

CABINET

Thursday, 8 December 2011

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	S Foulkes (Chair)	Finance and Best Value
	Councillors	P Davies G Davies AER Jones B Kenny A McArdle AR McLachlan C Meaden H Smith	Regeneration and Planning Strategy Housing and Community Safety Corporate Resources Environment Social Care and Inclusion Children's Services & Lifelong Learning Culture, Tourism and Leisure Streetscene and Transport Services
<u>In attendance:</u>	Councillors	P Gilchrist JE Green T Harney	D Mitchell L Rennie
<u>Apologies</u>	Councillor	J Stapleton	

208 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The members of the Cabinet were invited 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.

Each Member declared their personal interest in agenda item 21 – Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary and Secondary Schools and the Co-ordinated Admission Schemes for 2013-2014 (see minute 228 post) by virtue of their membership of school governing bodies.

Councillors P Davies and B Kenny declared their personal interest in agenda item 22 – Funding of Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector 2012/2013 (see minute 229 post), by virtue of them being non-executive Directors of the Wirral Multi-Cultural Centre. Councillor A McArdle also declared her personal interest in the same item by virtue of her being a member of the Leasowe Community Homes Management Board.

Councillor Kenny also declared his personal interest in agenda item 18 – Local Development Framework – Developer Contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy (see minute 225 post). Councillor Kenny, being a member of the Planning Committee, advised that he would take no part in the determination of this matter and would abstain from any vote taken.

209 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 24 November 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

210 CORPORATE PLAN 2012/2013 - UPDATE

The Chief Executive presented the Council's draft Corporate Plan for 2012-2013. He commented that the Plan reflected the needs of Wirral and the priorities for local people and it also put in place a clear commitment and actions to ensure that the

Council's corporate governance failings were addressed through engaging the entire organisation in the challenge and opportunities this presented.

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

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

211 **COUNCIL TAX BASE 2012/2013**

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

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

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

212 **COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS - ANNUAL REVIEW**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance presented a review of Council Tax charges for Second Homes, Long Term Empty Properties and the annual option for the Council to set locally defined discount schemes. Councils could reduce the Council Tax paid by using locally defined discounts and could also reduce discounts in relation to Second Homes and Long Term Empty Properties. The cost of locally defined discounts was met by the Council and the Director indicated that the amendment or removal of Long Term Empty discounts (Class C) produced a windfall for one year, and then the change was reflected in the following year's tax base figure and was of no direct financial advantage to the Council.

Resolved – That no amendments be made in relation to current discounts and no new discounts be introduced at the present time.

213 **COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS - CONSULTATION ON TECHNICAL REFORM**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance reported upon the areas covered by a Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) consultation paper on reforming Council Tax. The main areas under consultation were Second Homes, Empty Homes, Mortgagees in Possession, Instalments, Electronic Information, Solar Installations and Annexes to Dwellings. He set out information on each area of consultation and a proposed response to each of the 22 questions raised in relation to technical reforms.

Resolved – That the proposed response to the consultation document be agreed.

214 **INSOLVENCY AND CHARGING ORDERS POLICY**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance presented a revised policy and procedures concerning the use of Insolvency in the recovery of outstanding debts specifically Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates. The policy had been in operation for a number of years and had been changed and updated in the light of recommendations and practical experience.

Resolved – That the revised Insolvency and Charging Orders Policy be agreed.

215 **CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FINANCING 2012-2015**

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

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

Resolved –

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

216 **BUDGET PROJECTIONS 2012-2015**

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

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

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

Resolved –

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

rather than four year period, and the additional sum of £1m be set against this gap.

- iv. That the budget for the Council's Early Intervention Grant, which totals £17.9m in 2011/2012, is reduced by £1m in 2012/2013 to reflect the current cost of services provided and commissioned. This will enable the Acting Director of Children's Services to continue the same targeted and universal intervention programmes in 2012/2013 as 2011/2012.

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

217 CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER - AUTUMN STATEMENT

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance reported that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had presented his Autumn Statement 2011 on 29 November 2011 and he provided a summary of the main issues, a number of which had a direct bearing on local authorities. He indicated that the most significant was that the planned four years of spending cuts would now be extended for a further two years to 2017 although the Statement did not reveal where those additional cuts in spending would fall.

