

# BUSINESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 13 September 2016

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	M Sullivan (Chair)
	Councillors	RL Abbey C Blakeley G Ellis A Leech J McManus D Mitchell
		D Realey C Spriggs J Stapleton S Williams W Ward
<u>Deputies:</u>	Councillors	P Brightmore (In place of KJ Williams) D Elderton (In place of T Pilgrim)
<u>In attendance:</u>	Councillors	M Patrick, Cabinet Member S Whittingham, Cabinet Member
<u>Apologies:</u>	Councillor	T Anderson

## 18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that apologies had been received from Councillors John Hale, Tracey Pilgrim and Jerry Williams.

## 19 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PARTY WHIP

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

Members were reminded that they should also declare whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

Councillor Mike Sullivan declared a personal interest in agenda item 4, 'Road Safety – Reducing Pedestrian Casualties', by virtue of him being a member of the Pedestrian Forum Association.

Councillor Warren Ward declared a personal interest in agenda item 4, 'Road Safety – Reducing Pedestrian Casualties', by virtue of him being a former private secretary to the Police and Crime Commissioner in 2014.

## 20 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 12 and 27 July, 2016.

**Resolved –That the minutes of the meetings of 12 and 27 July, 2016 be approved.**

## 21 ROAD SAFETY - REDUCING PEDESTRIAN CASUALTIES

David Rees, Road Safety Manager (Highways and Transport) introduced a report which set out officer views on the pedestrian casualty analysis prepared by the Wirral Pedestrian Association and highlighted the Council's recent performance in improving road safety for pedestrians.

Wirral had a long term record of improving road safety for pedestrians. In 1994 there were a total of 304 pedestrians of all age groups and all severities injured on Wirral, of these 84 were killed or seriously injured (KSI). By 2015 this had reduced to 109 pedestrian casualties injured with 28 KSIs. The ratio of KSI casualties to slight class injuries had also reduced.

Whilst the performance in 2015 was improved compared to the figures for all pedestrian casualties in 2013 or 2014, overall for the most recent period of 5 years the reduction in all pedestrian casualties had slowed down. The report also highlighted the causation types of casualties and the proportion of pedestrian KSIs compared to other road user groups. A variety of Local authority approaches to road casualty reduction had also been examined such as those set by Bristol, Birmingham and Cheshire West and Chester.

Responding to comments from Members, David Rees's comments included:

- The Road Safety section was very proactive in their work through liaison with the Police and Fire and Rescue Service and in their educative role in schools and the wider community and he outlined the terms of the statutory duty in respect of road safety. He acknowledged there was a reactive role to take in designing out risks to pedestrian safety through physical evidence where the Authority prioritised its actions.
- There was a need to use funds wisely in a climate of diminishing resources and where there was a good road safety record then he saw no necessity for a traffic survey, such as on Saughall Massie Road.
- The Council had no records of pedestrian claims arising or road safety issues arising from the placement of 'A' boards on the footway during the last 10 years. Whilst the obstruction of footways could potentially be a nuisance this could be dealt with using current procedures.
- The Road Safety section was very proactive with regard to distraction issues, such as people using mobile telephones whilst driving which was

now about as problematic as drink driving. The issue of mobile 'phone use was raised with teenagers through education programmes.

- Parking on pavements was not an issue with regard to pedestrian KSIs. Notices were still issued to vehicles which parked on pavements, although he did not have data as to how many were issued.
- There would be a Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy which was currently in development and likely to come forward in the Autumn. Wirral's emerging Road Safety Strategy would follow and complement this and he did not see any duplication.
- Best practice had been looked at in other authorities.
- There was a capital budget of approximately £500,000 for road safety.

Some Members questioned the validity and tone of the Wirral Pedestrian Association report. Other Members expressed concern with their being such a difference between the two reports.

David Rees acknowledged that there was a lot of work still to do with the aspiration to be at the top of the league table, though this would require a lot of resources. Serious progress had been made with regard to road safety education.

During the course of the debate on this item Councillor Stapleton declared a personal interest due to the mention of a possible planning application for a Fire Station at Saughall Massie Road, by virtue of her membership of the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority.

The Chair thanked David Rees for his report and for doing a tremendous job.

The Chair then invited Victoria Doran of the Wirral Pedestrian Association to address the Committee. She stated that the report of the Head of Environment and Regulation appeared to assume that all reductions in casualties were as a result of Council actions. There had been a major improvement in car design and also a reduction in pedestrian miles walked on Wirral. She suggested that people were frightened to go out on the roads, although she was not aware of any figures for pedestrians on roads. She would encourage the Council to look at best practice not just nationally but internationally. The incidents of pavement parking and 'A' boards on pavements could be a reason for people not going out. She congratulated the Council on the longer courses for driver safety.

