

CABINET

Thursday, 16 October 2008

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	S Foulkes (Chair)	
	Councillors	S Holbrook G Davies P Davies G Gardiner S Kelly	M McLaughlin R Moon J Quinn J Stapleton
<u>In attendance:</u>	Councillors	JE Green L Fraser	D Elderton

211 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

The following declarations were made:

Councillor Phil Davies – a personal interest in Minute 213 (Land at The Warrens, Thingwall Road East) due to his appointment as a non-executive Director of Wirral PCT;

Councillor Jean Quinn – a personal interest in Minute 213 (Land at The Warrens, Thingwall Road East) as she had spoken to the PCT and GP's in the area about the issue;

Councillor Simon Holbrook – a personal interest in Minute 236 (Joint Merseyside Waste Development Plan Document - Spatial Strategy and Sites - Public Consultation) due to his employment and a prejudicial interest in Minute 243 (North and South Lodges, Birkenhead Park Grand Entrance) due to his previous involvement in this matter); and

Councillor Gill Gardiner – a personal interest in Minute 236 (Joint Merseyside Waste Development Plan Document - Spatial Strategy and Sites - Public Consultation) due to her membership of the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority Board.

The Leader of the Council indicated that it was his intention to vary the order of business for the Cabinet in order to consider Item 33 (Land at The Warrens, Thingwall Road East) as the first item on the agenda. The Leader of the Council explained to Members of the public that the item was recommended to be considered following the exclusion of the press and public. The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management outlined the reasons why it was lawful for the press and public to be excluded during the consideration of this matter.

The Leader of the Council invited a representative of those members of the public present to address the Cabinet and Mrs Val Curtis addressed the Cabinet accordingly.

212 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 paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

213 LAND AT THE WARRENS, THINGWALL ROAD EAST

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented a report which seek approval, in principle, for the disposal of an area of land at the Warrens Nursery in order to facilitate the construction of a health centre, subject to planning permission being obtained.

Resolved - That

- (1) the land at the Warrens Nursery be declared surplus to requirements and authorises its disposal, subject to planning permission being obtained and satisfactory terms being agreed;
 - (2) the District Valuer be jointly commissioned by the Council and the PCT to determine the value of the premium for lease;
 - (3) any provisionally agreed terms of disposal be reported to a future Cabinet; and
 - (4) any objections received in respect of the disposal of Public Open Space, associated with this proposal, be reported.
-

The press and public were invited to return to the meeting.

The following matters were considered in the presence of the press and public.

214 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting had been printed and published.

Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2008 be approved and adopted.

215 TRANSFORMING WIRRAL - CULTURAL SERVICES STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Cabinet agreed on 14 December 2006 to commission a Strategic Development Plan for Wirral's Cultural Services. The Director of Regeneration gave a presentation which set out the findings of that study and a proposed new vision for Wirral's Cultural Services which was:

"Through integrated management, deliver high quality multi-purpose facilities, concentrated on strategic locations to benefit the whole community of Wirral".

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism and Leisure referred to the thorough process that had been undertaken by the consultants and emphasised the need to find out why the service was underused. Councillor Moon also stated that there was a need to engage with other departments, the voluntary sector and the Council's partners especially with regards to the co-location and accessibility of services.

The Leader of the Council felt that the Council needed to engage with service users regarding the vision for the service and that the aim was to provide better services in fewer locations, particularly with regards to rising energy costs.

With the permission of the Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Conservative addressed the Cabinet. Councillor Green referred to the recent press coverage on this matter and the reported closures of libraries.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism and Leisure denied that the press coverage contained these issues.

Resolved - That

- (1) the proposed vision for Cultural Services, the identified outputs for each of the services and the vision for future provision be agreed;
- (2) consultation be undertaken with staff and user groups on the visions and service outputs; and
- (3) the review of Cultural Services facilities be incorporated into the Strategic Asset Review.

216 TRANSFORMING WIRRAL - STRATEGIC ASSET REVIEW

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services presented a report which described progress to date on the Council's Strategic Asset Review and recommended proposals for taking forward the Review. The Strategic Asset Review was an opportunity to enhance service delivery for local people through better, more fit-for-purpose facilities that were more energy efficient and less costly to maintain and operate. The Review was a key project underpinning two of the Council's corporate priorities for improvement for 2008/09: to improve the use of the Council's land and assets and to create a sustainable and stable budget, providing value for money.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources indicated that the public expected the Council to operate efficiently and hoped that everyone engaged in the process. He moved an amendment, duly seconded and it was –

Resolved - That

- (1) Many of the Council's buildings are old, energy inefficient, and inherited from five separate district councils in the 1970s when the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral was created.