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

Resolved –

- (1) **The Government's Autumn Statement indicates that their economic plans have been a colossal failure.**
- (2) **Growth is flat-lining, unemployment is rising and borrowing is £158 billion higher than planned.**
- (3) **The draconian cuts to local government are extremely damaging and will affect the quality of life of Wirral residents.**
- (4) **Cabinet calls on the Government to reverse their austerity measures and adopt policies which will grow the economy, create jobs and give local Council's the ability to fund high quality services.**

218 YOU CHOOSE BUDGET SIMULATOR

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance presented an analysis by YouGov of the You Choose budget consultation exercise, which ran from 19 August to 30

November 2011 and had sought to obtain the views of the public on how the Council could keep Council Tax rises to less than three percent, despite funding cuts from central government. He commented that a total of 1701 submissions had been received during the consultation period and the response rate in Wirral was the second highest of approximately fifty English Councils. Residents had suggested, on average, a total of £29m worth of savings, which would result in a reduction in Council Tax of 3%, which was similar to You Choose consultations undertaken by other local authorities. The Director provided a demographic analysis of the respondents and indicated how the suggested savings were split across all budget areas.

The Chair expressed his thanks to all who had engaged with the consultation exercise and he expected that the findings would be considered by overview and scrutiny committees. The exercise was part of the ongoing consultation process and he hoped it would be used a platform for consultation in the future.

Resolved – That the findings of the You Choose consultation exercise, as part of the ongoing consultation process for setting the 2012/2013 budget, be noted.

219 LIBRARIES STRATEGY

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance presented a strategy for libraries in Wirral, "Wirral Libraries, A New Chapter", which had been formulated to provide a base for the many changes and challenges the Library Service was facing both locally and nationally. He indicated that libraries were a key community asset and the strategy would be subject to regular review and would allow people to better understand the work and vision of the Library Service in Wirral.

Consultation had been undertaken as part of the review in April 2011 by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and there would be ongoing customer/service user consultations. The Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism and Leisure commented that a number of libraries already had Friends and Users groups which would continue to be a local focus for consultation. She also thanked the staff from the libraries service and One Stop Shops for the provision of an improved service to Wirral residents.

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

Resolved –

- (1) That Cabinet welcomes and agrees the Libraries Strategy for Wirral.**
- (2) That Cabinet recognises the potential for improved services to the public, which will follow from the provision of an integrated service with the One Stop Shops, with a single management structure and one section head.**
- (3) That Cabinet welcomes the fact that this means that, when the restructuring is completed, libraries will stay open at lunch time and will also be open on Wednesdays.**

220 TENDER REPORT - BIRKENHEAD PRIORY AND ST MARY'S CHURCH TOWER

Further to minute 123 (2 September 2010), the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reported upon the outcome of the two stage tender process for the project to stabilize, restore, protect and improve Birkenhead Priory And St Mary's Church Tower. He provided details of the most economically advantageous tender

and sought ratification to the selection of the Councils 'preferred constructor'. He indicated that the programme was dependent on Listed Building Consent, Scheduled Monument Consent and the result of archaeological investigations but, once these had been obtained, he anticipated a start on site in January 2012, with a view to completion in September 2012.

Resolved –

- (1) That Paragon Construction, having submitted the most economically advantageous tender, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Director's report, be accepted as the Councils 'preferred constructor'.**
- (2) The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to execute an appropriate construction contract with the preferred constructor in due course based upon a partnering philosophy, subject to them developing a satisfactory Health & Safety Plan.**

221 PENSBY COMMUNITY CENTRE

Further to minute 103 (4) (1 September 2011), the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reported upon the circumstances surrounding the transfer of Pensby Community Centre and outlined issues related to the Community Asset Transfer funding. He commented that given the timing of the lease of Pensby Community Centre in relation to the timing to the Strategic Asset review it seemed equitable to consider the request for funding from Pioneer People in line with other centres transferring as part of the programme.

The funding was in support of the Council's goal to reduce the running costs of the Council by improving the efficiency and value for money of Council services whilst reducing bureaucracy. There would be no saving in the Council's budget as a consequence of this proposal as the asset had already been transferred from the Council.

