

CABINET

Thursday, 9 December 2010

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	J E Green (Chair)	
	Councillors	S Holbrook C Blakeley S Clarke D Elderton G Gardiner A Hodson I Lewis R Moon L Rennie	Corporate Resources Housing and Community Safety Children's Services & Lifelong Learning Culture, Tourism and Leisure Environment Regeneration and Planning Strategy Community and Customer Engagement Social Care and Inclusion Streetscene and Transport Services
<u>In attendance:</u>	Councillors	S Foulkes P Davies	

240 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The members of the Cabinet were invited to consider whether they have a personal or prejudicial interest in connection with any of the items on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

Councillor J Green declared a personal interest in respect of Minutes 255 and 256 (Primary and Secondary School Admission Arrangements) by virtue of his wife's employment as a Headteacher with the authority.

Councillor C Blakeley declared a personal interest in respect of Minute 260 (Bidston Moss Viaduct Update and Docks Link Roads) by virtue of his membership of the Merseyside Integrated Passenger Transport Authority.

Councillor Holbrook declared a block personal interest in respect of Minutes 255 and 256 (Primary and Secondary School Admission Arrangements) on behalf of all of those Cabinet members who were members of school governing bodies.

241 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 25 November, 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

242 **WIRRAL'S FUTURE: BE PART OF IT: TASK FORCE OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Interim Chief Executive presented a report, supplemented by a presentation, outlining progress in relation to the implementation of the Council's consultation programme 'Wirral's Future: Be a part of it', initiated by Cabinet on 24th June 2010. The report also presented a series of options and recommendations from the four Task Forces established as part of the consultation programme to review service priorities and delivery around four distinct themes that correspond with the Council's corporate objectives:

Economy and Regeneration;
Living in Wirral;
Adult Social Services, and;
Children and Young People's Services.

These options and recommendations were presented to Cabinet by the Task Forces within the context of the budgetary challenges faced by the Council.

The Leader made the following statement which was endorsed unanimously by all members of the Cabinet:-

"The Progressive Partnership formed between the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Councillors in May 2010 resolved that by working together we would provide the stability the Council requires to take Wirral through difficult times to better days ahead. We recognised that the national debt crisis would have a significant impact on local government finances and that balancing the Council's budget, whilst protecting key frontline services must be a key priority.

This Administration made it clear that we would be inclusive in our decision making; committed to meaningful, open and transparent public consultation and to ensuring that no part of Wirral is ignored. We made clear our commitment to openness, fairness and responsibility and the decisions we are making tonight have been guided by these values.

Therefore, Cabinet would like to place on record our thanks to the Wirral Council Project team for designing and delivering the 'Wirral's future – be a part of it' consultation exercise - the largest ever undertaken in the Borough. We would also like to thank the Chairs and members of the four Task Forces for putting their knowledge, time and experience to work in the interest of the people of Wirral and for delivering such progressive, clear and imaginative recommendations.

We would also like to thank the people of Wirral for their constructive responses to the crucial questions and choices that were put before them.

Cabinet further welcomes the 'Wirral's future – be a part of it' consultation exercise and the outstanding level of public participation, as we believe the adoption of the Task Force recommendations will allow the Council, for the first time, to align its policies for Children and Young People, Adult Social Services, Living in Wirral and the Wirral Economy, to Wirral resident's priorities and therefore make better subsequent decisions on how it chooses to spend or to save the public's money."

On a motion by the Leader seconded by Councillor Holbrook it was:

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) all Task Force recommendations be considered at item 9 (budget projections) of this agenda;**
- (2) the Interim Chief Executive be instructed to report to an early meeting of the Cabinet on the alignment of Wirral's future Policy and Budgetary Framework to the public's priorities (as expressed in the 'Wirral's future – be a part of it' consultation exercise') including the resources required to ensure that from now on, resident insight and consultation are embedded into the Council's budget and policy decision making;**
- (3) Cabinet agrees with all of the Task Forces that if frontline services are to be sustainable for the future the way they are managed and delivered will have to change. Also that there is an opportunity to procure a range of services more cost-effectively from the Voluntary, Community, Faith Sector. This will be subject to a robust performance management framework that will ensure the quality of outcomes for service users are maintained or improved. The Council will provide support and help to enable the sector to develop and grow and will put in place arrangements to provide a seamless transition for service users and a fairer charging policy to protect the vulnerable;**
- (4) the Interim Chief Executive be instructed to ensure all necessary steps are taken to enable contracts with Voluntary, Community and Faith groups and organisations, which are due to end in March 2011 are extended by three months to facilitate service continuity during a period of contract review;**
- (5) Cabinet is aware that Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Organisations already play a crucial role in enriching the lives of Wirral residents and therefore commits our Administration to supporting their continued development, ensuring that Wirral becomes a shining example of how a Council can work in close partnership with the sector in the future for the benefit of local people. Cabinet recognises that this commitment requires a new way of working and thinking and that it will be at the heart of all we do in the future;**
- (6) to facilitate this cultural shift, Cabinet gives the Interim Chief Executive delegated authority in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council to establish a dedicated unit, initially from within existing resources, to support and encourage the development of the 'Big Society'. This unit will initially focus on increasing the involvement of voluntary, community, faith sectors in Council service delivery, the transferring of more power to local Councillors and neighbourhoods, ensuring greater transparency in the Council's activities, encouraging greater collective action to care for the vulnerable and supporting the creation of cooperatives, mutuals, and social enterprises;**

- (7) overall responsibility for leading and coordinating the Council's contribution to the Big Society; in liaison with the relevant Portfolio holders, be added to the Council Leader's Portfolio and Cabinet requests the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management to publish the relevant adjustments to Cabinet Portfolio responsibilities;
- (8) Cabinet also welcomes the urgency expressed in the consultation exercise for the Council to reduce its carbon footprint and requests the Interim Chief Executive to bring forward recommendations at the earliest opportunity on how the public's priorities for greater pace in this area of Council policy can be achieved;
- (9) Cabinet welcomes the views of the Task Forces and public regarding the potential to raise income through charging for Council services where appropriate. Cabinet also recognises that it is crucial that a fair charging policy is developed to ensure vulnerable people are protected. Cabinet also wishes to ensure that additional income raised is reinvested in front line services and that any costs of administering a new fair charging policy are minimised. We therefore instruct Officers to:
- ensure that the recommendations from the Task Forces's regarding potential areas for fees and charges are incorporated into the Strategic Change Programmes review of Fees and Charges as a matter of urgency and a report is brought back to Cabinet in January;
 - that as a matter of urgency the Director of Finance carries out the necessary work to establish a corporate policy on affordable charging to ensure that the most vulnerable people and those most dependant on Council supported services in our community are protected; and
 - that the Director of Finance reports to Cabinet on the establishment of one unified back office system for the processing of fees and charges; and
- (10) the Council be asked to note the options and recommendations presented by the Task Forces at Appendices A, B, C and D in respect of the Council's future plans, request a review of the consultation process, and instruct Officers to ensure that it is embedded within the Council's business planning processes for all future years including the development of a new Corporate Plan.

