



Health and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Tuesday, 4 December 2012
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 3 - Wallasey Town Hall

Contact Officer: Lyndzay Roberts
Tel: 0151 691 8262
e-mail: lyndzayroberts@wirral.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

AGENDA

1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP

Members of the Committee are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non pecuniary interests, in connection with any items on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

Members are reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they are subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

2. BUDGET OPTIONS (Pages 1 - 86)

The following documents are attached for Members' consideration:

- **'What Really Matters Questionnaire'**
- **Summary paper for Families and Wellbeing**
- Options papers relevant to this Committee:
 - Assessment and Care Management
 - Support for Carers
 - Non-Residential Care Charges
 - Assistive Technology
 - Community Meals
 - Day Services
 - Help and Advice for Older People
 - Residential Care for Learning Disabilities
 - Review of Contracts
 - Review of Emergency Duty
 - Review of Equipment Services
 - Short Breaks (Respite)
 - Targeted Support
 - Voluntary Sector Contract Review

3. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR



**PLEASE RETURN BY
31st January 2013**

Budget Options from the Chief Executive

“I offer these options for consideration by Councillors, residents and staff according to the overriding principle that we should spend less on ourselves – taking savings first from our ‘back office’ and so reducing as much as possible the impact on services to residents, particularly our poorest and most vulnerable.”

Graham Burgess, Chief Executive of Wirral Council

You can complete this questionnaire online at www.wirral.gov.uk/whatreallymatters, or hand it in at any Council One Stop Shop, Library, Children's Centre or Leisure Centre. You can also post it back to: What Really Matters, Wallasey Town Hall, Brighton Street, CH44 8ED

Dear Resident

I was appointed as Chief Executive to improve the way in which Wirral Council operates. My first task is to ensure we address the unprecedented budget challenge before us. 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.

These are tough times – for our staff, Councillors, and most importantly the people who we serve. We have some tough decisions to make over the coming months.

Today I publish my options for where savings might be found for Councillors, Partners, staff and the public to consider. I have sought to offer these options according to the overriding principle that we should spend less on ourselves, taking savings first from our ‘back office’ and so mitigating as much as possible the impact on services to residents particularly our poorest and most vulnerable.

You will see from the chart on the next page, we have been largely successful in developing these options to reduce the impact on residents as much as is possible. I guarantee that will always be our overriding principle as we strive to make the savings we are being forced to make.

These options also represent around 25% more than we need to save in this first year. That is to make sure that our Councillors, when they consider these options alongside your feedback, have the opportunity to make choices as they take these extremely difficult decisions. These savings are proposed as part of a three year drive, which will see the Council building firm foundations for the future of the borough by transforming the way we work and provide services.

I am therefore firstly proposing to reduce our Senior Management costs by around a third. I am also consulting on reducing other staffing costs such as car mileage and phone bills.

In addition I am bringing forward options to make better use of our buildings and Information Technology. Importantly I am reviewing the amount of money spent on Agency Staff, Consultants, marketing and all other non essential spending.

Given the size of the budget gap this will not however be enough. The further options I put before you are not easy ones. Council services must change – there is no other way of finding the massive amount of money we need.

My pledge is that I will consult with staff, residents, community, voluntary and faith groups and businesses in order that we make the tough decisions we need to - taking your views and opinions into account.

Graham Burgess,
Chief Executive.

Your details

Please provide your e-mail address if you would like Wirral Council to send you updates about Council services and future consultations. Your information will be managed in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy and will never be passed on to any unauthorised third party.

Your email address: _____

If you don't have an email address please provide your postal address:

Your name: _____

Your address: _____

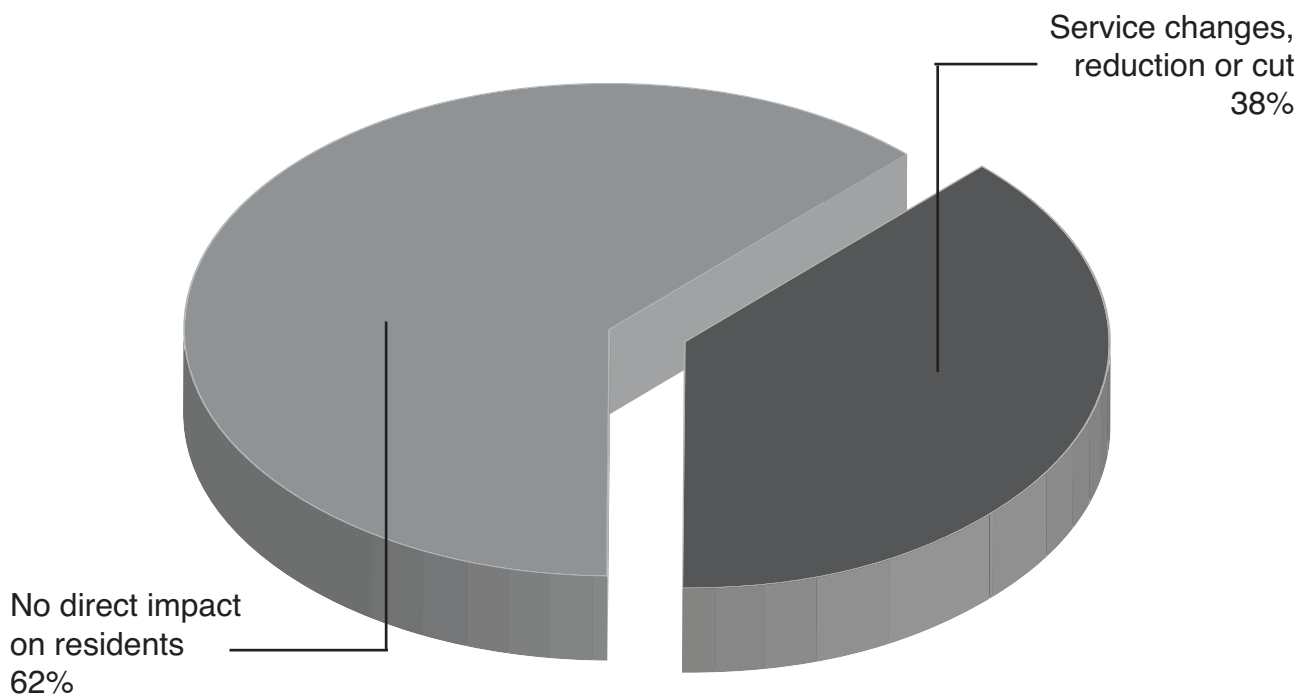
_____ Postcode: _____

What is your relationship to Wirral Council? *(please tick all that apply)*

- Resident Member of staff Local business
 Partner agency/organisation Voluntary/community organisation

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation please tell us its' name:

Where the savings come from



You will see that this questionnaire is split into four sections:

Section A: **Transformation and Resources**

Section B: **Regeneration and Environment**

Section C: **Families and Wellbeing**

Section D: **About You**

There are quite a lot of options, and questions, within this document. All questions have choices to best describe your view. Please tick one box for each option.

Please feel free to complete either as much or as little as you would like – every response, no matter how small, will be counted.

These budget options have been developed by Council Officers and, as much as possible; we have tried to develop them to follow what you told us in the first stage of this consultation.

For each of the options summarised in this report, you can find much more detailed information as to what likely impact they will bring by visiting our website at www.wirral.gov.uk/whatreallymatters, calling into any One Stop Shop or Library, or calling us on 0151 606 2030.

