

CABINET

Thursday, 13 January 2011

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	JE Green (Chair)	Finance and Best Value
	Councillors	S Holbrook D Elderton G Gardiner A Hodson I Lewis R Moon L Rennie	Corporate Resources 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	G Davies P Davies S Foulkes T Pritchard G Watt S Williams	
<u>Apologies</u>	Councillors	C Blakeley S Clarke	Housing and Community Safety Children's Services & Lifelong Learning

268 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

269 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 December 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

270 DOG FOULING

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management provided an update for Members in respect of work in respect of Dog Fouling managed by Wirral Community Patrol Service.

Councillor I Lewis thanked the officers of the Dog Fouling Enforcement Team managed by Wirral Community Patrol Service for the work they had undertaken when responding to the request from the Area Forum.

£40,000 had been allocated to bring about further improvements, building on the success of the successful "Give a Dog a Bad Name" dog fouling campaign. The Cabinet was informed of how this money was being spent, initiatives the Team were taking and other associated activity, including awareness raising, to clamp down on

those who allowed their dog to foul in public places and to educate them to pick up after their dogs.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) **Cabinet thanks the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its work on this matter and notes the good work of the Dog Fouling Enforcement Team; and**
- (2) **Cabinet agrees to further consider this matter as part of the budget setting process and instructs officers to consider options for this service, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment.**

271 BURTON'S BISCUIT FACTORY, MORETON - PROPOSED CLOSURE

Councillor A Hodson updated the Cabinet following Burton's recent and disappointing announcement that they proposed to close their Moreton Biscuit Factory with the loss of 342 jobs. They had said this was proposed to "improve the business's capabilities and cost competitiveness".

Members and officers had immediately sprung into action and had requested a meeting with Burton's management. This would take place in the next few days. There were also concerns over Typhoo and Manor Bakeries who shared the Burton's Factory site and meetings with their managements would also be held as soon as possible.

Councillor Hodson also informed that if the closures were brought about the site would remain designated for industrial/commercial use and would not be redesignated for housing.

There would now be a 90 day consultation period. Burton's intended to phase down production from March 2011 before completing closure later in the year.

Councillor J E Green informed that he was incredibly disappointed by this proposal and wanted to examine and discuss the reason behind the decision with Burton's management. He also wanted to investigate whatever opportunities there were to continue to work with the company to secure jobs in Wirral and the future of the site.

RESOLVED:

That the current position with regard to the Burton's Factory proposed closure be noted.

272 BUDGET PROJECTION 2011/2012

A report by the Director of Finance updated Members on the projected budgets for 2011-12 and 2012-13 taking into account the Spending Review presented on 20 October 2010 and the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.

Councillor S Holbrook reminded the Cabinet that when it had last met on 9 December the Local Government Settlement had not been announced. It had therefore taken

pre-emptive action in advance of the settlement. Consequently, it had a surplus but would still need to be cautious.

RESOLVED:

That the budget projections be kept under review.

273 COLLECTION FUND 2010-11

A report by the Director of Finance gave the estimated Collection Fund surplus or deficit for the year ending 31 March 2011. The position had to be notified to the precepting Authorities by 22 January 2011.

Although a balanced position had been forecast, there was a slight variation with a relatively small surplus resulting and this had been factored into the January 2011 estimate. It was noted that in 2010-11 the collection rate was in line with the 2009-10 performance and was on target. Although collection performance was currently being maintained, any deterioration in the length of time taken to collect debt would impact upon the calculation of the provision for bad debts requirement and the balanced position of the Fund. The Director would continue to closely monitor collection performance in the light of the national economic situation.

RESOLVED:

That the declaration of an estimated balanced position for the Collection Fund for the year ending 31 March 2011 be noted.

274 EVR/SEVERANCE FUNDING

With the agreement of the Chair, consideration of this item was deferred to the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 3 February 2011.

275 CONTRACT FOR THE SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION OF FROZEN FOOD

A report by the Director of Finance requested that the Cabinet note the award of this contract to Woodward's Foodservice. The Cabinet was advised that the Council would use a framework contract let by The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO) (formerly Scottish & Northern Universities Purchasing Initiative (SNUPI)). The two year contract would run from 10 January 2011 to 9 January 2013, with the option to extend annually for up to a further two years.

The Cabinet was reminded that TUCO was a public body which had been used for a number of years by the Council for various catering framework arrangements and the annual spend was approximately £515,000.