243 EUROPA BOULEVARD DISPOSAL OF SITES 1 AND 2

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management, detailed the result of the marketing exercise in respect of sites 1 and 2 Europa Boulevard and set out options for the way forward. Two responses received in response to the marketing exercise were contained in an exempt appendix to the report. They were not for publication

because they contained confidential information relating to the business affairs of the organisations concerned.

A letter from Williams Tarr Holdings Limited (dated 6 December) making representations in support of their proposal was noted.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Williams Tarr Holdings Limited be thanked for their interest and their efforts to bring about a successful development, but that their tender for the sites be declined and the sites be not remarketed at this time, pending further consideration of the most appropriate way forward;**
- (2) Officers seek talks with other landowners and interested developers and other parties with a view to carrying out a masterplanning exercise and establishing the potential for the land at Europa Boulevard to support a more comprehensive redevelopment of Birkenhead Town Centre. A progress report to be made to Cabinet within six months.**

244 PROVISIONAL FINANCE SETTLEMENT

With the permission of the Cabinet, this item was withdrawn.

245 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FINANCING 2011-15

A report by the Director of Finance detailed a draft Capital Programme for 2011/15 for consideration and referral to Council for approval. It also included the related capital financing requirements based upon the prudential indicators that inform the Treasury Management Strategy.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the new submissions as detailed in section 7.2 be approved;**
- (2) if the changes are approved, the capital financing requirements be reflected in the projected budget;**
- (3) the Prudential Indicators be noted and reported as part of the Treasury Management Strategy in February 2011; and**
- (4) update reports on the progress of the programme be presented in accordance with the Performance and Financial Monitoring reporting cycle.**

246 CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE

A report by the Director of Finance detailed the method used to calculate the Tax Base for Council Tax and recommended a figure for tax setting purposes. Members were requested to approve the tax-base for Council Tax purposes in 2011/12.

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the figure calculated as the Council Tax Base for the year 2011/2012 shall be 104,879.

247 COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS

A report by the Director of Finance reviewed Council Tax charges for Second Homes, long-term empty homes and the annual option for the Council to set locally defined discount schemes. Members were requested to decide if any amendments to current discounts should be brought into operation.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) with regard to Second Homes and Local Discounts, no amendment be made to the current discount levels for 2011-12;**
- (2) with regard to Long Term Empty Properties, the full rate of Council Tax is charged at the expiry of the exempt period. It being noted that this will support the policy of bringing more empty properties back into use, which is a policy also recommended by the Living in Wirral task force and supported by the public in the 'Wirral's Future' consultation. It also being noted that the New Homes Bonus, currently the subject of DCLG consultation, could potentially generate additional revenue to the Council in government reward grant for each empty house brought back into use;**
- (3) the discounts of 50% for the refuge and 75% for both flats continue to be awarded to Wirral Women and Children's Aid for 2011-12; and**
- (4) the Director of Finance be instructed to bring a report to a future Cabinet setting out a range of policy options and likely costs on eligibility criteria for considering applications of Local Discounts.**

248 BUDGET PROJECTIONS 2011-15

A report by the Director of Finance updated the projected budgets for the years from 2011 to 2015 taking into account the Spending Review 2011-15 presented on 20 October 2010.

On a motion by the Leader seconded by Councillor Holbrook it was:-

RESOLVED:

The Director of Finance has now reported that with the savings requirement placed on the Council, including the ending of £10.3million of Working Neighbourhood Fund Grant by the previous Labour Government, the Council must save £117million between 2011/12 and 2014/15

Cabinet anticipates that the measures the current coalition Government will need to take to tackle the doubling of the national debt, the spending £120 million every single day just to pay off the interest on Labour's debt and the biggest deficit in the G20 will increase the amount of savings required.

Cabinet believes we have a responsibility to the most vulnerable in our communities to ensure that high quality front line services are sustainable for the long term whilst doing all we can to minimise the burden of Council Tax on hard pressed residents.

Cabinet also believes that Wirral Council has a leading role in Wirral's economy and a responsibility to help to rebalance the economy to attract new investment to the Borough, creating skilled and green jobs that will reduce worklessness and grow our economy.

Cabinet therefore commends to Council the strategy our administration has adopted of:

1. **Informing, listening and engaging with Wirral residents**, employers, Council staff and the voluntary, community and faith organisations through the 'Wirral's future – be a part of it' consultation exercise which has delivered such progressive, clear and imaginative recommendations that will allow the Council, for the first time, to align its policies for Children and Young People, Adult Social Services, Living in Wirral and the Wirral Economy, to Wirral resident's priorities.
2. Repairing and reinvigorating the Council's Strategic Change Programme which seeks to fundamentally change the way the Council does business.
3. Offering Council staff the opportunity to leave Council service or reduce their hours if they so wish.
4. Our commitment to making every pound of the public's money matter by focusing, with the Interim Chief Executive, The Head of the Council's Strategic Change Programme and Director of Finance, on all areas of Council spending to identify where resources, including reserves, red tape, excessive back office costs and bureaucracy, can be released to keep Council tax minimised whilst investing in the services that matter the most to local people.

Cabinet thanks the Officers and staff of the Council, the independent Task Forces, Wirral residents and employers for the contributions they have made to the delivery of this strategy.

Cabinet notes that the formation of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat 'progressive partnership,' in May of this year, had at its heart a commitment to openness, fairness and responsibility and that Cabinet is confident that the decisions we are making tonight have been guided by these values.