Section A: Transformation and Resources

REDUCING COUNCIL MANAGEMENT

Wirral Council has around 4800 employees. Some of the structures in departments, and services, are no longer fit for purpose and could be updated and reduced, to achieve major savings. This option involves a total restructure and significant reduction in middle and senior management layers across the entire Council.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

WORKFORCE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The Council's current salary costs are £102 million. Another £6 million is spent on salary enhancements based on national and local conditions of service. This option is designed to reduce this expenditure by £4 million through making changes to employees' terms and conditions, including car mileage, phones, unpaid leave and single time working.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

PROCUREMENT

The Council is looking to make savings and increase income through the way it pays for goods and services, through starting to charge schools for work it does and also through paying some invoices and bills through an online system.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

The way the Council manages its cash flow and borrowing could also be significantly improved to bring in major savings. The Council will fund road repairs, building investments and other works through internal funds rather than borrowing, which will save around £1.7m.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

CIVIC SERVICES (THE MAYOR OF WIRRAL)

The Mayor undertakes a range of civic and fundraising duties throughout their term of office. The option here is to make a saving through re-designing the service to offer better value for money.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

ELECTIONS

The Council currently operates a system of three elections every four years, with Councillors elected for a four-year term. The option here would be to hold 'all-out' elections every four years, where all Members would be up for election for a four-year term.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

REDUCING THE COST OF DEMOCRACY

The Council currently operates a model of governance known as Strong Leader, which involves a Cabinet and five Overview and Scrutiny Committees, plus a number of other committees, who work to set Council policy, make and scrutinise decisions and set the Council budget. This option would involve a review of the Council's constitution and number of committees, and related meetings, to bring savings and a reduction in staff.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICE

The Council invests funds in its computer equipment, which is used by thousands of Council employees on a daily basis. This option involves centralising, and significantly reducing, the funding spent on providing computers, printers and other IT equipment to Council, including reducing the number of employees required to service the equipment.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING

The Council's communications and engagement division is responsible for promoting Wirral as a place, the Council's services, consultation activity and public relations and media activity. There are a number of options in this area, including a reduction in the core marketing budget of 50%, stopping the sponsorship of Tranmere Rovers Football Club,

which would bring a saving of £135,000 and removing the funding which is used to subsidise tourism and visitor events throughout the borough.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

AREA FORUM FUNDING

The Council invests funding each year into its programme of Area Forum events. This funding is available for communities to pay for additional Council services or to pay for community or voluntary groups to perform projects and activities. The option here is to cancel the currently frozen allocation of Forum funding, and to further remove the funding from the Council budget in future years, to be replaced by a new method of engaging and working with communities.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

BETTER USE OF BUILDINGS

The Council owns an extensive and varied number of buildings, from which it delivers services and provides back office support. This option involves closing the Acre Lane and Municipal Buildings and relocating staff elsewhere.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

TRANSFORMING BUSINESS SUPPORT

The Council has a range of administration staff throughout the Council, who provide support to departments. The option here is to bring together administration into three business units to support each new Council area, to ensure reduced costs and higher efficiency.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

RESTRUCTURE OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT DIVISION

This Council department is responsible for a number of functions, covering Council buildings, human resources and legal services. This option proposes restructuring and reducing the division as well as investigating the outsourcing of part of the department.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

Is there anything you would like to say about the savings options being proposed under Transformation and Resources?

Section B: Regeneration and Environment

PARKING

Car Park charges vary extensively across Wirral. It is much more expensive, for example, to park in Birkenhead than in West Kirby. The proposal here is to standardise car parking charges across the borough, and reduce the 'all day' charge to a competitive rate of £2.50, and bring in annual and seasonal permit rates in outer Birkenhead car parks. This would also involve reducing staffing across the service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION

Garden waste is at the moment collected free of charge from Wirral residents. The option here is to stop the free kerbside collection of waste and begin charging for the service. On average, Councils who charge for this service charge in the region of £35 per year.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTION

The 'ERIC' service is available for people to have items of large household waste collected and disposed of. The current charge for this service is £20 per collection; this option would involve raising this charge to £26.50 per collection.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

PRE-PLANNING ADVICE

The Council currently provides pre-planning application advice free of charge, many other Local Authorities across Merseyside charge. The option here is to introduce a fee for all pre-planning advice.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

APPRENTICE PROGRAMME

The Council has for the past few years funded 167 people to complete Apprenticeships, with a further 114 positions available during the current financial year. There are 2 options available here, the first is to remove the budget for this programme, which would end the Wirral Apprentice Programme in its current form; and the second is to reduce the budget to this programme, and explore opportunities to develop a Liverpool City Region Apprentice scheme. Please tell us which your preferred option is:

- Remove the budget for this programme
 - Reduce the budget for the programme and develop a Liverpool City Region scheme
-

HANDYPERSON SCHEME

The Council runs a handyperson scheme, which is open to all residents and means people can request maintenance on their homes for a relatively cheap price. The option here is to redevelop this service, meaning it is targeted more effectively at people who have recently been discharged from hospital, and reducing the service available to the general public.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

RESTRUCTURE OF THE REGENERATION, HOUSING AND PLANNING DIVISION

This option involves a service restructure in the Regeneration, Housing and Planning division, as a result of some significant changes which have led to a reconsideration of the work of the department.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

KENNELS SERVICE

The Council operates a kennels service, which serves to re-home abandoned and stray dogs. This option would involve closing the specific Wirral service and instead providing a joint service with partners across Merseyside. This would mean residents would have to travel to Halewood to collect their dogs.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

HOME INSULATION

The Warmer Wirral programme provides free or reduced cost home insulation for Wirral residents.

- Remove the budget for the programme
 - Reduce the budget for the programme, allowing for some energy efficiency and fuel poverty work to continue
-

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Environmental Health team perform a wide range of duties related to the health, wellbeing and safety of the borough. This option involves developing a partnership with Cheshire West

and Chester to put a mutual organisation together to deliver the service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

TRADING STANDARDS

Within the Trading Standards team there are a number of officers who are responsible for providing support to vulnerable customers. This budget option involves reducing this service by a number of officers.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

PEST CONTROL

The Pest Control service provides a treatment service to residents and companies. The option in this area involves reducing the department by one member of staff.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

The Council has a contract in place to cover all highway maintenance, which is soon going to be re-tendered. This option would reduce the proactive maintenance of roads, footways, signage and street furniture, and mean the Council would focus most resources on maintenance where there is a direct safety issue.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

STREET LIGHTING

The Council operates a scheme whereby people perform lighting inspections at night. This option would involve stopping these night-time inspections and also, where it is safe to do so, switching off lighting either completely or for part of the night.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

HIGHWAYS DRAINAGE

The Council performs regular maintenance work across drainage inspections on the highways, ensuring that risk of flooding is brought as low as possible. This option would reduce the service, and mean focusing the activity on targeted inspections at problem sites.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

STREET CLEANSING

The Council, through its contractor, invests a significant amount of resources in collecting litter and cleaning the streets. This option would involve reducing that investment, and working with the community to improve levels of street cleanliness. If successful, this reduction would be rolled out across other areas.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLS

The Council provides school crossing patrol sites across the borough. This option would involve inviting schools to pay for the crossing

patrol service and removing the cost to the Council. If schools are not prepared to pay for the service then it may be removed.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REMOVAL OF THE MAINTENANCE OF PARKS

Wirral has over 200 sites which are classified as being 'parks and open spaces', which are a mixture of large and local parks, general green spaces, beaches and bowling greens. This option would involve stopping maintenance on a number of parks, green spaces, beaches and grass verges and working with community organisations and 'friends of parks' groups to ensure the service was maintained.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REDUCTION IN THE MAINTENANCE OF PARKS

This further option relating to parks involves the reduction of maintenance whereby some areas will be cut every three weeks, rather than two, a reduction in bedding displays and the pre-planned maintenance programme. Rural grass verges would also be left for wildlife and only cut where there is a road safety issue. The Council would work with community organisations and 'friends of parks' groups to ensure the service was maintained.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

HOUSING SUPPORT FOR BME COMMUNITIES

Part of the Council's supporting people team is a small service which helps to provide support for people from black and minority ethnic communities to live independently. The option here is to remove this service, as other services both from the community and public sectors, including the Citizen's Advice Bureau, could potentially fill the gap.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

SUPPORTING PEOPLE

The supporting people programme delivers services to around 5,500 Wirral residents; making sure that those people with housing related needs are supported. This option would involve reducing this budget through renegotiating contracts, tendering services, remodelling services and closing services.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

INVESTING IN WIRRAL'S BUSINESSES

Wirral Council runs a service called Invest Wirral, which is designed to provide a wide range of business support services. The option here would be the reduction in support to businesses through a number of avenues, including business investments, grants and other funds. These funds may be replaced regionally. This option would also reduce duplication with other services by removing the Invest Wirral events budget and social enterprise support.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

COMMUNITY PATROL AND DOG FOULING

Wirral Community Patrol consists of more than 20 officers who work towards improving the security and safety of Wirral Council properties but also making Wirral a safe place to live, work and visit. The Council also provide a Dog Fouling Enforcement Team which aim to improve and protect the Wirral environment by reducing dog fouling. The option is to stop paying enhanced salaries for evening and weekend work for Community Patrol, except for bank holidays, and also to reduce the size of the dog fouling enforcement team.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

MODERNISATION OF LEISURE

Currently, Leisure Centres across Wirral have periods where usage is extremely low, compared to the number of staff working at the sites. The option in this area is to make a number of changes to pool operating times and working practices, including closing Europa Leisure Pool and Guinea Gap Pool during less busy times, and reducing the staff requirements for the sauna operation at Guinea Gap Leisure Centre among others.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

Is there anything you would like to say about the savings options being proposed under Regeneration and Environment?

