

CABINET

Thursday, 15 January 2009

Present:

Councillor	S Foulkes (Chair)	
Councillors	S Holbrook	M McLaughlin
	G Davies	R Moon
	P Davies	J Quinn
	G Gardiner	J Stapleton
	S Kelly	

323 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting were printed and published.

Resolved - That the minutes be approved and adopted.

324 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The members of the Cabinet 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 Steve Foulkes declared a personal interest in Minute 325 (Transforming Wirral – Strategic Asset Review) on behalf of all Cabinet Members due to their memberships of Joint Management Committees and as users of services;

Councillor Jean Quinn declared a personal interest in Minute 327 (Disposal of land at The Warrens – main depot site) as she had discussed the matter with Wirral PCT and GP's in the area.

Councillor Simon Holbrook declared a prejudicial interest in Minute 341 (West Kirby Marine Lake Reconstruction – Award of Contract) due to his employment.

Councillor Phil Davies declared a personal interest in Minutes 328 (Multi-systemic therapy programme development) and 327 (Disposal of land at The Warrens – main depot site) as a non-executive director of Wirral PCT.

325 TRANSFORMING WIRRAL - STRATEGIC ASSET REVIEW

At its meeting on 27 November 2008, Cabinet considered a report on the Strategic Asset Review which set out options for the future of the authority's asset portfolio. Cabinet resolved to approve in principle the option for strategic consolidation of the Council's asset base and requested that this be subjected to public and staff

consultation, with the results brought back to a future meeting. The Cabinet considered the Chief Executive's report which summarised the response to the consultation and sought Cabinet's views on the way forward. It was noted that the Cabinet had received a detailed breakdown of those consultation responses that had been received prior to the start of the meeting.

The Leader of the Council moved a motion, duly seconded which was circulated to the Cabinet and members of the public. Councillor Foulkes referred to the Area Forum Conferences that had been held as part of the consultation process which he had found challenging and rewarding. He understood that the contents of the Motion would not please all consultees but referred to the constructive comments that had been received as part of the consultation process. In particular, Councillor Foulkes indicated that the Council's representatives on Merseytravel's Committees would take forward the transport issues raised within the consultation.

The Deputy Leader of the Council supported the Leader's comments.

Resolved: That

on November 27th Cabinet agreed the Strategic Asset Review recommended by officers in principle, subject to consultation with the people of Wirral;

Cabinet welcomes the high level of public participation in this consultation as set out in the Cabinet report. Cabinet notes that residents also made it clear that they were prepared to pay more to keep facilities open;

Cabinet acknowledges that residents on a peninsula believe it is particularly important that their children have the opportunity to learn to swim and take part in swimming activities and that there have been representations from the public and from the health community on the importance of swimming as a way of tackling obesity;

Cabinet noted the often passionate support of what were felt to be local community facilities and recognised the considerable time and effort put in by a number of correspondents who sought to provide detailed arguments for the retention of a particular facility;

Cabinet is particularly grateful for the hard work that went into the detailed document submitted on the importance of Woodchurch Leisure Centre to the local community;

Cabinet also recognises the high regard in which Wirral residents hold their historic buildings and accepts the need to respect Wirral's heritage;

It also recognises the clear commitment of staff, residents, local musicians and artists and young people to maintaining good cultural facilities and suitable performance venues on the Wirral and thanks those who submitted detailed reasons why these are important to the life of the community as a whole;

However, Cabinet is also mindful of the current economic climate and the hardship that will create for many Wirral people;

It is mindful as well of the fact that definite action is required to tackle Wirral's budgetary problems and that the recession will also impact on the Council in a number of ways, increasing the need for firm financial control in order to protect Wirral's Council Tax payers;

Bearing in mind the Council's Corporate Priorities and in particular the need to do everything possible to tackle social exclusion and deprivation, Cabinet therefore resolves as follows, and recommends to Council that:

