

Council – 16 October, 2017

Motions

The following motions have been submitted in accordance with the notice required by Standing Order 7(1) and are listed in accordance with Standing Order 7(2).

1. TYRED CAMPAIGN *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Phil Davies

Seconded by Councillor Ian Lewis

On Monday 10 September 2012 a coach bound for Liverpool carrying 53 people from the Bestival music festival on the Isle of Wight, left the road and crashed into a tree instantly killing Michael Molloy (18), Kerry Ogden (23) and the coach driver, Colin Daulby (63), and left others with life changing injuries. The inquest into the crash found that the front nearside tyre which was actually older than the coach itself, at 19 years, was responsible for the crash. In 2014, Liverpool City Council unanimously agreed a motion in support of Michael's mother Frances calling for a change in the law requiring a ban on tyres older than six years on commercial vehicles. Despite the wide spread public and political support for this campaign, no change in the law has been made, shamefully leaving others are risk from faulty and dangerous tyres.

Council notes that Frances Molloy has launched "Tyred" – the official campaign to pressure Government – to change the law to ban the use of tyres older than ten years on commercial vehicles.

Council wholeheartedly supports "Tyred" and instructs the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition to call together cross-party support for a change in the law.

Council further resolves to support the "Tyred" campaign until such a change in the law is achieved and to draw the attention of the Local Government Association, especially its Environment and Transport Board, to this Council's view that the concerns should be fully addressed.

Finally, Council asks the Chief Executive to write to all schools in the Borough asking them to require coach and bus operators they use for school trips etc to adhere to the provisions set out in the Tyred campaign. Council should also ask officers to look at our own procurement procedures with a view to inserting an appropriate clause in any contracts with commercial operators and to also ensure that this standard applies to our own vehicle fleet.

2. EASTHAM WALK-IN CENTRE *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Moira McLaughlin

Seconded by Councillor Julie McManus

This Council condemns the closure of the Eastham Walk-In Centre with just five days' notice, causing massive inconvenience to local people and with no prior consultation with elected members and the public.

Council demands that Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group provides a definitive date by which Eastham Walk-In Centre will re-open, as promised by its Chief Officer, Simon Banks, at the meeting of Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 13th September 2017.

Council expects any future changes – including urgent changes to NHS services – to be formally notified to the Council and the public of Wirral at the earliest opportunity in order to ensure that meaningful consultation takes place and no resident loses out as a result. Council asks The Leader of the Council to write to the CCG outlining its concerns.

The NHS is now facing its seventh year of chronic underfunding by successive Conservative governments. People in Wirral are seeing the appalling consequences of the continuing attacks by Conservative politicians on this country's most treasured institution.

Council demands that the Government reverses this underfunding and opposes the enforced closure of life-saving local services such as Eastham Walk-In Centre.

3. SAVING OUR NHS FOR WIRRAL'S PEOPLE *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Council welcomes the developing relationship between itself and the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Foundation Trusts that provide services to the public of Wirral.

Council recognises that this involves frequent and regular contact with Officers as part of developing the Wirral Plan and ensuring that valued services meet local needs.

Council, having considered the process followed by the Clinical Commissioning Group in recent months, is firmly of the view that the process of consultation with Councillors and ward members was misjudged and inadequate, causing undue distress and anxiety with a failure to engage at the earliest stage. This was highlighted by the way in which the 'temporary' closure of the Eastham Walk-In Centre was brought about.

Council believes that the free flow of information on proposals under consideration is necessary for the successful development of future working relationships in the best interests of the services provided for Wirral's people.

Council notes that the 'Sustainability and Transformation Plans' are now being described as 'Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships'. The 'partnership' Wirral's people expect to see must not undermine the foundations and principles of our National Health Service, developed through the vision put together by William Beveridge and put into place by Nye Bevan.

This Council will, therefore, remain opposed to changes and savings which place the achievements of our NHS at risk.

In order to study the real impact of any proposals being developed, Council...

- a) urges that when officers from the Local Authority and NHS organisations work closely together, they ensure that adequate reporting processes are in place and are effective so as to enable Councillors to provide a democratic voice at all stages;
- b) wishes to be assured that proposals developed by all partners, including this Council's officers, will involve the opportunity for democratic input at all stages.

4. CARE LEAVERS COUNCIL TAX EXEMPTION *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Wendy Clements

Seconded by Councillor David Elderton

Council notes that:

1. OFSTED has identified support given to care leavers in Wirral is a key issue.
2. A 2016 report by The Children's Society found that when care leavers move into independent accommodation they begin to manage their own budget fully for the first time. The report showed that care leavers can find this extremely challenging and with no family to support them and insufficient financial education, are falling into debt and financial difficulty.
3. Research from The Centre for Social Justice found that over half (57%) of young people leaving care have difficulty managing their money and avoiding debt when leaving care.
4. The local authority has a duty of care to care leavers as 'Corporate Parents'.

