

# COUNCIL

Tuesday, 5 March 2013

Present:

The Mayor (Councillor Gerry Ellis) in the Chair  
Deputy Mayor (Councillor Dave Mitchell)

Councillors	RL Abbey	T Harney	T Norbury
	C Blakeley	P Hayes	C Povall
	E Boulton	S Hodrien	D Realey
	A Brighthouse	A Hodson	L Rennie
	P Brightmore	K Hodson	D Roberts
	W Clements	M Hornby	L Rowlands
	A Cox	M Johnston	J Salter
	J Crabtree	AER Jones	H Smith
	G Davies	C Jones	T Smith
	P Davies	P Kearney	W Smith
	WJ Davies	S Kelly	J Stapleton
	D Dodd	B Kenny	M Sullivan
	P Doughty	A Leech	A Sykes
	S Foulkes	I Lewis	J Walsh
	L Fraser	AR McLachlan	G Watt
	P Gilchrist	M McLaughlin	S Whittingham
	P Glasman	C Meaden	J Williamson
	JE Green	B Mooney	I Williams
	R Gregson	S Mountney	KJ Williams
	P Hackett	C Muspratt	P Williams
	J Hale	S Niblock	S Williams

Apologies Councillor D Elderton

## 128 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Council were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest, in connection with any matter to be debated or determined at this meeting and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

Councillor Jeff Green declared his interest in item 6 (b) Council Budget 2013/2014 (see minute 135 post) insofar as it related to the Schools Budget 2013/2014, by virtue of his wife's employment as a headteacher with the authority.

In addition, all Councillors who had been appointed to serve as governors on Wirral schools also declared their interest in item 6 (b) Council Budget 2013/2014 (see minute 135 post) insofar as it related to the Schools Budget 2013/2014.

## 129 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor informed the Council of the sad news of the recent death of Honorary Alderman Arthur Smith, Mayor of Wirral 1987-1988 and Labour Councillor for Holt Ward 1962-1974, Wirral Council No 1 Ward 1975-1980 and Birkenhead Ward 1981-1991. The Council stood in silence, as a mark of respect.

The Mayor's Chaplain, Revd Dr David Chester, led the Council in prayers.

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor David Elderton. The Mayor was pleased to inform the Council that Councillor Elderton had been discharged from hospital and was appreciative of the many best wishes he had received.

The Mayor referred also to the result of the recent by-election held in Pensby and Thingwall and welcomed newly elected Councillor Phillip Brightmore to the Council.

## 130 PETITIONS

A. In accordance with Standing Order 21, the Mayor received petitions submitted by –

- (i) Councillor Phil Davies and Deputy Mayor Councillor Dave Mitchell on behalf of 600 signatories, opposing the closure of Eastham Day Centre
- (ii) Councillor Kathy Hodson on behalf of 34 signatories, opposing the closure of Heswall Day Centre.

B. The following petitions were referred to the Council in accordance with Standing Order 34 (1), having exceeded the threshold of 1500 signatures to trigger a Council debate, in accordance with the Petition Scheme –

- (i) A petition of 1631 signatures, submitted by New Ferry Residents Association, opposing the proposed closure of Bebington/New Ferry Youth Club, as part of the budget savings options.

Warren Ward, representing the petitioners, addressed the Council.

- (ii) A petition of 14,402 signatures, submitted by Wirral UNISON opposing the proposed closure of Day Centres for People with Learning and/or Physical Disabilities, as part of budget savings options.

Brenda Hall, UNISON Branch Officer (Social Care), addressed the Council on behalf of the petitioners.

On a motion by Councillor Davies, seconded by Councillor McLachlan, and following a debate, it was then –

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the petitions opposing the closure of Eastham and Heswall Day Centres, presented by Councillors Phil Davies, Kathy Hodson and Deputy Mayor Councillor David Mitchell, be considered during the course of the debate on the Council Budget 2013/2014.**
- (2) That the thanks of the Council be accorded to Warren Ward and Brenda Hall for their presentations, their petitions be noted and their comments made be considered during the course of the debate on the Council Budget 2013/2014.**

## 131 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 11 February 2013 had been circulated to Members and, it was –

**Resolved – That the minutes be approved and adopted as a correct record.**

## 132 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Phil Davies, addressed the Council on the following matters –

- **Councillor Phil Brightmore**  
The Leader was pleased to welcome newly elected Councillor Phil Brightmore, and offered congratulations for his success in the recent by-election in Pensby and Thingwall Ward.
- **Honorary Alderman Arthur Smith**  
The Leader offered his sincere condolences for the death of former Councillor Arthur Smith, who he had succeeded as Councillor for Birkenhead Ward in 1991. Arthur had been a superb local Councillor with a detailed memory of local events and election campaigns and would be sadly missed.
- **Blue Flag Beaches**  
A recent report had revealed that only three beaches in the North West had achieved the highest standard of bathing water quality and all were in Wirral – at Meols, Moreton and Wallasey. The Leader thanked those staff involved in environment and tourism work and proposed that applications be made for Blue Flag status.
- **Improving the Skills of Young People**  
The Leader was pleased to report that 12 young people aged between 16 and 18, from Leasowe and Moreton East Ward, who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) had been accepted by Wirral Metropolitan College on a free Spring/Summer course for six weeks in Plumbing, Brickwork and Plastering. The agreement was brokered by Councillor Anita Leech and Jenni Jones from Leasowe Development Trust Job Club, the aim being to promote interest in young people attending full time college courses. He commented that it was important to reduce the NEET figures and applauded the initiative.
- **Involve North West**  
The Leader offered his congratulations to Involve North West, a voluntary organisation which provided help for young people who were long term unemployed, activities for young people, mediation services and debt advice, which had secured a substantial Lottery grant for three years. The Mayor had recently been kind enough to open their offices in Tranmere and the Leader was pleased that the organisation had been recognised by the award of the grant.

### 133 **PROCEDURE**

In response to comments from Members with regard to procedural matters, the Acting Director of Law, HR and Asset Management advised that the Budget Council procedure had been agreed by the Cabinet on 24 January 2013 (minute 171 refers) and subsequently by the Council (minute 108 (11 February 2013) refers). He commented that the procedure differed somewhat from previous years but had been discussed with Group Leaders and was in accordance with the rules of debate.

Having had regard to the views expressed by Members, the Leader of the Council indicated his willingness to meet with the Group Leaders to discuss the procedure to be adopted for subsequent years.

### 134 **CORPORATE PLAN**

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (1), the following matter was submitted for approval by the Council –

Minute 196 – Cabinet (18 February 2013)  
Corporate Plan

On a Motion by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

**Resolved (56:7) – That minute 196 (Cabinet – 18 February 2013) Corporate Plan, be approved.**

135 **COUNCIL BUDGET 2013/2014**

In accordance with Standing Order 13 (Budget Council Procedure), the Leader of the Council, Councillor Phil Davies, moved the Cabinet's Budget recommendations, duly seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, Deputy Leader, with any additional paragraphs (those related to precepts), together with other minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 18 February 2013 that required approval by the Council, plus the recommendations of the Interim Director of Finance, in his revised Council Tax 2013/2014 report.

A specific vote was required to be taken in relation to the recommendations in relation to Council Tax 2013/2014.

**A. The following minutes were deemed to be approved, subject to consideration of budget amendments. Therefore, if the budget amendments were to fail, the following minutes and cabinet budget would be approved, in accordance with the agreed Budget Council procedure –**

**1. Minute 201 (Cabinet – 18 February 2013)  
Level of General Fund Balances 2013/2014**

**Resolved:** That

- (1) it be agreed that the level of general fund balances recommended be based on a locally determined approach to the assessment of the financial risks that the Council may face in the future; and
- (2) it be agreed that the Council maintains its level of balances at or above the locally determined level of general fund balances.

**2. Minute 203 (Cabinet – 18 February 2013)  
S.25 Statement – Robustness of Estimates  
and Adequacy of the Proposed Reserves**

In accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council's Chief Financial Officer (Director of Resources) was required to report on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the Council's budget calculations and the adequacy of the adequacy of the General Fund balances and reserves.

The Cabinet noted that Budget estimates were exactly that, being estimates of spend and income made at a point in time. The Statement about the robustness of estimates could not give a guaranteed assurance about the Budget, but gave reasonable assurances that the budget had been based on the best available information and assumptions.

The report of the Interim Director of Finance had also outlined a number of key processes that had been put in place in order to meet the requirement on robustness.

**3. Minute 207 (Cabinet – 18 February 2013)  
Medium Term Financial Strategy**

**Resolved:** That

- (1) the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2013/2016 be approved;
- (2) the Prudential Indicators be adopted;
- (3) the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy be approved;
- (4) those Council Officers listed within Appendix F to the report on the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy Statement, be authorised to approve payments from the Council's bank accounts for all treasury management activities;
- (5) the Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved; and
- (6) regular updates on the Medium Term Financial Strategy be reported to the Cabinet.

**4. Minute 202 (Cabinet – 18 February 2013)  
Revenue Budget 2013/2014**

**BUDGET RESOLUTION - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Resolved – That**

Unprecedented cuts to Council funding from central government, combined with unfunded increased demand for social care in particular, mean that we have no choice but to cut around a third of our net budget over the next three years.

This budget involves some difficult choices: standards in some of our services will have to be less generous and charges for some services will have to increase, however, this Labour Administration is determined to put the Council's finances on a sustainable footing and ensure that Wirral Council continues to deliver good quality services for our residents. Over the next three years, we will also deliver a transformational change programme which puts in place new models for providing some services which will enable us to achieve further economies.

Our budget proposals for 2013/14 are set out in detail in this resolution. Key elements include the following:

- We will protect front-line services: no Children's Centres, Libraries or One Stop Shops will close.
- We will retain pensioner discounts for Council Tax.
- We will make appropriate provision for increased demand for our services for vulnerable families and adults, despite lack of increased funding from Central Government in this vital area.
- We will invest £1m of capital in a new state-of-the-art Youth Zone.
- We will invest £300,000 in funding for an innovative project to address child poverty led by Frank Field MP.

