

POLICY INFORM: Environment

Policy Inform- March 2017

The Policy Inform briefings will provide an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, bills presented to Parliament and emerging policies.

The Policy Inform briefings have been produced specifically to inform Portfolio Holders and Elected Members and will be taken to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees for discussion.



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INTRODUCTION

The Wirral Plan:

A 2020 Vision which sets out a shared partnership approach to improve outcomes for Wirral residents.

The Plan focuses on three key theme areas:

- **People**
- **Business**
- **Environment**

This Policy Inform paper will focus on the environment theme:

- **Leisure and Culture Opportunities for All**
- **Wirral Residents Live Healthier Lives**
- **Community Assets are Joined Up and Accessible**
- **Good Quality Housing**
- **Attractive Local Environment**
- **Wirral's Neighbourhoods are Safe**



The Wirral Plan Environment Theme states:

“Wirral has an attractive and sustainable environment, where good health and an excellent quality of life is enjoyed by everyone who lives here.”

Environment Policy Briefing:

This Policy Inform briefing focuses specifically on policies and legislation relating to the Environment Theme and is intended to provide Members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support the committees work programme and future scrutiny work.

The following table outlines the timetable for the preparation and reporting of policy briefing papers:

Overview & Scrutiny Briefings	
July 2016	The first policy briefing focused predominately on the Queen’s Speech, which established the Government's legislative programme for the parliamentary year ahead.

<p>September 2016</p>	<p>The second policy briefing was produced in September; it provided an update on policy and legislation and focused on Wirral Implications relevant to the government’s programme of legislation as outlined in the previous policy briefing.</p>
<p>January 2017</p>	<p>The third policy briefing focused on the Autumn Statement which set out how Government’s money was allocated. The policy briefing also provided an update on policy and legislation and considered relevant implications for Wirral.</p>
<p>May 2017</p>	<p>The fourth policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.</p>

The March policy briefing provides an update on policy and legislative developments that have been aligned to the Wirral Plan pledges.

The Committee may wish to identify specific policy areas to focus upon which are in line with the Committee’s work programme. Detailed briefing papers can be prepared for these subject matters at the request of the Committee which would be in addition to the regular policy briefing papers outlined above.

QUEEN'S SPEECH 2016 – DESIGNATION TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

On Wednesday 18th May 2016, the Queens Speech was delivered outlining the Government's programme of legislation and policies for the coming year.

Below is a list of all of the Bills that will have implications for local government. These Bills were announced during the Queens speech. The list also includes Bills carried over from the 2015-16 session. The list identifies the Overview and Scrutiny Committee remit that the legislation most closely aligns:

Legislative Plans	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Prison and Courts Reform Bill	Environment
Investigatory Powers Bill	Environment
Policing and Crime Bill	People and Environment
Soft Drinks Industry Levy	People and Environment
Lifetime Savings Bill	People and Environment
Neighbourhood Planning and Infrastructure Bill	Business and Environment
Children and Social Work Bill	People
Education for All Bill	People
Higher Education and Research Bill	People
National Citizen Service Bill	People
Finance Bill	People and Business
Bus Services Bill	Business
Local Growth and Jobs Bill	Business
Digital Economy Bill	Business
Modern Transport Bill	Business
High Speed Rail Bill	Business
Better Markets Bill	Business

Additional Bills that were announced during the Queen’s speech are outlined below. These will be monitored to identify any emerging implications for Local Government and reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

Additional Legislative Plans
Wales Bill
Bill of Rights
Criminal Finances Bill
Counter-Extremism and Safeguarding Bill
Cultural Property (Armed Conflicts) Bill
Small Charitable Donations Bill
NHS (Overseas Visitors Charging) Bill

The Bills relevant to the Environment priority are discussed in further detail in this paper.

WIRRAL PLAN ENVIRONMENT PLEDGES- POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

GOOD QUALITY HOUSING THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS

A safe and secure home is vital to all Wirral residents. We are working to improve the quality and supply of Wirral's housing stock, providing more affordable homes and specialist housing solutions, including extra care homes and supported living accommodation.

Our Pledge Ambition:

We will build and improve 7,000 houses over the lifetime of this five year plan. Our plans include building 3,500 new homes, improving 2,250 private sector properties and bringing 1,250 empty homes back into use by 2020. We will also continue to tackle the challenges and causes of homelessness in Wirral.

Outcome Strategy:

Wirral Housing Strategy Priorities:

- 1 Building more homes in Wirral to meet our economic growth ambitions
2. Improving the quality of Wirral's housing offer for our residents
3. Meeting the housing and support needs of our most vulnerable people to enable them to live independently.



Associated Legislation

Neighbourhood Planning Bill

Reporting Stage: The Bill was presented to Parliament on Wednesday 7th September 2016. After progressing through the House of Commons, it was first read in the House of Lords on 14 December 2016. The Bill's report stage began on 23th February 2017, and it is due to continue Tuesday 28th February.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Make provision about planning and compulsory purchase, and for connected purposes.

Associated Legislation

Neighbourhood Planning Bill (continued)

Concerns and progress so far:

What was going to be the Neighbourhood Planning and Infrastructure Bill has now been published as the Neighbourhood Planning Bill and no longer contains reference to the National Infrastructure Commission. The two main aims of the updated Bill are to help identify and free up more land to build homes on, to give communities as much certainty as possible about where and when development will take place; and to speed up the delivery of new homes, in particular by reducing the time it takes to get from planning permission being granted to building work happening on site. The Bill has been met with a passionate response in the House of Lords, with a wide-ranging discussion on issues such as home ownership rates and the role of local planning authorities. Councils have argued that there is little evidence that the current planning system delays housebuilding, pointing out that nearly nine in 10 planning applications are approved.