Council believes that:

1. To ensure that the transition from care to adult life is as smooth as possible, and to mitigate the chances of care leavers falling into debt as they begin to manage their own finances, they should be exempt from paying council tax until they are 25.
2. To write to the Minister of State for Children and Families, urging him to introduce a national exemption for care leavers from council tax up to the age of 25.

5. DISABLED WORKERS AND THE NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Stuart Kelly

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Council notes and endorses the All Age Disability Strategy at Priority Two (Young people and adults with disabilities have access to employment and are financially resilient) and notes that, in drawing up the Strategy, people with disabilities have told us “they should have the same access to education and work as all citizens” and that “everyone has a unique contribution to make and when this is recognised, people will feel and be valued”.

Council, therefore, expresses its disappointment that Birkenhead MP Frank Field (chair of the Work and Pensions Select Committee) has fallen into the trap of advocating a lower wage for people with certain disabilities. <http://www.learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/LW-Opp-for-All-FINAL.pdf> (Pages 106-113).

Council notes that no reliable evidence has ever shown that this is effective and it also perpetuates the stereotype that some disabled people are worth less than others.

Council believes that Mr Field’s views are both wrong and insulting and invites Frank Field MP to withdraw his suggestions and to apologise.

6. NJC PAY TO COUNCILS *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Janette Williamson

Seconded by Councillor Chris Spriggs

This Council notes that:

- National Joint Council basic pay has fallen by 21% since 2010 in real terms
- NJC workers had a three-year pay freeze from 2010-2012. This was compounded by the fact an agreement was reached to forgo a 1% pay rise shortly afterwards. This puts Wirral Council workers' pay BEHIND all North West councils who follow NJC pay.
- Local terms and conditions of many NJC employees have also been cut, impacting on their overall earnings, the 4 days unpaid leave amounts to a further 1.6% pay cut.
- NJC pay is the lowest in the public sector
- Job evaluated pay structures are being squeezed and distorted by bottom-loaded NJC pay settlements needed to reflect the increased National Living Wage and the Foundation Living Wage
- There are growing equal and fair pay risks resulting from this situation

This council therefore supports the NJC pay claim for 2018, submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite on behalf of council and school workers and calls for the immediate end of public sector pay restraint. NJC pay cannot be allowed to fall further behind other parts of the public sector. This Council also welcomes the joint review of the NJC pay spine to remedy the turbulence caused by bottom-loaded pay settlements.

This Council also notes the drastic ongoing cuts to local government funding and calls on the Government to provide additional funding to fund a decent pay rise for NJC employees and the pay spine review.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Call immediately on the Local Government Association to make urgent representations to Government to fund the NJC claim and the pay spine review and notify us of their action in this regard.
- Write to the Prime Minister and Chancellor supporting the NJC pay claim and seeking additional funding to fund a decent pay rise and the pay spine review.
- Meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and the pay spine review.

7. NEW FERRY *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Warren Ward

Seconded by Councillor Irene Williams

Council expresses its outrage that it is over six months since New Ferry was shaken to its core by an explosion in the town centre – leaving many people homeless, businesses damaged or destroyed and people nearby in terror, and the Government has still provided no financial assistance.

This Council commends the actions of its officers who have worked tirelessly to help restore order and normality to the community, and help residents and small businesses to get their lives back on track. Council support has included £300,000 from its scarce reserves.

Despite a long-awaited visit months after the explosion by the minister, Jake Berry MP, during which he heard of the heart-breaking stories of those affected by the blast, Council is astonished that the minister has taken the view that the explosion in New Ferry was not sufficiently serious to qualify for Government assistance and that the cost of recovering from the explosion should fall on the shoulders of Wirral Council Tax payers.

Council also condemns the u-turn by Wirral Conservatives, who, having originally backed Labour's call for Government to provide financial assistance, is now arguing that Wirral Council Tax payers should provide the funding.

Council also notes that the Government has taken a very different stance in response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy, where substantial public funding has been made available to help residents with urgent needs such as housing.

Council agrees that The Leader of the Council should write to Chancellor of the Exchequer, highlighting the impact which the explosion is still having, and requesting him to include funding in the forthcoming Autumn Statement to deal with emergency needs of residents and businesses in New Ferry and the wider regeneration plans which have been drawn up.

8. UNIVERSAL CREDIT *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Chris Jones

Seconded by Councillor Paul Stuart

Council condemns the government's misnamed "Universal Credit" scheme as an extension of past Tory/LibDem and current Tory policies crafted to shift to the poorest and most vulnerable in our society the burden of the bank-driven world debt crisis of 2008.