- We will give a high priority to assisting the delivery of the Wirral Waters scheme and will work with our partners to ensure we maximise the opportunities to attract new investment in the offshore wind sector and the return of the British Open to Hoylake in 2014.
- We will develop the skills of our young people to prepare them for work through our apprenticeship programme, ensuring the next generation benefit from the economic opportunities we create.
- We will maintain our commitment to be a Living Wage employer – one of only 10-15 Councils to apply this nationally.
- We will maintain an enhanced severance scheme for Council staff.
- We will remove unnecessary layers of management.
- We will establish powerful new Constituency Committees and devolve £200,000 to be focussed on reducing inequalities.
- We will mitigate the impact of benefit cuts by investing £100,000 in enhanced advice services.
- We will ensure that funding for tackling domestic abuse will continue by utilising the Community Fund and working closely with the Police and Crime Commissioner to ensure this vital priority is funded appropriately in the future.
- We will invest £50,000 in enhancing road safety around our schools.
- We will explore a range of opportunities to deliver savings and improve our services through new partnerships with other Councils across the northwest. The first, a shared internal audit service with Liverpool City Council, will be delivered this year.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This budget is the most important – and challenging - in recent history. Cuts, unprecedented since 1945, combined with changing demographics and residents who both demand and have a right to expect value for money and high quality services, present challenges this Administration is determined to address.
- 1.2 This Council faces a £109 million budget deficit over the next three years – we have to reduce our net revenue budget by a third. Over the next three years it is estimated that we will receive a 57% reduction in grants or £62 million less from central government to spend on our services. We are also facing increased demand of approximately £47million over the next three years. This includes costs associated with increasing numbers of older people in our communities who are living longer and requiring more support from the Council. These factors result in the £109 million savings that we must make by 2016.
- 1.3 In 2013/14 we face a £39 million budget shortfall due to a combination of cuts by government to our grant, together with unfunded demographic growth. We also have to address exceptional items totalling £38.4 million. This includes an inherited overspend from the previous Administration of £17 million. These figures have been confirmed by external experts.

- 1.4 This Administration is determined to get the Council's finances in order and be open and transparent in all its decision making processes. We have appointed a new Chief Executive and senior management team with an excellent track record. The formation of new cross-cutting Directorates will enable us to modernise services through a programme of transformation and improvement, ensuring that we deliver the best possible outcomes for our residents. In partnership with the Local Government Association we are at the forefront of developing a new approach to sector-led improvement. We have established an Improvement Board which has agreed a robust Improvement Plan with the aim of moving Wirral forward to become a high-performing Council. We are committed to working with our partners and across parties to meet our challenges.
- 1.5 External validation of our plans to address areas of weakness has been provided by a Corporate Peer Challenge of the Council which took place between 29<sup>th</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012. The Team concluded that:
- 'The Council has a good grasp of the scale and urgency of the challenges it is facing. You recognise the significant financial challenges will continue to increase as time elapses and that immediate and decisive measures to address them are required. We think the overall strategy you are working to, including the plans for organisational improvement and budget reduction, is appropriate given the challenges you face. Put simply we think you have a good awareness of the issues and an appropriate plan of action.'***
- 1.6 This budget will help to deliver financial stability for this Council, dealing with the challenges we face head on. We have a duty to make tough decisions and to get our own house in order. We will ensure that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used efficiently and effectively. A detailed report on the Council's financial position is being prepared by Eugene Sullivan, former Chief Executive of the National Audit Commission. We will publish this report and are determined to learn the lessons from the key findings.
- 1.7 This budget is being set against the background of a system of local government funding which, in our view, is grossly unfair. It cannot be right that authorities like Wirral, which have areas of high deprivation, have had their funding cut by £151 per head of population since 2010, whereas Councils in relatively affluent areas such as North Dorset are being required to find a cut of only £2 per head of population. The coalition government has cut Wirral Council's funding by a total of £64 million since 2010. This includes a key specific grant – the Area Cost Adjustment, worth £37 million, which provided funding to help address deprivation. The impact of removing specific grants from Councils in the most deprived areas is clearly spelt out by the Audit Commission in their report, 'Tough Times 2012' (see paragraph 31).
- 1.8 The scale of government cuts to Wirral Council's budget is also evident in an analysis of changes in revenue spending power 2013-14 which showed that of the 47 local authorities which are members of the Special Interest Group of Metropolitan Authorities outside London (SIGOMA), Wirral has had the biggest cut (2.62%) compared to the average cut (1.76%).
- 1.9 This Administration has made a number of representations to government regarding the Council's budget. The Leader of the Council has written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local

Government and, together with the other Party Leaders, the Leader has met with a minister from DCLG. Some flexibility has been agreed with regard to capitalisation to fund our severance scheme. Wirral has contributed to lobbying activity led by SIGOMA. We have also supported the 'Come Together' Campaign organised by Council Leaders from the Core Cities and Faith Leaders who have launched an e-petition which calls on the government to apply the cuts more fairly across the country, protecting those most in need, and making sure those in wealthy parts of the country pay their fair share. We will continue to lobby government to give Wirral a fair deal."

## **2. NEW CORPORATE PLAN**

- 2.1 We have developed a new three-year Corporate Plan which we have recommended for adoption by Council. This sets out a vision for Wirral and contains the key principles and priorities which will underpin the Plan. Our budget proposals will flow from three policy priorities and three guiding principles set out in the Corporate Plan:

### ***Policy Priorities***

- **Protecting the most vulnerable in our Borough**
- **Driving growth in our economy**
- **Tackling health inequalities**

### ***Guiding Principles***

- **We will spend less on the cost of running the Council**
- **Those with the broadest shoulders must bear the greatest burden**
- **Every effort will be made to mitigate the impact of savings on front-line services**

## **3. CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 Our priorities and budget proposals have been informed by the 'What Really Matters' consultation, the largest such consultation ever undertaken by Wirral Council, both in terms of reach and scope. This involved a two-stage consultation process: engaging the community firstly in debating the principles the Council should explore to develop the budget options and then further debate around those options. This is the first time that the Council has published all budget options and sought the views of residents well in advance of finalising the budget.
- 3.2 The main route for resident involvement was via a questionnaire which was available on-line and also in hard copy. In addition, the engagement team attended around 250 community events where residents gave their views on the budget. Stage one received almost 7000 responses. Stage two achieved 6522 responses. In addition, an extensive programme of staff consultation was delivered and since November 2012, over 20 meetings have taken place with the Trade Unions. In addition, a number of petitions, emails and letters have been received regarding budget options. Cabinet is grateful to all those who took part in the consultation.

## **4. TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE**

- 4.1 Given the scale of reductions in funding by central government, we will put in place over the next three years a radical programme of transformational change to replace the traditional model where Councils deliver most services directly. This will require us to build on the excellent work we have done in recent years with key partners such as the NHS,

the police service, the fire authority and the voluntary, community and faith sectors. We are looking closely at the experience of Community Budget pilots and have a programme of visits to other authorities which operate trusts, mutuals, social enterprises and co-operatives. We are the lead authority in Merseyside for developing a plan for sharing services with other Councils and will continue our positive discussions with Cheshire West and Chester Council with the aim of realising further savings over the coming months.

- 4.2 As part of our savings for 2013/14 we have entered into an agreement with Liverpool City Council to share our internal audit service and we are talking to other authorities about sharing other services. We have developed an exciting plan to involve local Friends Groups, The Reader Organisation and other similar organisations in a number of libraries and we are looking at opportunities for developing social enterprises from the work done by people with learning disabilities.
- 4.3 We will continue to provide the resources necessary to provide training opportunities to ensure Members have all the skills necessary to lead this new way of working and to fulfil the role of 'community champions' in our new neighbourhood working arrangements.

## **5. LABOUR'S PLEDGE TO OUR STAFF**

- 5.1 Our employees are the Council's most valuable assets and we want to protect frontline and low paid workers as far as possible. We are one of only a small number of Councils nationally to introduce the Living Wage as a minimum pay level for our staff.
- 5.2 Last year, one of the opposition aims was to reduce the amount of money the Council spent on Trade Unions. We believe that a business case can be made for good industrial relations: the Trade Unions play an important role in representing staff and helping the Council to achieve efficiencies. We will continue to support this work however, in conjunction with the Trade Unions, during the course of the next financial year we intend to review the funding for full time Trade Union Officials to ensure we are achieving the best value for money.
- 5.3 We have adopted a severance multiplier of 1.8, a reduction from the current multiplier of 2.2 but it is far above the basic, statutory entitlement. It is important to us as Councillors, to try and secure something above the statutory level for those employees leaving the authority. Although times are tough we have taken time to consider the best way to try and soften the blow of redundancy for employees as much as possible.
- 5.4 Although we are having to make significant changes to the way we do our business, our employees are key to the success of providing good quality services for local communities and we will continue to try to mitigate the impact of the cuts being forced upon us.
- 5.5 We will continue to work with Voluntary Community Action Wirral (VCAW) to support the creation of social enterprises. We will also provide our staff with the necessary skills and training to take over the running of Council services through the creation of mutuals.