RESOLVED:

That the award of this contract to Woodward's Foodservice at an annual saving of £65,000 be noted.

276 **PROVISIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT**

A report by the Director of Finance advised Members that an announcement of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2011/13 commenced on 13 December 2010. Following the consultation period, which was due to close on 17 January 2011, the Final Settlement would be issued in early February 2011. The report set out the latest information.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the implications of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement be noted; and**
- (2) the Council continue to use every opportunity to state the case for further improvement to the Provisional Settlement.**

277 **COMMITTEE REFERRAL - AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 22 NOVEMBER 2010 (WORK UNDERTAKEN BY THE NFI)**

The Cabinet were advised that at its meeting held on 22 November 2010 (Minute No. 49/2010 refers), the Audit and Risk Management Committee had given consideration to some of the work of the Audit Commission's National Fraud Initiative (NFI), which the Director of Finance had indicated could not be picked up by the Council.

The Committee had agreed that the Cabinet should be requested to consider making representations to the Government on the valuable work undertaken by the NFI.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Director of Finance be instructed to prepare an appropriate response in conjunction with the Leader of the Council and make recommendations to the Government on the valuable work undertaken by NFI; and**
- (2) an update report be presented to the Cabinet in due course.**

278 **TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY - NEXT STEPS**

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services served to update Members on the progress made in taking forward the recommendations agreed by the Cabinet at its meeting on 14 January 2010 in respect of the Strategy for Town Centres, Retail and Commercial Leisure.

In addition the report set out proposals and options for future actions. These actions included:

- Appraising the vitality of each of the town, district and local centres identified in the Strategy to provide a clear evidence base for progressing any potential actions and investment;
- Proposals for putting in place a phased programme of centre-specific Action Plans that would be developed in partnership with local traders, residents and shoppers.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a detailed evidence base for each of the retail centres identified in the Town Centre, Retail and Commercial Leisure Strategy be produced in order to inform the Core Strategy Development Plan Document and that this be the subject of a further report to Cabinet upon its completion; and**
- (2) the approach to the production of a phased programme of Action Plan development for the local town centres addressed by the detailed evidence base work be agreed.**

279 REAL HELP NOW - EMPTY SHOPS FUNDING

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services sought to allocate the Empty Shops funding of £52,632 which was made available to the Council by the Department of Communities and Local Government and followed on from the report considered by Cabinet on 14 January 2010 on this issue.

The report recommended that the Empty Shops funding be divided equally between three shopping areas across the borough – New Ferry, Bromborough and Egremont (King Street/Brighton Street), but that the final decision on how the money should be spent within the centre should rest with the Cabinet following the involvement of the relevant Area Forums.

RESOLVED:

It be recommended that the three shopping areas of New Ferry, Bromborough and Brighton Street/King Street are allocated an equal proportion of the £52,632 Empty Shops Fund and that bids be invited through the relevant Area Forums for the funding.

280 NEW BRIGHTON PHASE 1: GOVERNMENT OFFICE NORTH WEST - REQUEST FOR CLAWBACK

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management sought Members' approval to the partial repayment of an ERDF grant in the sum of £223,355 following the completion of an Article 10 audit inspection carried out by Government Office North West in connection with the delivery of the Brand New Brighton Phase 1 project. The Cabinet was advised that if Members agreed to this request capital borrowing could be used to finance the repayment of grant.

The Director reported that after careful consideration of all relevant facts and issues, Counsel had advised that the sum of £223,355 was repayable by the Council given the terms of the grant and the manner in which the EC procurement regulations were now interpreted and applied.

RESOLVED:

That the repayment of grant be funded by borrowing.

281 **COMMITTEE REFERRAL - COUNCIL EXCELLENCE O&S COMMITTEE 22 NOVEMBER 2010 (THE SAIL PROJECT CALL-IN)**

Councillor J E Green informed that he would be leaving the room whilst this item of business was under discussion, not because he had a personal and prejudicial interest, but because the prospective developers had told him that they would report him to the Standards Board for England if he stayed and participated in the debate when this matter was under discussion at the Cabinet meeting on 14 October 2010 (Minute No. 160 refers) and (Minute No. 220 (25.11.2010) refers also). Consequently, he had left the meeting on that occasion and would do so again now.

Councillor S Holbrook took the Chair.