Cabinet is aware, both from the Asset Review being carried out, and from the Cultural Services review, that many of these buildings, as they are now, are not

necessarily located in the best place for Wirral residents and do not provide modern, accessible, user friendly facilities fit for the 21st century.

Cabinet therefore welcomes the report as an opportunity to enhance local service delivery for local people through better, more fit-for-purpose facilities that are more energy efficient and less costly to maintain and operate.

Energy costs for example, even with energy saving measures already taken, are projected to rise by £9m in 2008/10 - equivalent to a 9% rise in Council Tax, and the repairs backlog currently tops the £10m mark.

Cabinet asserts that doing nothing is not an option and that they have a real responsibility to Wirral's tax payers to take action to make the Council's assets sustainable and bring them into the 21st Century.

Cabinet fully endorses the principles outlined in the report and agrees the recommendations as set out below. It urges the Officers to complete the area review of the borough as rapidly as possible and bring back to Cabinet its findings across the whole borough in order to allow wide ranging strategic decisions to be taken on the best possible information.

Cabinet further endorses the need to expedite the review of the Council's administrative buildings, in the light of modern technology available to allow mobile working, the need for sustainability and the need to reduce overheads by working from the fewest possible buildings. Given the potential substantial savings in this exercise Cabinet instructs officers to use all available means to achieve this in the shortest possible time and agrees that the Chief Executive be given delegated authority for any necessary expenditure up to a maximum of £100,000 to be funded from the Efficiency Investment Fund;

(2) the principles set out in paragraph 4.9 of this report guide and inform the future phases of the Strategic Asset Review.

(3) co-location of One Stop Shops and libraries (to facilitate access to information for local people) be explored further where possible;

(4) the area reviews for the remainder of the Borough (including the wards of Bebington, Bromborough, Clatterbridge, Eastham, Greasby, Frankby, Irby, Pensby, Thingwall and Upton) be commenced and expedited, with a view to the Strategic Asset Review progressing on a Borough wide basis;

(5) the provisional findings of the area reviews be subjected to cost benefit analysis to assess the viability of the preliminary findings;

(6) the area reviews be linked with the decision of Cabinet on the associated Report (elsewhere on this Agenda) on the Strategic Development Plan for Leisure and Cultural Services;

(7) staff who may be affected by any proposed changes be kept informed of emerging proposals; and that, following completion of the cost benefit analysis referred to above, consultation be undertaken with: (a) Area Forums; (b) service users (as to their needs and the facilities they would like); and (c) the wider community (as to optimum value for money for all local people);

(8) reports be brought to future meetings of the Cabinet on:

An update on backlog maintenance (together with an action plan);

A draft policy on community management and ownership of public assets;

A draft policy on asset disposals (with particular reference to disposals at an undervalue to promote the delivery of affordable housing).

(9) discussions continue with the PCT and Police (and other potential public and voluntary sector partners) to explore opportunities for shared use of assets; and that the opportunity for a joint development with the PCT at Europa Pools be given high priority and be the subject of a detailed report to Members; and

(10) the review of the Council's office and administrative buildings (including Facilities Management arrangements) be expedited with a view to moving to a smaller number of buildings and optimising value for money for local people.

217 TRANSFORMING ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Delivering the Transformation of Adult Social Services was critical to the Council's strategic objective: To improve health and wellbeing for all, ensuring people who require support are full participants in mainstream society. In particular the programme gave focus to the improvement priority of 'promoting greater independence and choice'. The Director of Adult Social Services presented a report which involved a number of key decisions, first identified in the forward plan in December 2007.

The decisions required in the report would also enable the Director of Adult Social Services to deliver cashable efficiencies over the medium term as outlined in his report to Cabinet of 4th September 2008. These were integral to achieving a stable and sustainable budget; however Cabinet had recognised the requirement for bridging finance in the short term to allow savings to take full effect.

The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Inclusion welcomed the report and the reduction of the projected overspend. Councillor McLaughlin also indicated that further reports would be presented to the Cabinet in November and December with the later report looking at the concept of individual budgets.