## **BUDGET PROPOSALS**

### **6. TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

- 6.1 Our proposals in this area are designed to ensure that the Council is able to achieve the significant financial savings required while still providing the structures, mechanisms and resilience we need to ensure we improve the way we do business.
- 6.2 This budget will bring about major savings in our buildings, marketing, information technology and what we spend on our senior management. We will also improve the value for money we achieve for goods and services through major changes to our procurement systems.
- 6.3 We believe that it is important to reduce the cost of democracy, while still ensuring that elected members have support in place to fulfil their essential role in our local communities. We therefore propose to save £275,000 by holding elections once every four years, and reviewing the number of meetings and committees held to both reduce administration costs and to enable Members to focus on what really matters to local people.
- 6.4 We are also taking steps to eliminate waste across the Council, ensuring that every penny of Council resources is targeted at improving our residents' quality of life. We will save around £20,000 by ceasing production of a glossy brochure and newsletter which previous Administrations opted to mail to every resident, at great expense. We believe this is an unnecessary extravagance and that it is not a responsible use of scarce Council resources.
- 6.5 We have also instructed Officers to rapidly explore innovative models of delivering back office services with our neighbouring Councils, with internal audit, procurement and information technology services likely to be the first to realise savings. We have worked hard with the Trade Unions to achieve savings in staff Terms and Conditions minimising the affect on contractual conditions and over the next year we are committed to working with them to identify further efficiencies.
- 6.6 We will continue to provide advice and support to event organisers in the borough, but will no longer provide funding to events. We will not renew the Tranmere Rovers Football Club sponsorship agreement but we will continue to support the excellent work the Club does in both local Schools and the wider Community across Wirral.
- 6.7 We recognise the vital work which is done by our partners in the voluntary, community and faith sectors and, while we will no longer provide funding through our Area Forum programme, we will reinvest £200,000 of this to kick-start work on our innovative proposal for a new model of Neighbourhood Working.
- 6.8 Welfare Reform will have far reaching consequences. We propose to delete vacant posts that are no longer required in the Revenues and Benefits team as the new Universal Credit is implemented. However, we will also mitigate against the impact of benefit cuts by investing £100,000 in information and advice services for Wirral residents, which will help signpost them to the support available in their local area and ensure that agencies are alerted to families at risk of financial crisis. Central Government have also transferred £237, 000 of Housing Benefit Administration costs to us that we have had no choice but to make

provision for. We have also had to deal with a cut of 10% or £3.2million in the funding we previously received from central government for administering council tax benefit.

6.9 In order to protect our libraries from closure we will deliver the service more efficiently by further integrating One Stop Shop services into libraries. We will bring our libraries in line with other Council services by closing them during those times when they are rarely used, during Christmas and New Year. Crucially, we have instructed Officers to accelerate discussions with the Reader Organisation and Friends Groups to explore opportunities for alternative delivery of this valuable service in the future.

6.10 Consultation is ongoing with the Trade Unions. Cabinet recommend the following changes to Terms and Conditions to achieve £3.8million of savings be agreed and recommended to Budget Council on 5 March 2013.

- All employees to take 5 days unpaid leave. This will be reviewed after three years.
- All voluntary overtime, additional hours and casual work to be paid at plain time.
- Review and revise criteria for car allowance scheme, reduce essential user lump sum and move to HMRC mileage rate for all.
- Implementation of an increment freeze for all employees for one year.
- Removal of disturbance, relocation and telephone allowance.

6.11 In addition we will work together with the Trade Unions to review current working arrangements to maximise the efficiency and cost effectiveness of services including annualised hours during this financial year which could mitigate the need for ongoing savings.

<b>TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES</b>	<b>2013/14 £000s</b>	<b>2014-16 £000s</b>	<b>TOTAL £000s</b>
Reducing Council Management	5000	0	5000
Reducing the numbers of Agency workers	500	0	500
Service Restructures	905	642	1547
Trade Union funding	- 270	0	-270
Reducing the Cost of Democracy	100	175	275
The Mayor of Wirral	50	0	50
Procurement	320	9000	9320
Treasury Management	1700	0	1700
Information Technology Service	210	90	300
Better Use of Buildings	100	458	558
Transforming Business Support	500	2000	2500
Revenues and Benefits	550	0	550
Marketing and Public Relations	167	0	167
Tranmere Rovers Sponsorship	135	0	135
Power Supplies - Contract Saving	11	0	11
Reduction in External Audit Fees	140	0	140
Workforce Conditions of Service	3800	0	3800
Area Forum Funding	391	0	391

Libraries and One Stop Shops	391	583	974
Shared Services Development	0	1400	1400
Council Tax Increase	2600	0	2600
Council Tax: Discounts and Exemptions	2284	0	2284
Council Tax: Court Costs	2429	0	2429
Council Tax: Discretionary Relief	0	320	320
<b>Transformation and Resources Total</b>	<b>22013</b>	<b>14668</b>	<b>36681</b>

## 7. FAMILIES AND WELLBEING

- 7.1 Increasing demand for our services adds to the unprecedented financial challenge we face. Our recommendations address this, while ensuring we are able to focus on our duty to serve and protect the most vulnerable in our communities. We will “think family”, while working towards our goal of delivering services in ways which are easy to access, focus on the front line, eliminate duplication and reduce back office costs.
- 7.2 We are committed to providing and commissioning the best and most appropriate levels of care and support possible, involving our partners throughout the voluntary, community and faith sector and we will further integrate our work with that of the NHS to improve residents’ experience of support services. These recommendations are in line with our policy of delivering more personalised services, to enable residents to stay independent for as long as they can. We believe it is right to review the support we provide to Carers to ensure we secure effective services for them whilst enabling short breaks and other services to be part of the cared for person’s budget rather than the carer.
- 7.3 We have had to think radically about the options for savings given the scale of the budget cuts and the options therefore include some proposals to reduce the universal services provided in our Children’s Centres. This Administration will ensure that our Children’s Services are focused on those children most in need, and we will therefore protect core Sure Start services within our most deprived areas to support our most vulnerable and disadvantaged families. We will maintain all of our Children’s Centres and Satellite Centres attached to Schools will be taken over by the Schools.
- 7.4 The work of our staff to safeguard Wirral’s most vulnerable children is vital. We have therefore made a provision that will be targeted at hard to recruit and retain front line child protection social workers.
- 7.5 Previous Administrations have not ensured that the growth in demand for services for vulnerable children and families is met with appropriate levels of funding. We are therefore investing in the following critical areas:

<b>Funding increased demand (Children and Young People)</b>	<b>2013/14 £000</b>
Independent Reviewing Officers	90
Additional Social Worker capacity in Wallasey District	315
Social Workers in Schools	75
Family Justice Review	100
Staying Put Policy	100
Increase in Foster care demand	500
Youth Justice Board	50
	<b>Total 1230</b>

This growth is included in the £39million target

In addition, we will ensure that appropriate funding is provided to help meet the costs of demographic growth in the numbers of vulnerable adults that is not being met by central government.

<b>Funding increased demand (Adult Social Care)</b>	<b>2013/14 £000</b>
Young Adults with Learning Disabilities	944
Older People	1773
Fees for Residential and Nursing Care	1000
	<b>Total 3717</b>

This growth is included in the £39million target.

- 7.6 We will continue to provide support to the Birkenhead Foundation Trust Springboard project, which is currently receiving national recognition for its work to establish new ways of working to tackle intergenerational poverty involving communities and volunteers. The project will engage with young women in the earliest stage of pregnancy to provide support focussed on raising aspirations for them and their children. A further £100,000 will be commissioned based on priorities identified by Wirral's Child Poverty Working Group.
- 7.7 We are proud of our excellent schools and will work with them to ensure that children continue to benefit from the best possible start in life. We do believe however that it is right to target resources where they are most needed and for schools to make an appropriate contribution for the services they receive from the Council.
- 7.8 We will consolidate our youth service to operate out of the four main hubs across the borough, and retain four Satellite youth Clubs and outreach provision until the new Youth Zone opens working hard to ensure that these services are targeted at those young people who are most in need. Funding for the excellent Wirral Youth Theatre will continue.
- 7.9 We believe it is vital to ensure increasingly limited resources are invested wisely. Our recommendation to charge more for non-residential services brings Wirral in line with other local authorities and we propose to re-tender contracts for extra care housing to ensure we are getting value for money while ensuring quality is maintained.
- 7.10 We will reduce the costs of transporting children and adults to school, day centres and other facilities by focussing provision on those in the greatest need. We are reviewing the pilot of a Community Card in St Helens, which has reduced the cost of transport significantly and enhanced personal choice. Business plans have been developed to ensure that Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre and the Schools Music Service will be self financing in the future.
- 7.11 The quality of some of our physical provision is simply not good enough. We propose to rationalise both our respite and day care services but will do so in close consultation with service users and their families, putting their interests at the heart of all we do. At the same time we will offer people more choice to use their personal budgets in the way that they choose.

7.12 We will focus specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health services on those who require it most. We are determined to ensure that no young person who needs this service should be forced to do without it. We also believe that this service could be rationalised, and improved, through targeting its efforts at those most in need.

<b>FAMILIES AND WELLBEING</b>	<b>2013/14 £000s</b>	<b>2014-16 £000s</b>	<b>TOTAL £000s</b>
Education Psychology Service	80	0	80
Schools Budget	250	2500	2750
School Improvement and Income from Schools	160	0	160
Careers, Education and Advice	700	300	1000
Housing Benefits - Maximisation of Grant	2000	0	2000
Community Meals	169	31	200
Charging for Non Residential Services	880	0	880
Targeted Support through NHS Contracts	1828	2383	4211
Extra Care Housing	300	300	600
Residential and Respite Care	160	160	320
Day Care and Day Services Transformation	750	1250	2000
Review of Support for Carers	250	0	250
Assistive Technology	150	150	300
Transport Policies	250	1082	1332
Area Teams for Family Support	200	0	200
Schools Music Service	21	0	21
Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre	23	0	23
Foundation Learning	121	12	133
Commissioning of Parenting Services	700	200	900
Review of VCF Sector Grants	705	115	820
Review of Residential Care for Learning Disabilities	300	0	300
Review of Equipment Service	100	0	100
Review of Emergency Duty	0	100	100
Youth and Play Services	687	300	987
Youth Challenge	200	200	400
Children's Centres and Sure Start	1576	596	2172
Short Breaks for Children with Disabilities	150	150	300
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	250	0	250
<b>Families and Wellbeing Total</b>	<b>12960</b>	<b>9829</b>	<b>22789</b>

## **8. REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT**

8.1 Wirral has enormous potential for economic regeneration – opportunities such as Wirral Waters, the International Trade Centre and the launch of a world class golf resort are of international significance. The size of our budget pressures are such that we will need to review our business support and reduce available business grants, however we are entirely confident that we will continue to create more jobs and attract investment through increasingly targeted activity.