The Chair then invited Chief Superintendent Ian Hassall, Area Commander of Wirral, Merseyside Police, to address the Committee. He referred to the amount of road safety education taking place in schools. He was aware of the notices issued to vehicles parking on pavements but he did not have any figures as to how many had been issued. He informed the Committee of the budgetary pressures which Merseyside Police were under and that there would be a structural change to the organisation from January, 2017. Each

month KSI figures were provided and scrutinised and the Police did devote resources to reducing KSIs.

A Member referred to the reduction in the Police budget and the loss of 2,000 people from the Merseyside Police force over three years and the detrimental effect this was having on neighbourhood policing.

The Chair thanked Ian Campbell, in his absence from the Wirral Pedestrian Association, for all the work he was doing into trying to bring down the numbers of pedestrian casualties. He then paid tribute to David Rees, Chief Superintendent Ian Hassall and Victoria Doran for their work and presentations to the Committee.

It was then moved by Councillor Blakeley and seconded by Councillor Steve Williams that –

- (1) Committee notes and thanks officers for their report.
- (2) Committee also thanks the Wirral Pedestrian Association for their input
- (3) Committee asks that an independent audit is commissioned to determine the current position in Wirral with regard to pedestrian safety and KSIs.

The motion was put and lost (4:10).

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Realey, it was then –

**Resolved (14:0) - That this Committee:**

- (1) Notes the information contained within the report and;**
- (2) Endorses the current holistic approach to casualty reduction and promotion of schemes and initiatives which assist the reduction of all road casualties.**

## 22 CUSTOMER CONTACT UPDATE REPORT

Lisa Jamieson, Transaction Centre Senior Manager introduced a report which summarised the work underway to develop a new approach to Customer Contact for Wirral Council and its partners. The project would form part of the council's new Transformation Programme.

The principles informing the Council's new model of customer contact were that it must:

- Make it easy for customers to get what they needed through digital transactional services and high quality information, advice and guidance content.
- Make sure those who struggled to use digital services could get help
- Develop staff to be problem-solvers, and use customer insight to prevent any problems recurring in future
- Find ways to share information and expertise with partners, so the Council could help its customers together
- Provide support in an emergency

As part of this model, the Council would provide increased opportunities for members and community groups to support residents who needed help in accessing Wirral's services through the development of 'Assisted Digital' provision.

The Council would also work closely with members to help them carry out their roles effectively, and efficiently. This would include providing training, improving communication between officers and members, and identifying how councillors needs could be met efficiently.

Responding to comments from Members, Lisa Jamieson's comments included the following:

- There would be an agile approach to the work involved in improving customer contact with any small task looked at and implemented through a structured approach.
- A number of soft market tests had taken place with regard to the CRM system and a further update was expected on the work of IT services to replace the system.
- She would ensure the list of initiatives outlined in the report were progressed over the next six months
- The possibility of using mobile 'phone apps would always be a consideration and soft market testing would take place on all ways for accessing services.
- Rather than presenting known solutions she was keen that Members' views also informed what would work best.

Members expressed views that with a new CRM system the need to retain a personal touch should still be taken into account. The difficulty in finding the right officer on the internal telephone directory was also referred to and officers promised that they would look into this issue.

Members thanked Lisa Jamieson for a very positive report and a Member referred to the need for her to get her vision across to senior officers within the Council.

On a motion by Councillor Blakeley, seconded by Councillor Elderton, it was then –

**Resolved (14:0) – That the officers be thanked for their report and a further report be brought to the Committee in January on the progress made.**

## 23 **UPDATE ON LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DEVELOPMENTS**

Rose Boylan, Policy and Strategy Manager, introduced a report and gave a presentation setting out a brief overview of latest developments at the Liverpool City Region (LCR), including the outcome of the recent Governance review and public consultation, and activity underway to implement the City Region devolution deal.

On 26 August the formal submission had been sent to the Secretary of State of Governance Review, Scheme and summary of consultation responses. All Councils would receive the draft Order and would be required to consent to the order before it was laid before Parliament. The DCLG would lay the Order sometime before early November 2016 and LCR local authorities and the Combined Authority would therefore need to provide consent for this before the end of October 2016. In May 2017 the Liverpool City Region Mayoral Election would be held.

Further detail on capacity and implementation, including staffing, remuneration, scrutiny, scheme of delegation and constitution, would be brought back to future meetings of this Committee.

Rose Boylan assured the Committee that all specific comments had been taken on board and the DCLG would have regard to these.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

## 24 **LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY SCRUTINY PANEL - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Chair reported that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel had not met since his last report to the Committee and he had nothing further to add to his previous report. The next meeting of the Scrutiny Panel would be held on 19 October.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

## **WIRRAL PLAN OVERVIEW REPORT: 2016-17 QUARTER 1 - BUSINESS THEME**

Alan Evans, Investment and Business Manager, introduced a report which described performance at Quarter 1 (April to June 2016). It was focused on high level population measures which described progress towards making a difference to the lives of Wirral residents.

