wirral Unit would be set by the Safer Wirral Partnership Board so the approach to delivering the Pledges would be agreed and there would be a range of outcomes to achieve. The Safer Wirral Unit will be accountable to the Board and, by default, the Safer Adults Protection Board and the Child Safeguarding Board, so any changes in priority will be discussed at the

appropriate strategic level. For the success of this delivery model, it was agreed by Members that consistent priorities will be crucial to ensure Wirral, and the Police achieve shared goals and ambitions. Members were assured that the Council would be instrumental in priority setting within that process. The Chair of the Safer Wirral Partnership Board will be the relevant Cabinet Member and will have the ability to ensure that the Police are more accountable and answerable for delivery.

Members raised a further concern regarding the Council's ambitions aligning to recommendations arising from the Ofsted review or the Taylor report. Assurances were provided that these recommendations would be actioned. For example, if it was recommended that Children's Services should not be located within a multi-agency team led by the Police, this would be complied with and the business case would be modified accordingly.

### Governance

Members queried the governance and scrutiny arrangements in place for the Safer Wirral Unit as a result of it being led by the Police. It is understood that the intention is for operational planning to be led by an appointed Officer from Merseyside Police. Officers or managers seconded to the Unit, whether from the Council or from partners, will be managed by this Officer who will be accountable to the three boards detailed in the delivery model (Fig 1.). This Officer will set the strategies, direction and outcomes for delivery based on these partnership boards and will also have a budget and resources allocated.

In terms of the reporting structure, it was explained that each board will have their own indicators which they will manage and monitor themselves. The success of the new model and achievement of the business case will be monitored by the performance monitoring and reporting arrangements. The Safer Wirral Partnership Board will monitor the delivery of these outcomes which will also be reported to the Cabinet Member and through corporate reporting mechanisms. It is expected that Wirral Plan performance indicators will be presented to Overview & Scrutiny for oversight.

A concern was raised by Members that if exception was taken with a poorly performing indicator, it was not clear who would be accountable. It was explained that it would initially be the Strategic Lead for this area of business from the Council's new Strategic Hub. The Safer Wirral Partnership Board has a statutory obligation on behalf of the Council and Police to ensure that people are safe and outcomes are delivered.

Members concluded that the scrutiny processes were unclear at this stage and there was a concern that the ability to scrutinise both the strategic and operational elements of the integrated Community Safety services without representation from the Police and Council officers. This would require more clarification to ensure scrutiny members can fulfil their role.

## Communication

A Member commented that if the desired outcomes from the proposal are safer communities and improved quality of life, it will be important for the public to be aware of this. From the community point of view, there is a perception that the Police will be contacted but won't respond. A question was raised around whether there was any plan for an advertising campaign or consultation campaign to inform residents of the proposal and where they need to go to avoid confusion. The Head of Corporate & Community Safety responded by agreeing there is a need for clarity on who to contact and what services will be provided and this will be addressed through the Communication Strategy which is currently being developed. Members were informed that there will be a high profile launch promoting the Safer Wirral Unit and the various teams that have been integrated. There will also be clarity on reporting lines and what those responsibilities are.

## Finance

A Member queried the efficiency savings of the proposed model and the potential risk that integrating services may increase the workload of Council funded services. The Head of Corporate & Community Safety reported that the Council budget for the proposal is £0.94M and is primarily for staffing and some transport costs. No efficiency target has been reported at this stage as the transformation work would need to take place first to assess potential savings based on the final model agreed. There is potentially scope for further efficiency savings to be realised and more additional funding may be identified as the new model develops. Members were informed that the Police and other partners have committed to providing resources but have not yet specified their budgets. As such, Members raised concern that the Council may be supporting their reducing budgets with the contribution that Wirral has made.

A Member raised a concern that the proposal appears to look like a savings option and clarity may be needed to demonstrate that the proposal is about doing the right thing with the public interest at heart and to deliver a better service. Although it is acknowledged that opportunities to maximise efficiency savings would be identified, an argument was made that there should not be any reference to efficiency savings within the business case.

## Scrutiny Process of the Business Case

Members queried whether this process was pre-decision scrutiny as it appeared the decision to create the Safer Wirral Unit has already been taken and is now being implemented. It was suggested that if pre-decision scrutiny is to take place on new delivery models then this should be scheduled accordingly and before implementation commences. This should be considered for future business cases presented to Members for review.

## **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Although there are financial implications arising from the business case, there are none arising from this report.

## 5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising from this report

## 6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

Although there are resource implications arising from the business case, there are none arising from this report.

## 7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Not Applicable

## 8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Not Applicable

## 9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct equality implications of this report.

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## APPENDICES

## REFERENCE MATERIAL

### SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee 'Transforming Wirral'	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2016