Resolved - That

- (1) the closure of Feltree House by December 2008 be agreed;
- (2) the project to develop Poulton House as an Intermediate Care Centre and the related provision within the Capital Programme be cancelled;
- (3) the re-assignment of day services from Seacombe House to other Day Centres, and the closure of Seacombe House Day Service be agreed;
- (4) the standardisation of meals charges to £2.60 per full meal be agreed;
- (5) consultation be commenced on the future of Incentive Payments in day services;
- (6) the Director of Adult Social Services be authorised to re-negotiate the financial contribution to third sector providers of 'out-of-home-activity';
- (7) the transfer of the remaining long term home care service provided by the Council to the independent sector be agreed;
- (8) the cancellation of the practice of making Holiday Grants to people with a disability be agreed;
- (9) charges for people with mental health needs who only access day services be waived;

(10) consultation be commenced on the proposal to increase the unit price of home care for people with more than £25,000 savings from £12.70 to the full cost incurred by the Council from April 2009; and

(11) the management actions contained within the report in order to contain the projected overspend be noted.

218 PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES REVIEW - PHASE 5

The Director of Children's Services presented a report which provided a summary of the current position in respect of primary school places, developments resulting from previous phases of the Review, and issues for the future. It sought Cabinet's approval for further phases of area reviews involving schools and stakeholders to identify any further opportunities for the removal of surplus places, taking into account the impact of the forthcoming Primary Capital Strategy programme. The report also identified the programme from a Value for Money perspective. In relation to a previous phase, the report sought Cabinet's approval to an amendment to the potential implementation date for the proposed closure of Arrowe Hill Primary School.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning referred to the reductions in numbers forecast for school roles over the next few years and indicated that the purpose of the review was to use public money effectively.

Resolved - That

(1) a renewed approval be given to the principle of area reviews to study current primary school provision in order to match future needs and support the opportunity for transformational change provided by the Primary Capital Strategy;

(2) approval be given to the sequence of planning areas to be examined in each new Review phase;

(3) the principle whereby a Review can be initiated where a school's roll collapses, or a school is placed in an Ofsted category of concern, be approved; and

(4) approval be given for the amendment of the implementation date for the proposed closure of Arrowe Hill Primary School to 31st August 2009.

219 PROJECTED BUDGETS 2009-11

At the request of the Chair, the Director of Finance provided the Cabinet with details of the Council's investments in Icelandic Bank.

The Director of Finance then presented the projected budgets for 2009-2011 to coincide with the period of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR).

The Leader of the Council moved a motion, duly seconded, and it was –

Resolved - That

(1) Cabinet recognises that these are difficult times financially for everyone and that it must do all it can to ensure that Wirral's Council Tax Payers are not faced with the additional burden of high Council Tax increases. Cabinet understands the need to make urgent savings in order to close Wirral's budget gap and therefore recommends the following:

CHILDREN'S SERVICES	
	£
Residential care – including reducing the numbers of children placed out of borough	650,000
Facilities Management	25,000
Instrumental music service – increase tuition charges.	45,000
TECHNICAL SERVICES	
	£
Introduce £20.00 charge per visit (up to five items) for Eric Service.	515,000
Refer traders to alternate sources of Community Funding for Christmas Lights from 2009 where more funding is now available if local communities wish to back their local traders.	30,000
Capitalise £1,500,000 of highway improvements in line with current year provision. (Savings net of capital finance charges.)	1,300,000
Delete remainder of Consultancy Budget required for Hespe exercise)	26,000
Bring School Crossing Patrols in line with nationally evaluated DFT guidelines	50,000
Delete publicity budget for Waste Control designed to cover introduction of new bin system which is now bedded in.	45,000
FINANCE.	
	£
Information Technology Services	100,000
ITS Hardware Review	50,000
Housing and Council Tax Benefit improved use of technology.	600,000
Student Awards no longer being processed in One Stop Shops.	50,000
Review of Cash Handling	10,000
Treasury Management	500,000

CORPORATE SERVICES/LAW,HUMAN RESOURCES AND ASSET MANAGEMENT		£
Reduction in costs as a result of new pay structure	40,000	
Reorganisation of EAT, RAT and Payroll	85,000	
2 nd phase of Legal and Democratic Services	40,000	
Increased income from Registrars	47,000	

(2) Cabinet further asks that:

- a) The Director of Children's Services bring a report to Cabinet on Nov.27th on transforming youth and play services, including the impact of moving to district based services;
- b) The Director of Technical Services, in conjunction with the Finance Director, bring a report to November 27th detailing the full amount of savings that can be achieved from the Hespe exercise, when a decision on the tender has been taken;
- c) The Director of Technical Services set aside a provision of £90,000 to facilitate a rapid response to fly tipping;
- d) The Director of Technical Services work with the Procurement Unit to review current contracts with the aim of reducing costs; and
- e) The Director of Adult Social Services bring a report to Cabinet on November 6th reviewing the potential for efficiencies in 2009/10 arising from the Adult Social Services Transformational Change Agenda.

