



Council Supplement

Town Hall
Wallasey

9 December, 2011

Dear Councillor

This supplement for the Council meeting to be held at **6.15 pm on Monday, 12 December 2011** in the Council Chamber, within the Town Hall, Wallasey should be read in conjunction with the Council Summons dated 2 December, 2011.

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AGENDA

6. **MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL BY THE COUNCIL (Pages 1 - 34)**

To consider matters referred to the Council for determination. The relevant minutes are attached; copies of the related reports can be provided for Council members on request.

In accordance with Standing Order 7(1), these matters will be taken as approved except in respect of any to which objections or amendments are submitted, in accordance with Standing Order 7(2).

(i) Minute 175 (Cabinet – 3/11/11) – Provision for Inflation 2012/13

(ii) Minute 198 (Cabinet – 24/11/11) – Insurance Fund Budget 2012/13

(The minutes in respect of (i) and (ii) above were attached to the original Council Summons dated 2 December, 2011).

Any other matters referred to the Council by Cabinet at its meeting on

8 December, 2011:

- (iii) Minute 210 - Corporate Plan 2012/13 (Minute and report attached)
- (iv) Minute 211 - Council Tax Base 2012/13 (Minute attached)
- (v) Minute 215 - Capital Programme and Financing 2012-15 (Minute attached)
- (vi) Minute 216 – Budget Projections 2012-15 (Minute attached)

Note: Objections have been received in respect of (iii), (v) and (vi) above and in accordance with Standing Order 7(2) are listed within item 10, 'Matters for Debate'.

7. MATTERS FOR NOTING (Pages 35 - 36)

The following matter, determined by the Cabinet, is drawn to the Council's attention in accordance with the Constitution (copies of the related report can be provided for Council members on request).

Minute 232 (8/12/11) - Local Account (Reason – waiving of call-in) (Minute attached).

10. MATTERS FOR DEBATE (Pages 37 - 64)

Pursuant to Standing Order 5(2)(n), and in accordance with Standing Order 5(4), to consider written comments, objections or amendments to minutes submitted under Standing Order 7(2), together with those motions, submitted under item 9 above, that the Council agrees to debate at this meeting and any minority reports submitted in accordance with Standing Order 35(4).

The order for debates will be as follows:

1. Motion: Policies Affecting Women
2. Motion: Council Processes and Purpose
3. Motion: Adoption - Being the Best Corporate Parents
4. Motion: Corporate Governance
5. Motion: Duty to Involve, Inform and Consult
6. Objection: Minute 210 (Cabinet – 8 December, 2011) - Corporate Plan 2012/13 - Update
7. Motion: Employment Rights
8. Motion: Parks and Countryside Service Procurement Exercise (PACSPE)
9. Motion: Affordable Homes
10. Motion: Bye-Law Banning Dogs from Children's Play Areas
11. Motion: AKA Report
12. Motion: Cashless Scrap Metal Trade
13. Motion: Annual Children's Services Assessment
14. Motion: Fairness, Not Favours
15. Motion: Increasing Recycling
16. Motion: Cuts to Local Transport Plan
17. Objection: Minute 210 (Cabinet – 8 December, 2011) - Corporate Plan 2012/13 – Update

- 18.Motion: Public Consultation and Shared Services
- 19.Objection: Minute 215 (Cabinet – 8 December, 2011) - Capital Programme and Financing 2012-15
- 20.Motion: Lights, Camera, Action
- 21.Motion: Education, Education, Education
- 22.Motion: Loss of Gas Supply in Leasowe and Moreton
- 23.Objection: Minute 216 (Cabinet – 8 December, 2011) – Budget Projections 2012-15

11. VACANCIES (Pages 65 - 66)

To receive nominations, in accordance with Standing Order 25(6), in respect of any proposed changes in the membership of the Cabinet and committees, and to approve nominations for appointments to outside organisations.

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Director of Law, HR and Asset Management

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REFERRALS TO COUNCIL

CABINET – 8 DECEMBER 2011

MINUTE 210 – CORPORATE PLAN 2012/13 - UPDATE

The Chief Executive presented the Council's draft Corporate Plan for 2012-2013. He commented that the Plan reflected the needs of Wirral and the priorities for local people and it also put in place a clear commitment and actions to ensure that the Council's corporate governance failings were addressed through engaging the entire organisation in the challenge and opportunities this presented.

The Corporate Plan provided a clear framework for budget and departmental planning for 2012-2013 and it would directly inform the Council's budget for 2012-2013. Departments would prepare individual business plans, which would set out in more detail how the actions set out in the Corporate Plan would be delivered.

Resolved – That the draft Corporate Plan be approved and referred for adoption by full Council on the 12 December 2011, for implementation from the 1 April 2012.

MINUTE 211 - COUNCIL TAX BASE 2012/2013

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance provided details of the method used to calculate the Council Tax Base for 2012/2013, which was used to calculate the individual amounts of Council Tax that needed to be raised to cover expenditure. Within the Council Tax were amounts for the Precepting Authorities (Police and Fire and Rescue), who would be formally advised as to the Tax Base to allow them to calculate their own requirements.

The figures used were an estimate based on the Valuation List of 5 October 2011 and the calculations had resulted in a Council Tax Base of 106,058 for 2012/2013. The Director provided comparative figures for previous years and commented that all previous year collections had ultimately met or exceeded the collection rate of 98.5%. The Director was satisfied that the rate would be achieved for 2012/2013.

Resolved – That the figure of 106,058 be approved as the Council Tax Base for 2012/2013 and recommend it to Council.

MINUTE 215 - CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FINANCING 2012-2015

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance presented a draft Capital Programme for 2012/2015, which also included the related capital financing requirements based upon the prudential indicators that informed the Treasury Management Strategy. The purpose of the Capital Programme was to enable the Council to prioritise and effectively deliver capital investment that contributed to the achievement of Council objectives and links to the revenue budget ensured that

revenue funding was provided to meet the financing costs, and any running costs, as a result of the capital programme investment.

The Director reported that the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code required local authorities to determine Prudential Indicators on an annual basis and they were required to be calculated in accordance with the Code. He indicated that the monitoring arrangements set out in the 'Delivering the Corporate Plan' report approved by the Cabinet (minute 379 (14 April 2011) refers) ensured that a structure was in place to manage performance and deliver the Corporate Plan.

Resolved –

- (1) That the new submissions as detailed in section 9.7, and the variations in section 9.10 of the report now submitted be approved and the Capital Programme be referred to Council for approval.**
- (2) That, if the changes are approved, the capital financing requirements be reflected in the projected budget.**
- (3) That the Prudential Indicators be noted and reported to Cabinet as part of the Treasury Management Strategy on 20 February 2012.**
- (4) That reports on the progress of the programme be presented in accordance with the agreed monitoring arrangements of the Corporate Plan.**

MINUTE 216 - BUDGET PROJECTIONS 2012-2015

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance reported that information in relation to the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) was only now beginning to emerge from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and more detailed information would follow, although it appeared that the basic Formula Grant figures were in line with figures previously reported. He was not able to substantiate reports in the national press of significant reductions in local government finances, but indicated that details of specific grants would come out in the coming months. In the absence of detail in relation to the LGFS, the Director presented the latest Budget Projections for 2012-2015.

He set out the assumptions that underpinned the budget projections and provided detail on grant negotiations, other legislative issues, balances, agreed savings and relevant risks. The budget projections set out in an appendix to the Director's report represented the most likely outcome from a wide range of available options and indicated a shortfall of £22.6m in 2012/2013, £30.8m in 2013/2014 and £46.9m in 2014/2015. The Government was consulting on a number of options which would impact on the budget projections and the Director confirmed that he responded to all consultation to try to ensure the best outcome for Wirral.

On a motion by Councillor Foulkes, seconded by Councillor P Davies, it was –

Resolved –

- (1) That Cabinet recognises that the projected budget gap is still subject to the Local Government Finance Settlement, which is expected from this afternoon, and which will need further analysis in order to reach a conclusion on the actual size of the budget gap faced by this Council.**
- (2) That, in a move to provide some good news at Christmas, however gloomy the economic forecasts may be, Cabinet is however prepared to give a commitment to Wirral residents that, whatever the details of the settlement, the final budget proposal will set a zero Council Tax increase for Wirral.**
- (3) Cabinet welcomes the enthusiastic response of Wirral residents both to the consultation on Neighbourhood Plans, which looked in detail at what people wanted in the areas where they live, and the Budget Simulator exercise which gave people the chance to set their own budget for Wirral and in so doing allow us to analyse in more detail what their priorities for services are.**
- (4) That Cabinet notes that this analysis is on tonight's agenda, and will be giving it full consideration before it draws up the final budget proposal. Cabinet also recognises that service specific consultation may be required should any decisions on budget reductions alter the level of service provided and affect third parties, and that it has particular responsibilities where services to people with disabilities are concerned.**
- (5) Cabinet notes that, should such a situation arise, the Chief Executive has been granted delegated powers, in consultation with the Leadership of the Council, to carry out the relevant consultation.**
- (6) That, in the meantime, pending the outcome of the final settlement, Cabinet proposes the following initial measures to continue the process of closing the budget gap.**
 - i. That the sum of £1.4m, which was the provision for pay for 2010/2011, which is no longer required, be set against this gap.**
 - ii. That the revenue sum of £1.075m, which is in the base budget for the provision of a broadband facility for businesses and is now additional to requirements, be set against this gap.**
 - iii. That, in view of the fact that it has not been physically possible to deliver the house insulation programme as quickly as the enhanced rate would demand, the programme be rephrased over a seven year, rather than four year period, and the additional sum of £1m be set against this gap.**
 - iv. That the budget for the Council's Early Intervention Grant, which totals £17.9m in 2011/2012, is reduced by £1m in 2012/2013 to reflect the current cost of services provided and commissioned. This will enable the Acting Director of Children's Services to continue the**

same targeted and universal intervention programmes in 2012/2013 as 2011/2012.

- (7) That the Director of Finance be asked to report back to Cabinet on the potential for Procurement Savings.**
- (8) That the Director of Finance also be asked to report back to Cabinet on projects within the Strategic Change Programme considering savings for 2012/2013, 2013/2014 and 2014/2015.**
- (9) That, in the light of the guarantee given by this administration that proper opportunity would be given to Scrutiny Committees to consider budget proposals, in line with the Constitution, Cabinet asks Council to approve those items where there is all party support and, in so doing, to suspend paragraphs 2(a) and 2(b) of the Budget and Policy Framework Rules. Where there is no such agreement, Council is asked to refer the relevant item to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee for discussion and subsequent referral to Cabinet and Budget Council.**

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

8TH DECEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	CORPORATE PLAN 2012-13
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR STEVE FOULKES
KEY DECISION:	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the Council's draft Corporate Plan for 2012-13 at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The draft Corporate Plan reflects the needs of Wirral and priorities for local people. It also puts in place a clear commitment and actions to ensure that the Council's corporate governance failings are addressed through engaging the entire organisation in the challenge and opportunities this presents.
- 1.3 The Corporate Plan provides a clear framework for budget and departmental planning for 2012-13. The plan will directly inform the Council's budget for 2012-13 and departments will prepare individual business plans, which will set out in more detail how the actions in the Corporate Plan will be delivered.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves the draft Corporate Plan to be referred for adoption by full Council on the 12th December 2011 for implementation from the 1st April 2012.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 On 17th March 2011, the Council agreed a three year Corporate Plan for 2011-14, with a focus on the activity that would be delivered during the current year (2011-12). In line with best practice, and to ensure that the changing needs and priorities of local people are addressed alongside the corporate governance challenges and opportunities faced by the Council, the Corporate Plan has been fully reviewed and refreshed to ensure that it is fit for purpose for 2012-13.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The draft Corporate Plan at Appendix 1 describes the challenges for the Council and how we will address these.