The Cabinet was advised that at its meeting held on 22 November 2010, the Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee gave consideration to the call-in of Cabinet Minute No. 160 of 14 October 2010, in relation to The Sail Project.

The Committee had agreed (6:4) (with Councillors Keeley, Kearney, McCubbin and Williams voting against) –

- “(1) That this Overview and Scrutiny Committee believes that the Cabinet should re-examine the issues, paying particular attention to
- (a) the need for a thorough public consultation;
 - (b) a rigorous transport assessment of car parking and travel issues.
- (2) That having considered the balance of whether the perceived benefits of the proposal outweigh the perceived drawbacks, on balance, the evidence received suggests an enabling development remains the most appropriate way forward.
- (3) That, in addition, Members have noted the storage and changing issues raised by the Lake Users and is concerned that these be addressed.”

Councillor S Holbrook moved the following Motion which was seconded by Councillor G Gardiner:

- (1) the Cabinet thanks the Council Excellence Scrutiny Committee for their painstaking and thorough investigation of the issues at the ‘call in’ meeting and welcomes their findings;
- (2) the Cabinet reaffirms that the purpose of this project is to secure a world class sailing school and supporting facilities for the West Kirby Marine Lane, and that a Hotel development on the Dee Lane car park is an enabling development to bring about that goal;
- (3) the Cabinet notes the views of Lake Users and believes that any development agreement must also ensure that amenities for lake users should be preserved or enhanced paying particular regard to storage and changing facilities as evidenced to the Scrutiny Committee;

- (4) without prejudice to the planning process, Cabinet reaffirms its support in principle for an enabling hotel development. However, Cabinet requires, as a matter of urgency, that a rigorous transport assessment of car parking and transport issues is completed (setting out the best possible proposals for minimising the net loss of car parking) and the Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement Plan is revised, all to the satisfaction of Council Officers; and that this is completed by no later than 30 March 2011. Cabinet authorises the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources, the Interim Chief Executive and the Director of Technical Services) to finalise Heads of Terms for the Development Agreement once this has all been done, or to terminate the project if the deadline is not met;
- (5) the Cabinet notes that Carpenter Investments no longer have exclusivity in relation to this development and indicates the willingness of the Council to enter into discussions with other interested parties and potential developers on any alternative plans which they might have to provide world class sailing school facilities; and
- (6) a further report be brought to Cabinet on 14 April 2011.

Councillor A Hodson moved the following Amendment that was seconded by Councillor D Elderton:

That

- (1) the Cabinet confirms its decision of 14 October 2010 (Minute No. 160 refers); and
- (2) the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be instructed:
 - (a) to express the Cabinet's sincere appreciation and thanks to Carpenter Investments for their considerable commitment to the Sail Project since 2007, but to inform them that the Council will not proceed further with this development; and
 - (b) following consultation with the Interim Director of Technical Services, to report back to a future Cabinet meeting with options for securing the future enhancement, or reprovision, of the Sailing School, without involving any material net loss of car parking in the vicinity.

The Amendment was put to the vote and was carried 4 for to 3 against. It then became the Substantive Motion and was put to the vote and was carried 4 for to 3 against. Consequently, the Cabinet

RESOLVED: That

- (1) **the Cabinet confirms its decision of 14 October 2010 (Minute No. 160 refers); and**
- (2) **the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be instructed:**

- (a) to express the Cabinet's sincere appreciation and thanks to Carpenter Investments for their considerable commitment to the Sail Project since 2007, but to inform them that the Council will not proceed further with this development; and
- (b) following consultation with the Interim Director of Technical Services, to report back to a future Cabinet meeting with options for securing the future enhancement, or re-provision, of the Sailing School, without involving any material net loss of car parking in the vicinity.

Councillor S Holbrook relinquished the Chair.

Councillor J E Green returned to the meeting and took the Chair again.

282 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE UPDATE**

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services advised the Cabinet of the proposed changes to the schedule of Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) identified since the adoption of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (UDP) in 2000. It recommended that Cabinet recommend the Council to formally adopt the revised schedule of sites as a material consideration for use by the Planning Committee in the determination of individual planning applications.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet recommends to Council that the revised schedule of Sites of Biological Interest be adopted as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of individual planning applications.

283 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR WIRRAL - EVIDENCE BASE - APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS TO CARRY OUT A GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services sought the Cabinet's approval to commission external consultants to carry out a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Wirral, funded to a maximum cost of £50,000.