- 8.2 We will continue to ensure that Wirral accesses external funding opportunities, including the new European Regional Development Fund Business Support programme and continues to work with UK Trade and Investment to attract investment locally from overseas companies.
- 8.3 We recognise the importance of developing the skills of our young people to prepare them for work. We will therefore continue to invest in our apprenticeship programme through funding the cost of apprenticeship training through the Liverpool City Region model. This funding will be matched with contributions from the National Apprenticeship Service.
- 8.4 Decent housing is crucial to residents' quality of life. We will continue to work with Registered Social landlords and Private Sector landlords to maximise the number and range of quality homes for rent. We will continue our programmes to restructure the Housing Market and work with House Builders to increase the number of new homes built in Wirral. We will prioritise the remaining Housing Market Renewal funding to provide priority affordable housing in our most deprived areas.
- 8.5 In accordance with our guiding principle of focussing resources on those who are most in need, we propose to target the handy person scheme to support those who have recently been discharged from hospital. The Home Insulation scheme will be reduced and future work will be targeted at tackling fuel poverty and energy efficiency projects such as the Green Deal.
- 8.6 We know that the quality of the local environment matters to local people, however we simply cannot afford to deliver certain services in the same universal way. We will better target street cleansing in the future and increase the charge for the optional ERIC service and introduce an 'opt in' service for garden waste. In addition we propose to charge for pre-planning advice to developers in the future.
- 8.7 We believe it is important that all residents pay their share and that it is unfair to charge different rates for car parking across Wirral. We therefore propose to standardise charges in car parks at the current rate for Birkenhead car parks, reducing the all day charge for on-street long stay bays in Birkenhead to £2.50 and to introduce competitive annual and season permits rates. We will also reduce office, maintenance and operational expenditure across the service.
- 8.8 We have no choice in the future but to target investment at where it is most needed. We therefore propose to rationalise street lighting maintenance and reduce street lighting where to do so does not present a risk. In addition we will reduce pro-active highway maintenance work – again ensuring that our primary focus is on the safety of our residents.
- 8.9 We will invest in enhancing road safety around our schools and will put in place road safety improvements, including for the following schools within the Council's four constituency areas; Egremont Primary, in Wallasey, Ladymount Primary and Pensby Primary in Wirral West, Oxtan St Saviours Primary in Birkenhead and Raeburn Primary in Wirral South.
- 8.10 We have also listened to our many residents who place huge value on our parks and open spaces. Two separate options were proposed in this area; to reduce the maintenance frequency across some open spaces, and to remove the maintenance on some parks and bowling greens. Feedback from parks groups, bowling teams and residents have made it clear that while they would accept a reduction in maintenance

frequencies, the removal of maintenance across many of our parks and open spaces would bring too great an impact at this time. We agree with this view, and therefore recommend that while the reduction in parks maintenance should be accepted, the removal of maintenance should not.

8.11 We believe that the budget option proposed for the Council Kennels/Dog Warden Service that the service should join the Merseyside Consortium should not be progressed at this time. The Friends of Birkenhead Kennels have submitted to the Council an alternative budget savings proposal and therefore we recommend that the decision to accept this budget option is delayed and the Friends of Birkenhead Kennels be requested to submit more detailed proposals for consideration.

8.12 The dog fouling team will be organised to align with the new Constituency Committees, with an enforcement Officer dedicated to each of the Constituencies. We also instruct the Council's Marketing Team to bring forward a campaign to target irresponsible dog owners to effect behavioural change.

<b>REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>2013/14 £000s</b>	<b>2014-16 £000s</b>	<b>TOTAL £000s</b>
Pre-Planning Advice	10	0	10
Home Insulation	926	0	926
Pest Control	30	0	30
Invest Wirral	352	0	352
Car Parking	281	0	281
Garden Waste Collection	582	569	1151
Household Waste Collection	80	0	80
Apprentice Programme	420	0	420
Handyperson Scheme	209	0	209
Trading Standards	71	0	71
Highway Maintenance	588	0	588
Street Cleansing	1000	-250	750
Biffa Contract Break	0	600	600
School Waste	180	0	180
Street Lighting	265	0	265
Highway Drainage	106	0	106
Reduction in Parks Maintenance	450	0	450
Housing Support for BME Communities	111	0	111
Supporting People	0	2000	2000
Dog Fouling Enforcement	97	0	97
Regeneration General Running Costs	0	40	40
Modernisation of Leisure	429	0	429
<b>Regeneration and Environment Total</b>	<b>6187</b>	<b>2959</b>	<b>9146</b>
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>	<b>41160</b>	<b>27456</b>	<b>68616</b>

8.13 The exceptional items, referenced at paragraph 1.3 at £38.4m of savings, that are additional to three year target of £109m, are to be funded by balances, released earmarked reserves, capital receipts and decisions taken at the November 2012 Cabinet in relation to the efficiency fund and the local council tax scheme. The Council will continue its freeze on all non essential spending.

- 8.14 The total savings proposed in this budget for 2013/14 amounts to £41.2 million with £27.5 million also proposed for the years 2014-2016. This means that we still have £40.3 million to find to achieve our overall target of £109 million by 2016.

**[Note: As a consequence of these savings and action taken earlier in the year, the General Fund budget is detailed below in the Summary of General Fund Estimates as set out at Appendix 2 of the report to Council]**

- 8.15 We request officers to bring forward a report to Cabinet no later than May 2013 in order to outline an approach for identifying further budget savings. This is as part of our commitment to be proactive in identifying the savings that we must make.

## **9. COUNCIL TAX**

- 9.1 This budget resolution makes provision for increased demand for services for vulnerable children and adults, the reduction in our Housing Administration Grant and contract uplifts, demand that should rightly be recognised in our settlement from Central Government. This equates to an unfunded increase of in excess of £5 million for the year 2013/14 that we have to meet ourselves.

- 9.2 The Government's offer of a grant of £1.3 million to freeze the Council Tax in 2013/ is a one off derisory offer that does not meet this pressure and that would not be included in our base budget. This means that in 2015/16 when the grant ends we will have to find additional cuts to replace the grant.

- 9.3 Under the Government's regulations the Council is allowed to increase Council Tax by 2%. Cabinet feels that increasing Council Tax by 2% in 2013/14 is the only responsible option before us. This would equate to a 1.6% increase in the Wirral Council element and is significantly below the Consumer Price Index which currently stands at 2.7% and the Retail Price Index which currently stands at 3.3%. This follows a two year freeze on Council Tax.

- 9.4 This Budget Resolution recommends an overall Council tax increase of £25.06 on a band D basis.

- 9.5 This represents an increase on Band D from £1,253.20p to £1,278.64p. This represents an increase of 48p per week. The majority of Wirral residents will pay less than this as most properties are below Band D.

- 9.6 Wirral Council's element of this is 1.6% with increases in levies accounting for the rest of the difference. The increase in overall council tax is 2%.

- 9.7 Precepts relating to police and fire services are still to be announced. The impact of any change to precepts will require adding to these figures.

## **10. RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**

- 10.1 That the budget proposals as set out in this resolution be agreed and recommended for approval at Budget Council meeting on 5 March 2013, and that the Council notes this budget includes an allocation of £2 million to address any slippage that may occur in the delivery of identified savings. This figure has reduced significantly from the original early

estimate of £5 million to £2 million due to management action, including the deletion of vacant posts and more effective management of savings.

- 10.2 We will work together with the Trade Unions to review current working arrangements to maximise the efficiency and cost effectiveness of services including annualised hours during this financial year which could mitigate the need for ongoing savings.
- 10.3 That officers are requested to bring forward a report to Cabinet no later than May 2013 which will outline the approach for identifying budget savings that the Council must make in 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- 10.4 That Council continues to lobby government to review the way it allocates funding to local Councils with a view to ensuring that any cuts are distributed in a way which is fair and equitable.

**WIRRAL COUNCIL**

**CABINET BUDGET**

**SUMMARY OF GENERAL FUND ESTIMATES**

	<b>BASE ESTIMATE 2012/13 £</b>	<b>CURRENT ESTIMATE 2012/13 £</b>	<b>BASE ESTIMATE 2013/14 £</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
<b>Departmental budgets</b>	<b>264,078,000</b>	<b>264,755,000</b>	<b>272,072,300</b>
Potential Overspends	0	7,909,000	0
Merseytravel	29,060,000	29,060,000	29,497,000
Local Pay Review	217,900	217,900	217,900
Funding for Low Paid pay increase	30,000	30,000	30,000
EVR / VS Scheme 2012 savings	(290,500)	(290,500)	0
Council Tax Re-imburement	3,990,000	0	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>297,085,400</b>	<b>301,681,400</b>	<b>301,817,200</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
Revenue Support Grant	(471,100)	(471,100)	0
National Non Domestic Rate	145,208,200	145,208,200	0
<b>Start Up Funding Assessment</b>			
Revenue Support Grant	0	0	106,968,000
Business Rates Baseline	0	0	31,424,000
Business Rates Top Up	0	0	39,739,000
Council Tax Freeze Grant	6,572,800	6,572,800	0
New Homes Bonus Grant	1,000,500	1,000,500	2,119,500
Local Services Support Grant	804,400	804,400	45,000
Collection Fund Surplus	1,455,100	1,455,100	0
Contribution from balances	9,604,500	14,200,500	10,163,900
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>164,174,400</b>	<b>168,770,400</b>	<b>190,459,400</b>
Local Council Tax Requirement	132,911,000	132,911,000	111,357,800
Less Council Tax Support allocation for calculating Alternative Notional Amount	(24,163,900)	(24,163,900)	0
<b>Adjusted Council Tax Requirement</b>	<b>108,747,100</b>	<b>108,747,100</b>	<b>111,357,800</b>
<b>STATEMENT OF GENERAL BALANCE</b>			
General Balance at 1 April	18,405,300	18,405,300	23,800,000
Adjustment (following 2011/12 outturn)	0	2,412,000	0
Budgeted contribution	(9,604,500)	(14,200,500)	(4,163,900)
Provision for slippage	0		(2,000,000)
Change management implementation fund	0	0	(4,000,000)
Contribution from Reserves and Provisions	0	17,183,200	
<b>GENERAL BALANCE AT 31 MARCH</b>	<b>8,800,800</b>	<b>23,800,000</b>	<b>13,636,100</b>