4.2 The draft Corporate Plan demonstrates how the Council will respond to a number of key drivers. These are:

- The findings of the independent report considered by Cabinet on the 22nd September 2011 entitled 'Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council's Corporate Governance Arrangements: Refresh and Renew' and the subsequent development of a robust work programme and identification of key lines of enquiry to address these findings;
- The recent consultation undertaken across Wirral to inform the development of Neighbourhood Plans for each of the Council's eleven Area Forum areas;
- The development of a child and family poverty strategy for Wirral;
- The Council's revitalised Investment Strategy;
- The effective integration of the Public Health function and new leadership role for local authorities in health and wellbeing

4.3 Subject to approval by Cabinet and Council, the Corporate Plan at Appendix 1 will provide a clear framework for the Council's budget and departmental delivery plans for the period April 2012-13. The timetable for the production of departmental plans and the agreement of the Council's budget is set out in the appendix to the Comprehensive Work Programme report considered by Corporate Governance Committee on the 26th October 2011. Action is now being undertaken in line with this timetable to ensure that departmental plans and the Council's budget are in place by January 2012 and February 2012 respectively. The You Choose Consultation took place between 19 August 2011 and 30 November 2011 and is one element of the ongoing consultation process for setting the 2012/13 Budget. An overview of the process and a summary of the responses are the subject of a separate report on this agenda.

4.4 Prior to the commencement of the 2012-13 financial year, Cabinet is requested to note that the work being undertaken to review and improve the Council's arrangements for policy, corporate and business planning and performance management will impact on the way the Corporate Plan is monitored in 2012-13, for example in respect of the frequency and content of reports to Cabinet and/or Scrutiny Committees, and the way in which corporate and business planning will be delivered in future years. This work, and related recommendations, will be considered by Cabinet as appropriate and in line with the governance arrangements established in respect of the Corporate Governance Committee.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 The corporate risk register will be revised in line with the draft Corporate Plan for 2012-13 to ensure that any risks to delivering the Council's goals are understood and mitigating actions put in place as appropriate.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 Not applicable

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 As indicated in 4.2, consultation with local people about their priorities for services has been undertaken through the recent consultation on Neighbourhood Plans. This process engaged individuals and organisations in all areas of Wirral.
- 7.2 The draft child and family poverty strategy which has informed the Corporate Plan is based on consultation with local stakeholders about the needs of children and families in Wirral.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 The draft Corporate Plan sets out actions in relation to working with voluntary, community and faith sector organisations to improve outcomes for local people.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 9.1 The Corporate Plan informs the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Annual Budget which seek to allocate available resources to deliver the priorities as set out in the Plan. By 10 March each year the Council has to agree a Budget, and set Council Tax levels, for the following financial year.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Legal implications relating to the actions set out in the draft Corporate Plan will be addressed by departments as appropriate.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 2.
- 11.2 In developing individual business plans, departments will also be expected to address equalities implications as appropriate, including through undertaking Equality Impact Assessments in line with corporate requirements.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Carbon reduction is a specific goal in the draft Corporate Plan. Any carbon reduction implications relating to other goals and actions will be addressed by departments as appropriate.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 Planning and community safety implications relating to the actions set out in the draft Corporate Plan will be addressed by departments as appropriate.

**REPORT AUTHOR: Jim Wilkie
Chief Executive**

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Draft Corporate Plan 2012-2013

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Previous Council and Cabinet reports as detailed in the subject history below

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Meeting	Date
Corporate Plan 2011-2014	Cabinet – 17th March 2011 Council – 18th April 2011
Independent Review	Cabinet – 22nd September 2011
Child Poverty Strategy and Action Plan – Progress Report	Cabinet – 13th October 2011
Neighbourhood Plans and Area Forum Funding	Cabinet – 24th November 2011

FOREWORD FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

This Corporate Plan is about a journey we are all taking together – Councillors, Officers, Council Staff and the people of Wirral. Travelling with us are our partners from public, private and voluntary sector organisations.

Our destination is a Wirral that is healthy and prosperous with a sense of well being that permeates all levels of our society.

It sounds simple but conditions for the journey are not good at the moment. We are in the middle of a Global and European financial crisis. Money is in very short supply and resources for the Council will be very limited for the foreseeable future. Individuals are feeling the pinch too, with pay increases restricted, jobs in short supply and prospects for the future very uncertain.

You might think this was the time to get our heads down, retreat into ourselves and try to weather the storm quietly. Think again.

The ground breaking Education Act which provided free secondary education for all was passed in 1944 at a time of great financial hardship for the Nation. Four years later, in a period of post war austerity, the National Health Service was created, providing free health care for all. Great changes are not just about money. They are about dreams and aspirations and a fierce collective determination to make things work, whatever obstacles may be thrown in the way.

We've come a long way since that post war period, but we haven't come far enough. Over 60 years later, if you live in one of Wirral's poorest areas the statistics show that you are likely to die (ten years) earlier than your counterpart in one of Wirral's wealthiest areas. That has to change. That mortality gap should not be tolerated in a civilised society.

We have a unique opportunity to make that change. The Public Health role is moving from the Health Service to Local Authorities which will allow us to work very closely together, using all our joint facilities and infrastructure, to tackle some of the most challenging problems which mean that gap stubbornly resists any attempt to narrow it.

All the evidence shows that poverty is one of the key factors in physical and mental ill health. Poor quality housing, poor job prospects, unemployment, low levels of education, low aspirations, failing family relationships, poor parenting, poor nutrition, fuel poverty, anti social behaviour, all play their part in creating the conditions which take away any sense of well being and allow ill health to flourish.

As a Council we have traditionally reacted to problems when they became apparent. But we've all heard the saying "Prevention is better than Cure". Well, that's the journey we are setting out on now, and which we are ideally placed to undertake. Identify the causes of problems and tackle them before it's too late. Before the consequences show themselves. Before it costs a great deal more money to put things right.

But this is something we all have to agree on. Preventing things happening is usually not visible. If we are successful, and there are no problems to point at, people may well

ask what we are spending the council tax payer's money on. If we change our priorities to release more money into early detection and prevention activities, there may be other areas that have to manage on less than before, which won't be popular.

We will need to be absolutely clear what we are doing, and why, and we will need real, hard evidence to back up what we are doing. No more decisions based just on anecdotes! If we don't have the evidence, then we will need to set up pilot schemes which can be properly analysed and evaluated first, before we move into a larger arena.

This does not apply only to new initiatives. We have been criticised by the District Auditor for taking decisions to let contracts without having sufficient detailed information and costings in place about our own activities to allow us to prove that an external contract will provide better value for money. From now on we will make sure that the right information is collected and evaluated on all the Council services so we truly demonstrate we are providing value for money for the Council Tax Payer. At a time when resources are limited this is more important than ever.

This brings me to the final element of our journey. We know where we are headed. We know the route map we are using to get to our destination. But we also need to know how to travel that route safely and cost effectively.

It's like driving a car. If you ignore the highway code, crash the gears, stall the engine at stop lights, forget to signal, take short cuts which turn into long cuts, u-turn illegally when you're lost, you may still reach your destination - eventually. But you may well have had several accidents along the way. You are likely to be stressed and exhausted. Your passengers will have had a very uncomfortable ride, and the costs of your journey will have escalated because of your bad driving.

Well right now everyone involved in driving Council activities forward is being put through the equivalent of an advanced driving course. The formal name is a Corporate Governance Review. The aim is to make sure that the basic rules and procedures which govern the way the Council runs, (a kind of Local Authority Highway Code), are brought up to date, and are understood and followed by everyone. That bad habits which have become standard over a period of time are eradicated and replaced with good habits, and that the whole process eventually becomes as automatic to staff and councillors as changing gears becomes to an experienced driver.

It's not newsworthy. It's not particularly exciting. It's a lot of hard graft without any instant rewards. But it is very, very necessary. This way we travel safely. We make sure taxpayers get real value for their money. We make sure services are delivered fairly and consistently, and we avoid unnecessary disasters. And we reach our destination more quickly.

Welcome to our journey to a healthy and prosperous Wirral, where the well being of every resident matters.

Cllr Steve Foulkes

Leader of the Council.

The Destination

Our Vision for Wirral.

A Healthy and Prosperous Wirral where a sense of well being permeates every level of society and where the place you live and the amount you earn no longer effects how long you live.

- **A thriving society, with plentiful employment opportunities, and high levels of skills in the local workforce.**
- **A learning society with excellent nursery or pre-school facilities, excellent schools and excellent colleges for young people or older adults who want to re-train or improve their qualifications.**
- **A caring society that protects vulnerable people**
- **A decently housed society where warm, well insulated and affordable housing is readily available.**
- **A stress free society where no one lives in fear because of criminal activities, or anti-social behaviour, or excessive noise or threatening neighbours.**
- **A clean society with a rubbish and graffiti free environment and responsible dog owners.**
- **A relaxed society with plenty of opportunities for leisure and fitness activities.**
- **A greener society that works to reduce carbon emissions and protect the environment.**
- **A conservation minded society that respects its heritage and works together to protect everything that is best about Wirral, including our unique countryside, open spaces and coast line.**

The Journey

The route map we need to follow.

- We will focus on the new Public Health role given to Local Authorities.
- We will seek in everything we do to recognise the way in which Council activities can have a direct impact on the Health and Well Being of Wirral residents.
- We will listen to what local residents and communities tell us are the priorities to improve their neighbourhoods and we will respond by providing services that meet their needs and aspirations.
- We will continue to tackle anti-social behaviour and work with all our partners to reduce crime
- We will ensure that effective safeguarding procedures are in place to protect vulnerable adults and children.
- We will work with our partners to reduce the numbers of children and young people living in poverty and support them and their families to build the foundations for prosperous, healthy and happy lives.
- We will respond quickly and effectively to local circumstances and needs and any potential impact of welfare reform.
- We will work actively to initiate and support early detection and prevention programmes for children and adults which seek to tackle potential problems before they develop.
- We will make sure those programmes are based on well researched evidence which can be analysed and evaluated in order to ensure the very best return in outcomes for any resources invested.
- Where evidence is not readily available, we will seek to run pilot programmes where outcomes can be properly assessed and used as guidance for future programmes.
- We will seek to raise the income of Wirral people by doing everything possible to build a strong and vibrant economy with high levels of employment and opportunities for Wirral residents to improve their skills and find work. We will focus on making sure our young people can achieve their full potential in education and in the workplace.
- We will work to improve the condition of Wirral's housing stock and improve the energy efficiency to reduce levels of fuel poverty.

Travelling Safely

Changing the way we do things. (Improving Corporate Governance).

- We will make sure that this Corporate Plan informs Service Development Plans and is reflected in the budget process.
- We will review and redraft the Council's Code of Corporate Governance
- We will make sure there is a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities between the centre of the organisation and individual departments.
- We will review the Council's Internal Audit Service and make sure any warnings they issue are acted on immediately.
- We will set up a Council Policy Unit to act as a think tank for the organisation, to link together new and established initiatives, to advise on best practice elsewhere and to give advance warning of the impact of any new legislation or policies.
- We will review the way information and advice is given to councillors, and the way in which reports are written, in order to create a democracy which is as open and transparent as possible.
- We will radically improve Corporate Performance Management so the cost of a Service, the way the Service is delivered, and the achievements of the Service are linked together so we can see exactly what the result is of any investment of Council Tax payer money. We will use this information to hold councillors and officers to account for the success or failure of service delivery and we will undertake effective staff training to help us change the culture of the organisation to one that is open, transparent and focussed on positive change.
- We will ensure that the Council meets best practice in respect of equalities and diversity legislation, in all areas of activity including policy development, service delivery, community needs and recruitment.
- We will create a fairer system by implementing a comprehensive schedule of fees and charges for all appropriate Council services in line with the law, the Council's Constitution, accepted best practice and the Council's objectives and we will review that schedule annually.
- We will make sure that anyone elected as a Councillor, on the back benches or in the Cabinet, receives the proper help and training to allow them to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively, to question and challenge, and be questioned and challenged themselves where necessary. We will ensure that any democratic structures reflect the best possible way of carrying out Council business in the interests of the Council Tax Payers.