The Cabinet was advised that the Strategy was necessary to comply with the conditions of the designation of the Mersey Heartlands New Growth Point; to provide robust evidence base for the preparation of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document; and to inform future site-specific land allocations. External consultants were required because of the specialist nature of the commission. The Strategy would assess the existing range and function of green infrastructure within the Borough. It would advise on the protection and enhancement of key environmental assets and identify where new Green Infrastructure was needed to deliver a wide range of environmental, economic and social benefits including climate change adaptation and mitigation; drainage and flood management; quality of place; health and wellbeing; biodiversity; recreation, tourism and leisure; walking and cycling; and attractiveness for future investment.

RESOLVED:

That the commissioning of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Wirral, on the terms set out in this report, be agreed.

284 JOINT MERSEYSIDE WASTE DEVELOPMENT PLAN - CONSULTATION ON PREFERRED OPTIONS AND NEW SITES CONSULTATION

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services advised that the Council was preparing a statutory joint Waste Development Plan Document with Liverpool, Halton, St Helens, Sefton and Knowsley. The report provided an update on progress made, reported on the results of the latest stage of consultation and sought approval for further consultation on sites to be included in Halton, Liverpool, Sefton and St Helens. The approval of further consultation would require a resolution of Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet recommends to Council that the Preferred Options 2 New Sites Consultation report attached to the report be approved for public consultation.

285 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/2012

A report by the Director of Technical Services informed Members that on 13 December 2010, the Department for Transport (DfT) announced the Local Transport Capital settlements for Merseyside for 2011/12 and 2012/13, and indicative figures for 2013/14 and 2014/15. The report set out the main points contained in the Local Transport Settlement Letter.

The Cabinet was advised that details of the proposed Wirral LTP Capital Programme would be presented to a future Cabinet meeting.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the settlement letter from the DfT, dated 13 December 2010, to the Integrated Transport Authority be noted;**
- (2) the proposals of officers to recommend to the ITA that the maintenance allocation be distributed to highway authorities in accordance with the DfT notional allocations, and that the existing locally agreed formula be used to distribute the ITB as in previous years be endorsed; and**
- (3) the proposal that there be no top-slice from the ITB to fund the Joint Working Budget until partnership discussions agree the level of JWB for 2011/12 be endorsed.**

286 WINTER RESILIENCE

A report by the Director of Technical Services provided the Cabinet with an updated overview of the impact of the recent prolonged spell of severe winter weather on the services provided by the Council; since the report to the Cabinet on 9 December 2010 [Minute 262 refers]. It was noted in particular, that lessons had been learnt

from the previous year, the gritting had gone well and the introduction of additional grit bins had been a resounding success.

The report also provided assurance as to the ongoing resilience of the Council's services for the remainder of the winter.

The Interim Director of Adult Social Services presented an oral report on the contingency arrangements he had put in place within his own Department during the cold snap in respect of health and social care.

Councillors J E Green, S Holbrook and L Rennie each paid tribute to officers who had worked very hard to ensure minimum disruption to services during the extreme weather conditions.

Members were also briefed on waste collections and proposals to repair roads where there were potholes.

It was reported that the Director of Public Health would attend the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 January 2011 and would provide a report to update Members on the Swine Flu/Flu outbreak.

It was also reported that the Interim Director of Adult Social Services, Howard Cooper, had been awarded a CBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours list for services to Local Government. The Cabinet congratulated him accordingly.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Interim Director introduce a Community Gritting Initiative that will comprise:**
 - (a) a fund of £55,000 to provide up to 110 grit bins, shared equally between the 11 Area Fora across Wirral and requests that residents and community groups be consulted on locations;**
 - (b) that all major shopping areas be assessed for provision of grit bins and that these areas be included in snow and ice clearance locations, as outlined below, in consultation with traders associations;**
 - (c) a published programme of snow and ice clearance in Wirral's busiest pedestrian and shopping areas in 2011/12 to be undertaken with Probation Service Community Payback;**
- (2) a meeting of partner organisations, including Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Merseyside Police and Merseytravel, be arranged to identify further issues for action;**
- (3) the Cabinet requests a review of communications with residents, community groups and employers during severe weather to enable information on schools, transport to adult training centres and social services, waste collection and gritting routes to be readily available and regularly updated;**

- (4) following meetings between the Cabinet Member, senior officers and managers from Biffa, the Interim Director of Technical Services ensures that arrangements for waste collection during severe weather are considered in a renegotiation of the waste collection contract; and
- (5) Cabinet welcomes the views of Members, through the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, on further improvements to arrangements for winter resilience in 2011/12 onwards.