**5. Minute 204 (Cabinet – 18 February 2013)  
Capital Programme and Financing 2013/2016**

**Resolved:** That

- (1) the 2013-16 Capital Programme, set out in the report in Table 4 and detailed in Annex 8 to the report be agreed and referred to Council for approval;
- (2) 'spend to save' and 'schemes to generate capital receipts' be reviewed in detail, prior to being specifically approved by the Cabinet for implementation;
- (3) the capital financing requirements be reflected in the projected revenue budget and the 2013/16 Medium Term Financial Strategy; and
- (4) the Prudential Indicators be noted and reported to the Cabinet as part of the Treasury Management Strategy.

**6. Minute 208 (Cabinet – 18 February 2013)  
Schools Budget 2013/2014**

**Resolved:** That taking account of the Schools Forum:

- (1) the DSG funded Schools Budget for maintained schools and academies be approved at the sum of £236,732,400;
- (2) the headroom of £333,400 be allocated within the formula to all schools;
- (3) the High Needs Contingency totalling £880,200 be agreed;
- (4) a further £250,000 of PPM included in the Schools Budget be funded from DSG;
- (5) the contributions to combined budgets be approved; and
- (6) the changes to the Early Years Single Funding Formula be agreed.

**7. Minute 209 (Cabinet – 18 February 2013)  
Carbon Budget**

**Resolved:** That

- (1) progress towards the 2013/13 target included in Appendix A to the report be noted;
- (2) the Carbon Budget for 2013/14 included in Appendix A to the report be approved;
- (3) the current Carbon Budget method be applied until the impacts of the simplification of the CRCEES are assessed and that Officers be instructed to report further to Members to make recommended alterations as a result of the simplification process;
- (4) Corporate targets for 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 proposed in Section 2.2.4 of the report be approved; and

- (5) managers be directed to ensure that Carbon Reduction Implications of projects and initiatives are assessed and reported as required by the standards report template. Impacts must be reported to the Sustainability Unit to support the carbon management process.

## CONSERVATIVE GROUP BUDGET AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green  
 Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie

Wirral's Conservative Councillors believe that in difficult economic times, residents of Wirral must be supported and that now is not the time to raise Council Tax.

We also believe that, at a time when private sector employment is growing, it is vital that young people in the Borough have the skills that employers need.

We do not believe that the Council's budget should be balanced on the backs of the most vulnerable people in the community and we therefore oppose proposed closure of adult day centre.

We welcome the Administration's consultation exercise and believe that by working together, with effort, all parts of the Council; Councillors, Senior Directors and Council staff can play a part in keeping bills down and protecting the vulnerable.

We welcome the Government's offer of financial support to the Council to freeze Council Tax for Wirral residents and regret that the current administration is recommending the rejection of this £1.3 million Government grant.

**We are therefore proposing to utilise this Government grant to reverse the Cabinet's proposal of a 2% increase to ensure that there is no increase in the Wirral Council Tax for 2013/14 and that the Administration's budget proposals be amended as follows:**

### Additional Expenditure

1)	Delete the Cabinet proposal to increase Council Tax by 2% and accept the Government's grant to freeze Wirral Council Tax.	£1,300,000
2)	Last year we deleted a Labour proposal to close day centres. We remain totally committed to this vital provision for the most vulnerable members of Wirral's society. Therefore delete the Cabinet proposal to close day centres and reduce day services.	£750,000
3)	We welcome the downward trend of unemployment in Wirral however; we still have 2,540 unemployed 18-24 year olds in the Borough. Therefore delete the cabinet proposal to cut £420,000 from the Apprenticeship Programme and create 200 extra opportunities for youngsters to find work and training.	£420,000
4)	The level of cuts proposed by the Cabinet will have unintended consequences and unforeseen impacts on local residents lives and services. We are therefore recommended the provision of a 'Resilience Fund'.  Use of this Fund will be allocated to services by the Cabinet following a recommendation of the all party Leaders Board.	£1,000,000

At a time when the Council is having to make very difficult decisions regarding where to invest any expenditure we believe it is vital that we do not duplicate spending and take every opportunity to invite wealthy organisations to work in partnership with us and shoulder a reasonable share of the Council's financial burden.

### Delete the following Growth Items

1)	<p>Last year the Council funded a free and independent information and advice service open to all Wirral residents but specifically targeted towards meeting the needs of families living in poverty. The service is responsive to those in greatest need, providing a package of information, advice and support in relation to welfare and benefits, debt and financial management, employment and housing this service already costs the taxpayer £290,000.</p> <p>We note that the Government is running housing benefit and universal credit pilots to see what support people might need and will make alternative arrangements for some people including paying landlords direct.</p> <p>We therefore believe the £100,000 recommended by the Cabinet for additional information and advice services can be deleted.</p>	£100,000
2)	As Trades Unions are wealthy organisations we do not believe the Council Tax payer should be expected to fund Full Time Trades Union officials we therefore believe this item of budget growth recommended by the Cabinet can be deleted.	£270,000

We believe all elements of the Council; Councillors, the Council bureaucracy and Council staff playing their part to do all we can to make it a little easier for pensioners and families to cope when bills arrive we therefore believe additional savings should be made.

### Additional Savings

<b>1</b>	<b>Reducing support to Councillors</b>	<b>£113,000</b>
	Cancellation of Councillors casework management IT system.	£50,000
	Reduce Councillors training spend.	£20,000
	Reduce policy support for Councillors by 25% (1 FTE).	£42,000
	Withdraw from membership of SIGOMA.	£1,000
<b>2</b>	<b>Leaning the Council Bureaucracy</b>	<b>£1,323,860</b>
	Delete Head of Policy post and reorganise responsibilities of staff and senior management.	£50,000
	Reduce Performance and Intelligence Team from 18.5FTE to 16	£100,000
	Reduce Council PR budget (this equates to the printing and distribution costs of 4 'One Council' editions per year).	£10,560
	Additional reductions in Council management (difference between Chief Executive option in cabinet report of 18 <sup>th</sup> February and saving in listed Cabinet budget proposal).	£163,000
	Noting the effectiveness of the Chief Executive's spending freeze in controlling Council expenditure during 2012/13 – we believe it would be prudent to reintroduce the spending freeze process and discipline during 2013/14.	£1,000,000

Council notes the discipline and management of the Strategic Change Programme (SCP) delivered £10.725 million of cashable benefits in the 2010/11 financial year. The Conservative Group remains disappointed that the Labour Administration formed in May 2011 did not actively manage the SCP and the opportunity it provided to reduce year on year revenue expenditure during the year was ignored.

Given the large amount of revenue savings to be achieved in the Strategic Change Programme agreed by the previous Labour Administration (special Cabinet Monday 13 February 2012 refers) we also deeply regret the current Labour administration's decision to abolish the all party arrangements for leadership, management and political oversight of the Strategic Change Programme recommended at the subsequent 2012/13 Budget Council meeting (Cabinet minute 7, 21 June 2012 refers) and note that once again the opportunity it provided to reduce year on year revenue expenditure was ignored.

Having had time to reflect on the Cabinet's failure to deliver their own Strategic Change Programme in 2011/12 and the transformational nature of the large scale cuts, Service Reviews, change projects and proposals for Shared Services now recommended by the Cabinet.

Council recommends the Administration accept the discipline, rigor, risk management and political oversight of the ambitious change portfolio it is recommending through the establishment of a Strategic Change Board on an all party basis to be lead by the Leader of the Council.

<b>3</b>	<b>Workforce Conditions of Service</b>	<b>£896,000</b>
	Introduce Chief Executive proposals as outlined in 18 February Cabinet report and include the 5 days unpaid leave proposed by the Cabinet.  (It be noted that this proposal whilst tough does ensure that staff will receive their entitlement to pay progression and increments for 2013/14 at a cost to the Council Budget of £730,000).	£896,000
<b>4</b>	<b>Discretionary Severance Scheme</b>	<b>£1,300,000</b>
	Replace the 'Severance Scheme' recommended by Cabinet and agreed by Employment & Appointments Committee and introduce a 'severance multiplier' of 1.2 uncapped.  (It is noted that whilst below the 1.8 uncapped multiplier recommended by Cabinet this remains significantly above the basic statutory entitlement).	£1,300,000

**This budget amendment will:**

**Result in a zero percent Wirral Council Tax increase,**

**Maintain the entire Councils commitment to a sustainable, budget,**

**Increase the Council's Balances from £13.6 million in the Cabinet's proposal to £14.1 million providing increased protection against the risk of non delivery of the Cabinet's recommendations of £0.5 million.**

For the financial year 2013/14 the Council will ensure that the pensioner discount continues to be awarded at the percentage awarded for 2012/13. This applies where:

(i) the Council Tax payer pays Council Tax in Wirral as their main home and all individuals in the household that are counted as resident for Council Tax purposes are aged 70 or over on 1 April 2013 (but where the qualifying age criterion is met after 1 April 2013 eligibility will be effective from the relevant birth date only);

(ii) this reduction will be calculated after deduction of all other Council Tax discounts and reliefs;

(iii) application must be made for the reduction where it is not currently in payment or the potential claimant is not in receipt of Council Tax Benefit;

No pensioner household in receipt of full Council Tax Benefit will qualify for the reduction.