Responding to comments from Members, Alan Evans informed the Committee that the pledge relating to the creation of jobs and growth included the creation of jobs within the maritime / ship building, offshore wind and civil nuclear sectors, which were all part of a targeted strategy to support these businesses. There were very high quality businesses in Wirral, including micro-businesses - businesses employing between 1 to 10 people.

Mark Smith, Head of Environment and Regulation, responding to a Member's comment on the pledge to make transport and technology fit for the future and the need to reduce road traffic casualties, stated that this was on an ongoing process and a new road safety strategy was being developed at City Region level. Resources available in the City Region included income from fines as a result of the Road Safety Camera partnership. When the City Region Strategy was in place a review would be undertaken by the Road Safety Manager and the Council's strategy would be refreshed.

Councillor Abbey reported that the review of the Wirral Bus Network had been put on hold and the consultation would start at the end of May / June, 2017 once the major works on the Merseyrail Wirral line had been completed.

Responding to Members' comments Mike Callon, Team Leader, Performance and Scrutiny, reported that more detailed reports on performance were available on the website, and these had been circulated to the Committee at the meeting. With regard to those items whose status was marked, 'Not started' although their status for the current period was marked as, 'Green', he would look into this and respond by email to the whole Committee. He referred to the Members briefing held in the last week to which 22 Members had been in attendance and that he was keen to take any further feedback to ensure future reporting on the indicators was pertinent and clear. The People Overview and Scrutiny Committee had resolved the previous week that the Chairs and Party spokespersons from the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees should meet to discuss the approach.

A Member commented over the confusing nature of the report and the need to see what was relevant to this Committee.

The Chair accepted that this was fair comment and that he would be meeting with the other Chairs and Spokespersons to discuss the best way forward for performance reporting.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

26 **FINANCIAL MONITORING QUARTER 1 2016//17**

Tom Sault, Head of Financial Services introduced a report which set out the projected revenue and capital monitoring position for 2016/17 as at the close of quarter 1 (30 June 2016) as reported to Cabinet on 18 July 2016.

The quarter one revenue report forecast an overspend of £1.1 million for the year and sought approval for the allocation of £11.1 million from the Revenue Contingency Budget to Directorates and the use of £1.6 million of General Fund Balances. The report also updated on other budgetary movements which had arisen since the 2016/17 budget was agreed.

The capital report updated the capital programme to reflect re-profiling of schemes between years which produced a capital programme of £58.97 million for 2016/17. Expenditure after the first quarter concluded was £2.7 million.

Under the New Operating Model, existing directorates would be superseded with new structures based around a Strategic Hub, Business Support function and a number of Delivery Units. Overview and Scrutiny Committees had already been reconstituted away from a directorate basis to align with Wirral's 20/20 three Vision themes of Business, People and Environment.

A budget realignment process was to take place to align to the New Operating Model. In very broad terms People would cover areas currently within Adult Social Care and Children and Young People, Environment would cover areas within Regeneration and Environment, whilst Business would cover Transformation and Resources plus aspects of the Regeneration and Environment budget.

**Resolved – That the report and appendices be noted.**

27 **POLICY INFORM: BUSINESS**

The Chair introduced a report on the September Policy Inform Briefing paper which provided an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, bills presented to Parliament and emerging policies.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

28 **HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATION PANEL MINUTES**

The Chair introduced the minutes of the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel held on 6 September, 2016, and it was -

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the recommendations of the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel as detailed in the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September, 2016, be endorsed; and**
- (2) The Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure be recommended to take appropriate action in respect of a proposal to introduce traffic calming features along with a 20mph Traffic Regulation Order in Devonshire Place as shown on drawing no. DC/0158/100.**

**29 BUSINESS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report from the Chair which explained the process of developing a scrutiny work programme for the new municipal year. The report provided an update regarding progress made since the last Committee meeting held on 12 July. The current work programme was made up of a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports. This provided the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

The Chair referred to the need to support the creative sector, and how best to alleviate barriers to bring businesses and entrepreneurs into Wirral. With regard to the Spotlight session for Wirral Waters this would take place on Tuesday, 18 October at 6.00pm in the Town Hall, Wallasey. It was also the intention that Members could go and visit Peel holdings in small groups to look at what was happening.

**Resolved – That the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2016/17, be approved with the addition of a task and finish group on supporting the creative sector.**

**30 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 1)**

Councillor Blakeley informed the meeting of a request for a special Committee meeting which he had submitted to the Head of Legal and Member Services in respect of the Community Patrol service.