Our Values

We will put the interests of all the people of Wirral above other considerations.

Elected members and staff will behave with honesty and integrity at all times.

We will practice openness and transparency and remain focussed on positive change.

We will welcome suggestions on how the Council can improve and positively encourage members, staff and the public to tell us when we have got something wrong.

We will be a “learning” organisation, where good practice is captured and rolled out across the Council, and where we actively seek ideas from other local authorities and external agencies.

We will make sure our decisions are based on clear evidence.

We will welcome public involvement in the work of the Council and we will carry out effective consultation, where appropriate, with the public and key stakeholders.

We will make sure that Council services fairly and transparently take into account the needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups when changes are made and that the Council is responsive to the diversity of Wirral’s communities.

We aim to be excellent in everything we do.

Health and Wellbeing

In following our route map:

- We will focus on the new Public Health role given to Local Authorities.
- We will seek in everything we do to recognise the way in which Council activities can have a direct impact on the Health and Well Being of Wirral residents.
- We will work in partnership to develop clear priorities and joined up services for improving the health and wellbeing of Wirral residents.
- We will improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people and maintain a clear focus on tackling health inequalities that exist within Wirral. This is a priority area in our child and family poverty strategy to ensure that we increase the impact of our activities in partnership with others.
- We will make sure services are in place to help keep older people fitter for longer and that the value and contribution they can make to society is properly recognised and respected.

Child Poverty

In following our route map:

- We will work with our partners to reduce the numbers of children and young people living in poverty and support them to build the foundations for prosperous, healthy and happy lives.
- We will work actively to initiate and support early detection and prevention programmes for children and adults which seek to tackle potential problems before they develop.
- We will make sure those programmes are based on solid evidence which can be analysed and evaluated in order to ensure the very best return in outcomes for any resources invested.
- Where evidence is not readily available, we will seek to run pilot programmes where outcomes can be properly assessed and used as guidance for future programmes.
- In developing approaches to early detection and prevention, we will build on existing activity such as Wirral's involvement in developing Community Budgets around the needs of families with multiple problems.
- We have placed child poverty as a central theme of this Corporate Plan; we will ensure that Council services are developed in line with the needs of children and families in poverty.

- **The Council will also lead co-ordinated action to work with partners and local communities to improve the lives of children and families living in poverty and add value to existing services and activity.**
- **We will improve information sharing amongst partners about best practice, and ‘what works’ in identifying and addressing issues of poverty.**
- **We will take co-ordinated action with partners to engage more children and families experiencing issues of poverty**

Neighbourhood Plans

In following our route map:

- **We will listen to what local residents and communities across the borough, from the poorest to the wealthiest areas, tell us are the priorities to improve their neighbourhoods. We will respond by providing services that meet their needs and aspirations.**
- **We have recently completed a major consultation exercise with Wirral’s communities to listen to what local people like about their neighbourhoods, and what they would like to see improved. We will use this consultation to help shape our neighbourhoods and the services they receive and we will continue to listen to local people’s views as we do this.**
- **We will help each area to use the devolved funds available to improve and shape where they live.**
- **Local people overwhelmingly told us that they have pride in their community and that neighbourhoods in Wirral have strong senses of identity and community spirit. We will work to build on this positive asset to strengthen our neighbourhoods and engage local people to help make a real difference to where they live.**

Investment Strategy

In following our route map:

- **We will pay particular attention to Wirral’s revitalised Investment Strategy which aims to build a strong, vibrant economy, through increasing the competitiveness of our people, places and businesses.**
- **We aim to have a borough with high levels of employment and investment, where businesses flourish, and all residents have the skills and opportunities to work. We will place a clear focus on increasing the number of jobs and employment opportunities for Wirral residents alongside our efforts to ensure longer-term prosperity through our Investment Strategy.**

- **We will seek to address the high levels of economic inactivity in disadvantaged groups and in the most deprived parts of Wirral through improving access to employment and skills, and tackling barriers to work. We will ensure that our young people are engaged in education, training and employment and are developing the skills they need for the future.**
- **We will make Wirral one of the most business friendly Councils in the country and a leading, vibrant global location for businesses and visitors. The delivery of our Investment Strategy is supported by a clear investment package and brand, including support for Wirral's tourism and visitor economy and a strong focus on international investment marketing.**
- **The Wirral Waters investment opportunity is now being promoted on an international basis. The Wirral Waters site has been designated as an Enterprise Zone, which will assist businesses through tax incentives, superfast broadband, improved infrastructure and simplified planning rules. We will also work hard to maximise the opportunities presented by the proposals to develop an International Trade Centre on the Wirral Waters site.**

Your ECONOMY

- We will seek to raise the income of Wirral people by doing everything possible to build a strong and vibrant economy with high levels of employment and opportunities for Wirral residents to improve their skills and find work. We will focus on making sure our young people can achieve their full potential in education and in the workplace.
- As the global recession has impacted on Wirral's economy, the Council has maintained a focus on supporting businesses and individuals during difficult economic conditions. We will make Wirral Council one of the most business friendly and supportive Councils in the country and develop the role of social enterprises in Wirral's economy.
- If we are to deliver a better future for Wirral and eliminate poverty, we need to improve access to employment and skills and tackle barriers to work for our most disadvantaged communities. We will work with partners and local communities to identify innovative ways of achieving this.
- We will position Wirral as a leading, vibrant global location for businesses and visitors. We will continue to support international trade links and develop our relationships with the private sector, to maximise inward investment and enable Wirral businesses to access new markets, sectors and opportunities. We will support Wirral's tourism and visitor economy and a strong focus on international investment marketing.
- We will work hard to deliver all of the opportunities presented by the Wirral Waters development.
- We will support the creation and growth of small and medium sized businesses.

Your ECONOMY	
Our goals for the next three years are to...	This year, we will focus on...
Improve access to employment and skills and tackle barriers to work	<p>Increasing the number of jobs and employment opportunities for Wirral residents</p> <p>Ensuring that new investment, economic and business growth is linked to tackling worklessness</p> <p>Tackling barriers to work and low skills in parts of Wirral and within disadvantaged groups, working with partners to ensure that pathways for skills and employment provide the best route out of poverty for local people and families</p> <p>Ensuring that our young people have excellent skills and opportunities into employment, including through Wirral's Apprenticeship programme</p>

	<p>Ensuring that young people not in education, employment and training are effectively supported to access the opportunities available</p> <p>Working with our partners to provide sustainable transport opportunities to access centres of employment.</p>
<p>Position Wirral as a leading, vibrant global location for businesses and visitors</p>	<p>Promoting and expanding our portfolio of high quality opportunity employment sites through the facilitation of priority projects</p> <p>Supporting the start up and development of key sectors by facilitating investment into specific key projects such as the infrastructure for renewable energy opportunities.</p> <p>Continuing to improve our relationships with the private sector to increase levels of inward investment and increase jobs</p> <p>Developing and implementing the Wirral Waters Enterprise Zone to support the Wirral Waters proposals</p> <p>Market Wirral as a business and visitor location through supporting Wirral's Tourism Business Network and delivery of successful visitor attractions including the 2012 Women's Golf Open</p>
<p>Make Wirral Council one of the most business friendly and supportive Councils in the country</p>	<p>Maximising available resources by co-ordinating all business support services through Invest Wirral</p> <p>Supporting the development of successful businesses, particularly those in key growth sectors</p> <p>Enabling an increasing role for social enterprises in Wirral's economy</p> <p>Adopting a more targeted approach to promoting Wirral as an investment location on an international stage and supporting Wirral businesses to access new markets and opportunities</p>

YOUR FAMILY: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- **Reducing child poverty is a priority for the Council and we are clear about what we will do to achieve this. We will have a strong foundation to achieve this on the basis of the excellent Children's Services we provide and history of strong partnership working in Wirral.**
- **We will continue to work with our partners to protect children and young people from harm and improve the lives of the children and young people already in our care.**
- **We promise to deliver Children's Services that give all children the best possible start in life. As we are clear from our commitment to work actively to initiate and support early detection and prevention programmes, we will provide early intervention and support for vulnerable children and families through projects and activities with a focus on identifying problems early and stopping them developing.**
- **We will ensure that the services provided through our Sure Start and Children's Centres deliver effective support based on the needs of our local residents and communities.**
- **We will pay particular attention to early intervention measures, including the need to make sure youngsters are school ready and that outreach work and the multi agency approach contained in the Roots and Wings programme are used to make contact with hard to reach families.**
- **The attainment of children who are affected by poverty and disadvantage is an area of focus for the Council and its partners. We will therefore focus on ensuring that these children and young people have the additional support they need to improve their attainment and achieve their full potential and that 16-18 year olds not in employment, education or training can access opportunities**
- **Local people have told us that activities for children and young people in their area are an important priority for them. We will ensure that children and young people have access to a range of activities.**
- **We will continue to engage with our children and young people through forums such as the Youth Parliament and the Children in Care Council to ensure that the views of children and young people are central to the design of the services we provide.**
- **Our success in designing services to divert vulnerable young people from crime and anti-social behaviour has received external recognition. We will continue to work in partnership to promote an integrated approach to supporting young people.**

Your FAMILY: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	
Our goals for the next three years are to...	This year, we will focus on...
Protect children and young people from harm and improve the lives of the children and young people already in our care	<p>Safeguarding children and young people in need of protection</p> <p>Ensuring that children in care and care leavers have appropriate support which best meets their needs</p> <p>Commencing the delivery of Munro reforms to ensure that systems are centred on the needs of children and young people</p>
Support schools and other settings to improve educational provision and attainment, maintaining a clear focus on outcomes for those children and young people affected by poverty and disadvantage	<p>Implementing and evaluating the new School Improvement Strategy; ensuring we meet our statutory duties and meet the needs of schools, including Academies, through effective traded services</p> <p>Improving educational outcomes for children and young people affected by poverty and disadvantage</p> <p>Improving the educational attainment of children in care</p> <p>Improving provision, choice and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities</p> <p>Reviewing the provision of behaviour support and reducing school exclusion</p>
Provide early intervention and support for vulnerable children and families	<p>Commissioning effective support and intervention services, for example Sure Start, improving outcomes for vulnerable children and families through parenting programmes, children and young people with disabilities and tackling harmful behaviour in children, young people and families</p> <p>Implementing the national Children's Centre payment by results research pilot to further improve the quality of targeted provision</p> <p>Ensuring every child is school ready</p> <p>Further developing effective partnership working to deliver joined up services for vulnerable families with complex needs through the delivery of the Community Budget pilot</p>
Ensure children and young people have opportunities to	<p>Providing children and young people with access to a range of appropriate developmental activities which meet their needs and encourage take up by making activities easily accessible</p>

<p>participate in activities which will help them achieve their potential</p>	<p>Providing opportunities for children and young people to be actively engaged in community and democratic decision making processes</p> <p>Ensuring that all young people aged 16-18 particularly those in vulnerable groups are effectively supported to access the education, employment and training opportunities available and, as part of this, implement the strategy for raising the participation age to 18 by 2015</p>
<p>Improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people, maintaining a clear focus on tackling health inequalities</p>	<p>Effectively implementing the Child Health Strategy and so reducing inequalities in the physical and mental health of children and young people</p> <p>Encouraging and supporting all children and families to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle</p>

YOUR FAMILY: ADULTS

- We will safeguard vulnerable adults in Wirral and seek to protect them from harm through working in partnership to ensure that our arrangements and policies for protecting are robust.
- The way the Council delivers social care services is changing. Wirral is now amongst the best in the country for the numbers of eligible people using Personal Budgets, which give adults more choice about the support they receive.
- We will build on these improvements to ensure that local people receive excellent standards of support and care and are protected and feel safe.
- We will listen to people who use services, their carers and communities, to enhance the quality of life of the people of Wirral who have care and support needs. We will work with our local communities to ensure that people can access services that meet their needs locally, and have greater choice and flexibility in the packages of support and care available to them.
- In circumstances where people develop care needs, we will work effectively with our partners to provide them with appropriate support to help them recover and regain their independence as quickly as possible.
- We will make sure that the services we commission from other organisations are high quality, cost effective and meet the needs of local people.
- We will place a specific focus on ensuring that when children with disabilities move into adulthood, they receive quality information, advice and support services to make sure this transition is seamless.