- (1) The Woodchurch Leisure Centre be retained;
- (2) Officers are asked to explore the possibility of persuading any of the Council's strategic partners who may benefit from the use of the Leisure Centre to contribute towards the £374,000 subsidy currently paid by the Council to keep the Leisure Centre open and to investigate the level of current charges to swimming clubs, schools and other organisations across the borough to ensure that the Council Tax payers are receiving good value for money which should be the subject of a report to Cabinet on February 5th as part of the budget setting process;
- (3) The Woodchurch Community Centre adjoining the Leisure Centre be considered for transfer to the Community within a two year time frame and the Leisure Centre and Community Centre be seen as the clear focus for community activities;
- (4) The two year time frame for community asset transfer will expire on 16/1/11;
- (5) A two year provision be set up to allow Guinea Gap to remain open pending a better understanding of the potential scale of any development along the waterfront and the possibility of bringing forward any Government investment in the Housing Market Renewal Initiative which could contribute towards kick starting any major development initiative.
- (6) That negotiations are held with Arena/Leasowe Community Homes for the transfer of the Leasowe Recreation Centre to the benefit of the community, subject to the agreement of satisfactory terms and conditions.
- (7) Cabinet notes that members of the public made it clear during the consultation period that they believed the main focus of activity in the Bromborough/Eastham area should be located in Bromborough. Cabinet therefore resolves to locate the multi- purpose complex at Bromborough Civic Centre, incorporating the Bromborough Library and the One Stop shop currently located in Eastham.
- (8) This would, as a consequence, entail the closure of Eastham library. Residents of Eastham will be given the opportunity to explore alternative ways of making best use of all the facilities in Eastham to meet community needs, including the possibility, if the community so wishes, of a community transfer of the library building, proper access to IT facilities where they are needed, and a remote book ordering point in a relevant location.

(9) That, in response to substantial public representation, and in recognition of the fact that it is geographically central to a number of deprived areas and housed in a building of historic interest, Upton Library be retained and Woodchurch Library closed.

(10) In view of the fact that the closure of Eastham library and Woodchurch library was not directly set out in the proposals for consultation, transitional finance of up to three months, to the end of June 2009, will be available to allow residents to consider the best use of buildings within their communities.

(11) That the development of the five major multi-purpose complexes in Bebington, Birkenhead, Liscard, Moreton and West Kirby (including brand new build in Moreton and Liscard) be confirmed.

(12) That the smaller, community focused, multi-purpose complexes located in Greasby, Heswall, Leasowe, Rock Ferry and St. James, with the addition of Bromborough, be agreed and that the delivery of services in the Upton/Woodchurch areas be provided by a combination of the Woodchurch Leisure Centre, Upton Library and Upton One Stop Shop in the Department for Work and Pensions site.

(13) That, in response to substantial public representation, Pensby Library be retained.

(14) That the closure of the following libraries be confirmed: Beechwood Library, Eastham Library, Higher Bebington Library, Hoylake Library, Irby Library, New Ferry Library, Prenton Library, Ridgeway Library, Seacombe Library, Wallasey Village Library and Woodchurch Library.

(15) Where the community, or organisations serving the community, express a specific interest in a library building after closure, particularly where there is a clear lack of alternative community facilities for potential community transfer, that potential for community transfer of the redundant library building will be vigorously pursued.

(16) Officers are also asked to carry out an audit of community activities within Libraries scheduled for closure to assess which of those activities could usefully be carried out in other ways, through Children's Centres, Schools, Community Centres or other Council buildings, with particular regard to activities for under 5s, access to technology and homework assistance for school children, access to technology for the unemployed and access to technology and activities for the elderly.

(17) In line with the Strategic Asset Review proposals, a system will be established for automatically reserving books online, from home, or from a number of community-based IT access points from which information technology can be accessed. These could be located in schools, community centres or other Council buildings, but will need to reflect the views of the local community. Officers are also asked to consider sympathetically the potential for limited transfer to interested community venues of currently held book stock.

(18) Officers will work with the voluntary sector to expand the existing service to the elderly, housebound or vulnerable members of the communities and will ensure that door to door transport schemes already operating for those with disabilities, such as Dial a Ride, will be well advertised to current library users. In the light of this, and public reaction to the proposal, the option of a mobile library service will not be progressed at this time but will be kept under review.