(3) Cabinet asks that the efficiencies contained within this motion be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committees for urgent consideration before Council meets on November 3rd. Should this prove impossible in any instance, then, because it is considered to be in the Council's best interests to implement proposed savings as early as possible, Cabinet asks Council to approve those items which have not been considered by Scrutiny committees where there is all party support and, in so doing, to suspend paragraph 2(a) of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules and to deal with the proposals in accordance with paragraph 2(b), i.e. where there is no such agreement, absence of which should be indicated by the lodging of an objection within the timescale set by Standing Order 12(1) (that is, by 10am on 29th October), Council is asked to refer the relevant item to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for discussion and subsequent referral to the next Council meeting. Items already discussed by the relevant Scrutiny Committee will be dealt with in the normal way.

220 **EARLY YEARS CAPITAL GRANT**

The Director of Finance presented a report which informed the Cabinet of an additional DCSF Early Years Capital Funding Stream, from April 2008 to March 2011, in addition to previously reported Children's Centre and Extended Schools Capital. The Grant was primarily, but not exclusively intended to support capital

investment in the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector. The report puts forward recommendations for the allocation of the grant in 2008/9 and 2009/10

Resolved – That

(1) the 08/09 and 09/10 DCSF Early Years Capital Grant be allocated as set out in 1.3 above, 50% approx on two accommodation renewal schemes for Private Voluntary and Independent groups (PVI) based on school sites and 50% open to all PVI groups, to bid for against DCSF criteria; and

(2) the grant be the subject of further reports recording final allocations to groups.

221 THORNTON HOUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL - NEW CLASSROOM EXTENSION

The Director of Children's Services presented a report which described the work required to provide an additional purpose built classroom and resource room extension for Thornton Hough Primary School, and set out the costs of the scheme.

Cabinet was asked to consider and approve the proposal.

Resolved - That

(1) the Scheme and Estimate, as presented, be accepted;

(2) the Director of Technical Services be authorised to seek tenders for the project; and

(3) the Director of Technical Services be authorised to obtain all necessary statutory approvals for the project.

222 LEARNER SUPPORT FUND ALLOCATION

The Director of Children's Services presented a report which outlined the Local Authority's powers to make awards to post-16 students. It invited the Cabinet to provide financial support to post-16 students in school sixth forms who could demonstrate that they had additional costs not met by EMA. (Education Maintenance Allowances).

Resolved – That

(1) the Authority should partially take up the power to make awards to post-16 students with the intention of funding those students in school sixth forms who could demonstrate that they had additional costs not met by EMA; and

(2) the Director of Children's Services be given delegated power to determine discretionary payments and applications.

223 REGISTRARS OF BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS - WEDDING FEES AND MARRIAGE ROOM

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented a report which contained a proposal to decommission the marriage room at Birkenhead Town Hall, and introduce a new scale of fees for marriage and civil partnership ceremonies at Birkenhead Town Hall and the Round Room at Wallasey Town Hall.

The fees for the ceremony rooms at Birkenhead and Wallasey would be:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| • Monday to Thursday | £70.00 |
| • Friday | £90.00 |
| • Saturday (Mornings only) | £114.00 |

Resolved - That

(1) the marriage room at Birkenhead Town Hall be decommissioned as set out in the report; and

(2) the revised scale of fees, as set out above, be implemented for those couples giving notice of their intention to marry, or have a civil partnership ceremony at Wallasey or Birkenhead from 1st April 2009.

224 REGISTRARS OF BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS - PRIORITY SERVICE FOR ISSUING CERTIFICATES

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented a report which contained a proposal to introduce a 'priority service' for customers who wished to pay for certificates from the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in order to receive their certificates within an hour. Customers who did not wish to pay for the service would return for their certificates the following day or could choose to have the certificate posted to them.

Resolved - That the proposal to introduce a 'priority service' for the issuing of current and family history certificate (with references) be approved.

225 LISCARD HALL

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented a report which advised Members of the necessary demolition of Liscard Hall, following a fire in the building and the options, which the Council may wish to consider with regard to the future of the site of the Hall and depot buildings.