Your FAMILY: ADULTS	
Our goals for the next three years are to...	This year, we will focus on...
Enhance the quality of life of the people of Wirral who have care and support needs	<p>Transforming in-house day services through engagement with local communities, residents and carers</p> <p>Providing integrated, high quality services in local settings</p> <p>Ensuring that people can manage their own support as much as they wish so that they are in control of what, how and when support is delivered to match their needs</p> <p>Provide support for people with learning disabilities and mental health needs to access training and employment opportunities</p>

<p>Delay and reduce the need for care and support</p>	<p>Ensuring that when people develop care needs the support they receive enables them to recover and regain their independence</p> <p>Reduce the need for formal care by increasing the use of high quality cost effective preventions services</p> <p>Ensuring that services commissioned from the voluntary, community and faith sector are cost effective and appropriately targeted</p>
<p>Ensure that the people of Wirral who use services have a positive experience of care and support</p>	<p>Ensuring that children with disabilities are effectively supported with the transition into adulthood</p> <p>Providing universally accessible information and support to people and their carers so that they are able to make choices about the care that they need to remain independent</p> <p>Ensuring that people who use social care and their carers are involved in the planning and evaluation of services, and are satisfied with their experience of care and support services</p>
<p>Safeguard people in Wirral whose circumstances make them vulnerable and protect them from avoidable harm</p>	<p>Ensuring that there are robust arrangements and procedures in place and followed in order that vulnerable people are kept safe and protected</p> <p>Ensuring that the provision of support and care in the independent sector is of the highest possible quality</p>

YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

- In line with the results of the Neighbourhood Plans, we will continue to use devolved funding to allow each area to meet the specific needs of their own communities.
- We will continue to tackle anti-social behaviour and work with the police and other partners to reduce crime. Local people told us that feeling safe in their neighbourhood is an important priority.
- We will work with partners to improve the condition of Wirral's housing stock and improve the energy efficiency to reduce levels of fuel poverty.
- Reducing Wirral's carbon footprint is an important priority for us and we work in partnership with local residents, partners and the private sector to address this.
- We have made impressive year on year progress to improve the amount of waste recycled in Wirral. Forty per cent of all household waste is now recycled and we will continue to build on this success, improving our recycling rates and reducing waste being sent to landfill sites.
- Local residents in all parts of Wirral have told us that having streets that are clean and tidy is an important priority to them. We will ensure that we deliver a reliable street cleansing service in all parts of the borough and use feedback from local residents to help us maintain standards. Wherever possible we will trace and prosecute flytippers
- Local people also want us to focus on having safe and well maintained roads. We have seen reductions in accidents on some of Wirral's busiest roads and we will continue to make Wirral's roads safer and target our resources effectively and in line with what local people have told us about their areas.
- Wirral's parks and countryside are very important to local communities and we will secure their future by improving how they are managed. We will also create even more opportunities for people to get involved and benefit from using these well-loved facilities in the areas in which they live and elsewhere in the borough. We will also encourage greater use of our high, quality and value for money leisure and cultural facilities in Wirral.
- We will respond effectively to the impact of welfare reform on the availability of and access to housing, including close partnership working with landlords in the borough.
- We will support those who are experiencing or who are at risk of homelessness and we will continue to work hard to improve access to advice and information about the housing options that local people have.
- The Council recognises that vulnerable people, including some of our children and young people, have additional housing needs and we will review the services we deliver to ensure that support is effective and targeted appropriately.

Your NEIGHBOURHOOD	
Our goals for the next three years are to...	This year, we will focus on...
Reduce anti-social behaviour and ensure that people feel safe in their neighbourhoods	Working in partnership to ensure that preventative measures to reduce anti-social behaviour are in place and that there is a quick response when incidents occur Engaging with the community to ensure that Community Safety interventions are effective
Reduce Wirral's carbon footprint	Delivering the Council's carbon budget Working with local residents, partners and the private sector to improve energy efficiency
Minimise waste by encouraging waste reduction and recycling	Educating and raising awareness to reduce the amount of household waste being sent to landfill and improving recycling rates
Have high standards of environmental quality in all of Wirral's neighbourhoods	Delivering a reliable street cleansing service to keep Wirral's streets clean and tidy
Have a safe and well-maintained highway network for all users	Maintaining and improving Wirral's roads through a programme of highway maintenance and road safety improvements
Provide and maintain high quality parks and countryside in partnership with local communities	Delivering an improved in-house parks and countryside service that is value for money Working with local communities to maximise the use and benefits of Wirral's neighbourhood parks and open spaces
Provide high quality, value for money leisure and cultural facilities for Wirral residents	Promoting the leisure opportunities available within Wirral to impact positively on health and well being

<p>Prevent and alleviate homelessness</p>	<p>Providing a range of interventions to assist people who are at risk of homelessness</p> <p>Ensuring a co-ordinated partnership approach in response to welfare reform, including providing benefits advice</p> <p>Improving access to privately rented accommodation</p>
<p>Support for people, including those who are vulnerable, to access suitable housing options</p>	<p>Reviewing housing services for vulnerable people in order to deliver efficiencies and improved outcomes</p> <p>Developing a plan to address the housing needs of vulnerable children and young people, incorporating the review of housing services for at risk young people and young people in care</p>
<p>Provide high quality and affordable homes and make the best use of the existing housing stock</p>	<p>Responding to housing market failure and restructuring housing market with partner organisations</p> <p>Exploring alternative funding and delivery mechanisms to provide high quality new and affordable homes</p> <p>Improving housing standards in the existing stock to make a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing</p> <p>Bringing empty properties back into use</p> <p>Developing partnership working with landlords to respond to the impact of welfare reform</p>

YOUR COUNCIL

- We will complete the actions under the Corporate Governance Review, (outlined above under Travelling Safely.)
- We will subject the Council to an external peer review in the summer of 2012 in order to assess how effective those actions have been.
- We will make sure that we know what outcomes are being delivered for the level of investment in resources used, both within the Council and in the commissioning of external services.
- We will make sure that we collect and evaluate the appropriate information in order to allow sound judgements to be made on whether or not we are delivering Value for Money in house, and whether or not any planned external contracts would provide better Value for Money or not.
- In taking key decisions, or planning new initiatives, we will move away from the use of anecdotal based evidence to the use of well researched factual evidence which can be clearly used to demonstrate the benefits of a planned course of action.
- We will make sure that the democratic structures in place reflect the most effective way of delivering sound services.
- We will be a skilled, committed and flexible workforce that is willing to go the extra mile for our local residents.
- We will take into account the needs of all Wirral residents and communities and meet our statutory duties in relation to equalities.

Your COUNCIL	
Our goals for the next three years are to...	This year, we will focus on...
<p>Ensure Wirral Council's Corporate Governance arrangements are robust, transparent and effective</p>	<p>Ensuring members and officers continue to work together to build on the foundations put in place by the Corporate Governance Review</p> <p>Ensuring that the Council's policies and practices are fit for purpose, consistently applied and transparently used by everyone</p> <p>Implementing outcomes of peer review taking place in Summer 2012</p>

<p>Improve the efficiency and value for money of Council services</p>	<p>Improving the delivery of services within available resources</p> <p>Ensuring the information provided for all service delivery decisions includes value for money considerations</p>
<p>Ensure we have a well led, skilled, committed and flexible workforce working to deliver excellent services to Wirral's communities</p>	<p>Ensuring Council staff are engaged and supported through cultural change</p> <p>Ensuring Council staff have the skills, training and capacity to deliver the Council's priorities and policies</p> <p>Ensuring the effective integration of the public health workforce and function into the Council</p> <p>Embedding our approach to equalities to ensure the Council fully meets its statutory duties relating to employees</p>
<p>Ensure that Council services fairly and transparently takes into account the needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups when changes are made and that the Council is responsive to the diversity of Wirral's communities</p>	<p>Developing, consulting on and implementing the Council's Equality Scheme</p> <p>Ensuring that the Council publishes and uses information relating to customers who share protected characteristics to shape services.</p>

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Equality Impact Toolkit (new version July 2011)

Section 1: Your details

Head of Service: Jim Wilkie

Department: Policy Unit

Date: November 2011

Section 2: What Council function / proposal is being assessed?

The Council's Corporate Plan 2012-13

Section 3: Is the Council function / proposal relevant to equality? (please tick relevant boxes)

- In services**
- In the workforce**
- In communities**
- Other** (please state)
- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Head of Service who needs to email it to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 4: Within the Equality Duty 2010, there are 3 legal requirements. Which of the following are relevant to the Council function / proposal? (please tick relevant boxes)

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- To advance equality of opportunity
- To foster good relations between groups of people

Section 5: Will the function / proposal have a favourable or negative impact on any of the protected groups (race, gender, disability, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership)?

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any negative impact.

Protected characteristic	Favourable or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All	Potential	Equality Impact Assessments identified / undertaken in relation to the specific actions identified in the Corporate Plan	Chief Officers / Heads of Service as appropriate and in conjunction with the Corporate Equality Group	By January 2012, in line with production of departmental plans	To be determined

Where and how will the above actions be monitored?

The Corporate Equality Group will monitor the programme of Equality Impact Assessments linked to the Corporate Plan. An initial exercise will be undertaken to identify the actions in the Corporate Plan which require EIA; some will be covered by existing assessments.

If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?

-

Section 6: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?

The Corporate Plan has been informed by a number of key drivers, including consultation with local people and evidence-based priorities for addressing child poverty. Both of these activities have been undertaken with a clear understanding of inequalities issues and the need to target and engage with protected groups.

Section 7: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council function / policy?

No – (please delete as appropriate)

If 'yes' please continue to section 8.

If 'no' please state your reason(s) why:

The Corporate Plan has been directly informed by consultation with local people and organisations.

(please stop here and email this form to your Head of Service who needs to email it to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 8: How will consultation take place?

Once you have completed your consultation, please review your actions in section 5. Then email this form to your Head of Service who needs to email it to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

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MATTERS FOR NOTING

CABINET – 8 DECEMBER 2011

MINUTE 232 - LOCAL ACCOUNT

Further to minute 201 (24 November 2011), the Interim Director of Adult Social Services reported upon the completion of the draft Local Account and sought comments on any aspects of it. The publication of the Local Account and the associated survey would be used to consult with service users, carers, partners and the wider community on the priorities for the Department of Adult Social Services in 2012/2013 and, in view of the need to begin the consultation process and ensure the maximum amount of time available for it, the Director recommended that call-in be waived.