Resolved – That grant funding as described in the report now submitted, in accordance with the Council's Community Asset transfer process, be given to Pioneer People to assist in the viability and sustainability of Pensby Community Centre.

222 SUPPLY OF CORPORATE UNIFORM CONTRACT

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance reported upon the negotiation of a collaborative contract for the supply of Corporate Uniform Clothing, which had been let by St Helens Council on behalf of the Merseyside Procurement Partnership. The contract had commenced on 1 December 2011 for a period of three years with an option to extend for a further 12 months subject to satisfactory performance.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Council becomes party to the Merseyside collaborative contract for the supply of Corporate Uniform Clothing.**
- (2) That this contract be the sole contract for the supply of Corporate Uniform Clothing to the Council.**

223 **MERSEYSIDE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY SERVICE - CONTRACT RENEWAL 2011/2012 AND 2012/2013**

The Acting Director of Regeneration, Housing and Planning reported that the Council jointly funded the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS), which provided specialist advice on the Local Development Framework and planning applications. Sefton Council was the lead authority for procurement of the service and he indicated that technical expertise and funding was shared between the five Merseyside District Councils and Halton Borough Council, thus providing economies of scale and specialist shared services that could not be effectively provided at District level.

Resolved – That in accordance with paragraph 21.1.1 (ii) of the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules, Cabinet agrees to extend the MEAS contract on the terms outlined, for the financial years 2011/2012 and 2012/2013, until 31 March 2013, at an annual cost for core services of £31,673 to be accommodated within existing budgets.

224 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT**

The Acting Director of Regeneration, Housing and Planning reported that section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required the Council to make an annual report to the Secretary of State on the progress made in implementing the Council’s Local Development Scheme (which sets out the timetable for the preparation of Local Development Documents) and on the extent to which the policies set out in individual Local Development Documents were being achieved.

He submitted for consideration the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report and set out the key issues contained within it. For the Council to meet the statutory requirement the Annual Monitoring Report was required to be submitted to the Secretary of State by 31 December 2011. He commented that although there was no requirement for public consultation, copies of the Report were required to be made available for public inspection on the Council’s website.

Resolved – That the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report for 2010/2011, be approved for formal submission to the Secretary of State and be placed on the Council’s website for public inspection.

225 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS AND THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY**

The Acting Director of Regeneration, Housing and Planning presented a detailed report on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which was a new levy that local authorities in England and Wales could choose to charge on new developments in their area. The CIL would have significant implications for the use of planning agreements and obligations and the Acting Director commented on the changing legal and policy context for planning agreements and obligations and on the potential for the CIL to provide future funding for essential infrastructure. He provided details of levy charges per square metre of development that were proposed by other Councils and commented that the level of CIL was required to be informed by an evidence base

The Acting Director also outlined the content of a national consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on detailed proposals and draft regulations for reform of the CIL, which could have implications for securing financial benefits from new development to be used to provide new infrastructure

required by the wider community. He set out in an appendix to his report a suggested formal response to the DCLG.

Resolved –

- (1) That an evidence base of infrastructure to support the Core Strategy is prepared with the engagement of all Council Departments and Heads of Service and with relevant external infrastructure providers to determine infrastructure requirements for each of the Settlement Areas identified in the Core Strategy and that Officers draw up a draft Charging Schedule of infrastructure and costs to support the Core Strategy including an assessment of the impact on the viability of future development and that this will be the subject of a further Cabinet report to determine the likely costs applicable should the CIL be introduced in Wirral.**
- (2) That the comments set out in Appendix 1 to the report now submitted form the basis of the Council's response to the Department for Communities and Local Government.**
- (3) That the report be referred to Planning Committee for information.**

226 **ENTERPRISE ZONES - UPDATE**

The Acting Director of Regeneration, Housing and Planning provided an update on the progress made in implementing the Enterprise Zone (EZ) status of Wirral Waters, setting out the discussions and negotiation with Government and the key activity identified within the implementation plan. He commented that the announcement of the EZ status for Wirral Waters was very good news for Wirral Council and its residents as it supported the aims of the Investment Strategy to increase the number of Jobs in Wirral, with positive benefits across the wider economic area. The implementation of the Enterprise Zone was of key importance to stimulating private sector investment in the Wirral Waters area and he indicated that the business rate retention model was a critical factor to be considered as part of the EZ proposals.