Cabinet therefore recommends to Council the following changes to this and future years Council spending plans, noting that this amounts to savings of £48 million.

EVR/VS	£24.3 million
Additional savings (to those identified above) arising directly from the consultation exercise	£0.691 million
Strategic Change Programme	£10.725 million
Every Pound Matters*	1.6 million removal of CT discount 1.23 from reserves 1.4 pension fund review 4.2 zero inflation provision 3.9 none reinstatement of in year ABG savings Total £12.3 million

Cabinet reaffirms its determination to driving down costs even further. We therefore instruct Officers to ensure the following Strategic Change Programme savings that relate to the running of the Council in 2011-2012 are delivered.

- Procurement £2 million
- ICT Strategic Review £0.5 million
- Asset transfers and disposals £0.48 million
- Office Accommodation £0.37 million
- Energy efficiency £0.08 million
- Printing Review £0.08 million
- Electronic Payments Development £0.20 million

We expect these measures to deliver further savings in future years.

Cabinet instructs the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management to identify and deliver efficiencies relating to office rationalisation, asset management and reduce duplication and introduce consistency in the delivery of facilities management functions through the Strategic Change Programme.

Cabinet requests the Lead Officer for the Council's Strategic Change Programme (SCP) to bring an early report on the progress of SCP to the Cabinet. The Lead Officer for the Council's SCP together with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council report progress on the SCP to the Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Cabinet further requests that a seminar is arranged for the Lead Officer for the Council's SCP together with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council to brief all members of the Council on the content and progress of the SCP.

Cabinet is committed to delivering savings through better management of our assets and buildings. Where there is clear mutual benefit for the community and Council this will include transferring assets to voluntary, community and faith organisations, where they request it, and a further reduction in the office space the Council requires in order to redirect further cash to front line services.

Consideration and response to ‘Wirral’s future – be a part of it’ consultation Task Force Recommendations:

Response to Adult Social Services Task Force

This Administration will ensure that the Council continues to provide for vulnerable people who have been assessed as having substantial and critical needs. We welcome the involvement and assistance of the Care Quality Commission, Department of Health and Local Government Association in tackling the weaknesses in this department and also welcome the improvements taking place in the quality of service delivery.

We will place an emphasis on preventative services to help people live in their homes or in homes of their choice and ensure that benefits to vulnerable people are maximised and that the quality of service is improved and monitored. We will continue to work closely with service users and carers as we provide and modernise day time activities while monitoring them to ensure that they are suitable and cost effective and seek to extend choice through greater use of Personalised Budgets.

The interim Director of Adult Social Services is instructed to implement the following service changes recommended by the Task Forces:

1. Cabinet has carefully considered the progress made with improvements in care services since they were last reviewed on November 2009. Cabinet recognises that Wirral currently has empty capacity in independent sector residential homes and that unit costs to the council are higher than our neighbours. Cabinet recognises that there is an opportunity to reduce unit costs and develop the range of care supplied by a wide range of providers

- a) The respite care and interim care currently provided at Maplehome, Pensall, Poulton, Meadowcroft and Fernleigh be reprovided by suitable voluntary, community, faith-based or organisations the independent sector under the terms of the existing Contract for Residential and Nursing Home Care together with appropriate care for the small number of long term residents in these homes and Manor Road. The Interim Director of Adult Social Services is also instructed to carry out further consultation with service users and their families, and with the small number of long term residents in these homes about the details of that re-provision.

Budget saving: £2,765,750 (included in SCP and EVR/VS savings)

- b) Cabinet agrees with the Task Force that the amount the Council pays to independent care home services should be in line with that paid by neighbouring authorities and welcomes tonight’s report on this subject.

Budget saving: £5,368,000 (included in SCP savings)

2. The Interim Director of Adult Social Services is instructed to reprovide personal support under the existing Supported Living contract for people currently supported by the Council in private supported living tenancies.

Budget saving: £1,610,650 (included in SCP and EVR/VS savings)

3. The Interim Director of Adult Social Services is instructed to re provide the enablement part of the HART service from the independent sector under the terms of the existing Contract for Domiciliary Care and amend specification to ensure quality of care is maintained and, where possible, enhanced.

Budget saving: £762,314 (included in EVR/VS savings)

4. The interim Director of DASS be instructed to consult with people who use services and their carers and, having regard to the outcomes of the consultation, implement a staged increase in the Fairer Charging Policy, applied to people who are supported to live in their own homes, from 75% to 100% of disposable income over the next three years, to be in line with other local authorities.

Income generation: £200,000

5. The Task Force recommended that the charge for meals on wheels be set at the actual cost of providing the meal. Cabinet recognises the value of this service to vulnerable people and does not wish to take this recommendation forward at this time.
6. The Task Force recommended that a nominal charge be applied to new users who do not have critical or substantial need and who opt to receive telecare technology to help them stay independent. The interim Director of DASS is requested to carry out the necessary consultations to apply a charge of £4 per week.

Response to Children and Young People's Task Force

This Administration places the highest importance upon protecting Wirral's children and young people from harm, and ensuring that vulnerable children and families are supported. We welcome the Task Force recommendations that support must continue to be provided at an early stage in order to reduce costly demand for services in the future at the same time as improving outcomes for children. This work will include encouraging more residents to become involved in fostering and adopting.

We also note that the key Task Force recommendations relating to the provision and cost of support and services to schools are in keeping with the Coalition Government's recently published White Paper. Cabinet agrees that School improvement should be more focused on school-to-school support with the Council fulfilling a co-coordinating and commissioning role.

Support provided to schools should be based on each school's individual needs through the continuation and development of traded services, based on need, so we only provide what schools want, at cost, and at a price they are prepared to pay.

Cabinet instructs the interim Director of Children's Services to:

1. Ensure that the Council continues to provide support and sell services to schools cost effectively and efficiently in order to make best use of schools delegated budgets and reduce central expenditure.

This Administration places the highest priority of all upon protecting and supporting our most vulnerable children. We therefore instruct the interim Director of Children's Services to:

2. Implement the redesign of support for the education of looked after children to ensure greater focus on their needs within their school settings, ensuring that the Virtual Headteacher continues to champion the needs of this important group of young people.