287 **PARKS AND COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES PROCUREMENT EXERCISE (PACSPE)
- INVITATION TO TENDER/PROJECT SCOPE DEFINITION**

A report by the Director of Technical Services presented a comprehensive report on the progress of the project since Outline Business Case approval and sought the Cabinet's approval for the proposed exclusions from the procurement exercise and form of contract endorsed by the PACSPE Member Steering Group.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) **the Cabinet be requested to:**
 - (a) **note the progress of the Parks and Countryside Service Procurement Exercise and approve the recommendations for exclusions endorsed by the Member Steering Group as set out in 3.3 of this report; and**
 - (b) **approve the form of contract endorsed by the Member Steering Group as set out in section 4.0 of this report; and**
- (2) **the Cabinet's thanks be conveyed to all those officers who have contributed to the procurement exercise.**

288 **ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES - IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

The Interim Director of Adult Social Services made a presentation entitled "It's Your Life. It's Your Choice. Making the Leap" which provided details of good progress being made towards addressing the service issues raised by the Care Quality Commission's Inspection of Adult Social Services in May 2010. It was noted that the morale of the staff was rising.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Director for the work he and colleagues in DASS were doing. Councillor Green emphasised that Cabinet was keen to do everything possible to support the Leadership in DASS and he asked the Director to make clear if he believed that further changes or additional management support might be necessary.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made in respect of the Improvement Plan for Safeguarding and Services to Adults with a Learning Disability be noted.

289 **CONTINUATION OF EXISTING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CONTRACT FOR AN INTERIM 6 MONTH PERIOD**

A report by the Interim Director of Adult Social Services included a recommendation to roll forward the current Assistive Technology contract for an interim 6 month period until the end of September 2011. The Cabinet agreement was obtained on 18 March 2010 for the Assistive Technology contract to go out to tender during 2010 and extend the existing contract for up to 14,500 people, under its existing terms. The current contract was due to expire as of March 2011. This involved a key decision which was first identified in the Forward Plan dated September 2010.

RESOLVED:

That Agreement be given to extend the existing Assistive Technology contract for a period of six months until 30 September 2011.

290 **BIRKENHEAD YOUTH ZONE**

A report by the Interim Director of Children's Services gave an update on the exploratory work undertaken with Merseyside Fire Authority, stakeholder youth organisations, the charity Onside, colleagues from Merseyside Police and officers from Wirral Children and Young People's Department (CYPD). The report outlined progress to date. The Cabinet was asked to approve the request to progress to the feasibility stage of this project and receive a further report when this has been completed.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet agrees to further work being undertaken in order to investigate the feasibility of this facility; and**
- (2) to avoid duplication in the development of youth provision on Wirral, membership of the Steering Group should reflect the range of partners involved in developing the Youth Offer on Wirral.**

291 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON SCHOOL APPEALS PANELS AND OF APPEALS PANELS CHAIRS**

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management advised of the statutory requirement to appoint members to sit on both School Admission and Exclusion Appeals.

The report invited the Cabinet to consider an application from two members of the public to sit on both School Admission and Exclusion Panels as members experienced in education. The exempt appendix referred to in section 4 was an exempt document and therefore not in the public domain by virtue of the applicants' personal information contained within it. (Minute No. 297 refers).

The Cabinet was also requested to consider the approval of an existing Lay Member of the Panel who, subject to appropriate training, was willing to act as Chair.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet be recommended to appoint Ann Barker as Chair to the Appeals Panel;**
- (2) the Cabinet be recommended to appoint Patricia Mary McClure and Jennifer Ann Turner to the pool of persons with experience in education for the Appeals Panel; and**
- (3) in future preference be given to appointing School Appeal Panel Members who have residency in Wirral, if possible.**

292 HOYLAKE COMMUNITY CENTRE - COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management sought approval for a transfer by lease of Hoylake Community Centre, Hoylake in accordance with the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

Since the report had been published further discussions had taken place with representatives of the Centre's Joint Management Committee (JMC) and a further report detailing these was circulated at the meeting. These discussions had resulted in a revised proposal by the JMC to contribute to the cost of repairs.

It was clear that the division of liabilities for the facility set out in the current lease had not been strictly observed. If there had been no lease in place, as was the case in the majority of other centres, a greater repair burden would be expected to fall to the Council.