Wirral currently has four designated neighbourhood forums, working on their own local planning proposals, with one adopted neighbourhood plan, another plan past referendum and at least two other groups expected to apply.

Associated Legislation

Homelessness Reduction Bill 2016-17

Reporting Stage: The Bill was presented to the House of Commons on the 29th June 2016. The Bill progressed to the House of Lords on 30 January 2017; the Bill's Second Reading was held on the 24 February, with the Committee stage date yet to be announced.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Make provision about measures for reducing homelessness.

Concerns and progress so far:

The Bill will place additional responsibilities on local authorities if it is passed, which the LGA criticised at its announcement. However, in January, £48m of new funding was announced for councils in England to help deliver new and expanded services to prevent and reduce homelessness, which was linked to this Bill. Lord Porter, Chairman of the LGA, stated that the LGA "were pleased," at the Government's announcement, however: "we ask that the Government commit to reviewing the Bill's impact two years after implementation, to assess its actual impact and to ensure that councils are being fully equipped and funded to deliver the Bill's ambitions."

Associated Legislation

Homelessness Reduction Bill 2016-17 (continued)

Government amendments agreed during the Bill's passage through Parliament will result in additional costs for local authorities; the estimated financial impact of these amendments is £13 million, which brings the total new burdens funding for local authorities up to £61 million. The Minister also committed to review the implementation of the legislation, "including its resourcing and how it is working in practice, concluding no later than two years after the commencement of its substantive clauses."

The Private Members' Bill has received consistent government backing, with Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid MP, saying on the 24th October 2016: "This government is therefore, very pleased to support Bob Blackman MP's Private Members Bill, with its ambitious measures to help reduce homelessness."

Associated Legislation

Use of Property (Protection) Bill 2016-17

Committee Stage: The Bill was presented to Parliament as a Private Members' Bill on 4th July 2016. The Bill was withdrawn on Monday 20 January 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Make provision about protecting existing and established use of property.

Concerns and progress so far:

The Bill has been withdrawn and will not progress any further.

The Bill aimed to oblige the Secretary of State to issue guidance for local planning authorities in England on protecting established non-residential uses of land, i.e. existing businesses and other organisations such as churches and sports clubs, where proposed residential development is in the vicinity of that land.

Associated Legislation

Renters' Rights Bill [HL] 2016-17

Reporting Stage: Bill presented to the House of Lords on the 10th June 2016. The Bill's Committee Stage took place on the 18th November, but a date for its report stage is yet to be scheduled.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To make provision for tenants' access to database of rogue landlords and property agents;
- To end certain letting fees for tenants;
- To implement mandatory electrical safety checks; and
- To prevent rogue landlords from obtaining an HMO licence.

Concerns and progress so far:

The Bill's primary focus is to amend the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 in order to forbid lettings agents from charging tenants a multitude of fees. The Bill has received strong support in the House of Lords. Its progress has though been boosted by a petition named 'Making Renting Fair in England', which has now gained over 250,000 signatures. There has, though, been some criticism of the Bill, with claims that it unfairly penalises small firms who charge 'fair' fees, as well as the possible resulting increase in rents as the cost implications of the Bill are passed from landlords to tenants.

The Chancellor's Autumn Statement announced a ban on letting agent charges "as soon as possible"; and this was followed up by policy proposals to ban letting agents' fees and introduce banning orders to remove the worst landlords or agents from operation in February's Housing White Paper.

Associated Legislation

Housing Standards (Preparation and Storage of Food by Tenants in Receipt of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit) Bill 2016-17

Reporting Stage: The Bill was presented to Parliament on Thursday 20th October 2016. Its second reading debate has been delayed, and is now expected to take place on 24th March 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To require landlords of tenants in receipt of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit to ensure that their rented accommodation meets minimum standards for the hygienic storage and preparation of food; and
- To ensure such rented accommodation contains adequate appliances, equipment and utensils for the cooking of food.

Associated Legislation

Housing Standards (Preparation and Storage of Food by Tenants in Receipt of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit) Bill 2016-17 (continued)

Concerns and progress so far:

This Private Members' Bill seeks to prevent vulnerable families being left hungry due to their property lacking basic cooking facilities, and received cross-party support on its presentation. Prior to the Bill's second reading, the Bill's sponsor, Frank Field Labour MP for Birkenhead, wrote to Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid MP, asking him to consider adopting it as a Government Bill.

Associated Legislation

Protection of Family Homes (Enforcement and Permitted Development) Bill 2016-17

Reporting Stage: The Bill was presented to Parliament on Monday 4th July 2016. The Bill resumed its second reading debate on Friday 25th November 2016; the debate has now been adjourned once more to Friday 24th March 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Make provision about guidance to local authorities on when to take enforcement action for breaches of planning law;
- to clarify guidance on the scope of permitted development rights;
- to make provision about rights and entitlements, including of appeal, for people whose homes are affected by such breaches;
- to make provision for the inspection and regulation of building under the permitted development regime; and
- to establish financial penalties for developers who breach planning law in certain circumstances.

Concerns and progress so far:

The Bill aims to streamline the enforcement action process for Local Authorities when they are faced with breaches of planning law, and to clarify the scope of permitted development rights. Therefore, the Bill directly relates to Local Authorities, and therefore will pose particular implications for legislation at a local level, if passed.

However, the Bill has been delayed multiple times, and, as a Private Members' Bill, it is unlikely that the Bill will be enacted into legislation.