Budget saving: £97,000 (included in EVR/VS savings)

3. Implement the review of additional support provided for children with Special Educational Needs, including whether there could be more opportunities for other organisations to provide these services.

Budget saving: £250,000 (£226,000 included in EVR/VS savings)

4. Cabinet welcomes the completion of the new build children's centre programme across Wirral and therefore believes that the interim mobile crèche facility is no longer required.

Budget saving: £71,000 (included in EVR/VS savings)

5. As the Extended Schools programme is so embedded across the Wirral, Cabinet agrees that any funding requirement for the administration and support for the programme be transferred to schools.

Budget saving: £125,000 (£38,000 included in EVR/VS savings)

6. As all Wirral schools have now achieved Healthy Schools status Cabinet agrees that the Council cease its contribution to this programme.

Budget saving: £94,000

7. Cabinet welcomes the high response from the public with suggestions on how to increase the number of foster carers in the borough. Cabinet believes that families offer the best environment for raising a child. The interim Director of Children's Services is requested to review the strategy in relation to fostering in order to involve communities more in identifying foster carers and notes that this is one aspect of the strategic change project to safely reduce the number of looked after children in Council care.
8. Cabinet also instructs the interim Director of Children's Services to review its in-house residential provision and to implement any necessary changes to improve services and reduce costs including capital investment, which will also be delivered through the strategic change programme. This will include the closure of Brookfield Children's home, on a timescale which takes account of the needs of the young people currently living there.

Recommendations 7 and 8 both relate to the strategic change project to safely reduce looked after children, a service area which is currently experiencing an overspend. This project will reduce expenditure by at least £1m in 2011/12, which will be significant in stabilising the budget and providing a foundation for revenue savings in 2013-15 (all savings included in SCP savings)

9. This Administration recognises the importance of the Oaklands Centre to local children and Schools. The interim Director of Children's Services instructed to establish the service on a full cost recovery basis to secure the Centre's future.
10. This Administration also recognises the value of the Schools Music Service and instructs the interim Director of Children's Services to ensure its quality is maintained whilst delivering the service in a more cost effective way. We note that the Secretary of State has instigated a national review of Music Services and any findings of this review should also be considered.
11. Cabinet instructs the interim Director of Children's Services to review the pan-Merseyside Connexions contract in the light of the recent announcement of a national all age careers service and take all necessary actions in relation to future contracting arrangements.
12. Cabinet notes the Task Force recommended that the Council should find new ways of working with the voluntary and private sectors to develop alternative ways of providing youth services . In addition Cabinet notes the

Task Force recommendation that the Council should find ways of delivering play services differently and more cost-effectively, making links where possible to other areas of activity. The interim Director of Children's Services is therefore requested to review these services in the light of the Task Force recommendations.

Response to Living in Wirral Task Force

This Administration is strongly committed to reducing Wirral's carbon footprint with, among other measures, improved recycling facilities and energy saving measures. We welcome the Task Force's recommendation endorsing this area of activity and will continue to strive to deliver a 60% carbon reduction target by 2025.

1. Cabinet instructs that the recommended renegotiation of the Biffa contract for refuse collection and street cleaning be taken forward as part of the Strategic Change Programme's contracts review. However Cabinet does not support charging for garden waste collection, charging for the removal of graffiti from private property, reducing the frequency of garden waste collection or increasing charges for the Eric service above inflation.
2. Cabinet welcomes the proposal to take a stronger approach to enforcement in relation to trade waste agreements and instructs the Director of Technical Services to implement this recommendation.

Budget saving: £10,000

3. Cabinet endorses the view that the current pilot to safely dim street lighting to reduce carbon and save money on energy costs should be implemented across the borough through the Strategic Change programme.

Budget saving: £50,000 in 2011-12 (included in SCP savings)

4. Cabinet recognises the proposal that Council should consider increasing fees for a number of optional Council services and requests that this be taken forward as part of the Strategic Change Programmes review of fees and charges.
5. Cabinet instructs the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management to examine the possibility of increasing on-the-spot fines for dog fouling and the dropping of litter. The Director is also requested to look at the potential for increasing income from these services by providing to partner and private organisations

Cabinet welcomes the Task Force's strong support for continuing to undertake preventative maintenance on Wirral's roads and maintaining the current programme of coastal and sea defence work. In light of the consultation, Cabinet will examine non-statutory Traffic Management services to establish whether money is being spent on the right things, while working to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on Wirral's roads.

Traffic management budget saving: £150,000 (included in SCP savings)

6. Cabinet requests that the recommendation from the Task Force to end differential charging, and introduce standard and fair fees in all of the Council's current pay and display car parks, be examined as part of the Strategic Change Programme's review of fees and charging. Cabinet recognises that this does not mean bringing all charges up to the current maximum charge and in reviewing car parking

charges, maintaining the vitality of the Borough's District Shopping Centres will be a priority consideration.

Cabinet will consider co-locating other Council services within libraries whilst continuing to offer a comprehensive library service across the borough. We will expand and invigorate the marketing efforts designed to maximise income through sport and recreation centres, seek private sector sponsorship for our galleries and exhibitions and will maintain the Book Start initiative.

7. Cabinet instructs the Director of Technical Services to conduct value for money reviews in high spend areas within sport, recreation and open space services, and that savings achieved under PACSPE are maximised.

Budget saving: £1,200,000 (included in SCP savings and EVR/VS)

8. Cabinet also instructs the Director of Technical Services to review the management of golf and leisure facilities to achieve potential savings and examine the possibility of introducing private tuition and holiday clubs to increase income. Cabinet reaffirms its wish to secure a long term sustainable future for the swimming and leisure centre offer within Wirral and requests the Director of Technical Services to bring forward a report on how this can be best achieved.
9. Cabinet instructs the Director of Finance to bring forward and implement proposals to integrate the one stop shop service within libraries including the co-location of facilities where practicable. Libraries and one stop shops are to be managed as one seamless information service with staff inter-changeable between both functions.

This Administration will seek to accelerate partnership working to bring more empty properties back into use, to meet housing needs and reduce the number of people waiting for suitable homes. We will work with partners to ensure a joined up approach to improving housing standards.

10. The interim Director of Corporate Services is instructed to ensure that the Housing Market Renewal and Housing Standards team maximise both external funding and partnership contributions to the funding and delivery of new housing.
11. The interim Director of Corporate Services is instructed to invest the Supporting People grant in prevention services for the most socially excluded, and renegotiate contracts where possible to achieve savings.