(19) That it be made perfectly clear that Birkenhead Central Library will remain open in its current building, which will be maintained as required; that there is no intention, and never was any intention, to demolish the building and that suitable alternative uses will be found for the building which will take account of its historic importance should the Council decide in the future that the needs of the Borough for a modern Central Library would be better met with a different building or on a different site.

(20) That the following facilities be transferred to community management, where the community expresses an interest, within a two year period and in line with the Strategic Asset Review recommendations and that finances be identified in the budgetary process to assist communities in making this a viable proposition: Hoylake Community Centre, Westbourne Community Centre, Livingstone Street Community Centre, Noctorum Community Centre, Leasowe Lighthouse, Seacombe Community Centre, The Grange, Grosvenor Ballroom, Vale House, Greasby Community Centre, Overton Community Centre, Delamere Community Centre, Mayer Hall, New Ferry Village Hall, 65 The Village, Victoria Hall, Windsor Close Community Centre, Heswall Hall, Turntable Building , Kylemore Community Centre, Alexander Hall and Pensby Community Centre, Woodchurch Community Centre and Leasowe Community Centre. Community IT access points will be provided where required as part of the transfer.

(21) That Grange Road West Sports Centre also be considered under the same terms for transfer to the community, and that discussions take place with those who currently use the facility, or other community members if necessary, to secure its continued operation.

(22) That Beechwood Recreation Centre and Community Centre be transferred for Community use and that work be undertaken by officers to assess the best way in which this can take place with a report back to Cabinet as appropriate.

(23) That the Wirral Museum be closed but that a new sustainable use which will secure the future of this iconic building be sought and expressions of interest invited.

(24) That expressions of interest in Pacific Road Theatre by Community/Charitable Trust/Commercial Operator or other interested organisation be sought, or given the considerable interest already expressed, be considered as part of a bidding process, to run the facility as an independent arts and performance venue.

(25) That the Wirral Transport Museum be transferred to a Community Development Trust, given suitable terms and conditions, or, if interest is expressed by an operator in the whole Pacific Road/Tramshed site, that the specialist role of the Transport Museum be protected as far as possible.

(26) That the office accommodation aspects of the Strategic Asset Review be implemented and officers be asked to accelerate the process of making savings from the rationalisation of the Council's office accommodation.

(27) That the closure of Bridge Court, Fellowship House, 98 Bidston Road, 4, Cavendish Road, Cavendish Enterprise Centre, Feltree House, Rosewarne, 5/7 St. Andrews Road, Shore Road Pumping Station, Hillcroft, 245 Liscard Road, 16/18 Rullerton Road, Dock Road Depot, 19, Heath Road, Kennet Close, the old Courthouse and Mendell Lodge be agreed, and appropriate arrangements made for their disposal.

(28) Cabinet is grateful for the views expressed by the Wirral Enabling Fulfilling Lives Group and confirms that no decision on the future of Cambridge Road Day Centre in New Brighton or Highcroft Day Centre in Bebington has been taken and that the future of these buildings and associated service provision will be considered as part of the DASS review of services.

(29) That the Strategic Asset Review be agreed, subject to the above amendments and endorsements.

(30) That, as a consequence of the above, the revenue saving of £3,101,000 be agreed; and

(31) That a provision of £1,863,000 be created to cover the items above and any necessary transitional funding.

NB. In accordance with the procedure adopted for other budget proposals agreed by the Cabinet, this minute will be forwarded to the Corporate Services, Culture Tourism and Leisure Services and Finance and Best Value Overview and Scrutiny Committees for consideration. The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be submitted to the Council on 9th February 2009.