The following options were presented:

- Option 1 - To incorporate the site of the Hall as an additional area of Central Park.
- Option 2 - To grass over the site leaving the top of the external and basement walls exposed as features to show the original structure and footprint of the Hall.
- Option 3 - To build on the site of the Hall.
- Option 4 - To try and promote a new scheme to refurbish the Depot Buildings, in isolation.

Resolved - That Officers be authorised to explore the viability of Option 3 and/or Option 4 in order to try and procure a beneficial use of the site of the Hall and its environs and to report back to a future meeting.

226 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Statement of Accounts for 2007/08 was approved by the Audit and Risk Management Committee on 30 June 2008 and was then subject to audit.

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 any amendments requested were presented, along with revised accounts, for approval by the Audit and Risk Management Committee on 30 September 2008.

Resolved - That the revised Statement of Accounts for 2007/08 be noted.

227 EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE - IMPLEMENTATION

The Cabinet considered a report which sought Members' approval for the upgrade of the Capita Academy Revenues and Benefits IT system to enable the introduction of the Employment and Support Allowance.

Resolved - That approval be given for the upgrade for the Capita Academy Revenues and Benefits IT system to enable the implementation of Employment and Support Allowance.

228 COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services presented a report which provided the Cabinet with an update on the changes to the Audit Commission's approach to assessing the performance of partnerships and other public bodies, including local authorities. It also provided some early responses to the consultation on the comprehensive area assessment (CAA) methodology.

Resolved – That

- (1) the proposed changes following from the introduction of comprehensive area assessment and the pilot of the CAA self-evaluation toolkit be noted;
- (2) an improvement plan be brought back to cabinet that integrates the area assessment, use of resources and managing performance elements on the assessment; and
- (3) the interim position on the consultation be noted and the Leader of the Council, in liaison with the Deputy Leader approve the final consultation response under delegated authority.

229 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GOVERNANCE MODEL AND MULTI-AREA AGREEMENT

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services presented a report which advised members on the proposed City Region Governance arrangements and outlined the next steps in the development of the structure. Cabinet was also asked to note the current position on the Multi Area Agreement (MAA) for Employment and Skills and authorise Officers to progress negotiations with Central Government in November.

Resolved – That

- (1) Officers continue to work with adjoining Local Authorities on the development of an MAA and to finalise the negotiations with Central Government on the Employment and Skills aspect of the MAA;

- (2) Council be recommended that Councillors George Davies and Gill Gardiner be nominated to the City Region Housing and Spatial Planning Board;
- (3) the development of a shadow City Region Cabinet be supported.

230 CONSTITUTION - REVIEW

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented a report which sought approval to a number of additional amendments and additions to the Council's Constitution following the review in July 2008. It also brought forward a number of matters regarding the operation of scrutiny in Wirral and suggests changes to the Council Minute Book.

The Leader of the Council moved a motion, duly seconded and it was –

Resolved – That the Council be recommended that

- (1) the Constitution be amended as set out in this report;
- (2) the Scrutiny Toolkit as set out in Appendix C of this report, and the Scrutiny Guidelines as set out in Appendix D, which were considered by the Scrutiny Chairs group, be approved, with the minor amendment to Paragraph 3 of the Scrutiny Call In Guidelines to read "Once the date of the meeting has been set, the relevant Chief Officer, Scrutiny Support Officers and all Council members will be notified of the date."
- (3) the working of the Scrutiny Toolkit and guidelines be reviewed in three months; and
- (4) Committee minutes be included on agendas for meetings and the Council Minute Book cease to be produced.

231 WIRRAL AFFORDABLE WARMTH STRATEGY 2008-2010

The Director of Regeneration presented a report which sought Members' endorsement of the new Wirral Affordable Warmth Strategy for 2008-10 (Appendix 1).

Resolved - That the new Wirral Affordable Warmth Strategy be approved.

232 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION HOUSING STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

The Liverpool City Region Housing Strategy (LCRHS) was a major piece of work, funded by Government Office NW, and commissioned by the Merseyside Housing Forum, to provide an investment framework for future housing development across the City Region.

The LCRHS document was reported to the Merseyside Housing Forum and the Merseyside Chief Executive Officers and Leaders group last year (2007) and the executive summary was circulated.

Following the development of the strategy, an Action Plan had been developed to take forward the strategy's recommendations, and the report sought endorsement of

the strategy and action plan, and that the recommendations for ongoing governance and implementation be noted.