Associated Emerging Policy

Government backs Homelessness Bill with £48 million for councils

Gov.uk 17/01/2017

Summary- Councils are to receive a further £48 million in funding to help the delivery of new and expanded services to prevent and reduce homelessness. This new funding will be available to councils in England to meet the costs of the Homelessness Reduction Private Members' Bill, which if passed by Parliament, will mean local authorities will be required to help all eligible people – whether they are single or a family – for 56 days before they are threatened with homelessness. Those who are already homeless will get support for a further 56 days to help them secure accommodation. Other services will also be required to refer homeless people or those at risk to local authority housing teams who can provide them with free information and advice services.

Brief Analysis- On a national level, the Homelessness Bill has seen cross-party backing, alongside extensive support from the Government. The implications for local government are wide-ranging, and the LGA was initially critical in its response to the Bill, stating in October that “as it stands, the Bill is unlikely to achieve its objectives” as the new statutory duties focus on the symptoms of homelessness, “without addressing the causes”, such as housing, employment and welfare reform. However, following engagement of councils and the LGA in the Bill's continued development, the Bill was called “far more workable” by the LGA. This statement was followed up by the above announcement in January, which was commented on as positive. However, the LGA recommends that the Bill's impact should be monitored, as costings are difficult to predict and may change over time.

Associated Emerging Policy

Pilot scheme launched to unblock infrastructure delays

LocalGov.co.uk 05/01/2017

Summary- The Housing & Finance Institute (HFI) launched a government-backed pilot scheme to unlock infrastructure delays on housing developments on the 5th January 2017.

Brief Analysis- The scheme will aim to identify, assess and then unblock infrastructure problems in order to speed up house building. It will pay particular attention to delays caused by lack of utilities or transports connections. The scheme will run until May 2017, and, if successfully, will roll out across the UK later in the year.

Associated Emerging Policy

New money for affordable homes released

[Gov.uk 05/01/2017](#)

Summary- Communities Secretary Sajid Javid announced £7 billion of funding in an expansion of the government's affordable housing programme which aims to meet the diverse housing needs of the country.

Brief Analysis- The £7 billion is available for housing providers to apply for, with the aim of delivering more than 200,000 new homes. Alongside the extra funding, the government is expanding the existing affordable housing programme through expanding the variety of tenures available, which now includes Affordable Rent, Shared Ownership and Right to Buy. The inclusion of homes for Rent to Buy, which will be let with rents set at or below 80% of local market rent for a set time period, aims to give tenants the opportunity to save for a deposit and then the option to buy their current home.

Associated Emerging Policy

Green light for construction of thousands of new Starter Homes

[Gov.uk 03/01/2017](#)

Summary- Housing Minister Gavin Barwell confirmed that 2017 will see the first Starter Homes being built on brownfield sites across the country.

Brief Analysis – The initiative aims to deliver new homes for first time buyers between 23 and 40 at a discount of at least 20% below market value. The first wave of 30 local authority partnerships, including the Liverpool City Region, will spearhead schemes with support from the government's £1.2bn Starter Homes Land Fund.

Associated Emerging Policy

New garden villages to deliver thousands of houses

[Gov.uk 02/01/2017](#)

Summary- The Government announced its support for the first ever garden villages, which have the potential to deliver more than 48,000 homes.

Brief Analysis- Garden Villages is an expansion of the existing garden towns programme, consisting of smaller projects of between 1,500 and 10,000 homes. The 14 new garden villages will have access to a £6 million fund over the next 2 financial years to support the delivery of the new projects, including unlocking the full capacity of sites, funding for additional resources and expertise to accelerate development and avoid delays.

Associated Emerging Policy

New garden villages to deliver thousands of houses

[Gov.uk 02/01/2017 \(continued\)](#)

The developments will be distinct places with their own community facilities. The government may run a further call for expressions of interest in 2017 for other places with proposals for new garden villages.

Associated Emerging Policy

Funds to improve housing for people with learning disabilities

[Gov.uk, 20/12/2016](#)

Summary- A £25 million housing and technology fund for people with learning disabilities has been awarded to 52 successful local authority bids.

Brief Analysis- The fund has been announced by the Department of Health to help people with learning disabilities live more independently in their own homes. The main aims of the fund are to prevent unnecessary in-patient admissions; encourage community-based solutions which promote independence and choice; make use of new technologies and other bespoke adaptations to improve and adapt existing accommodation; and save money by reducing the need for hands-on care. The successful local authority projects focus on adapting existing housing, creating new accommodation and giving people support so they have more independence and choice.

Associated Emerging Policy

Housing White Paper

Communities secretary Sajid Javid's housing White Paper was published on 07 February 2017, after several delays. The White Paper set out a number of important policy announcements, including: forcing councils to produce an up-to-date plan for housing demand; expecting developers to avoid "low-density" housing where land availability is short; reducing the time allowed between planning permission and the start of building from three to two years; using a £3bn fund to help smaller building firms challenge major developers; a "lifetime ISA" to help first-time buyers save for a deposit; maintaining protection for the green belt, which can only be built on "in exceptional circumstances"; introducing banning orders to "remove the worst landlords or agents from operating"; and banning letting agents' fees.

Associated Emerging Policy

Housing White Paper (continued)

Local Authorities were referred to throughout the paper: key implications posed by upheld Green Belt restrictions, which was followed by a best practice process for reasonable options to be met before amending the Green Belt boundaries, and the Housing Delivery Test, which aims to ensure that local authorities and wider interests are held accountable for their role in delivering new homes.