The Cabinet adjourned at 7pm and reconvened at 7.45pm

326 OUTCOME OF PROPOSAL TO CLOSE ARROWE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

At its meeting of 12th June 2008, Cabinet decided that following consultation with governing bodies, staff, parents and other stakeholders, statutory notices should be published regarding the closure of Arrowe Hill Primary School. Notices were published on 22nd October 2008. The Director of Children's Services presented a report which described the outcome of the subsequent representation period and recommended that the proposal be approved, and that authorisation be given for the proposal to close the school to be implemented.

With the permission of the Chair, the Headteacher of Arrowe Hill Primary School addressed the Cabinet in support of the School.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services thanked Ms Williams for her contribution and referred to the OfSTED report that was contained within the Cabinet agenda. Councillor Phil Davies indicated that the proposal to close the school would enable the resulting savings to be recycled for schools generally and paid tribute to all those that had contributed to the consultation process. He supported the recommendation.

The Leader of the Council indicated that this was a fine school and there was no dissatisfaction with the levels of quality within the school, moreover this issue concerned the number of children on roll at the school. Councillor Foulkes also thanked Ms Williams for her contribution and, on behalf of the Cabinet, expressed appreciation to everyone at the school for their contribution to the life of the community.

The Deputy Leader of the Council supported the comments of the Leader of the Council.

Resolved: That the proposal for the closure of Arrowe Hill Primary School be approved, and that the Director of Children's Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to ensure the prescribed procedures are followed, including proposals for the re-zoning of schools, in furtherance of the proposal, with closure of the school on 31st August 2009.

327 **DISPOSAL OF LAND AT THE WARRENS - MAIN DEPOT SITE**

The Director of Law, HR & Asset Management advised Members of the responses to the statutory advertising of the proposed disposal of land and designated Public Open Space at the Warrens Nursery, Thingwall, to Wirral Primary Care Trust "the PCT" to facilitate the construction of a Health Centre. The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management requested that 'call-in' on this matter be waived as the wasted costs likely to be incurred by the Council and the PCT preparing for the Inquiry whilst a Call-in notice was considered by Overview and Scrutiny would seriously prejudice the Council's and the public's interest.

The Deputy Leader of the Council referred to the previous decision by the Cabinet on this matter being called-in and investigated. He supported the recommendation and the proposal to waive call-in on this matter.

Resolved (unanimously) – That

- (1) the objections received be noted and the proposed disposal be agreed in accordance with its decision on 16th October 2008;**
- (2) the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to agree the premium payable, following the valuation by the District Valuer, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council;**
- (3) the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to enter in to the necessary legal documentation to dispose of the land to the PCT on the terms outlined in this report; and**

- (4) **call-in on this matter be waived and the Council be informed accordingly.**

328 MULTI-SYSTEMIC THERAPY PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

The Director of Children's Services reported further on a report submitted to Cabinet on the 4th October 2007. At that time approval was granted for an application to the Department of Health for grant funding to set up a pilot project, as one of the 6 pilot sites the Department of Health was looking to support. That application was unsuccessful. Locally, professionals across agencies had remained interested in the potential of Multi-Systemic Therapy as a successful intervention with adolescents who presented with conduct and anti-social difficulties. Wirral Children & Young People's Department(CYPD), Youth Offending Service(YOS), Primary Care Trust(PCT) and the Cheshire & Wirral Foundation (NHS) Trust believed this evidenced- based method of intervening with young people (age 11-17yrs) who were at risk of care or custody would make a positive contribution to improving the lives of individual children and their families, reduce anti-social behaviour and make a contribution in reducing high cost placements outside of Wirral. Using funding from the PCT, YOS and CYPD a project plan had been developed that would enable an MST programme to be delivered on Wirral. The Director therefore sought Cabinet approval for the development of a Multi-Systemic Therapy programme on Wirral.