Resolved – That

- (1) the LCRHS executive summary attached as Appendix A to the report be endorsed.
- (2) the LCRHS Action Plan attached as Appendix B to the report, be endorsed.
- (3) the recommendations for ongoing governance and monitoring of the Strategy and its Action Plan be noted.

233 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION ASSISTANCE - PREFERRED BUILDER PROTOCOL

The Director of Regeneration presented a report which requested Cabinet to adopt a preferred builder protocol in connection with the improvement and repair of owner occupied homes under the Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy which was approved by Cabinet on the 3rd April 2008 (Minute 581). The proposed protocol would eventually restrict applicants for Equity Renewal Loans and Home Repair Assistance Loans to the employment of contractors registered with the Wirral Traders Scheme operated by the Regeneration Department's Trading Standards Team or otherwise the employment of contractors from outside Wirral , approved by that team.

Resolved – That

- (1) the adoption of the preferred builder protocol be agreed which will restrict the approval of Home Repair Assistance and Equity Renewal Loan Applications by home owners who employ builders or building service contractors registered with the Regeneration Department Trading Standards Wirral Traders Scheme or if based outside Wirral, the employment of contractors approved by the Trading Standards Team;
- (2) the Wirral Trader Scheme's Code of Practice and Guidance documents be amended to accommodate applications and Scheme membership for any business service providers and contractors, trading or intending to do business within the Wirral Council Boundary.
- (3) the Director of Regeneration be authorised to select an implementation date.

234 MERSEY HEARTLANDS NEW GROWTH POINT FUNDING BID - GROWTH FUND PROGRAMME OF DEVELOPMENT 2008/09 TO 2010/11

In October 2007, Wirral Council, in partnership with Liverpool City Council and Peel Holdings, submitted a joint Growth Point bid, following an invitation from the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) (Cabinet 18th October 2007, Minute 312 refers). The Government sought bids from areas outside the South East of England, which could bring forward a significant increase in new housebuilding in the period to 2016. The joint bid was focused on the Wirral Waters project and the surrounding Housing Market Renewal Initiative area in Wirral and North Liverpool. The Wirral Waters and Liverpool Waters projects were both

included, although in Liverpool, a larger group of neighbourhoods, landowners and developers would be involved.

The joint bid was approved by CLG in July 2008. An initial sum of £200,000 from a national Growth Fund pot of £3 million (2008/09) had been awarded to assist in preparing a full bid into the national fund of £97 million (2009/10 – 2010/11). The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services presented a report which outlined the bid submitted by Wirral Council, Liverpool City Council and Peel Holdings for between £3 million and £6 million of the remaining £97 million Growth Fund. Growth Fund was announced by Government in December 2007 to support the delivery of infrastructure in local areas subject to high rates of housing growth over the Comprehensive Spending Review period 2008 to 2011.

An operational group of Wirral, Liverpool officers and Peel representatives had been set up, overseen by a Steering Group of senior Council officers and a Director of Peel Holdings to prepare the Programme of Development and manage Growth Fund spending. The senior steering group was to make recommendations to an Executive Board of two Wirral and two Liverpool Members.

Cabinet were asked to agree the submission of a Programme of Development for the joint Wirral Council, Liverpool City Council and Peel Holdings New Growth Point bid 2008/09 – 2010/11 and to nominate two Members to attend the Growth Point Executive Board. Cabinet was also asked to endorse the use of the first tranche of Growth Fund for joint work on transport modelling and housing land availability assessment. Finally, Cabinet was asked to agree that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, signs off the submission in conjunction with the Chief Executive of Liverpool City Council, in accordance with Department of Communities and Local Government requirements, in order that the Programme of Development can be submitted by 27th October 2008.

Resolved – That

- (1) the submission of a Programme of Development for the joint Wirral Council, Liverpool City Council and Peel Holdings New Growth Point bid be agreed;
- (2) the use of first tranche Growth Fund for joint commissioning with Liverpool City Council of transport modelling and a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for the Growth Point area be endorsed;
- (3) Council be recommended that the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council be nominated to attend the Growth Point Executive Board; and
- (4) the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, be authorised to agree the final content of the Programme of Development and that the Chief Executive signs off its submission in conjunction with the Chief Executive of Liverpool City Council.

235 **WORKING WIRRAL - WORKING NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND**

The Cabinet were provided with a progress update on the first round of Working Wirral commissioning since Cabinet considered a report on this issue on the 9th July 2008.