Budget saving: £200,000

12. The interim Director of Corporate Services is instructed to implement an alternative way to deliver the Home Improvement Agency Service, which makes adaptations to properties to support individuals being released from hospital.

Budget saving: £76,000 (one off saving)

13. The interim Director of Corporate Services is instructed to develop a sub-regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme in Merseyside.

14. The interim Director of Corporate Services to explore the introducing of charges for landlord accreditation as part of a shared service with neighbouring Authorities.

This Administration recognises the importance of the contribution the Council plays in protecting Wirral's environment and enhancing the safety of local communities.

15. Cabinet instructs the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management to restructure the Community Patrol service and introduce a broader enforcement role for officers.

Budget saving: £110,000 (included in EVR/VS savings)

16. Cabinet instructs the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management to review and restructure Pest Control service to improve efficiency and flexibility.

Budget saving: £72,525 (included in EVR/VS savings)

Response to Economy and Regeneration Task Force

This Administration is committed to increasing employment in all parts of the Borough and working with the Government to tackle worklessness. Cabinet supports regeneration of our dock areas through Wirral Waters ensuring that it is integrated into wider regeneration for Birkenhead and Wallasey and with economic benefits for the whole of Wirral.

Cabinet will drive forward the economic regeneration of the Borough by ensuring the continued implementation of the Investment Strategy. We will seek at all times to support and enable the private sector to grow. Initiatives such as the Construction Employment Integrator will ensure that business growth is linked to reducing worklessness.

We will tackle barriers to work and low skills so that people move from benefits into employment. Council investment in this area will seek to maximise other fund such as European Social Fund.

We will work with partners such as Job Centre Plus, the Skills Funding Agency and National Apprenticeship Service and only provide Council taxpayers resources to projects aimed at tackling worklessness that have clear targets for success that are directly linked to increased employment opportunities. We will maximise the investment made in the Wirral Apprentice programme ensuring even more local people benefit.

This Administration endorses the Task Force prioritisation of services that focused on job creation and tackling worklessness and deeply regrets the previous Labour Governments decision to remove the £ 10.3 million Working Neighbourhoods Fund Grant from the end of this financial year (2010/2011) which will leave any future programmes unfunded.

Cabinet therefore recommends to Council £2.845 million of increased spending for 2011/2012 to deliver the taskforce recommendations to support the following activity (noting this includes £740,000 which is the subject of an external funding bid).

- 1. Other than for those schemes that seek to address the requirements of those with special needs, Cabinet instructs that the funding of skills and training programmes that do not link directly to job outputs cease**
- 2. The interim Director of Corporate Services is instructed to work with Partners to deliver effective outreach and engagement activity and to commission work where there are gaps in provision and the targeted groups are 'hard to reach' or may not access mainstream services, or have specific multiple barriers to accessing employment.**
- 3. To support International trade links to maximise inward investment and Wirral businesses can access new markets and opportunities.**

4. The interim Director of Corporate Services is instructed to develop a single seamless approach to supporting investment to ensure that Wirral becomes the most business friendly Authority possible.
 5. Cabinet instructs the interim Director of Corporate Services to review the existing sub regional arrangements for securing inward investment and explores alternative methods that have the potential to deliver more effective job growth.
 6. The interim Director of Corporate Services is instructed to redesign the programme for delivery of the Wirral apprenticeship to reflect the taskforce recommendation.
 7. The interim Director of Corporate Services is requested to review the various grant funding to businesses to align with the taskforce recommendation.
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Cabinet reaffirms its commitment to:

1. Delivering savings of £48.016 million from EVR/VS, the Strategic Change Programme and our focus on making Every Pound Matter
2. Identifying resources to ensure that from now on, resident insight and consultation are embedded into the Council's budget and policy decision making
3. Reducing the Council's carbon footprint and bringing forward recommendations at the earliest opportunity on how the public's priorities for greater pace in this area of Council policy can be achieved
4. Wirral becoming a shining example of how a Council can work in close partnership with the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector in the future for the benefit of local people. Cabinet recognises that this commitment requires a new way of working and thinking and that it will be at the heart of all we do in the future
5. The Council will provide support and help to enable the Voluntary, Community, and Faith sector to develop and grow. This will include the establishment of a robust performance management framework to ensure the quality of outcomes for service users are maintained or improved and robust arrangements to provide a seamless transition for service users.
6. Developing a fair charging policy to ensure vulnerable people are protected
7. Establishing a dedicated unit to support and encourage the development of the 'Big Society'. This will focus on:
 - Increasing the involvement of Voluntary, Community and Faith sectors in Council service delivery.
 - Transferring of more power to local Councillors and neighbourhoods,
 - Ensuring greater transparency in the Council's activities,
 - Encouraging greater collective action to care for the vulnerable
 - Supporting the creation of cooperatives, mutuels, and social enterprises.
8. Supporting Adult Social Services staff through the changes required to turn around the Department following the findings of the Care Quality Commission.
9. Recognising the need to ensure that particular groups and communities are not disadvantaged by any changes in service delivery. Cabinet recognises that, in implementing the resolution, Officers must give due regard to the local authority's obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and ensure that the impact of any changes on particular groups and communities is assessed and mitigating activity put in place where necessary.
10. Cabinet further requests that the outcomes of the 'Wirral's Future' consultation are communicated across the borough, with particular attention

given to ensuring the Council works with the wide range of voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and groups in the borough to engage with local communities about what action is being taken.