## 1.0 SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX

1.1 In setting its council tax the Council is required to have regard to the various determinations set out in the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The principal amendment conferred by the Localism Act is the requirement to calculate a council tax requirement and not a budget requirement as previously.

### **The Statutory Calculations and Resolution**

1.2 The statutory calculations associated with each Council Tax increase are set out below and the Council is now invited to approve.

1.3 It be noted that in accordance with section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), that the Interim Director of Finance on 24 January 2013 calculated the Council Tax Base 2013/14 for the whole of the properties in its area as 87,116.4 (Item T in the statutory formula).

1.4 That the following amounts be calculated and approved by the Council for the year 2013/14 in accordance with sections 32-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) ("the Act");

a) £109,174,700 being the amount calculated in accordance with section 31A (4) of the Act (amended) as the Council Tax Requirement for 2013/14 (item R in the statutory formula). This amount (d) is determined as being the difference between:

i. £810,987,200 this being the aggregate of the amounts calculated in accordance with section 31A (2) of the Act (as amended), i.e. the aggregate of the amounts that the Council estimates that will be charged to a revenue account for the year in performing its functions, that are required to be set aside for contingencies and reserves and required to be transferred from its general fund to its collection fund in the year and

ii. £701,812,500 this being the amount calculated in accordance with section 31A (3) of the Act (as amended), i.e. the aggregate of the amounts of income that the Council estimates will be credited to a revenue account for the year in accordance with proper practices, the amount of reserves that are estimated to be used to provide for the items referred to in paragraph 1.4(a) above, and required to be transferred from its collection fund to its general fund in the year.

b) £1,253.20 being the amount calculated in accordance with section 31B (1) of the Act (amended) as the Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2013/14. This amount being calculated as item R in paragraph 1.4(a) above divided by item T in paragraph 1.3 above.

- c) that in accordance with section 36(1) of the Act that the following amounts are calculated for each valuation band in the area:

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
£835.47	£974.71	£1,113.96	£1,253.20
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
£1,531.69	£1,810.18	£2,088.67	£2,506.40

- 1.5 These amounts being the amounts given by multiplying the amount calculated as the basic amount of council tax by the number which in the proportion set out in section 5(1) of the Act is applicable to dwellings in a particular valuation band which is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D.
- 1.6 To note that the Police and Crime Commission for Merseyside and the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below.

**Police and Crime Commission for Merseyside**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
£102.42	£119.49	£136.56	£153.63
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
£187.77	£221.91	£256.05	£307.26

**Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
£45.80	£53.43	£61.07	£68.70
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
£83.97	£99.23	£114.50	£137.40

- 1.7 That having calculated the amounts at 1.4(c) and 1.6 above that the Council in accordance with section 30 (2) of the Act hereby sets the following amounts as the total amount of council tax for the year 2013/14 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

**Total Council Tax for Wirral**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
£983.69	£1,147.63	£1,311.59	£1,475.53
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
£1,803.43	£2,131.32	£2,459.22	£2,951.06

- 1.8 It be determined that the amount set in 1.4(c) above as the Council's basic amount of council tax for 2013/14 is not excessive in accordance with the principles determined by the Secretary of State under section 52ZC of the Act (as amended) and that no referendum to approve the basic amount of council tax is required.

**WIRRAL COUNCIL  
CONSERVATIVE GROUP BUDGET AMENDMENT  
SUMMARY OF GENERAL FUND ESTIMATES**

	<b>BASE ESTIMATE 2012/13 £</b>	<b>CURRENT ESTIMATE 2012/13 £</b>	<b>BASE ESTIMATE 2013/14 £</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
<b>Departmental budgets</b>	<b>264,078,000</b>	<b>264,755,000</b>	<b>270,655,800</b>
Potential Overspends	0	7,909,000	0
Merseytravel	29,060,000	29,060,000	29,497,000
Local Pay Review	217,900	217,900	217,900
Funding for Low Paid pay increase	30,000	30,000	30,000
EVR / VS Scheme 2012 savings	(290,500)	(290,500)	0
Council Tax Re-imburement	3,990,000	0	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>297,085,400</b>	<b>301,681,400</b>	<b>300,400,700</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
Revenue Support Grant	(471,100)	(471,100)	0
National Non Domestic Rate	145,208,200	145,208,200	0
<b>Start Up Funding Assessment</b>			
Revenue Support Grant	0	0	106,968,000
Business Rates Baseline	0	0	31,424,000
Business Rates Top Up	0	0	39,739,000
Council Tax Freeze Grant	6,572,800	6,572,800	1,300,000
New Homes Bonus Grant	1,000,500	1,000,500	2,119,500
Local Services Support Grant	804,400	804,400	45,000
Collection Fund Surplus	1,455,100	1,455,100	0
Contribution from balances	9,604,500	14,200,500	9,630,500
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>164,174,400</b>	<b>168,770,400</b>	<b>191,226,000</b>
Local Council Tax Requirement	132,911,000	132,911,000	109,174,700
Less Council Tax Support allocation for calculating Alternative Notional Amount	(24,163,900)	(24,163,900)	0
<b>ADJUSTED COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>108,747,100</b>	<b>108,747,100</b>	<b>109,174,700</b>
<b>STATEMENT OF GENERAL BALANCE</b>			
General Balance at 1 April	18,405,300	18,405,300	23,800,000
Adjustment (following 2011/12 outturn)	0	2,412,000	0
Budgeted contribution	(9,604,500)	(14,200,500)	(3,630,500)
Provision for slippage	0	0	(2,000,000)
Change management implementation fund	0	0	(4,000,000)
Contribution from Reserves and Provisions	0	17,183,200	0
<b>GENERAL BALANCE AT 31 MARCH</b>	<b>8,800,800</b>	<b>23,800,000</b>	<b>14,169,500</b>

**VOTE ON CONSERVATIVE GROUP BUDGET AMENDMENT**

Following a debate and Councillors Jeff Green and Phil Davies having replied, the amendment was put and lost (27:37)

## LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP BUDGET AMENDMENT

Proposed by: Councillor Tom Harney

Seconded by: Councillor Stuart Kelly

*Delete all and insert:*

Council notes the challenging circumstances in the production of the 2013/14 budget comprising loss of grant from Government and underlying budget stability problems dating back many years.

The original breakdown of our budget pressures indicated a £17m loss of grant, coupled with £22m associated with Wirral Council's own historic 'bad budgeting'; this has now increased to £35m as a result of further investigation by the Director of Finance.

This means that 66% of Wirral Council's budget challenge is 'Made in Wirral' and Council believes that this will take a number of years to stabilise.

In formulating this budget response to the challenge Council faces, we will take into account the consultation results and be mindful of the impact of decisions taken on vulnerable sections of our community whom we seek to protect in the options detailed below. As a result, this budget resolution will:

- Protect the Day Care Services **preventing the closure of a centre.**
- Protect universal Youth Services and Outreach to ensure **no youth club will close.**
- Ensure **no charges for collection of any refuse service** including the proposal for charges for garden waste.
- Recognise the **vital role played by the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector** in the provision of important services and advice to vulnerable sections of our community, not least the role played by CAB in welfare advice at this time of change and provide additional funding to secure and enhance this.
- Make provision to continue localised **grants to voluntary groups** via neighbourhood arrangements.
- Make provision to allow the Council to continue to **support tourism events** where there is a benefit to the tourism economy.
- Protect the **School Crossing Patrol** service.
- Maintain the Birkenhead **Dog Kennels** whilst working with the 'Friends' groups' to achieve efficiencies in its operation.
- Ensure **the Council chamber takes its share** of the changes with a reduction in Members to 60, biennial elections and cuts to basic and SRA allowances.
- Provide for **No Increase in Council Tax** at a time when household budgets are under pressure and the effect of any increase would impact adversely on those on lower incomes given the regressive nature of the council tax.

Council notes the reports of the Chief Executive detailing the budget options available and the outcomes of the consultation 'What Really Matters', along with the minutes and views expressed through the Scrutiny Committee process.

Council notes the previous decisions made at Council November 2012 and January 2013 amounting to budget savings of £9.4m. The budget recommendations from Council of 20 December 2012 are noted and altered as detailed below.

Council notes the Chief Executive budget options outlined in Cabinet reports 4a, 4b, and 4c to Cabinet 18 February 2013 set against the 2013/14 budget requirement of £39.6m are agreed **with the exception** of those listed below.

## **1 FAMILIES AND WELL BEING**

**1.1 Day Care and Day Services** – Council recognises that rushed changes will have a large impact which, if not handled with sensitivity, will be devastating and that the only way to make changes is to fully and honestly involve carers and clients at every stage. Council believes that this proposal is not sufficiently advanced in development to command the support and confidence of service users and their carers. Council, therefore, resolves not to proceed with this option as a budget saving option for 2013/14 and requests officers to continue to work closely with advocacy groups, service users and their carers in developing a more client-centred approach for future consideration.

**1.2 Review of Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Grants** – Council believes that the VCF sector has a vital role to play in provision of services within communities, for example in the area of welfare advice and assistance and resolves that the sum of £350,000 remain available for grants in 2013/14 and asks officers to work with the VCF sector to explore options to increase value for money, efficiency and to reduce duplication within the sector.

**1.3 Youth and Play Services** - Council resolves that no further action is taken on this proposal and believes the current range and availability of youth and play services within communities should remain available to Wirral young people, including funding for Wirral Youth Theatre and Outreach Service and that as a result of this decision, the following 11 youth facilities will be protected - Greasby, Bebington (located in Bromborough Ward), Viking (Rock Ferry), Charing Cross (Birkenhead), Cavendish (Bidston), Callister (Birkenhead), St Mary's (Wallasey), Moreton, Leasowe, Belvedere (Wallasey) and Fender (Upton).