Section C: Families and Wellbeing

COMMUNITY MEALS

The Council provide an outdated, but appreciated, meals-on-wheels service. This service charges people £2.68 per meal. The proposal here is to increase this charge by 79p per meal to a total charge of £3.47 per meal – which is what the service costs the Council.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

The Council provides a range of technology which is installed in people's homes to enable them to be more independent, such as bed occupancy sensors, property exit sensors, pull chords, flood detectors and falls detectors. These devices are installed and monitored 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, free of charge. The proposal here is to implement a weekly fee for this service of £3. This charge would only be applied to those people who could afford it.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

CHARGING FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Wirral Council's charges for adult social care services are among the lowest in the region. Many Councils charge 100% of a person's disposable income, Wirral currently charges 75%. The proposal here is to bring our charges in line with other North West Councils and charge 100% of a person's total disposable income.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

TARGETED SUPPORT THROUGH NHS CONTRACTS

The Council works closely with the NHS to provide a whole range of services for vulnerable adults; including nursing care, residential care and reablement (where a person is supported back to full health following an illness) among others. In this area the Council will work with colleagues in the NHS to reduce the use of higher cost services such as nursing and residential care to focus on community based alternatives such as Assistive Technology, intermediate care and reablement.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

EXTRA CARE HOUSING

The Council provides over 200 extra care housing units across the borough, which is a form of sheltered housing and residential care. The option here is to re-tender those contracts and look to provide the same level of service at a lower cost.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

RESIDENTIAL AND RESPITE CARE

The Council owns 3 residential care homes which provide short breaks for people with learning disabilities and mental health difficulties. The option here is to reduce the number of facilities from 3 to 1, while still providing the same service. More people will then benefit from supported living arrangements rather than residential care.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

DAY CARE AND DAY SERVICES TRANSFORMATION

The Council owns a number of Day Centres which support people with Learning Disabilities, Physical Disabilities and Mental Health difficulties. All of these centres need, to different extents, substantial investment and, due to younger people choosing to use other services, demand is substantially reducing. This option would involve investment in some centres, and the closure of others, while at the same time transforming the service to ensure it offers a modern and quality service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REVIEW OF SUPPORT FOR CARERS

When a carer is assessed for support, a “carer’s budget” is identified and allocated to the person. This option would involve changing this system and replacing it with an annual grant, which would be based on a banding system currently

used by other Councils. This would be based on the carer’s role and requirement for support, and would mean some carers receiving less financial support, but some receiving more according to their need.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

TRANSPORT POLICIES

The Council provides transport for over one thousand people across the borough every day to travel to Council facilities and schools among other places. This option would involve a full review of that transport, with a view to stopping providing transport to some or all Council facilities and schools. This would require people using the transport to either contribute towards the cost of the service or find other ways to travel to the service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

AREA TEAMS FOR FAMILY SUPPORT

Area Teams provide preventative services for vulnerable children and families. This option would involve reducing the number of teams from 11, to 4, and require the teams to re-focus their work based on need.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

SCHOOLS MUSIC SERVICE

The music service has for many years received a subsidy from the Council. This option removes that subsidy and requires the service to bring in enough income to break even.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

OAKLANDS OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

This service provides outdoor recreation and education activities, primarily for schools. The service also receives a subsidy from the Council, and this option would involve removing that funding and requiring the service to break even.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

EDUCATION PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

The Council provides an educational psychology service, which helps all children with special educational needs. The proposal in this area is to reduce this service and have a more targeted approach, whilst continuing to meet statutory requirements.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

FOUNDATION LEARNING

This is a programme offered to schools to support vocational learning for young people who are at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

The proposal in this area is to remove this funding and instead provide support through the careers education information, advice and guidance service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

COMMISSIONING OF PARENTING SERVICES

The Council invests money with organisations in the community and voluntary sector to provide parenting and family support, and the proposal in this area is to target a reduced service at those families most at risk of poor outcomes.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

SCHOOLS BUDGET

The Council has a budget for schools maintenance and also contributes towards a 27-year Private Finance Initiative agreement. The proposal in this area is to transfer the costs currently met by the Council to the schools budget.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND INCOME FROM SCHOOLS

The Council provides a number of services to schools, some of which are provided free of charge as part of the Council's legal obligations, some which are charged back to schools and some which are provided for no cost, or a cost which is lower than it costs to deliver. The option in this area is to reduce the level of free services the Council provides for schools and increasing the income from those services provided to Academy schools.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REVIEW OF VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR GRANTS

The voluntary, community and faith sector provide a number of services such as luncheon clubs, advocacy support and day care with funding provided by the Council. The proposal is that the Council reviews these services as part of a wider Council approach to ensure more targeted and cost effective services, based on early intervention and prevention.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

ASSESSMENT AND CARE MANAGEMENT

The Council is reviewing its assessment and care management process working closely with the NHS to improve the experience of care service users and make quicker the process from referral to support plan. The proposal is that through making the process more efficient, it would be possible to respond to financial pressures by reducing the number of social

workers and assessment support workers, although it is accepted that this would potentially negate improvements made through redesign.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REVIEW OF RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES

Many Councils have changed their services for learning disabilities, and developed supported living opportunities as an alternative to residential care. The option in this area is to develop supported housing arrangements for people with learning disabilities as an alternative to residential care.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REVIEW OF EQUIPMENT AND EMERGENCY DUTY

The Council provides equipment for people such as wheelchairs and also provides an emergency out of hours care management system. The proposal here is to review both services and investigate a shared service with the NHS to save money.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

YOUTH AND PLAY SERVICES

The Council provides and maintains 6 play schemes and 14 youth facilities, as well as extensive outreach projects. The option here is to review the number of play schemes, reduce the outreach service and integrate all youth clubs into the main four youth 'hubs'.