Cabinet recommends Council to:

1. Approve the reductions to the 2010/11 Budget arising from the current Council wide EVR/Severance programme; agree the proposed changes to the 2011/12 Budget arising from the current Council wide EVR/Severance programme; agree the proposed further changes to the 2011/12 Budget arising from the Strategic Change Programme; and agree the proposed further changes to the 2011/12 Budget arising from the Every Pound Matters initiative and other efficiencies; all summarised as follows:

EVR/VS	£24.3 million
Additional savings (to those identified above) arising directly from the consultation exercise	£0.691 million
Strategic Change Programme	£10.725 million
Every Pound Matters*	1.6 million removal of CT discount 1.23 from reserves 1.4 pension fund review 4.2 zero inflation provision 3.9 none reinstatement of in year ABG savings
* Cabinet instructs officers to continue the examination of reserves and departmental budgets for further savings opportunities.	Total £12.3 million

2. Instruct the Interim Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and relevant portfolio holders, to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to secure the timely implementation of all the above Budget changes (including all appropriate consultation with service users, contractors and staff); and authorise the Interim Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and relevant portfolio holders to minimise any restructuring costs and approve any consequential opportunities for further savings and efficiencies arising from the above Budget changes.
3. Recognises that the Budget changes will impact on staff and agree that, all staff who are materially and directly affected by the decisions contained in these recommendations, as determined by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management, shall be entitled to be considered under the Discretionary Policy for the pensions Scheme which is in place until December 31 2010.
4. That all existing 2010/11 Area Based Grant funding is included in the 2011/12 revenue budget at the 2010/11 level, with the exception of those savings which have been previously agreed.
5. Council instructs the Interim Chief Executive to ensure all necessary steps are taken to enable contracts with Voluntary, Community and Faith groups and organisations, which are due to end in March 2011 are extended by three months to facilitate service continuity during a period of contract review.
6. Cabinet recognises the scale of the savings that our strategy has achieved and that we have a responsibility to Wirral residents and staff to demonstrate that 'we are all in this together'. Therefore, the Director of Law, HR and Asset

Management be instructed to take all necessary steps to ensure that Councillor Allowances, including Special Responsibility Allowances are reduced from their current maximums by 5% at the earliest opportunity.

249 BALANCE SHEET MANAGEMENT - REVIEW OF BALANCES INCLUDING PROVISIONS AND RESERVES

The Director of Finance presented the mid-year review of the amounts held in balances, provisions and reserves and recommended the release of those provisions and reserves no longer required to the General Fund balances.

RESOLVED:

That, having regard to the risks involved, £1,232,000 be returned to General Fund Balances.

250 PENSION FUND ACTUARIAL VALUATION AS AT 31 MARCH 2010

A report by the Director of Finance summarised the results of the 2010 Actuarial Valuation of the Pension Fund and the implications for Wirral Council.

RESOLVED:

That the revised contribution rates be agreed.

251 MERSEYSIDE PENSION FUND - FUNDING STRATEGY STATEMENT

A report by the Director of Finance presented the amended Funding Strategy Statement (FSS), reflecting updated advice received from the Actuary on dealing with arrangements for funding employer contributions and the revised Statement of Investment Principles (SIP) following completion of the 31 March 2010 actuarial valuation. The FSS had been agreed by the Pensions Committee on 16 November 2010. It was presented to the Cabinet as best practice as recommended by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

RESOLVED:

That the revised Funding Strategy Statement be noted.

252 PROCUREMENT - REVIEW OF CONTRACT EFFICIENCIES 2010-11

Further to Minute 186 (5/11/09) when a projected procurement savings target of £682,000 for 2010/11 for those areas of expenditure involving corporate contracts was approved, the Director of Finance reported upon progress towards achieving that savings target and other procurement initiatives having a direct impact on service departments. The report also outlined possible procurement efficiencies for 2011-12.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the procurement efficiencies delivered in 2010/11 be noted; and**
- (2) as part of the estimated procurement savings for 2011/12 of £2m, the procurement efficiencies from corporate contracts estimated at £534,000 be agreed for 2011/12.**

253 PROVISION FOR INFLATION 2011-12

A report by the Director of Finance advised on the current position regarding pay inflation, price inflation, and income inflation, and requested a decision on the provision for inflation to be included in the budget for 2011-12.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) provision be made for pay awards in line with the Government recommendation;**
- (2) no provision be made for price inflation; and**
- (3) income budgets be increased by 3%.**

254 PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES:PETITIONS

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reported concerning a recent review of the Petition Scheme which had resulted in proposed amendments to make it more effective; and a number of proposed revisions to the authority's Council Procedure Rules to ensure compatibility with the Petition Scheme.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the implementation of the E-petitions Scheme through modern.gov; and that the launch will be prior to the 15 December 2010 statutory deadline; be noted;**
- (2) Council be recommended to revise the authority's Petition Scheme by approving the proposed amendments set out in Annex A to the report; and**
- (3) Council be recommended to revise the Constitution by amending the Council Procedure Rules relating to petitions, as set out in Annex B to the report, as amended.**

255 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND THE COORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME FOR 2012-13

A report by the Interim Director of Children's Services invited the Cabinet to consult on the Authority's admission arrangements for community secondary schools and the co-ordinated admissions scheme for 2012-2013.

RESOLVED:

That consultation takes place on the admission arrangements for community secondary schools, and the co-ordinated scheme for 2012-13.

256 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND COORDINATED SCHEME FOR 2012-2013

A report by the Interim Director of Children's Services invited the Cabinet to consult on the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary schools and the coordinated admissions scheme for 2012-2013.

RESOLVED:

That consultation takes place on the proposed admission arrangements and coordinated scheme for 2012-2013.

257 PLAY BUILDER PROGRAMME REPORT

The Interim Director of Children's Services submitted an update report on the current Play Builder programme and the recently revised Government play capital allocations, and sought approval for expenditure on the sites identified in the Year 2 programme.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the revised Play Builder capital funding of £373,990.63 from the Department for Education to improve 11 play areas in 2010-2011 be allocated in accordance with the project plan and be included in the Children and Young People's Capital Programme for 2010/2011 ; and**
- (2) approval be given for the sites identified for Year 2 expenditure (2010/11)**

258 CONSTRUCTION OF A THIRD GENERATION SYNTHETIC FOOTBALL PITCH AT WOODCHURCH HIGH SCHOOL - SCHEME AND ESTIMATE

The Interim Director of Children's Services submitted a report seeking approval for a scheme to construct a synthetic football pitch and changing facilities at Woodchurch High School which would be primarily used by the school during the day and by Football Association-affiliated football clubs in the evenings and

at weekends. The report set out the costs of the scheme at £925,550 and gave details of the Football Association Bid for an amount of £500,000. The project was part of the overall regeneration of the Woodchurch campus which had been subject to previous Cabinet approvals.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Scheme and Estimate, as presented, be accepted, subject to approval and funding from the FA;**
- (2) the Director of Technical Services be authorised to obtain all necessary statutory approvals for the project;**
- (3) the Director of Technical Services be authorised to seek tenders for the project when funding is approved;**
- (4) the tender recommended for acceptance be reported to Cabinet for their decision, in accordance with the Council's Procurement Policy and;**
- (5) the Cabinet be kept informed of any changes to the above proposals.**

259 CONTRACTS FOR PERSONAL SUPPORT

The Interim Director of Adult Social Services presented a report seeking authority to tender for the provision of Personal Support to people in their own homes and Support to people living in registered Residential and Nursing Home accommodation in Wirral. The revised Contracts focused on outcomes for people and were set in the context of the broader transformation agenda for Adult Social Care and the recommendations of the Task Force (Minute 242 refers). The new Contracts were considered essential to improving safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable people, providing better value for money and offering more choices for people to enable them to take control over their own lives.