In all of the circumstances it was recommended that the transfer proceeded on an amended basis of contribution towards repair costs from the new Charitable company. The effect of this would mean that, if the JMC was able to make its full contribution, the final estimated cost of grant aiding repair works would be £366,000 (net of fees and contingencies).

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet notes the report and the subsequent discussions that have taken place on the contribution to be made to the cost of repairs by the new community organisation;**
- (2) the Cabinet welcomes the recommendation to proceed with this community asset transfer, but also notes the very substantial cost of the necessary repairs required to establish the centre on a firm basis for the future. In this particular case it is recognised that such support is required for repairs upon transfer, having regard to the nature and size of the facility, the community benefit and other individual circumstances; and**
- (3) the Cabinet agreed therefore that:**

(a) a transfer by lease of Hoylake Community Centre be agreed and the Director of Law, HR & Asset Management be authorised to complete the necessary legal documentation on the terms now reported;

(b) all parties interested in asset transfer are reminded that the Community Fund allocation is limited and that support is appraised and agreed on a case-by-case basis having regard to need and community benefit;

(c) the agreed works to the property, together with the transitional costs for the first two years of the business plan, be funded from the Community Fund; and

(d) the proposal for payment by the community group of a contribution towards the cost of the necessary works as now reported be accepted.

293 **FELLOWSHIP HOUSE, 96 TRINITY ROAD, HOYLAKE**

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management advised Members of a change to the terms of the disposal of this building to the Wirral Methodists Housing Association.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Fellowship House, Hoylake be disposed of in accordance with the terms set out in this report; and
- (2) if Wirral Methodist Housing Association is unable to deliver this scheme within the timetable stipulated in this report, then the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to dispose of the property at auction.

294 **HESPE PROCUREMENT - FOLLOW UP OF PIDA DISCLOSURE**

The Cabinet considered Minute No. 43 of the Audit and Risk Management Committee held on 22 November 2010 as follows:

“Further to minute 31 (28 September, 2010) the Director of Technical Services gave an update to the Committee and submitted the Action Plan in relation to the Parks and Countryside Services Procurement Exercise (PACSPE).

A Member commented on the lateness of this report and the fact that he had only just received a copy that evening

The Action Plan listed the lessons learnt from the HESPE/PIDA along with the key actions, owners, timescale and progress.

Responding to Members’ comments, the Interim Head of Technical Services explained the use of the RAG (Red/Amber/Green) status system. Actions were ‘green’ if they were work in progress and still on target, they became ‘amber’ if there was slippage on timescale.

With the permission of the Chair, the Leader of the Council addressed the Committee and commented that the Committee could take comfort from the lessons learnt and key actions which were now in place to address these lessons with the responsibilities and accountabilities built in. Better project management was now being carried out on a corporate basis.

The Director commented that the Action Plan gave officers the security of knowing that they were following best practice and focused the whole organisation on delivering.”

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet notes the progress on the Action Plan and the Audit and Risk Management Committee be thanked for its hard work in this regard.

295 **URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 1)**

REPORT ON VISIT TO CHINA – OCTOBER 2010

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services outlined the activities undertaken during the visit to China in October 2010 and outlined subsequent activities that had taken place, including return visits to Wirral. It also identified further actions to be taken to build upon the contacts made and the opportunities that existed now and in the future.

The Cabinet discussed travel and accommodation costs in general terms and were informed that a clear review on the rules regarding these would be undertaken.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet agrees to:

- (1) maintain and enhance the relationships the Council has developed with regional and city Governments to date in the Peoples Republic of China;**
- (2) endorse the Leader of the Council’s commitment to the Prime Minister to offer increased support to Peel and other businesses serving Wirral’s travel to work area in activities they believe will have a positive impact with potential international investors;**
- (3) designate the Leader of the Council, as its ‘international investment champion’ to work with Peel and ‘City Region’ partners to maximise the chances of bringing international investment into Wirral and its travel to work area; and**
- (4) authorise the Leader of the Council, supported by appropriate officers, to respond to invitations and conduct international visits, subject to full reports to Cabinet and Council on their return, to further promote opportunities for investment.**

296 **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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

297 **EXEMPT APPENDICES**

Further to Minute No. 291, the Cabinet considered the Appendix to the report that contained exempt information that, if disclosed, may provide information relating to an individual.

RESOLVED:

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