This would involve centralising all of the youth services within the main four hubs, and investing in a new Youth Zone for Central Birkenhead.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

YOUTH CHALLENGE

The Council also funds services around risk taking behaviour (alcohol and drugs) as well as positive activities such as drama and arts. The option here is to reduce the budget of those services and ensure that the budget is used to target the most vulnerable.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

CHILDREN'S CENTRES AND SURE START

The Council has 16 Children's Centres, as well as a number of satellite children's centres. The option here is to reduce universal services from children's centres, to transfer provision of day-care to Private, Voluntary or Independent providers and to charge for most universal services which are provided. This would also include the release of a number of satellite children's centres, and a reduction in the Sure Start budget.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

HELP AND ADVICE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

The Council provides an optional service for people who are over 65, which provides support and advice about benefits and how to access other voluntary and Council services. The option in this area is to remove this service, and instead use existing contracts with a number of voluntary and community organisations to provide it on our behalf.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

CAREERS, EDUCATION INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Through a contract, the Council provides a wide range of careers advice to young people. The option in this area is to reduce this service so it is targeted at those most in need.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

SHORT BREAKS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The Council provides funding for children with disabilities to go on short breaks, which provide respite for them and their families. The option here is to reduce the number and range of the short breaks which are provided, while still providing the service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

This is a service which provides support for children with mental health needs. The option here is to reduce this service by one third, and target resources at those most in need.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REVENUES AND BENEFITS

As Welfare Reform and Universal Credit is rolled out the workload in the Revenues and Benefits division will increase. Staffing levels will, however, be able to reduce to reflect the new arrangements. The option in this area is therefore to begin to reduce staff in this division as the new Universal Credit is implemented.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

INCREASING COURT COSTS

The Council at the moment charges non-payers of Council Tax £65. This is below the actual costs, which are around £87. The option here is to increase these charges to £75.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS AND EXEMPTIONS

There are a range of discounts and exemptions on Council Tax available to Wirral residents, including reductions for properties undergoing major repair and long term empty properties. The option in this area is to conduct a full review of these discounts with a view to increasing income from Council Tax.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

COUNCIL TAX PENSIONER DISCOUNT

Pensioners aged over 70 in Wirral currently receive a discount of 7.76% against their Council Tax. The option here is to reduce that discount or change the qualifying criteria.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY RELIEF

Wirral last year paid discretionary business rate relief for charities, voluntary, social, educational and sporting organisations for a total of over £1m. The option here is to review and potentially reduce the amount of businesses and funding which is used to help these businesses with their rates.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

LIBRARIES AND ONE STOP SHOPS

Wirral Council has a network of 13 One Stop Shops and 24 Libraries. The options in this area include: further merging of libraries and One Stop Shops, the reduction of opening hours, particularly around Christmas and New Year, and the increased use of volunteers in the running of the facilities. The option of community asset transfer will also be part of this option. The Council also propose to reduce the book fund, which libraries use to purchase new books.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

Is there anything you would like to say about the savings options being proposed under Families and Wellbeing?

Section D: About you

This section is all about you. It would be helpful when we analyse the results of this questionnaire for us to know a little bit about you.

The next few questions are optional – you don't have to complete them if you don't want to. None of the information you give us will be used for any other purpose than reviewing the results of the questionnaire, and will never be passed on to any third party.

Your gender:

- Male Female Prefer not to say

Your ethnicity:

Please tick a box or state your ethnicity:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other British | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other white background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other mixed background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background | <input type="checkbox"/> African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arab | <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy, Romany or Irish Traveller |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | |

Your religion or belief:

What is your religion?

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Christian | <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish | <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | | | |

Or, what is your belief?

- | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humanist | <input type="checkbox"/> Atheist | <input type="checkbox"/> Agnostic | <input type="checkbox"/> Pagan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other belief | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | | |

Your disability:

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

Please tick all the boxes which apply:

- Physical Disability Mental Health Sensory impairment
 Learning Difficulty Prefer not to say

Your age:

- Under 16 16-24 25-44 45-64
 65+ Prefer not to say

If you are under 16, please do not answer the remaining questions.

Marriage or Civil Partnership:

Are you currently:

- Married Single Divorced Widowed
 In a Civil Partnership None of the above Prefer not to say

Your sexual orientation:

Please tick one box -

- Heterosexual Lesbian or gay Bisexual Asexual
 Prefer not to say

Gender Reassignment:

Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

Thank you for your time and involvement - it will make a difference.

**www.wirral.gov.uk/whatreallymatters
engage@wirral.gov.uk
0151 606 2030**

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Families and Wellbeing
Budget Options
from the Chief Executive

The Budget Challenge in Wirral

Dear Resident

I was appointed as Chief Executive to improve the way in which Wirral Council operates. My first task is to ensure we address the unprecedented budget challenge before us. 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.

These are tough times – for our staff, Councillors, and most importantly the people who we serve. We have some tough decisions to make over the coming months.

Today I publish my options for where savings might be found for Councillors, Partners, staff and the public to consider. I have sought to offer these options according to the overriding principle that we should spend less on ourselves, taking savings first from our ‘back office’ and so mitigating as much as possible the impact on services to residents particularly our poorest and most vulnerable.

These options also represent around 25% more than we need to save in this first year. That is to make sure that our Councillors, when they consider these options alongside your feedback, have the opportunity to make choices as they take these extremely difficult decisions. These savings are proposed as part of a three year drive, which will see the Council building firm foundations for the future of the borough by transforming the way we work and provide services.

I am therefore firstly proposing to reduce our Senior Management costs by around a third. I am also consulting on reducing other staffing costs such as car mileage and phone bills.

In addition I am bringing forward options to make better use of our buildings and Information Technology. Importantly I am reviewing the amount of money spent on Agency Staff, Consultants, marketing and all other non essential spending.

Given the size of the budget gap this will not however be enough. The further options I put before you are not easy ones. Council services must change – there is no other way of finding the massive amount of money we need.

My pledge is that I will consult with staff, residents, community, voluntary and faith groups and businesses in order that we make the tough decisions we need to - taking your views and opinions into account.

Graham Burgess,
Chief Executive.

Family and Wellbeing Services in Wirral

Perhaps the biggest responsibility any Council holds is the duty to protect its most vulnerable residents; adults, children and families.

A vision for Children's Services

The local authority's role in acting as a champion for children, supporting schools, shaping and commissioning services, assessing needs and delivering services to children is changing significantly. In the current climate of unprecedented financial austerity, it is imperative that the Council is clear about which services are essential and which are desirable. This is in order to determine which services and facilities can best be delivered by third parties, so that the local authority only delivers directly where it can evidence this represents value for money. Also, that the Council determines which services need public funding and which can be secured through other means.

This strategy emphasises the importance of developing coherent preventative services with partner agencies, which build on universal provision, so that we target interventions with children and families in order to improve outcomes and reduce the number of children requiring expensive and frequently reactive specialist services. Our role in the direct provision of universal services for children should be significantly diminished, or provided on a full cost recovery basis, since other agencies and communities

may be better placed to provide these services, and we must target our resources to work with more vulnerable children and families. However, our role in championing the needs of children, making sure that robust safeguarding processes are in place from top to bottom and across the breadth of the partnership, and making sure that the full range of services are available to meet children's universal needs in partnership with schools and others in their local communities, is as strong as ever.

Moving forward, we must increasingly "think family" to maximise opportunity for shared working across the Families and Wellbeing Directorate. For example, in providing transition support for children with a disability, working with troubled families, placing emphasis on the child and families journey, and through developing teams around families. We also need to configure services in a way which simplifies access, reduces unnecessary bureaucratic processes, and the associated management and back office costs.

There are opportunities through the reconfiguration of services to:

- Deliver well targeted early intervention and prevention; producing better outcomes for children and families and reduced costs in the longer term
- Focus on the child and families journey, not professional processes
- Determine which services and facilities need public funding and which can be secured through other means, so that public funding is targeted at the right people and the right organisations

Family and Wellbeing Services in Wirral

- Reduce bureaucracy and complexity with single access routes
- Make sure that the Council policies are fit for the current climate
- Maximise partnership opportunities – shared priorities, funding and service delivery.

A vision for Adult Social Care

The changing population, with rapidly increasing numbers of older and vulnerable people, together with changing aspirations and an environment of significantly reducing resources for Local Authorities, brings huge challenge for social care.

In order to meet these challenges we must transform the service offer; we must commission our services based on sound evidence, so that we know we are providing the best and most appropriate levels of care and support that is possible. This will help us to deliver more personalised services, and make sure that people can control their own circumstances, meet their own needs and stay independent for as long as they can.

Our commissioning approach is therefore the critical component of the Council's determination to deliver services in the most effective and efficient way. Adult Social Care is changing in order to focus increasingly on supporting people effectively. The changes are based on 6 key design principles.

Our aim is to ensure that for the people of Wirral:

- We will shift from focussing on crisis management in health and social care towards prevention and early intervention services that promote health, wellbeing and a good quality of life.
- We will work better across the Council and partners to offer information and advice that makes the support offer clearer and signposts people more effectively to a range of organisations including the voluntary, community and faith sector.
- Commissioning will deliver a broader range of integrated service solutions for people based on co-production and recognition of changing aspirations; this will lead to de-commissioning some traditional services as well as commissioning new ones.
- Commissioning will drive efficiency and ensure that we deliver Best Value for the people of Wirral.
- Safeguarding the dignity of vulnerable people and service quality will be at the core of our approach to commissioning.
- We will focus on delivering services locally and will build upon individual and community assets rather than deficits.