Councillor Bob Moon, portfolio holder, thanked the Interim Director and his team, for their hard work in progressing this matter.

Councillor Holbrook endorsed these comments and asked for the Cabinet's approval to waive the call-in period.

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management, advised that the waiving of the call-in on the grounds that the delay would seriously prejudice the Council's interests required the approval of both the Cabinet and the Interim Chief Executive.

The Interim Chief Executive gave his approval to the waiving of the call-in.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Cabinet authorises the Interim Director of Adult Social Services to implement the Contracting arrangements as set out in paragraphs 7 and 17;**

- (2) Cabinet instructs the Interim Director of Adult Social Services to continue dialogue with providers;
- (3) Cabinet instructs the Interim Director of Adult Social Services to advise providers that the Council will continue to benchmark charges to compare the fees paid with those of neighbouring authorities and retain these in broad alignment with the North West regional average, whilst continuing to ensure high quality and value for money;
- (3) the Council supports providers, including independent, community, voluntary and faith organisations, to develop partnerships which will be enable them to benefit from opportunities presented as personal budgets are rolled out and improve and enhance outcomes for vulnerable people;
- (4) Cabinet instructs the Interim Director of Adult Social Services to develop a robust quality assurance, inspection and monitoring framework, building on the rating criteria currently in use. This to ensure that the most vulnerable people in Wirral are safeguarded and outcomes enhanced with rigorous measures put in place to monitor provider standards to ensure that they are retained, and wherever possible improved;
- (5) the outcome of these enhancements be included in the Service Improvement Plan; and
- (6) call-in on this matter be waived to allow the tender process to proceed immediately.

260 **BIDSTON MOSS VIADUCT UPDATE AND DOCKS LINK ROADS RESURFACING**

The Director of Technical Services submitted a report summarising current progress of the works to strengthen the Bidston Moss Viaduct.

Additionally, the report requested authorisation pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 5.2 for a contract to be awarded by the Council to Costain Limited, the contractor undertaking the viaduct repair works, on a single tender basis, to carry out resurfacing activities on the Council's highway network adjacent to the viaduct site.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the current position regarding progress of the strengthening works at Bidston Moss Viaduct be noted; and
- (2) the acceptance of a single tender from Costain Ltd in the sum of £832,553, for the construction of carriageway resurfacing works Approach and Bidston Link Roads be approved, and that this be reported to Council pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 5.2.

261 **ANNUAL ELECTRICITY AND GAS CONTRACT RENEWAL**

The Director of Technical services submitted a report detailing the Council's annual electricity and gas contract renewals, undertaken by Buying Solutions following the end of the current contracts on 30 September 2010. He reported that the new contracts had increased the projected annual energy costs by £478,000, resulting in a £298,000 increase to the General Fund services and £180,000 to Schools.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) it be noted that the offer made by Buying Solutions was competitively tendered and accepted using Delegated Authority;**
- (2) the impact of the revised energy contracts be reflected in the 2010/11 General Fund budgets and the net increase of £149,000 be met from the General Fund balances;**
- (3) the impact of the revised energy contracts be reflected in the 2011/12 General Fund budgets and the net increase of £298,000 be added to the Budget Projections for 2011/15;**
- (4) the impact of the revised energy contracts upon the Schools Budgets be noted and the report be referred to the Schools Forum;**
- (5) it be recognised that no provision has been made for the 2011 contract renewals at this stage. Given the unpredictability of the markets, further reports to be presented to the Cabinet as information is received; and**
- (6) the revisions to the Carbon Reduction Scheme be noted and that £532,000 be included in the Budget Projections for 2012/13.**

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

The Leader reported that he agreed to accept the following items of urgent business:

(1) WINTER MAINTENANCE AND BIN COLLECTIONS

The Director of Technical Services outlined the current position regarding winter maintenance operations in response to the freezing weather

Since the start of the cold weather, gritters had been used on primary and secondary transport routes, which were prioritised by all local authorities to make the roads safe for motorists. Approximately 60% salt stock levels had been used so far, and representations were being made to the Secretary of State for Transport requesting that the national salt cell be activated to enable the Council to replenish its depleted salt supplies.

The freezing weather had severely disrupted bin collections, making many residential streets across the borough too icy for the bin wagons to gain access. Despite being unable to collect in many streets, Arrangements had been made for extra Biffa crews to work on the missed bin collections over the weekend and it was anticipated that

the backlog would be significantly reduced. The crews would attempt all scheduled collections, but conditions in some residential streets could prevent access problems for the large and heavy vehicles. Subject to improved weather conditions, it was envisaged that:

- All green bins that were due to be collected during the week commencing 6 December will be collected by 13 December;
- Green still outstanding from last week commencing 29 November, will revert to their scheduled collection next week;
- Green bins will take priority over grey recycling bins;
- Grey bins will be collected on their next scheduled collection day;
- Collection of brown garden waste bins will resume from 13 December

The Director referred to last year's experience of extreme weather conditions which had highlighted the need for regular communications through daily bulletins, press releases, the website, and the call centre. He reported that Biffa crews were working alongside the Wirral Community Payback Service and the Council's parks and gardens team to grit the pavements and main shoppers' car parks. The Council was also restocking grit bins, for use by residents outside their homes.

The Leader thanked the Director for his update report and also conveyed Cabinet's thanks to the operational teams.