The reaction of Local Government representatives from the LGA and LGiU has been mixed, with “encouraging” signs shown that the Government is listening to councils on powers to force developers and tackle land banking being met with frustration about the lack of movement on the “democratic deficit” in the planning system, and not enough being done to give Councils the powers and access to funding to resume their role as a house builder.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

Homelessness Reduction Bill

The financial implications of the Bill have been assessed by central Government, and an extra £48 million of funding has been assigned to the Bill. This has been welcomed by Local Government groups, with the caveat that it may not be suitable in the long term. Therefore the financial implications of the Bill will need to be assessed in Wirral in order to ascertain the suitability of the funding received for the additional responsibilities.

Renters Rights Bill

The aims of this Bill could have an impact on a significant proportion of residents in Wirral, as nearly 20% of housing in the Birkenhead and Wallasey Parliamentary constituencies are rented. The Chancellor’s Autumn Statement stated that letting agents will be banned from charging fees to tenants “as soon as possible”, and the Housing White Paper stated that it will look to bring forward that legislation, which will shift the cost to landlords instead.

The Government believes the move will save households hundreds of pounds, which may have an indirect impact on other Council priorities for residents. On the other hand, some landlords have stated they will have to pass on the letting agent fees in the form of higher rent for residents in order to meet costs. If this is the case, this will also have an indirect impact on other Council priorities for residents.

Protection of Family Homes (Enforcement and Permitted Development) Bill 2016-17

The Bill directly relates to local authorities, and will therefore pose particular implications if it was to proceed through Parliament. However, the Bill has not yet resumed Second Reading after being delayed multiple times. The particular implications of the Bill for Wirral will be re-visited in a future Policy Inform document, pending the Bill’s progress through the House of Commons.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

Housing Standards

Frank Field MP presented the above Bill to Parliament on 20th October 2016 as one which would require 'all landlords in receipt of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit (social or private) to provide basic facilities, which would include a fridge and a cooker as minimum standards for the hygienic storage and preparation of food, and contains adequate appliances, equipment and utensils for the cooking of food'. Inclusion of these items provide the ability for the tenant to be able to cook and store food, which would assist them to manage better on welfare benefits or with food received from food banks, which has proved to be an issue for some.

Providing appliances and utensils would represent a shift in the responsibility of the landlord along with the repairing obligations of the appliances. Providing these items poses a potential issue for private rented deposits because if cooking appliances and utensils are included, and become broken or damaged (it could be the end of life for the item), it may be taken from any deposit paid, which could result in the tenant being unable to move on to other private rented accommodation as they may not have enough for a new deposit. This may free up Wirral's Local Welfare Assistance funding which is currently available to those eligible to purchase this equipment.

Opportunity to shape national legislation and policy:

The Government have included an open consultation as part of the Housing White Paper, which begins on 7 February 2017 and closes on 2 May 2017. The consultation consists of 38 questions about the various policy proposals included in the White Paper, and therefore provides an opportunity for Wirral to respond to the various proposals and implications.

The deadline for responses is 23:45 on 2 May 2017 and the consultation can be accessed [here](#).

Opportunity to shape national legislation and policy:

The Land Registry has provided an open consultation on proposals to amend the Land Registration Rules 2003. The proposed rule changes will allow the introduction of new digital conveyancing and registration solutions over time. The Land Registry are seeking views from Land Registry customers, stakeholders and others with an interest in the property market.

The deadline for responses is 18:00 on 5 April 2017 and the consultation can be accessed [here](#).

Opportunity to shape national legislation and policy:

The Department for Communities and Local Government have provided an open consultation on proposals relating to planning and affordable housing for Build to Rent. The consultation is on changes to planning policy to encourage authorities to plan for Build to Rent schemes, with Affordable Private Rent to substitute for other types of affordable housing.

The deadline for responses is 23:59 on 1 May 2017 and the consultation can be accessed [here](#).

LEISURE AND CULTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

We will encourage more people to enjoy the wide range of leisure, culture and sporting opportunities on offer across Wirral. We will listen to residents' ideas and requests, and by 2020, will have increased access to events and activities to all our residents, regardless of age or income.

Our Pledge Ambition:

We will review the borough's leisure and cultural offer to make it fit for the future, and optimise the use of public spaces, parks and gardens across Wirral as community assets.

Outcome Strategy:

Wirral Leisure Strategy Priorities: 1. Promote and celebrate Wirral's parks, coast and countryside for leisure activities 2. Encourage people to take part in sports, leisure and social activities 3. Increase pride in Wirral's communities and encourage more residents to volunteer

Wirral Culture Strategy Priorities: 1. Develop creative partnerships and a cultural events programme to promote arts, culture and heritage in Wirral 2. Increase resident and visitor participation in Wirral's arts, culture and heritage offer to promote its educational, social and wellbeing benefits 3. Promote Wirral on a global stage as part of the Liverpool City Region to attract world class arts, culture and heritage events and exhibitions 4. Maximise the contribution of the arts, culture and heritage to the local economy.



Associated Legislation

Betting Licences Bill (Category B2 Gaming Machines) [HL]

Reporting Stage: The first reading of the Bill took place on the 13th June. A date for its second reading debate is yet to be scheduled.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To make provision for licensing authorities to restrict the number of Category B2 (fruit machines, slot machines) gaming machines which may be authorised under a betting premises licence.

Associated Legislation

Betting Licences Bill (Category B2 Gaming Machines) [HL] (continued)

Concerns and progress so far:

The Bill's content has been published and seeks to update section 172 of the Gambling Act 2005. The specifics of the Bill include that no machine of this category may allow a single charge of more than £10, and that the number of machines in this category must not exceed the number for which the premises holds a licence.