He commented that the Local account was expected to be a central part of the approach to Sector Led Improvement, the heart of which was a principle that every Council should be responsible for its own improvement, and should identify its own needs through self evaluation. The details of the self evaluation document had been subject to a “peer challenge”, which had been undertaken by Veronica Jackson, former Director of Adult Social Services at Oldham Council, who had been recommended for the role of peer challenger by the LGA. Her initial feedback confirmed that Wirral had made significant improvements and that staff were to be congratulated for meeting a range of challenges.

Resolved –

- (1) That the draft Local Account be endorsed.**
- (2) That the Local Account be published for consultation on the priorities for the Department of Adult Social Services in 2012/2013.**
- (3) That, due to the need to begin the consultation process and to ensure the maximum amount of time available to do this, call in be waived.**

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Council – 12 December, 2011

MATTERS FOR DEBATE

The Council is asked to consider the following motions, submitted in accordance with the notice required by Standing Order 8(1), and objections and amendments submitted in accordance with Standing Order 7(2).

The order of business is as determined by the party groups in accordance with Standing Order 5(4) and the times for speeches by Standing Order 12(8) (all other speakers have 3 minutes).

1. MOTION: POLICIES AFFECTING WOMEN

Proposed by Councillor Bernie Mooney (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Chris Jones (3 minutes)

(1) This Council calls on the coalition government to reconsider a number of policies which are disproportionately affecting women. These policies appear to have been developed without any form of equality assessment of risk to women, these include:

- (i) Job cuts in the public sector
- (ii) Female unemployment at a 23-year-high
- (iii) Changes to the benefit system affecting childcare
- (iv) Changes to the NHS
- (v) The appalling state of care for the elderly
- (vi) Education and student fees
- (vii) Food price inflation
- (viii) Price of petrol
- (ix) Changes to pensions
- (x) The whole direction of the deficit reduction programme and its effect on day to day life

(2) Council calls on David Cameron to stop trying to simply appeal to women voters with populist policies such as offering caesarean section to all who want it.

(3) Council believes that if the coalition puts women's rights and issues at the heart of policy formation and development they may not look so arrogant and out of touch with the needs of female voters.

Right of reply: Councillor Bernie Mooney (7 minutes)

2. MOTION: COUNCIL PROCESSES AND PURPOSE

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie (3 minutes)

(1) Council notes the ongoing activity to improve the Council's Corporate Governance processes.

(2) Council believes that as the activity to improve its processes continues it becomes even more important to restate our purpose.

(3) Council therefore commits itself to the following principles:

- A commitment to making Wirral a bigger and stronger society.
- Creating the environment and developing the skills needed to make Wirral a place where local employers succeed and businesses choose to invest – an economy with high levels of private sector employment, which retains and attracts our young people and provides the job opportunities for all to realise their full potential.
- Placing the views of Wirral, residents, employers, Community and Voluntary groups at the heart of all we do, providing opportunities for people to improve their neighbourhoods, lives and those of their families, ensuring that no part of Wirral is ignored.
- Actively supporting the Coalition Government's commitment to ending child poverty by 2020, providing support services to children, young people and their families that help to alleviate the effects of poverty and, in the long term, break inter-generational cycles of deprivation.
- Providing services that meet the needs and aspirations of all Wirral people, fostering a real pride in the borough, ensuring high standards of cleanliness, environmental protection and public safety, creating a clean, safe and sustainable environment.
- Working everyday to keep children and vulnerable people safe and tackle the gross inequalities in health and education outcomes experienced by our residents. Services provided for our most vulnerable, disadvantaged or excluded citizens, wherever they may live, should be founded on fairness, raise aspirations, promote choice and improve quality of life.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Steve Foulkes (7 minutes)

Seconded: Councillor Phil Davies (3 minutes)

Add the following:

Council notes the principles set out in this motion and recognises that they have already been incorporated in the re-fresh of the Corporate Plan agreed by Cabinet on the 8th December.

Council is concerned that a number of the principles included in the list in this motion, eg. ending child poverty and creating a sustainable environment, have been made more difficult to achieve as a direct result of the announcements in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Statement and the coalition government's draconian cuts to local government budgets.

Right of reply: Councillor Jeff Green (7 minutes)

3. MOTION: ADOPTION - BEING THE BEST CORPORATE PARENTS

Proposed by Councillor Mark Johnston (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Pat Williams (3 minutes)

Council:

- (1) Congratulates the Acting Director of Children's Services and his staff on the achievement of the "performing excellently" rating from Ofsted in relation to the quality of children's services in Wirral and believes that this is fair recognition for the work undertaken over the past few years to ensure that the council provides the highest level of service possible for children and young people in our community.
- (2) Notes that Wirral Council currently looks after 679 children (102 children per 100,000 population - the 5th highest in the North West). The recent release of the Children in Care Performance tables from DfE show that, as an average for the 3 year period 2008-2010, Wirral Council is ranked 105th out of 143 authorities in terms of percentage of children (69%) who are adopted within 12 months of the decision being taken that adoption is the best route.
- (3) Recognises that there can be many complex and different reasons why adoption placements can sometimes take longer than 12 months, such as large sibling groups or complex health needs. In these circumstances the stability of placement is critical and Wirral has a good record in this area with just 1 unplanned ending out of 24 placements in the year to May 2011. Ofsted's Adoption inspection report of June 2011 noted, "The very low disruption rate indicates that children are appropriately matched with their adoptive parents".
- (4) Welcomes the recommendations of the Government's recent Family Justice Review, particularly those that focus on tackling delays in the family justice system.
- (5) Believes that, in those circumstances where the risk to a child is too great for that child to remain in the care of his or her natural family, adoption is normally the best opportunity of securing positive life chances for that child, particularly if the adoption can happen in the child's first few years.

- (6) Further, believes that the current system can be too slow to recognise where adoption is the preferred option and then take swift action to ensure that adoption is speedy and suitable in those cases.
- (7) Therefore, instructs the Acting Director of Children's Services to bring forward a report to the Children and Young People OSC setting out:
- (i) How decisions around the adoption system are made (including the approval processes for prospective adoptive parents) and how they might be speeded up and improved for those children in care where adoption is likely to be the best outcome for providing a stable, permanent home.
 - (ii) An explanation of the relational link between the Fostering and Adoption team, the support provided by foster carers when children move from foster care to adoption and any weaknesses in process highlighted, with recommendations to improve any issues.
 - (iii) An explanation of the impact of the Family Courts on the adoption process, with suggestions given as to how to better work with and strengthen the existing approach by the Merseyside Family Court Justice Council to improve the likelihood of appropriate and timely adoptions, taking account of the recommendations and proposals set out in the Family Justice Review.
 - (iv) The potential for further development of a peer mentoring scheme for new adoptive parents to provide more support in the early days of adoption and further reduce the risk of placement failure.

Right of reply: Councillor Mark Johnston (7 minutes)

4. MOTION: CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Proposed by Councillor Steve Foulkes (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Phil Davies (3 minutes)

This Council:

- (1) Welcomes the recommendations in the AKA report regarding corporate governance.
- (2) Supports the steps which have been taken by the administration to begin to implement these recommendations, i.e.
 - (i) Setting up a Cabinet Committee including the Leaders of the opposition groups;
 - (ii) developing a work programme including ten key lines of enquiries based on the AKA report;
 - (iii) inviting all members of the Council to get involved in contributing to the work programme;

- (iv) Setting up a dedicated Change Team to drive this forward;
 - (v) holding an initial meeting with the Local Government Association to explore external support which is available.
- (3) Records its appreciation to Ms Anna Klonowski for agreeing to provide additional support to enable the Council to put the necessary measures in place to improve our corporate governance and for providing a helpful presentation at the recent members' seminar.
- (4) Re-iterates the importance of elected members putting aside political differences and working together with staff, the public and other key stakeholders to deliver good corporate governance.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie (3 minutes)

Insert an additional paragraph:

- (5) Acknowledges that at the Local Elections in May 2011, the people of Wirral voted that no one political party should run this Council. In order to reflect the wishes of our electorate and work to achieve excellent Corporate Governance the Leader of the Council, if he truly believes that all political differences should be put aside, could mend this 'Broken Council' by immediately forming a Cabinet made up of members from ALL political groups.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Tom Harney (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Phil Gilchrist (3 minutes)

Add new paragraph to end:

- (5) However, Council is concerned:
- (i) The current Administration has so far failed to consult the public and carry out meaningful consultation on next year's Budget, leaving the authority at risk of legal challenge.
 - (ii) The current Administration has failed to engage and involve the Council's OSCs in the development of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, despite previous assurances by the Leader that he would do so.
 - (iii) At the removal of the results of the Budget Simulator from public view from the Council's website after the closure of the Simulator.
 - (iv) The current Administration has repeatedly failed to produce and publish important Cabinet reports in good time, prior to those meetings taking place, reducing the opportunities for elected members to constructively challenge recommendations and performance.

- (v) Important decisions on governance improvements are being made without full publication of all the relevant information.
- (vi) That, until the current Administration changes the way it works, poor governance is likely to continue.

Right of reply: Councillor Steve Foulkes (7 minutes)

5. MOTION: DUTY TO INVOLVE, INFORM AND CONSULT

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie (3 minutes)

Council notes that at its meeting on 18th July 2011 Council agreed the following resolution:

(1) This Council:

- (i) Reaffirms its commitment to enhanced community engagement to ensure that major policy decisions include more robust processes of public consultation, as appropriate, before decisions are taken, as agreed unanimously by Notice of Motion at Council on 15 February 2010.
- (ii) Believes that last year's Wirral's Future consultation, using the task force model and public questionnaire, followed the principles set out in that Notice of Motion to:
 - Share the problem or issue and develop broad support on the need for change before progressing on to possible solutions;
 - Develop a 'green paper' approach to setting out options and possible solutions within the operational, policy and financial constraints with genuine opportunity for people to influence decision making, and;
 - Improve the use of the Council's website as a consultation portal, with a list of active consultations in progress and with the relevant supporting documents available as downloads.
- (iii) Acknowledges the need for consultation to include a strong independent element and recognises the crucial work of the independent task forces - comprised of experts in their thematic fields - and thanks them again for their work.
- (iv) Also believes that this approach played a substantial and legitimate role in achieving a balanced Budget for 2011/12 whilst protecting services, cutting the cost of running the Council and ensuring no compulsory redundancies.
- (v) Calls on the Leader to:
 - Confirm the venues and dates at which the public will have the opportunity to take part and notes that, at this stage of the successful 'Wirral's Future' consultation in 2010, the main programme had already circulated.