Budget Options

The budget options in this report have been designed to try and improve the value for money which we are getting for our residents, but still making sure that the people who are receiving the service have the choice and opportunities to stay independent and safe.

These budget options have been developed by Council Officers and, as much as possible; we have tried to develop them to follow what you told us in the first stage of this consultation.

That consultation focussed on four main themes: raising income, changing service delivery, re-shaping services and stopping services. The options in this report also follow those four main themes.

For each of the options summarised in this report, you can find much more detailed information as to what likely impact they will bring by visiting our website at www.wirral.gov.uk/whatreallymatters or calling us on 0151 606 2030.

What You Told Us:

“The Council should look to raise income through raising or introducing charges. Raising charges should take every step to not disadvantage or marginalise vulnerable groups by making services unaffordable, and the services selected for increased charges should be chosen carefully.”

Budget Options

Option: Community Meals

Community Meals, or 'meals on wheels', have been a traditional part of adult social services for many years. It involves hot meals being delivered to a number of vulnerable residents every day. The service is appreciated by many, but there are some problems associated with it.

There is no choice involved in the Council service – people simply get what they are given, and it doesn't tend to cater for any special dietary requirements such as vegetarianism, or any religious considerations. There are now lots of alternative providers of ready meals that can offer much greater choice to people at a reasonable cost to the individual.

The proposal is that the Council could increase the charges, to bring Wirral in line with other Councils, so the price paid covers the current cost, which would work out at 79p per meal, and replace the current contract with a smaller contract reflecting anticipated demands for the service.

At the moment, people receiving community meals pay £2.68 per meal. The cost to the Council is £3.47 per meal.

Budget Saving: £75k increased income based on full cost recovery plus £125,000 reduction in spend

Option: Assistive Technology

Around 4500 people in Wirral benefit from some type of assistive technology installed in their home; this includes things like bed occupancy sensors, property exit sensor, pull chords, flood detectors and fall detectors.

This equipment is currently installed free of charge, and the people who receive the service have the added benefit of 24/7 monitoring, again for no charge. People who receive these services normally receive additional benefits to cover additional costs. The value of the equipment ranges significantly, depending on the volume and type of support required but can cost up to £5,000.

The option in this area is to provide the same service, to the same standard, but introduce a weekly charge of £3 per household, per week, regardless of the level of equipment installed within the house.

The charge be assessed on an person's ability to pay.

**Budget Saving:
£300,000 increased income**

Budget Options

Option: Charges for Non-Residential Services

The Council has the ability to charge people for the social care services they receive. These charges are for services which include home care, supported living, day care and transport.

Most Councils charge for these services, and many Councils charge 100% of a person's disposable income. Wirral currently charges 75% of a person's disposable income and the option in this area is to increase this level to 100% from next year. This would also involve a reduction in the savings capital limit for non-residential care to the same level as those receiving residential care.

This option will increase the contributions made for their care by vulnerable and elderly people. However, the charges are based entirely on a person's ability to pay, and will bring our levels of charges in line with other Councils in the North West.

**Budget saving:
£880k increased income**

What You Told Us:

“The Council should make savings through changing the way services are delivered through outsourcing, sharing services or encouraging groups of staff to take over the running of services – as long as the Council kept the responsibility for the quality of the service.”

Budget Options

Option: Review of contracts

This involves the review of contractual arrangements in three service areas:

Extra Care Housing

The Council has worked with partners to provide over 200 units of extra care housing for older people across 5 locations in the borough. Extra Care Housing is a form of residential care or sheltered housing, whereby the resident lives with a high degree of independence but also receives constant support and protection.

This option involves the Council re-tendering the contracts for these services to seek to provide a service at the same quality but with better value for money, with consideration of the projected huge increase in our elderly population in the coming years.

Residential and Respite Care

The Council is committed to working with people who use services, their families and carers, partners and providers to develop services and to encourage the market to deliver flexible and personalised respite and short term breaks. The introduction of block contract arrangements for a small number of short term care beds to facilitate assessments post hospital discharge has the potential to generate savings for the Council.

The option involves the introduction of contract arrangements for a small number of short term care beds to help with providing assessments after a person has been discharged from hospital.

Day Care

The Council is committed to working with people who use services, their families and carers, partners and providers to develop services. The Council is developing a contracting framework for day care provided by independent sector providers. This may deliver efficiencies through improved commissioning and the opportunity to standardise daily rates.

The option further proposes that the Council reviews its approach to commissioning day care provided by the independent sector to deliver efficiencies.

Budget saving:
£600,000

Option: Targeted Support

Wirral Council works closely with the NHS to provide a whole range of services for vulnerable adults. These include nursing care, residential care, and reablement among others. Reablement is where a person is supported back to full health following an illness or injury.

The option in this area is to work with the NHS and reduce the use of higher cost services such as nursing and residential care homes and to jointly change services to work much more closely together in an integrated way. The main focus is on community based alternatives including Intermediate Care, reablement and assistive technology. The option also includes ensuring that multi disciplinary assessments are comprehensive and ensure individuals are provided with appropriate support.

Budget saving: £3.95m savings and increased income

Option: Residential and Respite Care

The Council currently owns 3 residential care homes providing respite and short breaks for people with learning disabilities and mental health difficulties. The service also provides four crisis beds for people with mental health issues. The in-house provision is expensive and the standard of the buildings is not as high as the Council would want for those it cares for.

The option in this area would be to merge and improve the residential and respite care directly provided for people with Learning Disabilities by the Council to one location, while closing one of the homes. In relation to Mental Health Services, we will close one building and offer people alternative options in the independent sector. People will benefit from supported living arrangements rather than residential care.

While this proposal may result in people who are currently living across two locations needing to move, due to potential closure the impact on the people and their carers can be minimised by making sure that alternative, responsive services are available from other providers. This option will result in people who need these services being given a greater choice than they currently receive with existing Council run facilities.

Budget saving: £320,000

Option: Day Care and Day Services Transformation

Currently, Wirral Council provides a number of Day Centres which support people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health difficulties. The Council is exploring ways to deliver an improved, effective, efficient in-house service that can remain competitive, in terms of quality and cost. All of our day centres at the moment need substantial investment to varying degrees to bring them up to an acceptable quality standard.

This option will involve the complete transformation of day services; which may result in investing in some centres to make them modern, fit for purpose and suitable to provide the best possible support, but would also mean the Council providing fewer centres.

Whilst this proposal may result in the closure of some centres, individuals will still be able to access day services if they choose to do so whilst others, through a personal budget, may choose other ways to receive support. The demand for day services in the voluntary sector may increase as people exercise greater choice through personal budgets. The project to transform day services is developing a service model based on the needs and priorities of service users, with a particular focus on employment needs. The potential for Social Enterprises is also being explored.

**Budget saving:
£2 million**

Option: Review of Support for Carers

In the process of conducting a community care assessment, a carer for an individual may be identified. The department has a duty to consider the needs of the carer as part of the overall assessment and the carer has the right to ask for a separate assessment of their own needs. As part of the current assessment process, a carer's assessment generates (through the Resource Allocation System) a carer's budget, a sum of money based on the nature and extent of the impact of the carer role on that individual. This can be paid as a direct payment to carers to support them in their carer role.

The NHS has also been given additional funding to support carers and NHS Wirral has recently commissioned the Wirral Information Resource for Equality and Diversity Carers Support Service to offer short breaks for carers. Carers are now able to access these services through GPs rather than through Adult Social Services.

The proposal is to review the current process and consider the efficacy of three alternative options:

- ***the cessation of personal budgets for carers with support for carers being commissioned by the department***
- ***the introduction of an annual grant to carers***
- ***the introduction of a payment to carers based on a banding system that reflects the impact of the carer role on the individual***

**Budget Saving:
£250,000**

Budget Options

Option: Transport Policies for Adults and Children

The Council provides transport for well over a thousand people across the borough every day; travelling to Council facilities, schools and other services.