He also outlined potential issues related to the management of any uplift in Business Rate generated by Mersey Waters and commented on the operation and priorities of the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), who had proposed a governance structure for the Mersey Waters Enterprise Zone that was subject to formal sign off from the relevant local authorities.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning Strategy welcomed the Enterprise Zone status and expressed the view that Wirral should be able to retain a significant proportion of the increased business rates generated by Wirral Waters so as to promote further local economic growth. The Chair also commented that the LEP had expressed concern that businesses should not simply relocate into the Enterprise Zone to secure benefits without any employment growth.

Resolved –

- (1) That the current position of the Enterprise Zone and the ongoing discussions with Government be noted.**
- (2) That the draft Implementation Plan attached to the report now submitted be agreed for sign-off.**
- (3) That the issues raised within the report regarding the current proposals, as to how uplift in Business Rates within the Enterprise Zone will be**

managed and to work with Liverpool Council to further understand the implications, be noted.

- (4) That a further report be presented to the Cabinet as appropriate.
- (5) That the establishment of an Enterprise Zone Board with the membership as set out in the report now submitted be agreed.

227 **WIRRAL COUNCIL AND WIRRAL PARTNERSHIP HOMES COMMUNITY FUND**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance provided an update on the latest position regarding the Community Fund, which was established as a consequence of the transfer of the bulk of the Council housing stock to Wirral Partnership Homes (WPH) in February 2005. The Fund was administered by WPH as was overseen by a Joint Working Group. The Director commented that the Fund could only be used for activities that complied with the Objects of WPH and he set out details of Council submissions for funding for the 2012/13 financial year, which included Housing Support Services (£400k per year); Private Sector Housing (£600k per year) and Vulnerable Families (Community Safety) (£500k per year). The Director commented also that the Community Asset Transfer Programme was continuing and whilst commitments may have been made by the original end date of 31 March 2012, the spend would not have been incurred. He therefore recommended that WPH be asked to extend the time period to 31 March 2014 to allow for completion of the programme.

Resolved –

- (1) That officers make the appropriate submissions to Wirral Partnership Homes (WPH) for funding from the Community Fund in respect of the items detailed in section 4.12 of the report now submitted.
- (2) That approval be sought from WPH to extend the use of the Community Asset Transfer funding allocation to 2013/2014.
- (3) That WPH be advised that the Council supports the continuation of the Your Wirral scheme for 2012/2013 at the previously agreed level of £250,000.

228 **ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND THE CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEMES FOR 2013-2014**

The Acting Director of Children's Services reported that the Local Authority (LA) was required to determine admission arrangements for community secondary schools and for community and voluntary controlled primary schools. The New School Admissions (England) Regulations (2003) also required the Authority to have in place a coordinated scheme for admissions to all primary and secondary schools in 2013-2014 and both schemes had been updated to reflect changes in national guidance. No major changes were proposed to those arrangements currently in place for primary school admissions, however a change was proposed to the co-ordinated scheme for secondary schools in relation to testing arrangements for selective grammar schools from 2013-2014. The secondary scheme had also been updated to reflect the change in status of some schools. He commented that the LA was required to consult on its admission arrangements and to determine those arrangements by April of the preceding year.

The Director commented that the proposed changes included within the national draft Code required that parents must receive their child's selection test results prior to completing their preference form. This enhanced emphasis had been retained in the draft revised version of the Admissions Code published on 2 November 2011 and as a significant change to current practice in Wirral, this would require consultation with parents, schools and the wider community. The consensus view of the 11 Plus Working Group was that Wirral should change the timing of selective testing to ensure that test results were provided before preferences were submitted, whether or not the final published Admission Code retained the directive.

Resolved –

- (1) That a public consultation be held on the proposed admission arrangements and coordinated schemes for primary and secondary schools for 2013-2014 as required by guidance.**
- (2) That the consultation shall include the proposal to amend the timing of the grammar school selection process as recommended by the Wirral Eleven Plus Working Group.**

229 FUNDING OF VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR 2012/2013

The Interim Director of Adult Social Services reported upon the commitment of the Department of Adult Social Services towards the voluntary, community and faith sector and, in particular, the services which the Department recommended to be commissioned for 2012/2013.