Associated Legislation

National Citizen Service Bill [HL]

Reporting Stage: The first reading of the Bill took place on the 11th October 2016 in the House of Lords. The Bill passed through the committee stage with amendments in the House of Commons, and currently awaits a date for the reporting stage in the House of Commons.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To secure the future of the NCS and make the NCS Trust accountable to Parliament and the public.

Concerns and progress so far:

National Citizen Service was first piloted in 2011, and involves a group of 15 to 17 year olds undertaking activities together, including residential activities and a community project, over a 2 to 4-week period. The aim is for the participants to develop the skills they needed to be 'active and responsible citizens'; mix with people from different backgrounds; and get involved with their communities. The National Citizens Service Bill seeks to secure the future of the NCS and make the NCS Trust accountable to Parliament and the public. Notable amendments to the Bill thus far include provision for all 15 to 18 year olds to take part in the scheme with a graduation ceremony afterwards and the provision of sufficient funds to allow for young people with disabilities and those from disadvantaged backgrounds to take part in the scheme. The Bill has achieved cross-bench-support in the House of Lords as peers acknowledged the importance of the NCS Trust's independent status, and the opportunity for more young people, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds to benefit from the scheme. During the Bill's second reading in the House of Lords, several peers highlighted the importance of local authority engagement and the leadership role of the NCS in strengthening the wider youth sector and breaking down siloed working, in the context of national cuts to the youth and voluntary sector.

Associated Legislation

Football Supporters (access) Bill

Reporting Stage: The Bill was introduced to parliament on 30th November 2016 under the ten minute rule. Its second reading is scheduled to take place on the 24th March 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To require football clubs to provide tickets to matches at a discount for persons under a specified age;
- to require local authorities to consider the needs of match going supporters when approving kick off times; and
- to require football clubs to set aside a proportion of transfer fees paid for the development of football facilities for local clubs and young people.

Concerns and progress so far:

As the Bill is a private members Bill, it is currently being prepared for publication prior to its second reading due on the 24th February 2017. The Bill has gathered relative support in the media, where attention has been drawn to the fact that the age of football fans at matches is increasing as young people can no longer afford to go to fixtures. The lack of public transport provision for fans has also been raised as an issue, as fixtures are often moved to times during the day that suit television networks rather than the supporters.

Associated emerging policy

£4 million in grants to fund English museums and galleries

[Gov.uk 17/01/17](http://gov.uk/17/01/17)

Summary- Grants totalling £4 million have been awarded to improve displays and facilities at museums and galleries across England, Matt Hancock, Minister of State for Digital and Culture, announced on the 17th January 2017.

Brief analysis- The grants, jointly funded through a partnership between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Wolfson Foundation, will be used for renovation and improvement projects in 39 museums and galleries, helping institutions across the country to increase access, improve displays and enhance public spaces. One of the institutions which have been awarded funding is the Maritime Museum in Liverpool, who will receive £200,000 to install a new gallery. Matt Hancock, Minister for Digital and Culture, said of the grants: "We want people to be able to enjoy world-leading culture wherever they live and whatever their background. These grants will make an important contribution toward increasing access to their wonderful collections and improving the visitor experience at museums right across the country."

Associated emerging policy

UK City of Culture 2021

[Gov.uk 12/01/17](#)

Summary- A nationwide competition was launched in early January to find the UK City of Culture 2021. The award is designed to use culture as a catalyst for economic and social regeneration and raise the profile of the arts and creativity locally and across the country. It also helps cities develop a broader high quality arts and culture sector, as well as attract increased business investment and boost tourism.

Brief analysis- Those interested in submitting bids to be UK City of Culture 2021 are asked to register with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport by the end of February 2017. Bids for the 2021 competition must be received by 28 April 2017 after which they will be assessed by an Independent Advisory Panel. A shortlist will then be announced in the summer, before the winning city is announced in Hull in December (the current holders of the UK capital of culture award). Liverpool's success of winning European Capital of culture in 2008 has not only shown that winning such a prestigious title can bring huge economic benefits to city, but also has the potential to bring cities

Associated emerging policy

Government boost for horseracing in Betting Levy Reform

[Gov.uk 14/01/17](#)

Summary- Sports Minister Tracey Crouch has announced that British horseracing will benefit from mandatory contributions from all major gambling businesses that take bets on the sport in this country. The move will ensure that any gambling business that takes bets from consumers based in Britain on races held in this country will pay 10 per cent of their gross profits from racing, above the first £500,000 they make, to support the sport and the equine industry.

Brief analysis- It will be enforced via a reformed statutory Horserace Betting Levy. The Levy has been in existence since 1961 but has become outdated, so offshore online betting businesses that take bets on British racing are under no statutory obligation to contribute to horseracing. Sports Minister Tracey Crouch said: "This move will help secure the future of horseracing in Britain by making sure that gambling firms pay a fair return to support the sport. Horseracing has a strong heritage in this country, employing thousands of people and is enjoyed by many almost every day of the year. This new approach to the Horserace Betting Levy will help sustain and develop the sport." The government intends to introduce the new funding scheme in April 2017.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

National Citizen Service Bill

The Bill seeks to establish the National Citizen Service on a more permanent footing with current provision for 16- and 17-year olds in England being extended. As such more Wirral young people and families will have the opportunity to attend NCS Courses.