This option will involve a full review of that transport, with a view to stopping providing transport to some or all Council services, and instead requiring the people using the services to either contribute to the cost of the transport or find other means.

This option will result in a reduced transport service for children and adults. This may result in a potential impact on other Council services as a result of the change.

**Budget saving:
£832,000**

Option: Area Teams for Family Support

Area Teams provide preventative services for vulnerable children and families. The team and partners provide support to these children and families to prevent their situation getting worse. There is some duplication of effort due to the number of teams.

The option in this area is to reduce the number of Area Teams from 11 to 4, and have them work across the borough based on need.

The reorganisation will target services more effectively to meet the needs of children and families.

**Budget saving:
£200,000**

Budget Options

Option: Schools Music Service

The Council currently provides a Schools Music Service. The service has for many years received a small subsidy from the Council.

The option in this area is to remove the subsidy and ensure that it brings in enough income to break even. This will be done through increased marketing and seeking sponsorship.

The risks in this area are that young people may choose to use different services, these risks will be mitigated through promotion and targeting a wider client group.

**Budget saving:
£21,000**

Option: Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre

The Council currently delivers the Oaklands Outdoor Education Centre service. The service has for many years received a small subsidy from the Council.

The option in this area is to remove the subsidy and ensure that it brings in enough income to break even. This will be done through increased marketing and seeking sponsorship.

The risks in this area are that young people may choose to use different services, these risks will be mitigated through promotion and targeting a wider client group.

**Budget saving:
£23,000**

Budget Options

Option: Educational Psychology Service

The Council provides an educational psychology service, to help all children who have special educational needs.

The option in this area is to reduce this service while continuing to meet statutory requirements. This will need a more targeted approach.

Reducing the capacity of this service will have an impact on children, young people and their families who have additional educational needs.

**Budget saving:
£80,000**

Option: Foundation Learning

A programme is offered to schools to develop and then deliver Foundation Learning for those young people who are at risk of becoming NEET, which means not in education, employment or training.

The option in this area is to stop this programme and target support from the Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance Service.

This may impact on the Council's effectiveness in ensuring young people are in education, training or employment.

**Budget saving:
£133,000**

Budget Options

Option: Universal and Targeted Commissioning of Parenting Services

The Council invests money with organisations in the community and voluntary sector to provide parenting family support and advisory services, including where families are affected by poverty and disadvantage.

The option here is to reduce and target these services at those families most at risk of poor outcomes.

This might result in a reduction in the number of children, young people and their families receiving a service.

**Budget saving:
£900,000**

Option: Schools Budget

The Council has a budget for Planned Programmed Maintenance, which covers expenditure on maintenance work in schools. The Council also has a 27 year Private Finance Initiative agreement which relates to improvement work to 9 schools. The annual costs for this are covered by government grant, contributions from schools and the Council budget.

The proposal in this area is to transfer costs currently met by the Council to the Schools Budget.

While removing considerable pressure from the Council budget, this would mean schools would have to absorb the additional costs.

**Budget saving:
£2,750,000**

Budget Options

Option: School Improvement and Income from Academy Schools

The focus of the school improvement service is on the core statutory duties of the local authority and traded service with schools for the services that are non-statutory. Over the last couple of years, Wirral has reviewed its statutory duties and costs in relation to its academy schools. Whilst some services have reduced, others are now trading with academies.

This option is to reduce the level of non-traded school improvement support and training and increase income for those services provided to Academy Schools by increasing what the Council charges.

The Council provides a number of services to Academy schools which are no longer under the control of the Council including educational social welfare and behaviour support. Applying additional charges would not impact on the quality of services provided to Academy schools. Applying charges to Academy schools would not impact on the quality of services provided.

**Budget saving: £131,000 plus
£60,000 in additional income**

Option: Review of Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Grants

The voluntary, community and faith sector provide a number of services such as luncheon clubs, advocacy support and day care with funding provided by the Council.

The proposal is that the Council reviews these services as part of a wider Council approach to commission more targeted and cost effective services based on delivering prevention and early intervention services.

This proposal will include a review of drugs and alcohol assessment and rehabilitation services to commission services that will deliver better outcomes for individuals and to promote harm reduction, treatment, rehabilitation and recovery. This will include stopping funding for organisation core costs with the focus shifting to delivering improved outcomes for people.

**Budget saving:
£820,000**

Budget Options

Option: Assessment and Care Management

The Council is reviewing its assessment and care management process working closely with the NHS to improve the experience of care service users and make quicker the process from referral to support plan.

The proposal is that through making the process more efficient, it would be possible to respond to financial pressures by reducing the number of social workers and assessment support workers, although it is accepted that this would potentially impact on the level of service provided.

**Budget saving:
£500,000**

Option: Review of Residential Care for Learning Disabilities

Many Councils have changed their services for learning disabilities, and developed supported living opportunities as an alternative to residential care. The main principles of supported living are that people with learning disabilities own or rent their home and have control over the support they get, who they live with and how they live their lives.

This option in this area is to develop supported housing arrangements for people with Learning Disabilities as an alternative to residential care.

This option seeks to balance the needs of the people involved to increase choice and control, to redesign services that are out dated and not fit for purpose.

**Budget saving:
£300,000**

Budget Options

Option: Review of Equipment Services

The Council provides equipment for people such as wheelchairs and frames.

The option here would be to develop a shared service with the NHS to make a saving of £100,000 on VAT payments.

This option would have no impact on the service.

**Budget Saving:
£100,000**

Option: Review of Emergency Duty

The Council is reviewing its arrangements in the way emergency duty, or 'out of hours', care management systems are developed.

The proposal here is that the current arrangements are reviewed to investigate a shared service with the NHS.

This option would have no impact on the service.

**Budget Saving:
£100,000**

What You Told Us:

“The Council should look into the use of its buildings, and try to provide services from a smaller, more cost effective range of locations. The Council should try to make sure that no communities were left isolated if facilities near them were closed.”

Budget Options

Option: Youth and Play Services

The Council provides and maintains 6 Play Schemes and 14 youth facilities, as well as extensive outreach projects. These services are available for all children and young people in the borough, and are also backed up with further services provided by the voluntary and community sector.

The option in this area is to review provision of Play Schemes, reduce the outreach service and integrate all youth clubs in to the 4 main Youth Hubs, where services would be centralised. It is further proposed that the youth opportunity fund should be stopped. This fund provides opportunities for organisations to bid for funding to deliver projects for young people.

This service will be aligned with the new Youth Zone planned for Birkenhead.

This would reduce the number of easily accessible youth facilities. There is potential for partners and the voluntary sector to provide services which would replace the reduction in Council services, which the Council could potentially help fund. The Council also plan to invest in a central Youth Zone to provide improved and alternative provision.

**Budget saving:
£1,178,000**

Option: Youth Challenge

Youth Challenge (Positive Activities for Young People) provides universal and targeted services to Young People – outreach, risk taking behaviour (alcohol, substance misuse), Big Nights, Arts and Drama.

The option is to reduce the budget for these services.

There may be a reduction in the number of young people taking part in positive activities. The Council would seek to ensure that services are accessible by continuing to target the more vulnerable and at risk young people.

**Budget saving:
£400,000**

Option:

Children's Centres and Sure Start

Wirral has 16 Children's Centres and a number of smaller satellite centres. The centres provide a wide range of services, covering targeted specialised services as well as 'universal services'; and can be accessed by all young people and their families.

The option here is to reduce universal services from children's centres and charge for most universal services which are provided. This would further include the release of a number of satellite children's centres including Manor Primary School, Bedford Drive Primary School, New Brighton Primary School, Lingham Primary School, Eastway Primary School, Hoylake Holy Trinity Primary School, Oxton and New Ferry bases.

There are a number of proposals regarding Children's Centres, and the reduction of the Sure Start budget, all of which are designed to protect the specialised, targeted services for the most vulnerable families.