Resolved – That

- (1) Cabinet as accountable body agrees the recommendations of the WEDS Partnership and approves Working Wirral expenditure for:
 - The Nextstep Plus project to a maximum of £385,822 for the period 2008 to 2011;
 - The Reach Out / Reach Out Plus project to a maximum of £1,685,079 for the period 2009 to 2011.
- (2) the action taken by the WEDS Partnership and by officers in the allocation of these funds be noted.

236 JOINT MERSEYSIDE WASTE DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT - SPATIAL STRATEGY AND SITES - PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Council had agreed to be a partner in the preparation of a Joint Merseyside Waste Development Plan Document with the Councils for Liverpool, Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens and Halton. Initial consultation on the issues to be addressed was carried out during March and April 2007. Further consultation was now needed on the spatial strategy and sites for new waste disposal facilities to be contained within the emerging DPD, as part of a Spatial Strategy and Sites Report.

The Cabinet considered a report which recommended that public consultation on the Spatial Strategy and Sites Report should be approved; that the approval of public consultation be not taken as an endorsement of the sites or strategy set out in the Spatial Strategy and Sites Report; and that the Council's comments on the content of the Spatial Strategy and Sites Report be subject to a further report, so that the Council's formal comments can be submitted as part of the public consultation process, which was planned to take place between November 2008 and January 2009.

Resolved – That

- (1) the commencement of an eight-week public consultation process on the Waste DPD Spatial Strategy and Sites Report be agreed in order to meet project deadlines and those set by the Secretary of State for the completion of the Regional Spatial Strategy;
- (2) Cabinet's agreement to the commencement of public consultation should not be taken as an endorsement of the sites or strategy set out in the consultation report and that the Council's formal comments on these will be the subject of a further report and decision during the consultation period. The Council's Investment Strategy requires that the most effective use is made of key development sites to provide for uses in accordance with the vision and aspirations of the Investment Strategy.

237 MERSEY WATERFRONT REGIONAL PARK - FINANCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director of Regeneration presented a report which sought approval of the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park (MWRP) Board recommendations to fund the River of Light (Pilot Project) and Technical Support for the Coastal Places, Open Spaces project.

Resolved - That:

- (1) a MWRP grant of £50,000 be approved to Liverpool City Council to undertake the River of Light Pilot Project and ;
- (2) a MWRP grant of £30,000 be approved to The Mersey Partnership to fund the Arts on the Waterfront Feasibility Study.

238 STREETSCENE ENFORCEMENT - POLICY & STRATEGY

The Director of Technical Services presented a report which sought Cabinet approval for a Streetscene Enforcement Strategy embracing the main areas of enforcement and legislation under the responsibility of this Directorate and which had an impact on the local environment.

It was recommended that the proposed enforcement policies were approved for adoption and the accompanying strategy setting out a proposed prioritisation for enforcement activity and management actions to improve the service were endorsed.

Resolved – That

- (1) the existing approach to Streetscene Enforcement outlined in Section 3.0 of the report be noted and the existing enforcement activity outlined in Appendix A to the report be endorsed;
- (2) the policies outlined in Section 5.0 and Appendix C be adopted, including fixed penalty notice levels and licence fee structures;
- (3) the making of an order to designate areas of land where consent will be required to Distribute Free Literature as detailed in paragraphs 5.5 and 5.6 of the report be approved; and
- (4) the proposed approach to prioritising enforcement activity and management actions in Sections 6.0 and 7.0 of the report be endorsed.

239 COMMUNITY SPEED INITIATIVE (ACCIDENT 2ZERO) - UPDATE

The Director of Technical Services informed the Cabinet of the evaluation of the Community Speed Initiative piloted in seven discrete areas of the Borough from March 2008.

The report sought endorsement from the Cabinet to continue to develop the scheme, moving the initial trial areas to new locations and again monitor and report findings. It sought guidance from Cabinet on this process and assistance in identifying community groups.

Resolved – That

- (1) the report be noted and it be acknowledged that overall the initiative had received positive support from both motorists and residents;
- (2) the continuation of the initiative by moving the scheme from the seven pilot areas to another seven areas throughout the Borough be endorsed;

- (3) Officers to engage with communities via Area Forums over the possibility of moving the initiative on into other local areas, mindful of the broad criteria in 2.3; and
- (4) elected Members be encouraged to offer assistance in identifying community groups which could be contacted in their Wards to assist in the Community Speed Watch initiative.