WIRRAL RESIDENTS LIVE HEALTHIER LIVES

We want all of our residents to have a good quality of life and lead healthy lifestyles in clean and safe environments

Our Pledge Ambition:

We remain committed to addressing health inequalities in Wirral through encouraging residents to lead healthier lifestyles, and promoting physical activity and healthy eating. We will also continue to reduce the prevalence of smoking amongst our residents and the level of alcohol related ill-health and anti-social behaviour through restricting availability of 'super-strength' alcohol. We want to see 30% of Wirral off licences retailers sign up to the council supports 'reduce the strength' campaign.

Outcome Strategy:

Wirral Healthier Lives Strategy Priorities: Reduce the number of smokers in Wirral 2. Reduce the impact of alcohol misuse on individuals and communities 3. Promote healthy eating 4. Support local people to take control over their own wellbeing.



Associated Legislation

Soft Drinks Industry Levy

Announced in the 2016 budget as a part of the government's childhood obesity strategy, the tax will impose a levy on soft drinks with more than 5g of sugar per 100ml from April 2018, equating to 24p per litre for the drinks with the highest sugar content.

The purpose of the levy is to:

- To encourage producers and importers to reduce added sugar in soft drinks;
- to promote diet drinks; and
- to reduce portion size of soft drinks

Concerns and progress so far:

The levy has been called for by Public Health England and the British Medical Association for some time as a means to tackle the UK's obesity epidemic, although it has been met with fierce opposition from industry who are now considering legal action to halt the levy. It is thought that the levy will raise £550 million in its first year, with revenues subsequently dropping as producers modify their behaviour. Funds raised will be spent on investing in physical activity and healthy eating initiatives for school children as a means to reduce rates of childhood obesity. Examples include the £10 million investment per year in school breakfast clubs ensuring children get a healthy start to the day, and doubling Primary PE and Sport Premium helping pupils stay active in school.

Associated Legislation

Soft Drinks Industry Levy (continued)

The specifics of the levy will be set out in the 2017 Finance Bill. The government ran a consultation period for the levy between 18th August and the 13th October, which sought the feedback of industry and health experts. The feedback gathered from the consultation found that over half of all respondents (154 in total) were in favour of the levy, with many wishing to extend the scope of the levy to other products. In particular 95% of medical and health bodies who responded to the consultation were supportive of the proposals, and 73% of retailers. A majority of manufacturers and associated trade bodies were, though, opposed to the levy (78%).

Associated Legislation

Sugar in Food and Drinks (Targets, Labelling, and Advertising) Bill

Reporting Stage: Bill presented to parliament on the 14th September 2016, with its second reading now rescheduled for 24th March 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To require the Secretary of State to set targets for sugar content in food and drinks;
- to ensure that added sugar content on food and drink labelling be represented in terms of the number of teaspoonfuls of sugar; and
- to provide for standards of information provision in advertising of food and drinks.

Concerns and progress so far:

As a private members Bill, there is little information about its contents until close to its second reading, delayed until 24th March. The Bill is closely aligned with the Soft Drinks Industry levy which aims to change the behaviour of soft drinks producers to improve individuals' health outcomes.

Associated Legislation

Diabetes Inpatient Care Bill

Reporting Stage: The Bill was first presented to parliament on the 15th December 2016, with its second reading scheduled to take place on 24th March 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To ensure that all diabetic patients are identified on admittance to hospital and have their diabetes condition monitored while in hospital by a specialist diabetes team.

Associated Legislation

Diabetes Inpatient Care Bill (continued)

Concerns and progress so far:

As this Bill is a private members Bill, its contents is currently being prepared for publication in advance of its second reading, due to take place on the 14th February 2017. The Bill's sponsor MP Keith Vaz is campaigning for legal care requirements for specialist diabetes care in hospitals as currently 15% of all hospital beds in the UK are taken by someone with diabetes, and more than one fifth of people with diabetes have a hypoglycaemic episode during a hospital stay, and almost 40% experience medication errors.

Associated Legislation

Access to Radiotherapy Bill

Reporting Stage: The Bill was first presented to parliament on the 29th November 2016, will its second reading scheduled to take place on 24th March 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To make provision to improve access to radiotherapy treatment in England;
- to define access in terms of the time that patients are required to travel to places providing treatment; and
- to specify 45 minutes as the maximum time patients are to travel.

Concerns and progress so far:

As this Bill is a private members Bill, little information about its contents are currently available. It is expected that specifics of the Bill will become available prior to its second reading on the 24th March 2017.

Associated Legislation

Maternity and Paternity Leave (Premature Birth) Bill

Reporting Stage: The Bill was first presented to parliament on the 26th October 2016, will its second reading scheduled to take place on 24th March 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To amend Part 8 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 to make provision about maternity and paternity leave for parents of babies born prematurely.

Associated Legislation

Maternity and Paternity Leave (Premature Birth) Bill (continued)

Concerns and progress so far:

As this Bill is a private members Bill, little information about its contents are currently available. It is expected that specifics of the Bill will become available prior to its second reading on the 24th March 2017. A campaign named 'The Smallest Things' has been vocal in their support for the Bill, and an associated petition has gathered over 100,000 signatures signalling general support for the Bill. There have, though, been concerns raised that if the Bill were to become law, the change would mean an increased cost to employers.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

Soft Drinks Industry Levy

Wirral Context

Sugar consumption is as a major factor in childhood obesity. Sugar-sweetened beverages (SSB) are disproportionately consumed by children and adolescents and are the single biggest source of dietary sugar for children and teenagers. Locally the latest data shows that 22.9% of school children in Reception are overweight or obese rising to 34.4% in Year 6. The consumption of alternative drinks that are lower in sugar can potentially contribute to weight loss. This can indirectly prevent the incidence of other issues associated with obesity such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Excess sugar consumption also negatively impacts on child dental health. Wirral has above average prevalence of decayed, missing or filled teeth in children (aged 0-3) when compared to the rest of England.