- Confirm which organisations, employers, service users and partners are involved in the consultation, noting that, at this stage of the successful 'Wirral's Future' consultation in 2010, this information was already available.
 - Publish the names of the individuals who have written the questionnaire and the names of those who will consider the responses from the public and notes that, at this stage of the successful 'Wirral's Future' consultation in 2010, this information had already been circulated.
 - State how many contacts and how many qualitative responses will be considered a 'success', noting his Party's criticism of the contact with more than 40,000 people and 5,500 completed questionnaires in the successful 'Wirral's Future' consultation in 2010.
- (2) Council notes that five months on from passing this resolution the Leader of the Council has still not complied with the content of this resolution.
- (3) Therefore Council calls on the Leader of the Council:
- to apologise to Council for ignoring its democratically expressed wishes
 - to write to all members of the Council explaining the Council's legal responsibilities to involve, inform and consult on its services with residents and stakeholders and how robust processes of public consultation, before budget decisions are taken, is to be achieved prior to introducing its 2012 – 2013 budget.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Phil Davies (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Steve Foulkes (3 minutes)

Delete all. Replace with:

- (1) Council notes that two extensive Consultations have already taken place this year, one leading to the creation of Neighbourhood Plans, setting out particular priorities for individual neighbourhoods, and the other a Budget Simulation exercise which has given all those who are interested the opportunity to participate in a budget setting exercise, and in so doing to allow an analysis of favoured priorities. Both these exercises will inform the budget setting process.
- (2) Council notes that this is in addition to the widely publicised, if flawed, consultation, which took place last year which again drew conclusions on the priorities of Wirral residents.
- (3) Council is mindful of the guidance in the central government Code of Practice on consultation which refers to the "burden of consultation" and states that "formal consultation should not be entered into lightly".
- (4) Council is also mindful of the fact that Consultation may well be required where a reduction or change in funding alters the level of service provided and affects third parties, and that there are particular responsibilities where services to

people with disabilities are concerned, and that that Consultation would need to be very specific to the service altered and the relevant service users.

- (5) Council notes that, should such a situation arise, the Chief Executive has been granted delegated powers, in consultation with the Leadership of the Council to carry out the relevant consultation.
- (6) Council also notes that, given the upheaval and instability created by last year's budget, including the loss of a fifth of the Council's workforce, which did not form part of any consultation, it is the stated aim of this administration to do all in its power to avoid any further destabilisation or dramatic cuts in services and that its budget will be designed to avoid further trauma if possible.
- (7) Council expresses its concern that the Chancellor's Autumn Statement which seeks a further £15 billion cuts in the Public Sector may well have a serious impact on Local Authority Funding, which is already in a state of crisis, but the timescale of that impact is not yet known.

Right of reply: Councillor Jeff Green (7 minutes)

**6. OBJECTION: MINUTE 210 (CABINET – 8 DECEMBER, 2011)
CORPORATE PLAN 2012/13 – UPDATE
Item 6 (iii) – Matters Requiring Approval by the Council**

Proposed by Councillor Tom Harney (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell (3 minutes)

- (1) That a decision on the Corporate Plan be postponed and deferred to the next Full Council meeting and that, in the meantime, the Corporate Plan is referred to all the Council's OSCs for scrutiny. In line with Article 6 of the Constitution, OSCs to consider those parts of the Corporate Plan within the remit of each committee, with Council Excellence OSC carrying out its coordinating role in line with Clause 23 of the Constitution relating to Council Excellence, specifically "the overall production of the Corporate Plan." That a report to the next Council be made on the views of the OSCs.
- (2) Council notes that the Corporate Plan was not issued with the Council Summons and therefore elected members have not had sufficient time to consider this important document, nor have they been sufficiently engaged in its development, despite the previous assurances of the Leader of the Council to include OSCs in the development of the Budget and Policy Framework."

Right of reply: Councillor Steve Foulkes (7 minutes)

7. MOTION: EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

Proposed by Councillor Brian Kenny (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Adrian Jones (3 minutes)

- (1) This Council is extremely concerned that the Government has announced its intention to give companies greater freedom to sack employees as part of an overhaul of employment laws, to boost economic recovery.
- (2) Council is also concerned at plans to double the qualifying period for unfair dismissal claims and to introduce a fee for lodging an employment tribunal claim for unfair dismissal.
- (3) Council believes that it is typical of this Government to claim that the only way to bring unemployment down is to make it easier to sack people and reduce their employment rights.
- (4) Instead of attacking these rights, Council believes that the Government should reverse its disastrous economic policies, which have produced near-record levels of unemployment, and to produce a plan to restore much-needed growth.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Andrew Hodson (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Simon Mountney (3 minutes)

Delete all after (1) This Council and insert:

endorses the changes proposed by the Government with regards to Employment rights and it recognises whilst providing protection to employees the system does need to be made simpler for both employers and employees.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Stuart Kelly (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Tom Harney (3 minutes)

Paragraph (1) – delete “to boost economic recovery”

Delete paragraphs (3) and (4) and insert new paragraph (3):

- (3) Council believes that boosting economic growth is not reliant upon changes to employment rights.

Right of reply: Councillor Brian Kenny (7 minutes)

8. MOTION: PARKS AND COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE PROCUREMENT EXERCISE (PACSPE)

Proposed by Councillor David Elderton (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Tom Anderson (3 minutes)

- (1) Council notes with disappointment Cabinet's decision to ignore the views of the Council's Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and abandon the Parks & Countryside Procurement Exercise
- (2) Council notes that this abandonment will result in the following Corporate Plan target not being met: 'Successfully deliver the Parks and Countryside Services Procurement Exercise to enable proposed contract benefits to be achieved by January / February 2012.'
- (3) Council expresses its serious concern that when reviewing the Cabinet's decision, the Council's Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee found:
 - 'No mention or discussion took place regarding stakeholder management or the views of key stakeholders about the benefits of clear quality improvements that were built into the procurement exercise. In fact, other than the views of the Council Trades Unions, the results of consultation and the views of park users and user groups were not even mentioned by a single Cabinet Member at the meeting'.
 - 'No mention was made of the training and development programme for staff and volunteers or the three to six new apprentices to be created as part of PACSPE'.
 - 'Insufficient account appeared to be taken of the reduction from costs of £8.1 million per year to £7.4 million per year already achieved by the PACSPE process with the potential to reduce costs by a further very large sum'.
 - And that it was 'hard to understand how the Leader of the Council characterised the potential savings as marginal'.
- (4) Council is therefore drawn to sharing the conclusions of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee that 'the decision to refuse to award the PACSPE contract will see the ever decreasing quality of a service starved of investment by this administration which is already characterised by going for the quick fix instead of making the difficult but necessary strategic decisions in the interests of Wirral residents.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Chris Meaden (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Chris Jones (3 minutes)

Delete all. Replace with:

Council re-iterates the position outlined in the resolution carried by the Cabinet on November 3rd (Minute 173) and reminds members again of:

- The seriousness of the qualification by the District Auditor of the Council's Value for Money Statement.
- The warning that members should be aware of the increased risk of letting a ten year contract if there is only very limited information on the costs and activity levels of the existing service against which to monitor whether or not the new contract provides Value for Money.
- The fact that the cost of contractual inflation over a period of three years at current CPI levels would erode any savings delivered by outsourcing the contract and in subsequent years could increase costs to the Council.

Council believes that it is now time to look forward.

It welcomes the fact that the Managers and workforce within the Parks and Countryside Service are working together to deliver a new improved service for the people of Wirral and that so far timescales contained within the business plan have been met. Plans are in place for the transfer of staff from Continental Landscapes back to the Council and there is universal determination to demonstrate that the Council can provide true Value for Money and an excellent service in the future.

Right of reply: Councillor David Elderton (7 minutes)

9. MOTION: AFFORDABLE HOMES

Proposed by Councillor Alan Brighthouse (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Stuart Kelly (3 minutes)

- (1) Council welcomes the recent Coalition Government announcement to support first time buyers through the introduction of government supported 95% mortgages as part of a strategy to tackle housing shortage, boost the economy, create jobs and get more people on to the housing ladder.
- (2) Council notes that, under this new mortgage indemnity scheme, the Government will underwrite a percentage of each loan on newly built property, meaning buyers will not have to raise as much towards a deposit.
- (3) Council also notes that this scheme sounds very similar to the 'Lend a Hand' local authority mortgage scheme referenced in the Notice of Motion "Mortgage

Support for First Time Buyers”, aimed at first time buyers finding it difficult to raise the 20-25% deposit needed to obtain an affordable mortgage interest rate and agreed unanimously at Full Council on 18th April 2011 (Minute 118).

- (4) Council agreed that this scheme had the potential to support housing markets in areas at risk of housing market failure, stimulating the local housing market and benefiting the wider local economy
- (5) Council is reminded that the Director of Finance was instructed to bring forward a report reviewing the impact of the ‘Lend a Hand’ local authority mortgage scheme and any lessons that would need to be learnt prior to the implementation of such a scheme in Wirral.
- (6) Given that the Government continues to endorse the principle of public sector backed top up mortgages, the Economy and Regeneration OSC is urged to request a report from the Acting Director of Regeneration, Housing and Planning on how Wirral can be at the vanguard of any implementation plan of the Government’s scheme.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor George Davies (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Pat Hackett (3 minutes)

Add the following:

- (7) Council welcomes and supports this scheme which will add to the tools available to allow people more options to access home ownership in the current challenging climate.
- (8) Council recognises that this is an opportunity to boost the local housing market by supporting access to home ownership and employment opportunities.
- (9) Council believes it will enable greater choice when offered alongside our original intended scheme, which is to support access to mortgages for first time buyers to purchase from the existing stock in the borough.

Right of reply: Councillor Alan Brighthouse (7 minutes)

10. MOTION: BYE-LAW BANNING DOGS FROM CHILDREN’S PLAY AREAS

Proposed by Councillor Jean Stapleton (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Brian Kenny (3 minutes)

- (1) Council is concerned about irresponsible dog walkers who allow their dogs to enter enclosed children’s play areas.
- (2) Council asks for the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management to report back to Cabinet on the process for producing a new bye-law or other appropriate

measures to give the Council powers to impose sanctions on dog walkers who deliberately allow their animals to enter enclosed children's play areas.

- (3) Council also asks the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management to report back to Cabinet on a new bye-law obliging all dog walkers to carry an appropriate bag at all times when walking their dog.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Pat Williams (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Mark Johnston (3 minutes)

Paragraph (2) – delete “on the process for” and replace with “on the feasibility of”

Paragraph (3) – insert “the feasibility of” after “report back to Cabinet on”

Right of reply: Councillor Jean Stapleton (7 minutes)

11. MOTION: AKA REPORT

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Simon Mountney (3 minutes)

- (1) Council notes it has been seven months since the former leader of the Council requested Officers to contact Mr Martin Morton to offer him a position back with the Authority following the report of Mr Martin Smith, Independent Associate Consultant, North West Employers and that to date, due to a lack of urgency by the new administration, this matter has still not been resolved.
- (2) Council further notes it has been over two months since the Leader of the Council received the two AKA reports, commissioned by the then leader of the Council, into the circumstances surrounding the Martin Morton 'scandal.'
- (3) Council believes that justice delayed is justice denied and calls for the immediate publication of the additional two AKA reports (Executive Summary & Full Report) into this matter.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Adrian Jones (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor George Davies (3 minutes)

Replace paragraphs (1) (2) and (3) with the following new paragraphs:

- (1) Council does not believe it appropriate for negotiations between an individual and the Council to be made the subject of a public debate at Council. Council recognises however that these negotiations have been protracted and urges those concerned to reach a speedy conclusion in the interests of all concerned.

- (2) Council welcomes the fact that the AKA inquiry, commissioned by the former Leader of the Council, identified key issues of Corporate Governance which needed to be addressed, dating back through several different forms of political administration, from Majority, to Minority, to Coalitions of different persuasions. Council further welcomes the fact that this report was published as rapidly as possible to allow all three parties to work together to tackle the challenges to good Corporate Governance on Wirral.
- (3) Council believes that the Leader of the Conservative Group is well aware of the legal constraints on publication of the remaining elements of the report until a Right of Reply process has been completed and it is disingenuous for him to imply that there is any other reason for its delay, or that the Leader of the Council is in some way “sitting” on a draft report that has been shared with opposition leaders.
- (4) Council further believes that natural justice is best served by allowing the Right of Reply process to be completed before publication and preserving proper confidentiality until that point, as good Corporate Governance would demand.