He set out the background to funding, the current funding arrangements, the issues for consideration and the recommendations for the future, 2013 and beyond. He provided an update on changes to the current contract for intermediate care provision provided by voluntary sector and independent sector providers, which were being made in order to clarify the funding and quality assurance arrangements for services currently commissioned by the Department. The recommendations would enable the Department to make more robust commissioning arrangements for the future, which reflected the move towards personalisation and would enable the most effective delivery method for intermediate care.

Resolved – That the Cabinet agrees to:

- (i) Accept the VCF framework for commissioning.**
- (ii) Complete the “needs analysis” described in 2.12.3 by 1 March 2012.**
- (iii) Complete the “Total Resource Analysis” by 1 April 2012.**
- (iv) Receive a further report early in the new municipal year based on analysis of the above findings.**
- (v) Change the methodology used for funding older persons' day services, towards accreditation and away from block funding.**
- (vi) Use new service specifications for all services from 2012/13 onwards.**
- (vii) Put all services worth in excess of £150,000 over the life of the contract out to tender for 2013 onwards.**
- (viii) Agree the block contracts for intermediate care.**

230 THE WIRRAL WELL

The Interim Director of Adult Social Services presented an overview of the Wirral Well, which was an online information hub for social care, health, community and wellbeing activities that had been developed by Voluntary and Community Action Wirral (VCAW) and supported by the Department of Adult Social Services (DASS), NHS Wirral and the North West Joint Improvement Partnership (NWJIP).

He commented that VCAW was Wirral Council's current preferred voluntary, community and faith sector infrastructure partner and the site could be viewed at www.wirralwell.org and via link from www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/social-care-and-health.

He reported that the Wirral Well site met both corporate and departmental strategic aims, together with the strategic aims of Communities for Health funding and the ability to contribute to and inform the JSNA. The project was 'live' and able to work toward meeting those aims quickly, where other options would take longer (approximately 9 months for procurement) or require greater commitment of resources by the authority. £73,060 would cover one years operating costs to enable the expansion and development of the site to meet the required outcomes, which provided 'added value' for the Council.

The Wirral Well project was initiated by and NWJIP grant funding and had necessitated DASS and NHS Wirral involvement in its early stages of development. The Interim Director indicated that this had added value to the project which other solutions could not provide and it also meant that DASS was already utilising the Wirral Well to provide social care, health and wellbeing information to people in Wirral. The value of Wirral's commitment in this matter would not exceed £73,060, and the open market could not provide an equivalent solution for equal or less than this value within the required timescale.

Resolved –

- (1) That approval is given for DASS to utilise £73,060 of the Communities for Health grant to fund the first year development costs of The Wirral Well in the form of grant funding to VCAW; this being conditional on VCAW working together with DASS and NHS Wirral to ensure the site meets the needs of the people and the organisations which use it.**
- (2) That financial support for the Wirral Well project be considered an exception to Contract Procedure Rules as stated in 21.1 paragraphs (i) and (iii).**

231 PROGRESS ON PERSONALISATION

The Interim Director of Adult Social Services reported upon progress in the implementation of personalisation within the Department for Adult Social Services (DASS) and highlighted key changes that were required to be further progressed. He commented that personalisation and the associated policies and procedures that underpinned it represented a significant shift in the way that DASS supported people who used services. Activity in the area was subject to change, reflecting national and local developments and consequently, the Department needed to review continually the way it worked. The Department aimed to enhance the quality of life for people who had care and support needs through accessing and receiving self directed assessment and a personal budget. It therefore needed to ensure that its policies

and procedures were appropriate and robust to support the people who used services.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted.**
- (2) That a further update report from DASS be presented in Spring 2012 in relation to process and procedures within the department that seek to enhance the customer journey.**
- (3) That Cabinet agrees to consultation with Carers in relation to a revised Carers Resource Allocation System (RAS) and banding system.**
- (4) That Cabinet agrees to the procurement of a supplier to provide a Prepaid Card service for people who use Personal Budgets and Direct Payments.**
- (5) That Cabinet agrees to an accreditation process for Support Planning and Brokerage to be undertaken and progress reported back as part of the update report to Cabinet in Spring 2012.**

232 LOCAL ACCOUNT

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

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

Resolved –

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

233 COMMITTEE REFERRAL - CQC IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management submitted minute 36 of the Health and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 November 2011, which

had considered the completion by the Department of Adult Social Services of the Improvement Plan following the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection of May 2010. The Committee had signed off the Improvement Plan and recommended it to the Cabinet.