Potential Implications

Since the last update the government has published its Childhood Obesity Plan for Action. The soft drinks industry levy is one of a range of actions included within the Plan. The levy, alongside the other actions, will contribute to tackling childhood obesity; diabetes and other cardiovascular conditions as well as to improve dental health. This will also contribute to delivering Wirral's Healthier Lives Strategy.

The levy has a potential dual impact as the revenue generated by the levy will be, it is proposed, invested in primary school PE and sport premium; thereby also potentially improving children's physical activity levels. For those children who are overweight or obese, they will have increased support locally to enjoy physical activity and lose weight. This will also help us to promote a more active culture among children; making a contribution to Wirral's Leisure Strategy.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

Soft Drinks Industry Levy (continued)

In addition to enabling the implementation of the Childhood Obesity Plan for Action at local level it is also important to recognise that the effectiveness of the levy in reducing sugar intake, and consequently contributing to improving health outcomes, will be dependent on a number of factors. These include how producers and retailers respond both in terms of the extent to which manufacturers reformulate drinks, how the tax is either absorbed by producers or passed on to customers and/or if consumer choices change and what they change to. Furthermore, the current proposals for the levy also include a number of exemptions including immunities for small operators, fruit juice and milk based e.g. milkshakes drinks. The design of the tax will therefore be critical in terms of realising the potential health benefits and any contribution to the consultation should address these issues.

The consultation on the levy closed on 13th October 2016. The Director of Health and Wellbeing inputted into the consultation response through the Cheshire and Merseyside Public Health Collaborative (Champs) to ensure a consistent technical approach and response from the sub region.

Opportunity to shape national legislation and policy:

HM Revenue and Customs are running an open consultation asking for views on proposed sanctions to tackle illicit tobacco and whether these could potentially help tackle evasion of tobacco duty and other excise duties. Sanctions include: increasing financial penalties for repeat offenders, a new civil penalty for dealing in illicit tobacco, reducing the threshold for the publication of details of people or companies that deliberately evade duty and statutory Duty of Care on landlords and landowners of properties or land.

The deadline for responses is 23:45 on 10 May 2017 and the consultation can be accessed [here](#).

ATTRACTIVE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT FOR WIRRAL RESIDENTS

We are committed to empowering residents to help them create great neighbourhoods where communities are proud of their area and love where they live. We will work with communities to develop locations, taking advantage of assets and local characteristics to create a sense of identity that people can relate to and want to uphold.

Our Pledge Ambition:

We want to increase residents' pride in their local communities, and increase personal responsibility to keep Wirral 'clean and green'.

We will listen to local residents and act on their suggestions to ensure more residents see their quality of life improve over the five years of this plan by supporting communities to deal with local environmental issues such as litter, fly-tipping and dog fouling.

Outcome Strategy:

Loving our Environment Strategy Priorities: 1. Love where you live
2. Driving behaviour change 3. Put resources where they are needed 4. Tackle untidy land

Managing our Waste Strategy Priorities: 1. Waste Prevention and Reuse 2. Residual Collections 3. Kerbside Recycling 4. Food and Garden Waste Collections



Associated Legislation

UK Environmental Protection (Maintenance of EU Standards) Bill

Reporting Stage: The Bill was presented to Parliament on the 13th July 2016. The Bill's second reading debate has been delayed and is expected on Friday 24 March 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Make provision about the safeguarding of standards of environmental protection derived from European Union legislation, including for water, air, soil, flood protection, and climate change, after the withdrawal of the UK from the EU.

Concerns and progress so far:

The Bill was well-received by parliament during its first reading, and since there has been development in terms of post-Brexit policy, whereby Theresa May stated in her January Brexit Plan speech that "as we repeal the European Communities Act, we will convert the 'acquis' – the body of existing EU law – into British law."

However, the Bill has been delayed multiple times, and is unlikely to go through.

Associated Legislation

Clean Air Bill

Reporting Stage: The Bill was presented to parliament on the 16th November 2016. The second reading debate has been delayed until the 24th March 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To set, measure, enforce and report on air quality targets;
- to require that vehicle emissions targets and testing reflect on-road driving conditions;
- to make it an offence to remove permanent devices that reduce vehicle emissions;
- to provide powers for local authorities to establish low diesel emissions zones and pedestrian-only areas;
- to restrict the use of diesel vehicles in urban areas; and
- to make provision about the promotion of electric and hydrogen powered vehicles and for the development of sustainable public, private and commercial transport by road, rail, air and sea.

Concerns and progress so Far

If passed and made law, it will be incorporated into a new Clean Air Act, updating current legislation which is 24 years old. A new Clean Air Act would include provisions to make public transport, cycling or walking the easiest option for urban journeys and a funded diesel vehicle scrappage scheme to help business and car owners upgrade to less polluting vehicles. However, as a Private Members' Bill, it is unlikely to go through.

Associated Legislation

Vehicle Noise Limits Bill

Reporting Stage: The Bill was presented to parliament on the 4th July 2016. The second reading debate was initially expected to take place on the 2nd December 2016, but has now been delayed to the 24th March 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Make provision for the enforcement of noise limits for vehicles via automatic monitoring equipment.

Concerns and progress so far

At present, vehicle noise limits are defined by Regulations 55-57 of the Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986, with breaches of these limits punishable by fine. This Bill seeks to ensure that enforcement of these limits can occur using the existing vehicle enforcement network.

As a Private Members' Bill it is unlikely to go through.