Resolved - That

- (1) **the setting up of an MST Programme be formally approved;**
- (2) **the report be referred to Employment & Appointments Committee; and**
- (3) **the bid for funding to the Council's Efficiency Investment fund be approved.**

329 PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN ACADEMY AT BIRKENHEAD HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Cabinet was informed that the proposal to establish an Academy at the current Independent Birkenhead High School for Girls was now nearing the end of the formal feasibility stage. The steering group for the project had consulted with various stakeholders regarding the scheme. A letter from the Cabinet member to the steering group was attached as Appendix A to the report. The Council had now to decide formally whether it supported the establishment of the project, despite some of the reservations which had been expressed previously by officers and reiterated in the Cabinet member's letter. The Secretary of State would then make a decision on whether to proceed with the proposal or not. The "Expression of Interest" which set out the vision and rationale for the Academy was attached at Annexe B. The Director of Children's Services' initial response to that was given at Annexe C. The proposed Academy's admission arrangements were enclosed at Annex (D). The balance of the report set out the issues for the Cabinet to consider.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services moved a motion, duly seconded, as follows:

“(1) Cabinet welcomes the principle of an independent school choosing to enter the Local Authority’s mainstream school provision for Wirral children and young people.

(2) If the Academy is approved, members would wish to see that the Academy works closely with other Wirral schools, including further investigation of the possibility of close partnership working with Prenton High School for Girls;

(3) Cabinet requests that the Secretary of State consider amending the age range of the proposed Academy to 11 to 18 to reduce the impact on primary school provision, since there is already a precedent at the Belvedere Academy in Liverpool.

Cabinet wishes to reiterate the Director’s concerns on the following areas:

- The implications of this development against the background of surplus places and falling rolls
- The Academy’s impact on the gender imbalance in other schools due to the overprovision of girls places, compounded by the absence of an equivalent single sex boys school in Birkenhead
- The Academy’s likely compliance with Local Authority policies such as the Admissions Code, SEN and inclusion and 14 to 19 strategy
- The proposed admission policy for the Academy, which does not appear to meet the core function for the Academy, which does not appear to meet the core function of an Academy in serving disadvantaged young people from deprived areas.”

The Deputy Leader of the Council moved an amendment, duly seconded, as follows:

“In considering its response to the proposal for Birkenhead School for Girls to become an Academy, Cabinet expresses its concerns that:

- the admissions policy of the proposed school will be inconsistent with the principles underlying the Academy Programme, i.e. a tackling of long-term problems of under-achievement in areas of high deprivation, despite being geographically well-located to carry out such a roll.
- the proposal would increase the number of places available in secondary schools at a time of falling rolls and have the potential to further distort the gender balance in schools in the Birkenhead area.

Both these impact adversely on the ability of the Council to plan for secondary education in the Borough.

Whilst Cabinet would be minded to support the establishment of an academy where this would be demonstrated to raise standards and aspirations in historic areas of low attainment, Cabinet believes that, in the specific circumstances that pertain to this application, the case for an academy has not been made.

Cabinet, therefore, requests that the application be refused or at least deferred so that it can be further considered in parallel with the Council's own review of secondary education."

The amendment was put and lost (5:5 with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning) exercising his casting vote against the amendment.

The substantive motion was put and it was –

Resolved (5:0) – That

(1) Cabinet welcomes the principle of an independent school choosing to enter the Local Authority's mainstream school provision for Wirral children and young people.

(2) If the Academy is approved, members would wish to see that the Academy works closely with other Wirral schools, including further investigation of the possibility of close partnership working with Prenton High School for Girls;

(3) Cabinet requests that the Secretary of State consider amending the age range of the proposed Academy to 11 to 18 to reduce the impact on primary school provision, since there is already a precedent at the Belvedere Academy in Liverpool.

Cabinet wishes to reiterate the Director's concerns on the following areas:

- **The implications of this development against the background of surplus places and falling rolls**
- **The Academy's impact on the gender imbalance in other schools due to the overprovision of girls places, compounded by the absence of an equivalent single sex boys school in Birkenhead**
- **The Academy's likely compliance with Local Authority policies such as the Admissions Code, SEN and inclusion and 14 to 19 strategy**
- **The proposed admission policy for the Academy, which does not appear to meet the core function for the Academy, which does not appear to meet the core function of an Academy in serving disadvantaged young people from deprived areas.**

330 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT PERFORMANCE REWARD GRANT

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services advised Cabinet of the latest position on the expected performance reward grant (PRG) for Wirral's 2005-2008 LAA stretch targets. His report also outlined the position regarding use of the performance reward grant which was expected to be received, based upon most recent forecast performance information.