Resolved – That the minute be noted.

234 **CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENT ENERGY EFFICIENCY SCHEME UPDATE**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reported upon actions that had been taken to comply with the mandatory Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRCEES). The required Footprint and the Annual Reports had been submitted via the Government Gateway by the deadlines and he presented summary reports confirming the latest submissions at appendices 1 and 2 to his report.

The Director commented that the CRCEES had a legal requirement for participating organisations to carry out regular internal audits and an Interim Internal Audit had been issued on 26 July 2011 and a Final Internal Audit had issued in October 2011. He presented the audits at appendices 3 and 4 to his report and he reported that Internal Audit had now programmed annual CRCEES audits to comply with the regulations.

The first purchase of allowances would take place between April and July 2012 after the Environment Agency had sent out the invoices and the allowance charges would be based on the emissions contained in the Annual report. A budget provision of £532,000 had been made to cover the cost based on the CRCEES guidance that was available at the time and he indicated that calculations using current guidance and including administration costs suggested the cost of CRCEES compliance would be £487,583 assuming other cost elements were not introduced by the Environment Agency. The contribution of each responsible department to the projected cost is shown below (Minute 416, Cabinet 19 March 2009 refers).

Responsible Department in 2010/2011	Projected CRCEES Cost
Academy Schools	£ 26,976
Adult Social Services	£ 22,491
CYPD (Buildings)	£ 8,944
CYPD Schools	£ 212,800
Disposals	£ 349
Finance	£ 8,711
LHR&AM	£ 54,768
Pension Fund	£ 44,194
Technical Services	£ 108,350
TOTAL	£ 487,583

CRCEES allowance charges were based on the amount of energy consumed and therefore, if the amount of energy consumed was reduced, then so would the amount of CO² emitted and the cost. Meeting targets set under the Carbon Budget would help control the cost.

Resolved –

(1) That the report be noted.

- (2) That Cabinet notes that reducing the use of energy and meeting targets set by the Carbon Budget will reduce emissions of Carbon Dioxide that will consequently reduce the allowance the Council will have to purchase.**
- (3) That Cabinet notes that reducing energy use will also minimise energy purchase costs.**

235 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved – That, in accordance with 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.

236 TACKLING WORKLESSNESS AND SUPPORTING APPRENTICESHIPS IN WIRRAL THROUGH THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

The Acting Director of Regeneration, Housing and Planning sought approval to extend the Council's European Social Fund (ESF) 'tackling worklessness' and 'supporting apprentices' programmes contracted with Knowsley Council, who were the accountable body for the funds across the Liverpool City Region (LCR) on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions. He commented that reducing worklessness and increasing the number of apprenticeships was a fundamental element in the delivery of Wirral's Investment Strategy and the recommendations contained within his report set out how the Council could maximise the ESF resource and achieve additional job outputs.

Resolved –

- (1) That the delivery timescale of the Tackling Worklessness programme be extended to meet the contractual target reported to Cabinet on 3 February 2011 within the original contract value of £2,440,610.**
- (2) That the delivery timescale of the Supporting Apprentices programme be extended to meet the contractual target reported to Cabinet on 3 February 2011 within the original contract value of £1,714,539.**
- (3) That authority be delegated to the Acting Director of Regeneration, Housing and Planning to negotiate, finalise and sign the extended contractual funding agreements with Knowsley Council as accountable body for ESF funds for the Liverpool City Region.**
- (4) That authority be delegated to the Acting Director of Regeneration, Housing and Planning to negotiate, finalise and sign the contractual funding agreements with the Council's contracted supplier for an element of the worklessness programme.**