240 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 the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

241 BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE: ONE SCHOOL PATHFINDER - WOODCHURCH HIGH SCHOOL - PREFERRED BIDDER

The Director of Children's Services presented a report which updated Cabinet in respect of the new school procurement process and sought approval to continue to the next stage of the contractual process. This was the designation of Preferred Bidder, PfS Selected Panel Bidder status. It was recommended to award this to Kier Regional, trading as Kier North West who were currently the single bidder under the national Partnerships for Schools (PfS) procurement framework.

Resolved - That

- (1) Kier Regional trading as Kier North West be appointed Preferred Bidder, as the Selected Panel Bidder under the national Partnership for Schools procurement framework for the Woodchurch High School One School Pathfinder project;
- (2) Officers be authorised to continue detailed contractual, design and specification negotiations and prepare the Final Business Case for submission to Partnerships for Schools; and
- (3) the scheme be the subject of a further report at Contract approval stage.

242 MENDELL LODGE, NEW CHESTER ROAD, BROMBOROUGH

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented a report which sought Cabinet's approval to the sale of Mendell Lodge, Bromborough to a Registered Social Landlord ("RSL") to enable the site to be redeveloped as an Extra Care Housing facility for older people.

Resolved - That the property be disposed to Housing 21, in accordance with the provisionally agreed terms and conditions set out in this report.

243 NORTH AND SOUTH LODGES, BIRKENHEAD PARK GRAND ENTRANCE

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented a report which sought Members' approval to the grant of a rent free period on the letting of both Lodges in order to support the efforts of The Active Drama Company Limited in establishing an Arts Centre at the location, and to allow rent free occupation of part of the South Lodge to the Friends of Birkenhead Park.

Resolved - That

- (1) approval be given to the grant of a twelve month rent free period in respect of the North Lodge and six months rent free in respect of the South Lodge;
- (2) the Friends of Birkenhead Park be allowed to occupy part of the South Lodge rent-free.

244 PENNANT HOUSE, BEBINGTON

The Cabinet considered a report which outlined for Members the need for urgent repair work to be carried out at Pennant House, until the Strategic Area Asset Review process had been completed with recommendations as to the optimum location for all Council service delivery in Bebington.

Resolved - That

- (1) the essential works of repair set out in this report be undertaken, to secure the structural integrity of Pennant House;
- (2) the Director of Technical Services be instructed to procure the essential works of repair referred to in Section 4 of the report;
- (3) appropriate arrangements for the temporary re-location of the One Stop Shop service be made to allow these essential works of repair to be undertaken.

245 COMBINED HEAT AND POWER INVEST-TO SAVE SCHEME

The Director of Technical Services presented a report which provided details of the proposed Discounted Energy Purchase (DEP) Combined Heat and Power (CHP) contract to replace the existing plant at Leasowe Recreation Centre and to provide new CHP plant at Europa Pools and West Kirby Concourse. The benefit of the DEP scheme was that the contractor only charged i.e. the leasing costs, for the electricity that the plant produced (the site pays for the gas used) over the 10 to 12 year contract period and there was no capital outlay or operational risk required by the Council. CHP delivered a range of economic, environmental and supply benefits. The initial investment of £10,000, which could be funded from the Efficiency Investment Budget, would provide a financial return in excess of £30,000 per year at current prices. As utility prices continued to rise the savings from the CHP would increase.

Resolved – That

- (1) to allow the invest to save scheme to proceed, approval be given to fund the initial £10,000 investment from the Efficiency Investment Budget; and

(2) approval be given to install the three Ener-g Ltd. CHP units using their DEP leasing arrangements subject to satisfactory contractual and legal arrangements being agreed by the Council's Legal Section.

**246 HIGHWAY AND ENGINEERING SERVICES PROCUREMENT EXERCISE (HESPE)
- AWARD OF CONTRACT**

The Director of Technical Services presented a report which recommended that Cabinet award the new Highway and Engineering Services contract commencing 1st April 2009 to the preferred provider suggested in the report.

The recommendation of the preferred provider was based on the results of tender evaluation exercise and confirmation that the business case for the procurement project, with particular focus on value-for-money and the achievement of efficiency savings, would be delivered.

Resolved – That

(1) the outcome of the tender evaluation exercise outlined in section 3.0 of the report be noted;

(2) the confirmation of value for money and Outline Business Case assumptions described in section 4.0 of the report be noted;

(3) the new Highway and Engineering Services 2009-14 contract be awarded to the preferred provider, subject to statutory Standstill Period procedures; and

(4) officers report to a future meeting on the key issues outlined in section 6.2 of the report.

247 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.