Right of reply: Councillor Jeff Green (7 minutes)

12. MOTION: CASHLESS SCRAP METAL TRADE

Proposed by Councillor Dave Mitchell (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Ann Bridson (3 minutes)

- (1) This Council notes with great concern the level of metal theft across our Borough, and the effect of this crime on our community, including on homeowners, businesses, places of worship, community buildings, heritage assets, war memorials and infrastructure providers. According to Merseyside Police, almost 6 crimes per day (5.8) are related to theft of metal. This equates to 2.1% (more than one in 50) of all recorded crimes.
- (2) Council welcomes the e-petition launched (by Walsall Council <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/406>) on the official Government website calling for a change to the Scrap Metal Merchants Act 1964, to prohibit cash transactions, and make payment by cheque or bank transfer mandatory, providing an audit trail when thefts are detected or stolen or suspect materials are recovered.
- (3) Council welcomes the proposal of the Metal Theft (Prevention) Bill to Parliament by Hyndburn MP Graham Jones, aimed at establishing a robust licensing scheme for scrap metal dealers coupled with greater police and judicial powers to close scrap yards found flouting the law.
- (4) Council also welcomes the Government review into what else needs to be done to tackle the issue of metal theft.
- (5) Therefore, Council calls on the Leader to request:

- (i) That the Chief Executive contact Wirral's four Members of Parliament, and the Home Secretary, to inform them of Wirral Council's support for this legal change, and to request their support;
 - (ii) That the e-petition be publicised on the Council's website, along with advice on preventing such thefts, or on measures which may help to identify thieves such as the use of smart water, in partnership with the local Police and other partners, as appropriate.
- (6) Further, Council instructs the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management to prepare a report for the next Sustainable Communities OSC on current levels of metal thefts, the steps that are being taken to prevent them and to bring those responsible to justice, with the opportunity for members to contribute suggestions and comments, to ensure that Wirral's response to metal theft is as robust as possible.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Bill Davies (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor John Salter (3 minutes)

In paragraph (4) add after 'theft':

'including consideration of the introduction of a full licensing regime to regulate the activity.'

In paragraph (5) (i) delete all after 'Council's support' and add the following:

'for the Bill before Parliament and further measures that would strengthen regulatory controls for this trade such as a licensing regime, and to request their support.'

Right of reply: Councillor Dave Mitchell (7 minutes)

13. MOTION: ANNUAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES ASSESSMENT

Proposed by Councillor Ann McLachlan (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Tony Smith (3 minutes)

- (1) This Council notes that Wirral Council's Children's Services has been awarded an excellent rating in the Annual Children's Services Assessment by Ofsted. Wirral was one of only 28 authorities across the country providing excellent services for children in their area. The rating is an improvement on last year's score, and recognises sustained and further improvement in a number of areas.
- (2) During the inspection Ofsted looked at 22 types of services and settings including schools, nurseries and colleges, fostering and adoption services, children's homes, and childminders and childcare. Inspectors also took into account a recent inspection of safeguarding and looked after children which judged services

to be 'good with good capacity to improve with some outstanding features,' and recent good inspections of adoption and fostering services.

- (3) The inspection team said that the very large majority of services, settings and institutions are 'good or better' and most provision helps children and young people to learn and stay safe.
- (4) Positive strengths they highlighted included educational standards and progress, the development of five-year-olds, (and in particular a reduction in the gap between the achievements of those from low income families and other children of the same age), and the proportion of primary and secondary schools that are now 'good' or 'outstanding.'
- (5) There was also special praise for the fact that more children with special educational needs achieve good GCSE's than elsewhere, with provision for special educational needs being 'good' or 'outstanding.'
- (6) Elsewhere, there was special mention of the quality of post-16 education and training, children's homes, fostering and adoption, and services for safeguarding and looked after children where leadership and management are outstanding, as are partnership agreements.'
- (7) Two areas of improvement were identified, and moves are now underway to improve the performance of some childcare provision and reduce the gap in achievement between young people from low income families and other young people of the same age.
- (8) Council records its congratulations to the Acting Director and all the staff, both in the department and in schools, for their dedication and commitment to the young people of Wirral.

Right of reply: Councillor Ann McLachlan (7 minutes)

14. MOTION: FAIRNESS, NOT FAVOURS

Proposed by Councillor Cherry Povall (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Tony Cox (3 minutes)

- (1) Council recognises the valuable role played by trade unions in ensuring effective industrial relations, their role in consultation and involvement in matters concerning health and safety and the unpaid hours of service given by many trade union members to wider issues affecting their colleagues.
- (2) However, Council believes that trade unions must, wherever possible, remain impartial and not be dependent on an employer for favours. Council also notes that taxpayers in Wirral are subsidising trade union activity at Wirral Council and this activity is costing £360,000 per annum.

- (3) Council notes this includes eight full time union officials, employed by Wirral Borough Council, for the sole purpose of promoting trade unions and carrying out union activity. Council notes that a further 112 trade union stewards in the Council are given 8,458 hours of Council time to conduct union business.
- (4) Council believes that, given the state of the public finances, it is no longer fair for the taxpayer to subsidise trade unions in this way and that responsibility for funding trade union activity should rest with trade union members and trade union leaders.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Bernie Mooney (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Adrian Jones (3 minutes)

Delete all, replace with:

- (1) Council believes it is important to recognise the important and valuable role of the trade unions in ensuring effective industrial relations, in maintaining the highest possible level of health and safety standards and ensuring training and learning opportunities through consultation and involvement.
- (2) Council notes that unions operate under legal recognition agreements which give statutory rights to elected union representatives for paid time to undertake trade union duties and to train for those duties. These duties include negotiating terms and conditions of employment, representation at disciplinary and grievance hearings, attending health and safety meetings, and promoting learning and training needs. Wirral Council has a trade union recognition policy with a facilities agreement which is based on Employment legislation, a National Agreement through the National Joint Council and the ACAS Code of Practice.
- (3) Council believes it is misleading to suggest that all the responsibilities of union representatives should be classed as trade union activities which should be paid for by union members, as the vast majority of work undertaken by legally elected representatives concerns duties and training directed at ensuring good standards of industrial relations, which is as beneficial to the Council and to Wirral's Council Tax payers as it is to union members.
- (4) Council believes that to remove these rights would not only be a breach of the law, and a breach of a National Agreement, but a totally false economy which could end up costing more than it saved.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Stuart Kelly (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell (3 minutes)

Paragraph (2) - *delete* "and this activity is costing £360,000 per annum."

Paragraph (3) - *delete final sentence and replace with* "This activity is costing £191,000 (plus on costs) per annum."

Delete paragraph (4) and replace with:

- (4) Council believes that the scale of investment in these services should be a reflection of workforce numbers and the duties required for adequate representation and that work to establish this should be undertaken.

Add new paragraph:

- (5) Council acknowledges the work of the 112 shop stewards and the valuable role they play in representing the workforce to management on such issues as health and safety and other statutory obligations, promoting in-work learning and development and contributing to the effectiveness of the Council.

Right of reply: Councillor Cherry Povall (7 minutes)

15. MOTION: INCREASING RECYCLING

Proposed by Councillor Alan Brighthouse (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Bob Wilkins (3 minutes)

Council:

- (1) Is reminded of its support of The Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy for Merseyside which includes a commitment to recycle 50% of household waste by 2020.
- (2) Believes that it can reach and should exceed this target much sooner, helping to reduce the borough's carbon footprint and reduce the amount paid out for waste disposal.
- (3) Is reminded that it agreed unanimously (Council, 12th July 2010, Minute 22) "to request that the Director of Technical Services continues to examine new ways to reduce waste to landfill, such as through the introduction of food waste collections (taking account of existing work undertaken to date), the collection of recyclable material from businesses, increasing the range of recyclable material that can be taken to the council's recycling collection points and working with MWDA to increase the range of materials that can be placed in grey bins".
- (4) Instructs the Director of Technical Services to present a report to the next available Sustainable Communities OSC, and calls on the Leader to request a Cabinet report, setting out the contribution and progress Wirral has made since 12th July 2010. This report shall also include, but not be limited to, options for;
- (i) increasing the range and proportion of materials that are recycled;
 - (ii) supporting the development of improved facilities and services for the recycling of trade and commercial wastes, recognising that a local green infrastructure will support the development of local businesses;

- (5) Instructs the Director of Technical Services to present a report to the Sustainable Communities OSC, and invites the Leader to request a Cabinet report, before the end of the municipal year proposing a Wirral Council Action Plan that clearly sets out the mechanism by which Wirral will achieve the objectives included in The Joint Recycling and Waste Management Strategy for Merseyside.
- (6) Also calls on the Leader to instruct the Director of Technical Services to work with the MWDA to modernise the levy mechanism and design a new system which more accurately reflects the benefits of recycling and the disposal costs of non recyclable waste.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Irene Williams (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Brian Kenny (3 minutes)

Amend paragraph (2) as follows:

- (2) Believes that (subject to the implementation of a new Levy Payment Mechanism that incentivises district investment in recycling) it can reach and should exceed this target much sooner, helping to reduce the borough's carbon footprint and reduce the amount paid out for waste disposal.

Amend paragraph 4 (i) as follows:

“increasing the range and proportion of materials that are recycled with particular focus on materials realising the most carbon savings, such as textiles and WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment);”

Amend paragraph (6) as follows:

- (6) Also calls on the Leader to instruct the Director of Technical Services to work with the Merseyside Waste and Recycling Authority and other Merseyside authorities to modernise the levy mechanism and design a new system which more accurately reflects the benefits of recycling and the disposal costs of non recyclable waste.

Right of reply: Councillor Alan Brighthouse (7 minutes)

16. MOTION: CUTS TO LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Proposed by Councillor Harry Smith (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Ron Abbey (3 minutes)

- (1) This Council condemns the coalition government's decision to cut Wirral's Local Transport Plan transport capital programme by £2.3 million.
- (2) This cut has hit a number of key areas which contribute to residents' health and quality of life, i.e. highway maintenance, reducing congestion, road safety, the

promotion of walking and cycling, breaking down the barriers to people using public transport and schemes to improve access to jobs, healthcare, education and job opportunities.

- (3) Council asks the government to re-consider these damaging cuts and to restore these budgets.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Lesley Rennie (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Adam Sykes (3 minutes)

Delete all and insert:

- (1) Council notes that this year's Local Transport Plan has seen a reduction in funding.
- (2) Council notes that the borough wide consultation exercise, 'Wirral's Future - be part of it' undertaken by the previous Administration clearly shows that the residents of Wirral value road safety and highway maintenance as a priority.
- (3) Council is therefore pleased to note that the previous Conservative-led Administration listened to local people and made available the sum of £1.6million as a significant investment to maintain and improve Wirral's roads through a programme of highway maintenance and road safety improvements.
- (4) Council calls upon the present Council Leader to reflect similar commitment when formulating a budget for the coming year.
- (5) Council also notes that the Coalition Government made available to Wirral a sum of £625,931 to repair pot holes caused by severe weather conditions over the winter period.
- (6) Council requests the Director of Technical services continues to work in collaboration with Partner Agencies to deliver a full Road Safety Programme. Further ways of working together with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service to deliver Road Safety Educational Training be explored, as Council acknowledges their vast experience in delivering excellent training to young people in successful schemes such as 'Drive to Arrive'.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Tom Harney (7 minute)

Seconded by Councillor Stuart Kelly (3 minutes)

Paragraph (1) – delete all and replace with:

- (1) Council notes the international economic circumstances are likely to lead to a reduction in available capital finance for the Local Transport Plan.