Resolved - That

(1) the amount of performance reward grant expected and the financial implications set out in section 4 of this report be noted;

- (2) as Wirral Council is the accountable body for the Local Area Agreement, the LAA Programme Board's recommendations for the apportionment of performance reward grant as set out in section 3 of this report be approved.

331 COLLECTION FUND 2008/9

The Director of Finance advised Cabinet of the estimated Collection Fund deficit for the year ending 31 March 2009. This deficit had to be notified to the precepting Authorities by 22 January 2009.

The Leader of the Council referred to the level of collection and it was noted that in 2008-09 the Council Tax Collection rate was currently ahead of the 2007-08 performance and was expected to finalise at 98.8%

Resolved – That the declaration of an estimated deficit of £800,000 for the Collection Fund for the year ending 31 March 2009 be noted and the precept bodies be charged accordingly.

332 PROJECTED BUDGETS 2009-2011

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

At the request of the Leader of the Council, the Director of Finance updated the Cabinet on the position regarding the Icelandic Bank.

Resolved – That the projected budgets continue to be reported to the Cabinet in line with the agreed financial and performance management timetable.

333 COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT (CAA) - USE OF RESOURCES

The Director of Finance provided details of the Audit Commission project brief for the Comprehensive Area Assessment Use of Resources 2009 assessment covering 2008/09.

The Leader of the Council referred to the specific mention of Strategic Asset Management within the brief.

Resolved – That

- (1) the 2009 Use of Resources Project brief be noted;
- (2) regular reports be brought to Cabinet on progress on the Use of Resources.

334 **WORKING WIRRAL - WORKING NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND**

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services advised Members on the current situation with regards to the Working Neighbourhoods Fund resources.

He also requested authorisation for the appointment of consultants to develop further the Investment Framework to guide the allocation of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund resources when confirmed by Government for 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Resolved – That the allocation of a maximum of £15,000 for the appointment of Regeneris Consulting to further develop the Investment Framework to enable targeted commissioning of the Working Wirral programme to progress once WNF resources for 2009/10 and 2010/11 are confirmed by Government, be approved.

335 **REVIEW OF WIRRAL PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION ASSISTANCE POLICY**

The Director of Regeneration sought approval to undertake a consultation exercise in relation to the proposed revisions to the Council's Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy. Following the consultation exercise a further report would be presented to Members detailing the final version of the policy, with the intention of implementing the revised policy in April 2009.

The Director also requested delegation to use specialist contractors not registered on the Trading Standards Wirral traders Scheme, in cases involving HRA and Equity Loans for Renewal, where there were specialist building works to be undertaken.

Resolved - That

- (1) the revised Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy be subject to a consultation exercise, as detailed in item 4.0 of this report;**
- (2) a further report be submitted to Cabinet in Spring 2009 detailing the final version of the Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy for adoption and implementation from April 2009; and**
- (3) Members agree to allow officers the delegation to use specialist contractors, not registered on the Trading Standards Wirral Traders Scheme, in cases involving HRA and Equity Loans for Renewal, where there are specialist works to be undertaken for the reasons set out in the report.**

336 **TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/10**

The Director of Technical Services advised members that In November 2007 the Department for Transport (DfT) approved a Local Transport Capital Settlement for

Wirral of £6,507,000 for 2009/10. His report set out a proposed Local Transport Plan (LTP) capital programme for approval. This was a key decision included on the forward plan.

Resolved - That it be recommended to Council that the proposed Transport Capital Programme for 2009/10, set out in this report, be approved.

337 **PROGRESS TOWARDS THE TRANSFORMATION OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES - EARLY VOLUNTARY RETIREMENT AND VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE UPDATE**

The Director of Adult Social Services advised members that the council had agreed a major Transformation Programme for Adult Social Care in Wirral. That programme included the revision of many services and structures and would have a significant impact on the council's workforce. The report considered the impact of the Home Assessment and Reablement Team (HART) and the implications of reviewing the staffing within the Department.