## **2 REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT**

**2.1 Garden Waste Collection** – Council, having regard to the consultation outcome which indicated 51.7% opposition to this proposal, resolves that no further action is taken on this proposal and notes that should charges be introduced, it is likely that recycled green waste yield will fall with a rise in landfill costs contrary to our aspiration to be a green council which promotes recycling.

**2.2 School Crossing Patrols** - Council resolves that no further action is taken on this proposal.

**2.3 Kennels Service** – Council resolves that no further action is taken on this proposal and that officers work with Wirral Friends of Birkenhead Dog Kennels to explore other options to achieve value for money and efficient working of the kennels.

## **3. TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

**3.1 Public Relations and Marketing** – whilst accepting the withdrawal of Tranmere Rovers sponsorship at £135,000, Council does not agree for 2013/14 to reduce the public relations and marketing budget to the extent proposed and believes its activities in promoting and supporting tourism events brings a net financial benefit to the Wirral.

Council, therefore, partially accepts the reduction proposed, save that the sum of £80,000 remains within the budget to enable some support to be available for promotion of tourism events.

**3.2 Neighbourhood Forums** – Council notes the emerging constituency committees but still believes there is a place in any new structure for ward-based liaison

committees with local community groups to meet with local members to discuss localised issues and concerns; Council, therefore, believes a small budget should be retained for the purpose of allowing ward-based forums to continue to support local initiatives with match or grant funding. Council believes a sum of £200,000 would be sufficient for this purpose and adjusts the budget option accordingly.

**3.3 Four Yearly Elections** – no further action be taken on this matter, but that the size of the Council is reduced to 60 elected Members in biennial elections from 30 wards.

**3.4 Pensioner Council Tax Discount** – Council resolves that no further action is taken on this proposal and pensioner discounts remain in place.

**3.5 Council Tax Court Costs** – Council resolves that this budget option is amended to allow for full cost recovery of court costs and it is noted that the effect is increased income to the council of £250,000.

#### **4. ADDITIONAL SAVINGS**

Council further notes and agrees additional savings items that did not form part of the options consultation as follows

- 4.1 - Reduction in agency workers - £500,000
- 4.2 - Power supplies contract saving - £11,000
- 4.3 - Reduction in audit fees - £140,000
- 4.4 - Cessation of production of glossy brochure - £20,000
- 4.5 - Additional Courts income (see paragraph 3.5 above) - £250,000
- 4.6 - Reduction of councillor numbers to 60 combined with biennial elections; 50% reduction in councillor SRA and £1,000 reduction in basic allowance - £200,000
- 4.7 - Reduction in salary of 5% for senior officers over £100,000 per annum - £40,000

#### **5. BASE BUDGET**

Council notes and agrees that the following items already form part of the base budget and capital programme of the council

- 5.1 - Capital investment in the Youth Zone of £1.0m
- 5.2 - Tackling child poverty - a sum of £300,000
- 5.3 - Payment of at least the living wage rate to employees of the Council
- 5.4 - Increased demand Children and Young People - £1.23m
- 5.5 - Increased demand Adult Social Care - £3.717m

It is further noted that the one-off funding of £270,000 for full time union activity pending a review (agreed in last year's budget) has now expired with no review having taken place as instructed. However, Council instructs officers to maintain maximum flexibility to allow workplace TU representatives to carry out their duties.

#### **6. SEVERANCE SCHEME**

Council resolves to establish its severance scheme based on a multiplier of 1.8 capped at £450 per week, it being noted that the reduced requirement of running the scheme is £1.0m compared with an uncapped scheme.

#### **7. RESERVES AND PROVISIONS**

**7.1 20mph zones** - Council notes the in-year decision taken by Cabinet to remove the £500,000 provision established for the introduction of 20mph zones in

residential areas of Wirral that want them and around schools. Council resolves to re-establish that reserve with the 2014/15 budget and continue the work of introducing these zones to reduce speeding and save lives and agrees for 2013/14 to kick start the programme outside schools with an immediate allocation from reserves of £50,000 to enhance safety outside schools, specifically Egremont Primary, Ladymount Primary, Pensby Primary, Raeburn Primary and St Saviours Primary.

**7.2 Think Big Investment Fund'** - Council also resolves to review reserves further in order to make any necessary allocation to support the 'Think Big Investment Fund' to enable resources to be made available to businesses developing and expanding in Wirral until such funds can be replaced by capital receipts becoming available.

## **8. BALANCES AND EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS IDENTIFIED**

Council notes the reports of the Director of Finance that identify historic 'bad budgets' within council estimates potentially requiring the sum of £13m to resolve. Council believes that this historic under-budgeting can't be resolved within one year and that the programme of critical budget review should continue and each budget line challenged and assessed. It is further noted the effects of the budget decisions made above in relation to the chief executive budget options and additional savings allow resources to be allocated to addressing these exceptional items in 2013/14 and that the balance can be met from the 2012/13 general fund balances out-turn of £23m with the level of general fund balances for 2013/14 being set at £13m as recommended by the Director of Finance following assessment of risks arising. Council further notes the review being carried out into historic 'toxic' debts and asks officers to report once the review has concluded with its recommendations

## **9. CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Council notes and approves the proposed Capital Programme with the exception that the schemes reliant upon revenue or reserve contributions are added to those schemes listed as unsupported within the capital programme and that they proceed as and when sufficient capital receipts become available. Council resolves the priority order for new schemes brought forward as capital receipts become available to be:

**9.1** - Healthy Homes (£105,000)

**9.2** - Think Big Investment Fund (£300,000)

**9.3** - Empty property interventions (£125,000)

**9.4** – Schemes currently requiring contribution from revenue or reserves (£888,000)

**9.5** - Improvements to Stock (£950,000)

**9.6** - Park Depot, plant and equipment, and vehicles

## **10. FORWARD PLANNING 2014-16**

Council instructs senior officers, including the chief Executive, Director of Finance and the Strategic Directors to continue to monitor on-going day to day expenditure to control and challenge non-essential expenditure during the course of the financial year.

Council further instructs officers to develop savings in the area of shared services with estimated further savings of £1.4m and supporting people (subject to Scrutiny review) with estimated savings of £2.0m.

## **11. COUNCIL TAX**

Council notes the net effect of the above measures requires **no increase in Council Tax** and that the Government Council Tax Freeze Grant is now available to support the budget.

For the financial year 2013/14 the Council will ensure that the pensioner discount continues to be awarded at the percentage awarded for 2012/13. This applies where:

(i) the Council Tax payer pays Council Tax in Wirral as their main home and all individuals in the household that are counted as resident for Council Tax purposes are aged 70 or over on 1 April 2013 (but where the qualifying age criterion is met after 1 April 2013 eligibility will be effective from the relevant birth date only);

(ii) this reduction will be calculated after deduction of all other Council Tax discounts and reliefs;

(iii) application must be made for the reduction where it is not currently in payment or the potential claimant is not in receipt of Council Tax Benefit;

No pensioner household in receipt of full Council Tax Benefit will qualify for the reduction.

## **12. The Statutory Calculations and Resolution**

12.1 The statutory calculations associated with each Council Tax increase are set out below and the Council is now invited to approve.

12.2 It be noted that in accordance with section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), that the Interim Director of Finance on 24/01/2013 calculated the Council Tax Base 2013/14 for the whole of the properties in its area as 87,116.4 (Item T in the statutory formula).

12.3 That the following amounts be calculated and approved by the Council for the year 2013/14 in accordance with sections 32-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) ("the Act");

a) £109,174,700 being the amount calculated in accordance with section 31A (4) of the Act (amended) as the Council Tax Requirement for 2013/14 (item R in the statutory formula). This amount (d) is determined as being the difference between:

i. £810,405,200 this being the aggregate of the amounts calculated in accordance with section 31A (2) of the Act (as amended), i.e. the aggregate of the amounts that the Council estimates that will be charged to a revenue account for the year in performing its functions, that are required to be set aside for contingencies and reserves and required to be transferred from its general fund to its collection fund in the year and

ii. £701,230,500 this being the amount calculated in accordance with section 31A (3) of the Act (as amended), i.e. the aggregate of the amounts of income that the Council estimates will be credited to a revenue account for the year in accordance with proper practices, the amount of reserves that are estimated to be used to provide for the items referred to in paragraph 12.3(a) above, and required to be transferred from its collection fund to its general fund in the year.

- b) £1,253.20 being the amount calculated in accordance with section 31B (1) of the Act (amended) as the Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2013/14. This amount being calculated as item R in paragraph 12.3(a) above divided by item T in paragraph 12.2 above.
- c) that in accordance with section 36(1) of the Act that the following amounts are calculated for each valuation band in the area:

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
£835.47	£974.71	£1,113.96	£1,253.20
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
£1,531.69	£1,810.18	£2,088.67	£2,506.40

- 12.4 These amounts being the amounts given by multiplying the amount calculated as the basic amount of council tax by the number which in the proportion set out in section 5(1) of the Act is applicable to dwellings in a particular valuation band which is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D.
- 12.5 To note that the Police and Crime Commission for Merseyside and the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below.

#### **Police and Crime Commission for Merseyside**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
£102.42	£119.49	£136.56	£153.63
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
£187.77	£221.91	£256.05	£307.26

#### **Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
£45.80	£53.43	£61.07	£68.70
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
£83.97	£99.23	£114.50	£137.40

- 12.6 That having calculated the amounts at 12.3(c) and 12.5 above that the Council in accordance with section 30 (2) of the Act hereby sets the following amounts as the total amount of council tax for the year 2013/14 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

#### **Total Council Tax for Wirral**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
£983.69	£1,147.63	£1,311.59	£1,475.53
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
£1,803.43	£2,131.32	£2,459.22	£2,951.06

- 12.7 It be determined that the amount set in 12.3(c) above as the Council's basic amount of council tax for 2013/14 is not excessive in accordance with the principles determined by the Secretary of State under section 52ZC of the Act (as amended) and that no referendum to approve the basic amount of council tax is required.