Budget saving:
£2,172,000

What You Told Us:

“You said we should look at non-universal, optional services and investigate if they could be reduced or stopped.”

**Option:
Help and Advice for Older People**

The Council provides a service for people who are over 65, which is called the 'promoting older people's independence network', or 'POPIN'. This service is about giving older people support about benefits, and how to access other voluntary and Council services.

The option in this area is to stop providing the service, and investigate using voluntary and community organisations to provide the service on our behalf.

This service aims to increase independence, improve access to health and wellbeing services, and also to delay the need for more intensive care as people get older.

It's also true that voluntary and community organisations are already providing similar services and could fill the gap that this service leaves behind. In addition Council One Stop shops can offer similar advice and information.

**Budget saving:
£350,000**

**Option:
Careers, Education Information,
Advice and Guidance**

The Council provides a wide range of careers advice to young people across the borough, including 1:1 information and advice to vulnerable and NEET young people, providing an interactive web portal offering information on career choices and providing tailored training programmes.

The option in this area would be to redesign and reduce these services, to ensure the targeted work still took place at the level defined by the Council's statutory duties.

The service would be redesigned to ensure that those people at greatest risk of becoming NEET were targeted to receive the most support.

**Budget saving:
£1,000,000**

Budget Options

Option: Short Breaks for Children with Disabilities

The Council provides funding for children with disabilities to go on short breaks, which provide respite both for the children but also their carers and / or families. These services are all bought in from the private and voluntary sector.

The option in this area would be to reduce the number and range of the short breaks which are funded for children with disabilities.

This change will mean the budget can be planned more effectively, and that the Council can make sure we only 'buy' the services we need, it will also mean that less money will be invested with the voluntary sector and young people will not have the same choice or access to the service they get at the moment.

**Budget saving:
£300,000**

Option: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

This is a comprehensive specialist service to children and adolescents who require mental health support. The service is provided in addition to statutory health provision and involves additional support being provided to children in need, children in care, children with a plan for adoption and children with a disability. Additionally, CAMHS has direct responsibility for delivering a specialist fostering programme, Fostering Futures, for some of the most vulnerable children in care.

This option is to reduce the service by a third.

There is a risk that some of the more vulnerable children, young people and families will not receive timely therapeutic intervention in response to their needs.

**Budget saving:
£250,000**

Option: Revenues and Benefits

The Council's Revenues and Benefits Service is responsible for the calculation and payment of benefits of approximately £160 million, as well as other income including the financial assessment, charging and recovery of accommodation and support charges.

The service is also responsible for the raising, administration and collection of £350 million gross income from Council Tax, Business Rates and Accounts Receivable invoices. This includes amounts funded from Council Tax benefits and other relief.

This option is to reduce staffing levels in line with the impact of changes to the welfare system.

This option is about rationalising the approach to delivering the service in light to changes of the welfare system whilst continuing to deliver a statutory level of service.

Further options in this area are to raise income by increasing the court costs the Council charges to its debtors from £65 to £75, and reviewing the Council Tax discounts and/or exemptions in place for empty properties, households over 70 years of age and those on low incomes as well as Discretionary Rate Relief.

The Council would need to consider how this option would impact on residents, debtors, social and private landlords and the local economy. Changes have the potential to impact financially on all the above, apart from those defined as vulnerable.

**Budget Saving:
up to £11 million**

Option: Libraries and One Stop Shops

Wirral Council has a network of 13 community One Stop Shops in convenient locations throughout the borough. Services accessible via One Stop Shops include Adult Social Services, Anti-Social Behaviour team, Blue Badge scheme, Council Tax, Consumer Advice, education and welfare benefits, electoral register, Family Information Service, Fire Service, Housing Options service and home improvements, Housing and Council Tax Benefit, Housing for rent via Property Pool Plus, job applications, Job Points, Leisure Services, Licensing, NHS Services, parking fines and appeals, payments, Pest Control / Environmental Health, Recycling, Rubbish and Waste, Registrar Services, Tell Us Once, Tourism and Wirral Partnership Homes.

The Council's 24 libraries deliver a face to face service across the borough from a number of locations and offer reference facilities, an audio-visual service, home reader service, exhibition spaces, meeting rooms, study areas and a coffee area.

A programme is now underway to bring together Wirral's libraries and One Stop Shop service. The benefits to the Council and the public in merging One Stop Shops and libraries include staff being generically trained to offer a wider range of enquiries.

The options in this area include: further merging of libraries and One Stop Shops, the reduction of opening hours, particularly around Christmas and New Year, and the increased use of volunteers in the running of the facilities. The option of community asset transfer will also be part of this option. The Council also propose to reduce the book fund.

Further mergers would result in a reduction in the number of staff required at each merged site, as well as potential costs for improvements to merged buildings. Further library and One Stop Shop mergers would compliment the work already underway with a number of pilot sites and further enable users to access a number of services at one location. The option is unlikely to affect the council's statutory responsibility for providing a library service.

A reduction of opening hours will impact on staffing resources and require consultation with them, as well as users and partners. A reduction in Christmas and New Year opening hours would have minimum impact on library users. A single one stop shop will remain open during the period for emergency contact.

The option could also impact on our staff, users, partners and voluntary organisations. A high level of consultation would therefore be required. The service will look into other service delivery alternatives, such as working with partners and local groups, as well as maximising the use of volunteers.

Budget Options

A reduction in the book fund has the potential to impact on member satisfaction and service reputation.

An e-book service is now available which may replicate 'hard copy' books available. The service will ensure statutory levels of books remain.

Budget Saving:
£629,000

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OPTION: ASSESSMENT AND CARE MANAGEMENT

BUDGET SAVING: £500,000

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

The Council is reviewing its assessment and care management process working closely with the NHS to improve the experience of care service users and make quicker the process from referral to support plan.

The proposal is that through making the process more efficient, it would be possible to respond to financial pressures by reducing the number of assessment and care management staff although it is accepted that this would potentially negate improvements made through redesign.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

There is work underway to streamline the assessment and care management process. There is also a programme of work to develop greater integration with the NHS. This proposal is that through these changes the Council should seek to achieve savings by reducing the number of assessment and care management staff by 15 posts and contribute £500k to the overall efficiency target.

Work is taking place this year to improve the customer experience and to stream line the assessment and care management processes. This is aimed at ensuring that the process from referral through to support plan is speeded up and simplified. It is anticipated that the leaner arrangements will be in place by March 2013.

IMPACT

This may have an impact on performance and offset the benefits to the customer through the work being undertaken to develop a leaner process. There is a risk of increasing the Council's reimbursement liability as delayed discharges from hospital may increase.

MITIGATION

This change is alongside work to develop greater integration of services with the NHS and it is likely that through the development of joint care management there will be some management savings and this will contribute to the corporate management savings target.

The integration programme is being supported by the Kings Fund and is focused on delivering streamlined responsive services, better outcomes for people and more efficient use of resources.

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OPTION: REVIEW OF SUPPORT FOR CARERS

BUDGET SAVING: £250,000

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

In the process of conducting a community care assessment, a carer for an individual may be identified. The department has a duty to consider the needs of the carer as part of the overall assessment and the carer has the right to ask for a separate assessment of their own needs. As part of the current assessment process, a carer's assessment generates (through the Resource Allocation System) a carer's budget, a sum of money based on the nature and extent of the impact of the carer role on that individual. This can be paid as a Direct Payment to carers to support them in their carer role. The average annual Direct Payment to carers in Wirral is currently £1,730.

The proposal is to review the current process and consider the efficacy of three alternative options:

- ***the cessation of personal budgets for carers with support for carers being commissioned by the department***
- ***the introduction of an annual grant to carers***
- ***the introduction of a payment to carers based on a banding system that reflects the impact of the carer role on the individual***

The NHS has also been given additional funding to support Carers and NHS Wirral has recently commissioned the Wirral Information Resource for Equality and Diversity Carers Support Service to offer short breaks for Carers. Carers are now able to access these services through GPs rather than through Adult Social Services.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

There are a number of issues about the current process for generating a personal budget for carers:

- providing carers with a budget does not help create the range of support services that carers require to sustain them in their carer role
- there is confusion about what should be in the individual and the carer budgets
- the cost of providing support to carers in this way has contributed to significant budget pressures

It is anticipated that through a review of the current process and implementation of one of the above options that savings of £250,000 can be generated in a full year.