Councillor Rennie, portfolio holder, endorsed these comments and noted that the improved weather forecast for the weekend should provide the opportunity to "catch up", particularly in relation to bin collections. She thanked Mark Camborne, Health Safety and Resilience Manager, for his role in co-ordinating resilience planning to respond to the winter maintenance problems and producing the daily communications bulletins to keep members informed.

On a motion by Councillor Rennie seconded by the Leader it was:

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted.**
- (2) the Director and operational teams be thanked for their efforts in providing a first class winter maintenance service to ensure that the most vulnerable people in society are helped and supported during the winter months.**
- (3) Cabinet note that the UK is in the grip of its longest cold snap for almost 30 years.**
- (4) revised Winter Maintenance Arrangements agreed by Cabinet 14/10/2010 following the formal review undertaken by Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 June 2010 have thus far worked well.**
- (5) Gritting and associated activities have been evident during this period and crews have worked around the clock to ensure Wirral's main roads have been kept free from snow and ice.**

- (6) to date Wirral has spread some 1500 tonnes of rock salt from its enhanced stocks and further supplies have been ordered.
- (7) Cabinet further acknowledges the work of the Area Forums in funding additional grit bins which have proved invaluable in allowing Wirral citizens to play their part in responding to these difficult conditions.
- (8) Wirral's multi agency approach has once again proved successful with all Members of the Council being provided with appropriate and timely information and our thanks are passed to all those who have contributed to this.
- (9) based on previous experience, it is now known that the cycle of gritting, damage to our roads and salt shortages will inevitably follow and Cabinet reaffirms its commitment to funding additional salt supplies and continued gritting operations over and above normal budget provision.
- (10) Cabinet also instructs the Director of Technical Services to take appropriate action to continue to maintain the safety of the borough's roads and repair all resulting pot-holes and to report back to a future meeting should it not be possible to contain costs within Departmental budgets.
- (11) any such costs over and above those that cannot be contained from the existing budgets will be met from Council balances.

(2) WIRRAL WATERS

The Leader referred to the vision for Peel Holdings' 18million sq ft regeneration scheme, the biggest of its type anywhere in the UK, covering 500 acres of derelict docklands. He commented that the government's decision to approve the scheme and not to 'call it in' for a public inquiry demonstrated its trust in Wirral people to make the decision. The development would create tens of thousands of jobs during construction over a period of 30 years and approximately 27,000 jobs when complete. The Council's task now was to assist Peel Holdings in finding the businesses to occupy their new buildings.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted.
- (2) the following officers be thanked for their dedication and attention to detail which had resulted in the scheme receiving planning approval:

Jim Wilkie, Interim Chief Executive
Kevin Adderley, Interim Director of Corporate Services
Emma Degg, Interim Head of Planning, Engagement and Communities
David Green, Director of Technical Services
David Ball, Head of Housing and Regeneration
Ian Platt, Head of Housing

Joanne Storey, Principal Planning Officer
Matthew Crook, Senior Conservation Officer
Mark Smith, Head of Service, Streetscene and Waste
Joseph Smith, Group Leader, Technical Services, Traffic and Transport
Keith Rodgers, Principal Assistant Engineer
Richard Lewis, Investment Strategy Manager
Andrew Fraser, Principal Forward Planning Officer
John Entwistle, Principal Forward Planning Officer
Rose Boylan, Principal Economic Officer
Roy Jones, Group Solicitor

(3) HOYLAKE LIFEBOAT STATION, HOYLAKE – CALL IN UPDATE REPORT

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management submitted a report seeking Cabinet's instructions on the recommendations of the Council's Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 December, 2010. Cabinet was asked to determine whether it wished to proceed with the joint sale of its car park adjoining the Hoylake Lifeboat Station.

RESOLVED:

That the disposal of the car park adjoining the original Lifeboat Station in Holyoke, in accordance with the previously agreed exempt terms, be approved.

(4) TACKLING WORKLESSNESS AND SUPPORTING APPRENTICESHIPS IN WIRRAL THROUGH THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services provided an update regarding two European Funding bidding opportunities to address worklessness and to support apprenticeships, and requested approval for the required match funding as part of the next stage of the application process to the Government Office North West (GONW).

Appendix 2 of the report contained commercially sensitive information regarding the competitive tendering process the disclosure of which was not considered to be appropriate.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

- (1) agree the match funding sum of £1,778,889 from Working Neighbourhoods Fund reserves and £500,000 from the Apprenticeship policy option to draw down £1,876,270 of European Social fund resources to tackle worklessness and support apprenticeships in Wirral.**
- (2) agree that a further report on the detailed offer letter for these bids is brought back in due course for the approval of Cabinet prior to acceptance of the ESF funding.**

263 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

264 EUROPA BOULEVARD DISPOSAL OF SITES 1 AND 2 - EXEMPT APPENDICES

Further to Minute No. 243, the Cabinet considered the Appendix to the report that contained exempt information that, if disclosed, may provide financial business affairs information about a third party.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the Appendix containing exempt information that could not be considered in the presence of the press and public, be noted.

265 REDUCTION OR REMISSION OF NON DOMESTIC RATES DUE TO HARDSHIP

The Director of Finance submitted an application for reduction of non domestic rates due to hardship. The Cabinet was requested to consider the application having regard to the current policy and criteria and decide if an award was appropriate.

RESOLVED;

That the £3,000 shortfall for 2010-11(at a cost of £750 to the Authority) be awarded as hardship relief and that, in addition, a further £1,000 (at a cost of £250 to the Authority) be awarded as relief in 2011-12 in order to assist the applicants in their longer term plans.

266 COMPANY NAMED IN THE REPORT - REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Interim Director of Corporate Services submitted a report seeking approval to provide a grant to the company named, to assist towards its business development project.

RESOLVED:

That a 'Think Big' Investment Fund Grant of £44,000 be approved towards the business development project being undertaken by the company named within the report.

267 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 2)**

**TACKLING WORKLESSNESS AND SUPPORTING APPRENTICESHIPS IN
WIRRAL THROUGH THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – EXEMPT APPENDIX**

Further to Minute No. 262 (4), the Cabinet considered the Appendix to the report that contained exempt information that, if disclosed, may provide financial business affairs information about a third party.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the Appendix containing exempt information that could not be considered in the presence of the press and public, be noted.