**WIRRAL COUNCIL**

**LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP BUDGET AMENDMENT**

**SUMMARY OF GENERAL FUND ESTIMATES**

	<b>BASE ESTIMATE 2012/13 £</b>	<b>CURRENT ESTIMATE 2012/13 £</b>	<b>BASE ESTIMATE 2013/14 £</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
<b>Departmental budgets</b>	<b>264,078,000</b>	<b>264,755,000</b>	<b>271,189,200</b>
Potential Overspends	0	7,909,000	0
Merseytravel	29,060,000	29,060,000	29,497,000
Local Pay Review	217,900	217,900	217,900
Funding for Low Paid pay increase	30,000	30,000	30,000
EVR / VS Scheme 2012 savings	(290,500)	(290,500)	0
Council Tax Re-imburement	3,990,000	0	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>297,085,400</b>	<b>301,681,400</b>	<b>300,934,100</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
Revenue Support Grant	(471,100)	(471,100)	0
National Non Domestic Rate	145,208,200	145,208,200	0
<b>Start Up Funding Assessment</b>			
Revenue Support Grant	0	0	106,968,000
Business Rates Baseline	0	0	31,424,000
Business Rates Top Up	0	0	39,739,000
Council Tax Freeze Grant	6,572,800	6,572,800	1,300,000
New Homes Bonus Grant	1,000,500	1,000,500	2,119,500
Local Services Support Grant	804,400	804,400	45,000
Collection Fund Surplus	1,455,100	1,455,100	0
Contribution from balances	9,604,500	14,200,500	10,163,900
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>164,174,400</b>	<b>168,770,400</b>	<b>191,759,400</b>
Local Council Tax Requirement	132,911,000	132,911,000	109,174,700
Less Council Tax Support allocation for calculating Alternative Notional Amount	(24,163,900)	(24,163,900)	0
<b>Adjusted Council Tax Requirement</b>	<b>108,747,100</b>	<b>108,747,100</b>	<b>109,174,700</b>
<b>STATEMENT OF GENERAL BALANCE</b>			
General Balance at 1 April	18,405,300	18,405,300	23,800,000
Adjustment (following 2011/12 outturn)	0	2,412,000	0
Budgeted contribution	(9,604,500)	(14,200,500)	(4,163,900)
Provision for slippage	0		(2,000,000)
Change management implementation fund	0	0	(4,000,000)
Contribution from Reserves and Provisions	0	17,183,200	
<b>GENERAL BALANCE AT 31 MARCH</b>	<b>8,800,800</b>	<b>23,800,000</b>	<b>13,636,100</b>

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**VOTE ON LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP BUDGET AMENDMENT**

Following a debate and Councillors Tom Harney and Phil Davies having replied, the amendment was put and lost (7:57)

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There being no further budget amendments, the Cabinet Budget Proposal referred to herein is deemed now to be approved.

## **B. COUNCIL TAX 2013/2014**

The Council considered the report of the Interim Director of Finance, which sought approval for the statutory calculations in respect of setting the Council Tax, to set the total amount of Council Tax for the financial year 2013/2014 for the different categories of dwellings and, to determine that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for the financial year 2013/2014 was not excessive such that referendum was not necessary.

On a Motion by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

**Resolved (37:27) –**

- (1) That it be noted that in accordance with section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), that the Interim Director of Finance on 24/01/2013 calculated the Council Tax Base 2013/14 for the whole of the properties in its area as 87,116.4 (Item T in the statutory formula).**
- (2) That the following amounts be calculated and approved by the Council for the year 2013/2014 in accordance with sections 32-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) (“the Act”) –**
  - (a) £111,357,800 being the amount calculated in accordance with section 31A (4) of the Act (amended) as the Council Tax Requirement for 2013/14 (Item R in the statutory formula). This amount is determined as being the difference between:**
    - (i) £812,403,700 this being the aggregate of the amounts calculated in accordance with section 31A (2) of the Act (as amended)**
    - (ii) £701,045,900 this being the amount calculated in accordance with section 31A (3) of the Act (as amended),**
  - (b) £1278.26 being the amount calculated in accordance with section 31B (1) of the Act (amended) as the Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2013/2014.**
  - (c) That in accordance with section 36(1) of the Act that the following amounts are calculated for each valuation band in the area:**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>£852.17</b>	<b>£994.20</b>	<b>£1136.23</b>	<b>£1278.26</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
<b>£1562.32</b>	<b>£1846.38</b>	<b>£2130.43</b>	<b>£2556.52</b>

being the amounts given by multiplying the amount calculated as the basic amount of council tax by the number which in the proportion set out in section 5(1) of the Act is applicable to dwellings in a particular valuation band which is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D.

It be noted that the Police and Crime Commission for Merseyside and the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service have issued precepts

to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below.

**Police and Crime Commission for Merseyside**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>£102.42</b>	<b>£119.49</b>	<b>£136.56</b>	<b>£153.63</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
<b>£187.77</b>	<b>£221.91</b>	<b>£256.05</b>	<b>£307.26</b>

**Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>£45.80</b>	<b>£53.43</b>	<b>£61.07</b>	<b>£68.70</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
<b>£83.97</b>	<b>£99.23</b>	<b>£114.50</b>	<b>£137.40</b>

That having calculated the amounts above that the Council in accordance with section 30 (2) of the Act hereby sets the following amounts as the total amount of council tax for the year 2013/2014 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

**Total Council Tax for Wirral**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>£1000.39</b>	<b>£1167.12</b>	<b>£1333.86</b>	<b>£1500.59</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
<b>£1834.06</b>	<b>£2167.52</b>	<b>£2500.98</b>	<b>£3001.18</b>

136 **PAY POLICY REPORT**

The Council gave consideration to minute 66 of the Employment and Appointments Committee held on 14 February 2013 and to the report of the Acting Director of Law, HR and Asset Management in relation to the Pay Policy Statement 2013/2014. His report was submitted, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, which required Council's to determine and publish annual pay policy statements.

The Employment and Appointments Committee –

- (1) Recommended to Council, for approval, the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2013/2014;
- (2) Noted the increase of the Living Wage, effective from 1 November 2012.
- (3) Noted the responsibility of the Employment and Appointments Committee to ensure the provisions set out in the Pay Policy were applied consistently throughout the Council, and recommend any amendments to the Council.

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

**Resolved (64:0) (one abstention) – That the Pay Policy Statement 2013/2014 be approved.**

137 **DEVOLUTION OF MAJOR TRANSPORT SCHEMES FUNDING AND THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK**

The Council gave consideration to minute 210 of the Cabinet held on 18 February 2013 and to the report of the Interim Director of Technical Services, in relation to the Devolution of Major Transport Schemes Funding and the Department for Transport Assurance Framework.

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was

**Resolved – That the recommendations set out in Cabinet minute 210 be confirmed.**

138 **STATUTORY SCRUTINY OFFICER**

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was

**Resolved – That the Council’s Director of Policy, Performance and Public Health be appointed as the Council’s Scrutiny Officer.**

139 **BY-ELECTION RESULT - 28 FEBRUARY 2013**

The Acting Director of Law, HR and Asset Management submitted a summary of the result of the by-election held on 28 February 2013 –

Pensby and Thingwall  
Phillip Alexander Brightmore, 8 Chatsworth Road, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

140 **ALLOCATION OF COMMITTEE PLACES AND VACANCIES**

Following the results of the by-election held on 28 February 2013, the Council was requested to give consideration to the allocation of Committee places for meetings to the end of the current municipal year.

A note from the Acting Director of Law, HR and Asset Management proposed an increase of one place for the Labour Group of overall Committee places and for this to be applied to the Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to represent the approved allocation of Committee places, agreed at the Annual Meeting. The Council was also requested to deal with a number of vacancies, as follows:

**Committees**

**COUNCIL EXCELLENCE O&S COMMITTEE**

Additional Labour place – Councillor Phillip Brightmore

**EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**

Councillor Wendy Clements to replace Councillor David Elderton as deputy  
Councillor Pat Hackett to replace Councillor John Salter as deputy

**SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD**

Conservative deputy vacancy

**COUNCIL EXCELLENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Conservative deputy vacancy

## **HEALTH AND WELL BEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Conservative deputy vacancy

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Conservative deputy vacancy

### **Outside Bodies**

#### **COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT**

**(i). Kylemore Community Centre Joint Management Committee**

(Pensby and Thingwall Ward Councillors)

Vacancy to replace former Councillor Don McCubbin

**(ii). Leasowe Play, Youth & Community Association Management Committee**

Vacancy to replace former Councillor Anne McArdle

#### **HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY**

**(iii). Leasowe Community Homes Management Board**

Vacancy to replace former Councillor Anne McArdle

#### **REGENERATION AND PLANNING STRATEGY**

**(iv). Conservation Area Advisory Committees**

Conservation Area      Councillor(s)

Barnston                      Vacancy to replace former Councillor Don McCubbin

Gayton and Heswall      Vacancy to replace former Councillor Peter Johnson

#### **ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

**(v). Heswall Advisory Body (Heswall ATC) (1:1:1)**

Vacancy to replace former Councillor Peter Johnson

#### **STREETSCENE AND TRANSPORT SERVICES**

**(vi). Wirral Pedestrian Forum (1:1:1)**

Vacancy to replace former Councillor Don McCubbin

#### **Resolved –**

**(1) That an increase of one place for the Labour Group, on the Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee be approved.**

**(2) That the amendments to membership and appointments listed above, be approved and nominations to any outstanding vacancies, be submitted to the Acting Director of Law, HR and Asset Management.**