Paragraph (2) – delete: "This cut has hit a number of key areas which" and insert:

“Council affirms that the Capital Transport Programme should be prioritised to...”
continue rest of paragraph as before.

Paragraph (3) – delete all and replace with:

(3) Council affirms its commitment, in line with the principles outlined in paragraph (2), to the introduction of 20mph zones in residential areas and outside schools and calls upon the Cabinet to stop stalling and get on with the work for which money has already been made available.

Right of reply: Councillor Harry Smith (7 minutes)

**17. OBJECTION: MINUTE 210 (CABINET – 8 DECEMBER, 2011)
CORPORATE PLAN 2012/13 - UPDATE
Item 6 (iii) – Matters Requiring Approval by the Council**

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie (3 minutes)

Council recognises the difference between a wish list (however many good intentions the list espouses) and a plan is the presence of objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound. Council notes that the new corporate plan sent to it by the administration for endorsement has 13 pages of commentary, 75 wishes and a complete lack of specific activities to be undertaken, dates by when they will be completed or how success will be measured.

Council believes that the lack of clarity and rigour in the plan, as now presented, will lead to confusion regarding how departmental plans can best be configured to contribute to clear Council objectives and lead to a return of the silo approach to service delivery and problem solving.

Council notes the definition of good corporate governance includes reference to inclusive, consultative and transparent decision making and therefore regrets that the development of the new corporate plan, sent to it by the administration for agreement, has not been inclusive, consultative or transparent.

Council therefore refuses to adopt the new Corporate Plan in its current state and recommends, in the absence of a meaningful public consultation exercise this year, that:

- (1) The administration seeks the views of all relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Council partners.
- (2) Any comments received are transparently evaluated by the Cabinet.
- (3) Following (1) & (2) above, a more robust plan containing SMART objectives is resubmitted to a future Council.

Right of reply: Councillor Steve Foulkes (7 minutes)

18. MOTION: PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND SHARED SERVICES

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Tom Harney (3 minutes)

- (1) Council notes with interest Liverpool City Council's Budget consultation with residents, stakeholders and service users on quantified options for cost savings, which includes savings arising from the sharing of services between the five Merseyside authorities (including Wirral).
- (2) Council further notes with dismay that whilst Liverpool residents were being consulted at an early stage on sharing services with Wirral, Wirral residents were not given the opportunity of being consulted on sharing services with Liverpool or any other of the Merseyside authorities.
- (3) Therefore, Council instructs the Chief Executive to make publicly available all material relating to discussions and negotiations that have taken place with the other Merseyside districts in relation to sharing services, including any assessment of the implications for services and service users as well as quantifying the level of savings that can be achieved.
- (4) This Council believes that the current Labour Administration;
 - (i) has, to date, failed to comply with the Council's own unanimously agreed policy (Council, 15th Feb 2010, Minute 103) "to ensure that major policy decisions include more robust processes of public consultation, as appropriate, before decisions are taken";
 - (ii) has, despite stating they would set out to use You Choose and build on last year's detailed 'Wirral's Future' consultation, done too little and may have left it too late to carry out any meaningful consultation on next year's budget, leaving the authority at risk of legal challenge, and;
 - (iii) has, despite the willingness of overview and scrutiny committees to engage with the process, failed to provide any information or set out a single option or proposal in relation to next year's Budget for members to scrutinise.
- (5) Council, therefore, calls on the Leader to publish, as a matter of urgency, his draft Budget proposals, so that what little time which remains can usefully be applied to public consultation to mitigate the risk of legal challenge.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Steve Foulkes (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Jean Stapleton (3 minutes)

Delete everything and replace with the following:

Council notes that both the Chief Executive and the Acting Director of Adult Social Services has confirmed that no officer has been involved in any discussions with Liverpool City Council regarding the sharing of adult social care services between the five Merseyside authorities.

The principle of shared services has been discussed at a City Region level for a number of years, however, to date no agreement has been reached on any specific proposals.

During this municipal year the Labour Administration has put in place a wide-ranging and inclusive consultation process around key priorities for the Council. This has three elements:

- (i) Neighbourhood Plans for each Area Forum have been developed via a questionnaire, focus groups and meetings with local organisations such as residents associations – the results were reported to Cabinet on the 24th November.
- (ii) The ‘You Choose’ Budget Simulator, which was recommended by the Local Government Association and is used by a wide range of local authorities – the results were reported to Cabinet on the 8th December.
- (iii) All Overview & Scrutiny Committees were given the opportunity of putting forward suggestions of areas of the budget which could yield savings.

The above have been used to inform a refresh of the Corporate Plan which was submitted to Cabinet on the 8th December.

Council thanks all individuals and organisations who have engaged in the consultation exercise described above.

Right of reply: Councillor Phil Gilchrist (7 minutes)

**19. OBJECTION: MINUTE 215 (CABINET – 8 DECEMBER, 2011)
CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FINANCING 2012-15
Item 6 (v) – Matters Requiring Approval by the Council**

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie (3 minutes)

That the Capital Programme as proposed by Cabinet be amended to include:

- Preventative maintenance to classified roads - £500,000.
- Preventative maintenance to unclassified and residential streets - £500,000.
- Road safety improvements and local transport schemes - £650,000.

Right of reply: Councillor Steve Foulkes (7 minutes)

20. MOTION: LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

Proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Ian Lewis (3 minutes)

Council:

- (1) Welcomes public engagement in the democratic process. Council notes the growing use of blogs and microblogs by members of the public and notes that many sites now also include video and audio recorded at Council meetings.
- (2) Reaffirms its commitment, made last year by the previous Conservative Liberal Democrat administration, to ensure that any member of the public who wishes to film or broadcast from a public Council meeting is encouraged to do so.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Jim Crabtree (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Denise Roberts (3 minutes)

Add additional paragraphs:

- (3) Council would not wish to see proper debate constrained in any way by the presence of cameras or audio equipment and therefore asks the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management to clarify in writing for members the position on qualified privilege which may go some way to allay fears about unfounded legal actions arising from detailed recordings of proceedings.
- (4) Council further asks the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management to draw up a protocol on the use of material designed to prevent any abuse of material which could be harmful to councillors who are legitimately engaged in the processes of democracy.
- (5) In the meantime, the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management is asked to re-circulate the original guidance he produced when the issue first arose.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Dave Mitchell (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Pat Williams (3 minutes)

Add additional paragraph:

- (3) However, Council is concerned to protect the rights of members of the public, petitioners and others who are not elected members and may interact with the Council and its committees. Council asks the Director of Law HR and Asset Management to ensure that the Chairs of committees are appropriately briefed.

Right of reply: Councillor Chris Blakeley (7 minutes)

21. MOTION: EDUCATION, EDUCATION, EDUCATION

Proposed by Councillor Sheila Clarke (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor James Keeley (3 minutes)

Council:

- (1) Welcomes the decision of the Coalition Government to increase the Pupil Premium by a further £58 per pupil this year, thereby eliminating the deficits at many schools in recent years. Council believes further increases in the Pupil Premium will enable schools in Wirral to make further, welcome progress in raising the achievement and attainment of all pupils in the Borough, regardless of background.
- (2) Also notes that many existing schools have benefited from the Council's budget this year, including improvements to school buildings, such as:
 - £75,000 toilet refurbishment at St Andrew's Primary School, Bebington
 - £60,000 replacement windows at Greasby Junior School
 - £27,000 kitchen improvements at Thingwall Primary School
 - £93,000 safer playground at Christchurch School, Moreton
 - £450,000 mobile classroom replacement at St George's Primary School, Wallasey
- (3) Is pleased to note that the Deputy Prime Minister has announced the introduction of free nursery school provision for approximately 140,000 children from the most deprived families and looks forward to working with schools to ensure that children in Wirral benefit from this extra investment.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Ann McLachlan (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Tony Smith (3 minutes)

Delete all. Replace with:

- (1) Council notes that the Pupil Premium was introduced to address the current inequalities between children eligible for Free School Meals and their wealthier peers.
- (2) Council further notes that, whilst Schools are free to spend the Pupil Premium as they see fit, they will be held accountable for how it is spent and this money is not intended to be used to plug any deficit in School budgets.
- (3) Council welcomes the consultation on extending the former Labour Government's commitment to provide free nursery education for all children under school age to two year olds.

(4) Council also notes the much reduced capital programme for 2011/12, compared to the over £40m invested in 2010/11, which enabled many Schools in Wirral to benefit from improvements to their buildings and facilities.

Right of reply: Councillor Sheila Clarke (7 minutes)

22. MOTION: LOSS OF GAS SUPPLY IN LEASOWE AND MORETON

Proposed by Councillor Ian Lewis (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Chris Blakeley (3 minutes)

Council is concerned that 3,000 homes and employers in Leasowe and Moreton were without mains gas supply for up to eight days during November, caused by a leaking water main.

- (1) Council thanks members of the local community, including Leasowe Estate Tenants Association and the Autumn Club who immediately gave support to their more vulnerable neighbours, including the delivery of portable electric heaters and hotplates and those residents who worked to provide hot meals at the Leasowe Community Centre and Leasowe Millennium Centre for those who were unable to cook.
- (2) Council also expresses its gratitude to the engineers from National Grid who worked throughout this period to restore supply; the engineers from Scottish Power who responded quickly to loss of electricity supply in some roads; staff from the Council's Emergency Planning Team and Social Services Department and staff from Leasowe Community Homes, who all responded quickly to support residents.
- (3) Council while welcoming compensation payments of £30 per day, confirmed by National Grid on the first day of the loss of supply, is concerned that payment arrangements do not recognise the difficulties caused to people on prepayment meters or that many people do not hold a current account.

Council requests that the Chief Executive of the Council write to National Grid to thank his engineers for their work and outline the concerns expressed in this motion.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Anne McArdle (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Ron Abbey (3 minutes)

Add the following:

Council also notes that at the request of the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Inclusion that United Utilities and National Grid have been invited to attend a meeting of the next Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to present their reports on their response to the loss of supply.

It is also noted that letters of thanks to the local community for their support in the crisis have been sent from the Chief Executive.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Bob Wilkins (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell (3 minutes)

Add to the end of the motion:

Council also requests that the Director of Technical Services prepares a report for the Sustainable Communities OSC, setting out lessons learnt, including appropriate recommendations on improving community resilience in the event of any future interruptions to energy supplies.

Right of reply: Councillor Ian Lewis (7 minutes)

23. OBJECTION: MINUTE 216 (CABINET – 8 DECEMBER, 2011) BUDGET PROJECTIONS 2012-15 Item 6 (vi) – Matters Requiring Approval by the Council

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green (7 minutes)

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie (3 minutes)

- (1) That the decision to cut £1m from the Early Intervention Grant be referred to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- (2) That the sum of £1.4m pay provision be referred to the Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Right of reply: Councillor Steve Foulkes (7 minutes)

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COUNCIL VACANCIES – 12 December

Outside Bodies

Licensing, Health & Safety and General Purposes

North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Councillor Pat Glasman to replace Brian Kenny

Housing and Community Safety

Wirral Council and Riverside Challenge Fund Working Group (See Cabinet minute 179 – 3/11/11)

Councillor George Davies (Cabinet Member for Housing & Community Safety)
Mr K Adderley (Acting Director of Regeneration, Housing and Planning) or deputy
Mr B Norman (Director of Law, HR and Asset Management) or deputy

Leasowe Community Homes Management Board

Vacancy to replace Councillor Ian Lewis

Children's Services and Lifelong Learning

Birkenhead Sixth Form College Governing Body

Councillor Denise Roberts (1 Nov 2011 to 31 Oct 2015)
(Appointments to the Governing Body are made for a four year term)

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