The purpose of the report was therefore to:

- Update Cabinet on developments and seek approval for the use of the corporate efficiency fund for the development of the Home Assessment and Re-enablement team (HART)
- Inform members of the Early Voluntary Retirement (EVR) requests that had so far been received and to request Cabinet's approval to progress a number of Early Voluntary Retirement(EVR)/Voluntary Severance(VS)
- Seek approval to waive call in on the EVR issue so as to enable employees to plan their lives

Resolved (unanimously) - That

- (1) **the contents of the report be noted;**
- (2) **an allocation of £1.5m be made from the Corporate Efficiency Investment Budget to enable investment in the development of Home Assessment & Re-enablement Team (HART) service in 2008/09;**
- (3) **an estimated figure of £1,519,464 in respect of EVR/VS be funded from the Departmental revenue budget**
- (4) **it be noted that these changes allow for a reduction in expenditure to meet existing efficiency targets and does not allow for any additional savings.**
- (5) **the call in for this matter be waived and the Council be advised accordingly.**

338 **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.

339 **UPDATE ON THE LOCAL PAY REVIEW AND THE MANAGEMENT OF WORKFORCE CHANGE**

The Director of Law, HR & Asset Management provided members with an update as to the current situation in regards to Job Evaluation, Harmonisation and Equal Pay and set out proposals for the implementation of a new equality proof pay structure and set of harmonised terms and conditions of employment from 1 August 2008. The proposals detailed within his report in this regard were agreed by Cabinet on 22 May 2008.

Cabinet was also updated as to progress in supporting organisational/workforce change around the Council and, in order to ensure that planned changes could continue to be effectively supported in 2009/10 and beyond, funding for a further HR post and an additional Solicitor in Legal and Member Services was being sought.

The Leader of the Council referred to the Head of Human Resources who would be leaving the Council shortly to take up a new position with the new authority for Cheshire East. Councillor Foulkes thanked him for all his hard work on this matter and for the Council generally and congratulated him on his new post.

Resolved - That

- (1) the work undertaken so far be noted;
- (2) a further report be presented to Cabinet following implementation Stages 2, 3 and 4;
- (3) the use of the Local Pay Reserve as set out in Section 4 be agreed; and
- (4) £94,900 be provided from the Efficiency Investment Budget for the posts identified and that their establishment be subject to the agreement of the Employment and Appointments Committee.

340 **PROVISION OF GARDEN WASTE COMPOSTING FACILITIES SERVICES PROCUREMENT EXERCISE - AWARD OF CONTRACT**

Cabinet was recommended to award the new Garden Waste Composting Facilities 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 the 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. This was a Key Decision identified in the Council's Forward Plan.

The Cabinet Member for the Environment thanked Officers for their work on this matter.

Resolved – That

- (1) the new Garden Waste Composting Facilities Services 2009-14 contract be awarded to the preferred provider, subject to statutory Standstill Period procedures;**
- (2) an allocation of £30,000 pa be approved to fund a quality control resource as described in paragraph 4.2.3;**
- (3) a £50,000 budgetary reduction towards the Director of Technical Services 2009/10 savings target be approved; and**
- (4) a further report be brought to a future meeting reviewing the overall position for waste and environmental services budgets as described in paragraph 4.3.4. of the report.**

341 WEST KIRBY MARINE LAKE RECONSTRUCTION - AWARD OF CONTRACT

This matter was deferred.

342 BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE, ONE SCHOOL PATHFINDER, ICT CONTRACT

The Director of Children's Services sought cabinet approval to award Research Machines (RM) the ICT contract for the BSF One School Pathfinder project – Woodchurch High School following a procurement using the national Partnerships for Schools (PfS) Framework, as approved for use by Cabinet on 28 March 2007.

Resolved - That the awarding of the ICT contract for the BSF One School Pathfinder project at Woodchurch High School to Research Machines (RM) be approved.

343 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.