Further, Council calls on the government to listen to the people, listen to members of the Parliamentary Conservative Party who see their votes slipping away, and abandon its Universal Credit proposals.

Universal credit will, for people in or out of work, conflate or replace most of the discrete benefits to which they are now entitled. The LGA shows an expectation of average weekly income cuts of £11.18 from the change to UC but with potentially devastating immediate income gaps of several weeks for the very neediest. These benefits can include those for housing, child care, disability, limited capability for work, caring, etc.

Council notes that following a recent DWP presentation, explaining how the shift from the previous arrangements will be put into effect, Councillors who attended became aware that the government's arrangements are too incompetently orchestrated to avoid severe financial distress amongst Wirral's most vulnerable and neediest individuals, families and children.

As the change to UC is intended to begin its Wirral "roll out" during November there are well founded fears that it will precipitate a desperately hungry Christmas-time for many already low-income Wirral residents, negating the very spirit of the Christmas message and forcing more people to rely on foodbanks.

Whilst declaring profound opposition to the seemingly vindictive and cruel speed of the change to UC, Council also observes that the measure is consistent with seamless continuation, by the present Tory government, of the preceding ConDem collaboration government's neoliberal austerity measures.

Finally, Council notes that the Leader of the Conservative Group has already shown his willingness to make a stand against his own government when he believes they are wrong by voting against the hated Bedroom Tax. Council calls on Councillor Lewis to show similar resolve and oppose Universal Credit.

9. ACTION ON SCRAMBLER BIKES (*refer to Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee*)

Proposed by Councillor Bruce Berry

Seconded by Councillor Chris Blakeley

Council welcomes the launch of the Wirral Safer Hub

However Council notes that there is increasing public concern concerning anti-social behaviour relating to motor bikes and scrambler bikes.

Council further notes that Merseyside Police, despite the good work carried out under Operation Brookdale, do not seem to be able to contain the root cause of the problem.

Council therefore requests the Wirral Safer Hub set up a dedicated task force using all agencies, elected members and the voluntary sector to come up with a plan to tackle this menace.

10.TOUGHHER ACTION ON FLY-TIPPING *(refer to Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in consultation with Cabinet Member)*

Proposed by Councillor David Burgess-Joyce

Seconded by Councillor Bruce Berry

Council notes that between 2013 and 2016 3,648 tonnes of fly tipped waste was removed costing the Council taxpayer £584,285.85.

Council further notes the damage that fly-tipping causes to Wirral's natural environment and wildlife and the statement from Keep Britain Tidy imploring that "It's got to be easy for people to do the right thing otherwise we will see an increase in fly-tipping".

Therefore Council requests that the Cabinet Member for Environment considers:

1. Investing in CCTV and automatic number plate recognition technology (ANPR) to help police fly tipping hotspots, such as Carr Lane and Lingham Lane in Moreton.
2. Instructing officers to ensure that all fly tipped waste, whether hazardous or non -hazardous is removed within three working days.

11. MAKING MORE TIME FOR PEDESTRIANS *(refer to Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee)*

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist
Seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia

Council notes that National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recently began a consultation on creating an environment in which people are more active...
<https://www.nice.org.uk/news/article/local-councils-should-make-it-easier-for-people-with-disabilities-to-be-active-says-nice>

In raising this issue, it argued that active travel will help to prevent a range of chronic health conditions, leading to savings for the NHS and society at large.

Its general aim - to make it as easy as possible for people to walk, cycle or use other forms of active travel rather than making short journeys by car - would fit well with the aims of this Council and strategies being adopted by the Liverpool City Region.

Council recognises that whilst NICE is not expected to report upon the results of its latest study until the end of March 2018, the report contained ideas that can be considered in the meantime.

As NICE suggested that Councils should ensure that crossings with signals give enough time to cross the road, this Council requests officers to report on how extending the time allocated to crossing the road can be achieved so that the needs of pedestrians, wheelchair users and the elderly can be better addressed.

12. WIRRAL WELL-MADE NEED FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT *(refer to Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee)*

Proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley

Seconded by Councillor Leslie Rennie

Council notes that in Moreton more than 500 new houses will be built in the next two/three years including:

- 297 on the former Burton's site
- 122 on the former Fernbank Farm site and
- a number (yet to be determined) on the former Foxfield School.

However at the recent 'Moreton Conversation' it was clear that, while plans to push forward with the initiative were welcomed, no thought had been given to provide adequate infrastructure to support the proposals including additional education, health and public transport provision.

Council therefore requests the Leader of the Council to put in place, alongside these proposals, plans to ensure that fully adequate infrastructure is designed which will include working with Merseytravel to bring forward the plans for the provision of the long overdue and much needed Town Meadow Railway Station.