Associated Emerging Policy

DEFRA to Reject Deposit-Return Schemes

[Resource 15/02/2017](#)

Summary- Officials from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs have played down the possibility of introducing a deposit-return scheme (DRS) as part of its new litter strategy for England.

Brief analysis- Officials were apparently unimpressed by the results of a trial scheme in Scotland, stating that the proposal is now 'unlikely'. Such a scheme would involve a 10 to 20 pence levy on plastic bottles and containers, which customers would be able to reclaim by bringing them back to stores to be recycled. Advocates say that scheme has worked in Norway and Germany, achieving recycling rates of target materials in excess of 90 per cent. On the other hand, critics say that DRSs undermine recycling and fail to prevent litter. The Department's 25-year Environment Plan is expected to be published later this year.

Associated Emerging Policy

Lidl to Donate Surplus Food Through Neighbourly App

[Resource 14/01/2017](#)

Summary- Supermarket Lidl has become the second major grocery retailer to sign up to social platform Neighbourly to tackle its food waste.

Brief Analysis- Neighbourly Food, launched in December 2015, is a specialised app that allows businesses to offer their excess food by uploading what's available, its location and expiry date. Local charities and food banks that have registered with the service for free can then claim what they need and also publicise their food requirements. Lidl plans to have all its stores participate by April 2018. Marks & Spencer also use the network in their stores, and in a June 2016 reports noted that its partnership had helped reduced stores' food waste by 9%.

Associated Emerging Policy

Westminster City Council to trial 'polluter pays' parking charges

[LocalGov 30/01/2017](#)

Summary- A pilot scheme to charge diesel cars more for parking within Marylebone is to be piloted by Westminster City Council from April.

Associated Emerging Policy

Westminster City Council to trial 'polluter pays' parking charges (continued)

[LocalGov 30/01/2017](#)

Brief analysis- The scheme will add an extra 50% to parking charges for diesel cars within F Zone with the aim of cutting harmful vehicle emissions. Any money raised from the initiative will be spent on schemes to promote sustainable transport. The council's Cabinet Member for Environment, Sports and Community has stated that the aim is to encourage residents to invest in cleaner transport that will make a difference in the equality of air in the area. The pilot measure is supported by local stakeholders and partners within the Marylebone Low Emission Neighbourhood including the three business improvement districts.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

The above Bills will have a number of implications for the Council. The full details of these implications will not be available until the Bills' second reading and debate to Parliament. Therefore detailed implications for Wirral Council in relation to these Bills will continue to be monitored and included in the next Policy Inform papers produced for Overview and Scrutiny Committees in July.

COMMUNITY SERVICES ARE JOINED UP AND ACCESSIBLE

We are already integrating public sector and community services to make sure they are fully joined up, but we will integrate more services with our partners, and work with voluntary and community groups to transfer local assets for them to manage directly, providing the services residents need.

Our Pledge Ambition:

We will enable our already thriving communities to realise their full potential and unlock the skills and expertise within them to deliver more for themselves.

Associated Legislation

At present there are no legislative developments associated with this pledge. We will continue to monitor any developments.



**Community Services
are Joined Up and
Accessible**



Associated Emerging Policy

£210,000 funding boost to community projects

[Gov.uk 24/01/2017](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/210000-funding-boost-to-community-projects)

Summary- Minister for Faith and Integration Lord Bourne announced a £210,000 funding boost to be shared among Near Neighbours community projects in England.

Brief analysis- Near Neighbours aims to bring together diverse communities and different faiths, through a range of activities that improve their lives and the local community in which they live. The first projects to receive the new funding include those improving employability through basic literacy and numeracy classes, and those bring communities together in unique ways to build personal skills like sewing classes and hospitality training to improve local relationships.

WIRRAL'S NEIGHBOURHOODS ARE SAFE

Unfortunately, the actions of a small minority can have a negative impact on the majority of residents. We are increasing our efforts to quickly and effectively deal with anti-social behaviour, including street drinking and neighbourhood noise issues.

Our Pledge Ambition:

Over the next five years we will place a greater emphasis on activities which will positively engage young people and communities to prevent anti-social behaviour, and support people that have been affected. We will also look at improving potential licensing and planning enforcement powers.

Outcome Strategy:

Wirral Safer Neighbourhoods Strategy Priorities: 1 Build stronger and more confident communities where people feel safe. 2. Improve Community Safety by tackling the cause and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour. 3. Protecting the most vulnerable people in our communities. 4. Deliver greater integration with all relevant partner agencies to achieve a safer Wirral.



Associated Legislation

Policing and Crime Bill

Royal Assent: The Bill was presented to Parliament on February 10, 2016. Royal Assent was completed on January 31, 2017.

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- To make provision for collaboration between the emergency services in order to make services more effective and efficient;
- Overhaul the police complaints system so that the public have confidence in the police and highest standards of integrity are adhered to;
- More protections to people under investigations and children and young people from sexual exploitation; and
- Refining police powers under the Mental Health Act.

Associated Legislation

Policing and Crime Bill (continued)

Concerns and progress so far:

Both houses agreed on the contents of the Bill during the Consideration of Amendments. Royal Assent was completed on January 31, 2017. This legislation will enable police, fire and ambulance services to drive deeper collaboration locally in the interests of efficiency, effectiveness and economy. It will also bring about changes to police complaints and disciplinary systems designate police powers to staff and volunteers, general changes to police powers and changes will eliminate the use of police stations as a place of safety for children and young people under 18.

Potential implications for the Wirral Plan as a result of emerging legislation and policy:

There are currently no implications for the Council emerging from the Policing and Crime Bill.

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