



TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Thursday 1 December 2022

REPORT TITLE:	LIVERPOOL AND WIRRAL CORONER AREA ANNUAL REPORT 2021
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

A Coroner is an independent judicial office holder, appointed by the local authority.

They investigate deaths that have been reported to them if it appears that,

- The death was violent or unnatural
- The cause of death is unknown, or
- The person died in prison, police custody or another type of state detention

The appended report is the full annual report of the Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Area for the period of 2021.

The Wirral Plan 2021-2026 has been developed and the focus covers the following five themes:

- Safe & Pleasant Communities
- Brighter Futures
- Active and Healthy Lives
- Sustainable Environment
- Inclusive Economy

The Coroners service delivers in some form against most of the above themes.

This matter affects all wards in the borough.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee is recommended to note the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee within its terms of reference, has responsibility for customer contact, community development and community services, including all of those functions related to community safety and also those regarding the promotion of community engagement. The Committee is charged by full council to undertake responsibility for bereavement services and support to the Coroners Service.
- 1.2 The report has been produced to enable the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee to undertake this function.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 A further option would be not to undertake a review of this report. However, the Committee is tasked to undertake this function as laid out in the Constitution.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 On 2nd April 2015 the Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Areas merged to form one jurisdiction. Liverpool City Council is the lead authority working closely with Wirral Council. The Coroner Area of Liverpool and Wirral is a large geographical area of 26,884 Hectares with a population of around 800,000. The area is a part of the Liverpool City Region which is a world class centre of excellence in commerce, culture, education and industry and as such the area has a significantly larger workforce than resident population. The Coroner works closely with two registration districts, Liverpool Register Office and Wirral Register Office.
- 3.2 The Coroners and Justice Act 2009 sought to give effect to some of the key recommendations of Dame Janet Smith's Shipman Inquiry and the Luce Review which both reported in 2003.
- 3.3 In particular, the intention behind Schedule 2 of the 2009 Act was to move towards fewer (but larger) coroner areas which are supported by a full-time Senior Coroner. This approach could lead to greater economies of scale, through sharing of staff and resources and will enable full-time Senior Coroners to focus entirely on their coronial duties, thus developing their skills and experiences more fully.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The gross expenditure outturn for 2021/2022 for the Liverpool & Wirral Coroner Services was £1,964,711. The recharge ratio according to population is 63% Liverpool City Council, 37% Wirral Council.
- 4.3 A further breakdown of the recharge ratio is included in the appended report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Section 24 of the 2009 Act requires the relevant local authority for a coroner area to provide 'whatever officers and other staff are needed by the coroners for that area to carry out their functions'. The authority must provide accommodation that is 'appropriate to the needs of those coroners.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 This report is for information purposes only and as such there are no direct legal implications

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 This report enables the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee to review the coroners annual report and any associated risks. By not undertaking this function, the Committee would not be discharging its duties as laid out in the constitution. This is a high-profile service and carries reputational risk implications.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The report has been produced for information and to enable further debate and discussion by members of the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. However, this report is for information purposes only and as such there are no direct equality implications.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report is for information purposes only and as such, there are no direct environment or climate implications

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 This report is for information purposes only and as such, there are no direct community wealth building implications associated with this report

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Annual Report 2021

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Coroners and Justice Act 2009
The Shipman Enquiry
Cabinet Report 2 December 2012

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee in accordance with 6.2(g) Terms of Reference: in relation to bereavement services and support to the Coroner's service.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure	12th October 2021