IMPACT

This proposal may result in a reduction in the number of carers directly supported by the Department. However support will still be available to Carers from the Council, NHS and Voluntary Sector organisations.

MITIGATION

For all individuals currently receiving a carer's budget, a review would be required before any changes were made to their current support arrangements. Support will still be available to Carers from the Council, NHS and Voluntary Sector organisations.

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OPTION: CHARGING FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

BUDGET SAVING: £880,000

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

The Council has the ability to charge people for the social care services they receive. These charges are for services which include home care, supported living, day care and transport.

Most Councils charge for these services, and many Councils charge 100% of a person's disposable income. Wirral currently charges 75% of a person's disposable income and the option in this area is to increase this level to 100% from April 2013.

This option will increase the contributions made for their care by vulnerable and elderly people. However, the charges are based entirely on a person's ability to pay, and will bring our levels of charges in line with other Councils in the North West.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

Local authorities have discretionary powers under Section 17 of the Health and Social Services and Social Security Adjudication Act 1983 to charge adult recipients of non-residential care services. Charging for non-residential services is covered in the Local Authority Circular LAC (2001)32 - Fairer Charging Policies for Home Care and Other non-residential Social Services published by the Department of Health in November 2001. The Fairer Charging guidance allows local authorities to decide whether to charge for services and there is quite significant scope for local discretion.

Further guidance was issued by the Department of Health in July 2009 to supplement the Fairer Charging guidance. This fairer contributions guidance provides a model for calculating a person's contribution to their personal budget.

The assessed charge is based on the person's ability to pay and, unless they are assessed to pay the maximum charge for their services, it is a contribution towards their package of care irrespective of the type or volume of support provided.

Benchmarking information has been obtained to compare the charge applied by Wirral with that of other North West Authorities. This is shown in the table below.

Council	% Charge against Disposable income
Wirral	75
Wigan	75
Sefton	80
Lancashire	85
Rochdale	90
Cheshire East	97
Blackpool	100
Bury	100

Cumbria	100
St Helen's	100
Stockport	100
Tameside	100
Trafford	100

The potential impact on an individual's weekly charge from an increase in the charging policy is provided in the table below. The examples shown cover the most common weekly assessed charges.

Current Charge	Revised Weekly Charge			
	85%	90%	95%	100%
£12.13	£13.75	£14.56	£15.37	£16.18
£17.11	£19.39	£20.53	£21.67	£22.81
£19.88	£22.54	£23.87	£25.20	£26.53
£55.78	£63.22	£66.94	£70.66	£74.38
£63.53	£72.01	£76.25	£80.49	£84.73

IMPACT

Whilst the service will remain unchanged the proposal will increase the contributions made by vulnerable and elderly people in the Borough towards the cost of their care and support. People may decline the service if charges are increased and this may impact on their health and wellbeing. There may also be an impact on the level of Council debt as people may not pay the increased charge.

MITIGATION

Charges are based on a person's ability to pay and will be reviewed on a case by case basis for individuals who experience difficulty in paying their assessed charge.

OPTION: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

BUDGET SAVING: £300,000 increased income

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

Assistive Technology in Wirral is jointly funded by Wirral Council and NHS Wirral. The joint management of the service is provided via Wirral Council. The service has seen a growth in the numbers of people being supported by the service of over 225% since 2009/2010. In 2011/12 there were over 4,500 people accessing the service at a cost of £1.5m.

Assistive technology includes installations in a person's home such as bed occupancy sensors, property exit sensor, pull chords, flood detectors and falls detectors. Assistive Technology in Wirral is increasingly recognised as an integral part of supporting individuals and carers.

This equipment is currently installed free of charge, and the people who receive the service have the added benefit of 24/7 monitoring, again for no charge. The value of the equipment ranges significantly, depending on the volume and type of support required but can cost as little as a few pounds to over £5,000.

The option in this area is to provide the same service, to the same standard, but introduce a weekly charge of £3 per household, per week, regardless of the level of equipment installed within the house.

The charge would be based on an individual's ability to pay.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

The Council has already agreed to develop 'nominal' charging for Assistive Technology. In the current financial climate and in the absence of directly tangible cashable efficiencies, a growing service must be considered to be unsustainable. Charging will be linked to Fair Access to Care criteria, must in itself not become a barrier to using Assistive Technology and be mindful of the funding principles of the NHS i.e. free at the point of care.

The option is to implement a proposed charge based on the cost of providing an ongoing monitoring service. The proposed charge of £3 per week is in line with charges made by other Local Authorities. It is estimated that 50% (2,500) of current users would be liable for this charge.

The current system is not to charge, this is seen as untenable going forward. A nominal fee has been put forward that covers the cost to the council, to charge more may be illegal.

IMPACT

It is acknowledged that in implementing a charging regime there is likely to be an impact on the number of financial assessments made, the collection of income and potential bad debts.

MITIGATION

People who need the service may opt out due to the cost of the fee; this will be mitigated by ensuring that the charge is based on an individual's ability to pay.

OPTION: COMMUNITY MEALS

BUDGET SAVING: £75k increased income based on full cost recovery and £125k reduced expenditure based on a smaller contract which reflects anticipated demand

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

Community Meals, or 'meals on wheels', have been a traditional part of adult social services for many years. It involves hot meals being delivered to a number of vulnerable residents every day. At the moment, people receiving community meals pay £2.68 per meal. The cost to the Council is £3.47 per meal.

The proposal is that the Council could increase the charges so the price paid covers the current cost, which would work out at 79p per meal, and replace the current contract with a smaller contract reflecting anticipated demands for the service.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

The Community Meals service is currently delivered by an independent sector provider under a contract which expires in June 2013. Since the contract was awarded in 2008 there has been a significant fall in demand for the service from 2,600 meals per week to 1,900 meals per week and this trend is continuing.

The development of personalisation and introduction of personal budgets and direct payments has undoubtedly had an impact in this area as individuals are making personal choices regarding their nutrition and food provision.

Currently the Council charges £2.68 per meal and this is a subsidised rate. The full cost of providing the meal is estimated to be £3.47 based on the original contract for 2,600 meals.

The fall in demand means that it is unlikely that the Council will need to have in place a large contract for community meals. The current subsidy is therefore no longer appropriate and it is proposed that the current contract is replaced with a smaller contract which reflects anticipated demand for the hot meals service over the next 3 years.

There is no choice provided for dietary requirements within the current service, people simply get what they are given. The service does not tend to cater for any special dietary requirements such as vegetarianism, or any religious considerations. There are now lots of alternative providers of ready meals that can offer much greater choice to people at a reasonable cost to the individual.

Consideration was given to ceasing to provide a hot meal service, however it was felt inappropriate at this time and there will continue to be a small demand for this service as a cost effective alternative to providing additional domiciliary support at meal times.

IMPACT

The assessment of need of an individual who is eligible under Fair Access to Care must take account of their need for nutrition and meal provision and this will be included in their support plan. Adult Social Care will ensure that the range of available choices is discussed with the individual and a suitable arrangement put in place.

MITIGATION

There is now greater choice for people available to access affordable meals, including supermarkets who deliver ready meals to the door and specialist companies who deliver affordable frozen meals that meet all dietary requirements, such as Wiltshire Farm Foods. No subsidy is provided for these alternatives to the home delivered hot meal service. There are also at least 40 luncheon clubs in the Wirral, 9 of which receive a grant payment from the Council.

The Council will ensure that comprehensive information is available to the public on the range of providers of this service.

OPTION: TRANSFORMATION OF DAY SERVICES AND DAYTIME PROVISION

BUDGET SAVING: £2,000,000 to £2,500,000 (depending on option)

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

Currently, Wirral Council provides a number of Day Centres which support people with Learning Disabilities, Physical Disabilities and Mental Health difficulties. The Council is exploring ways to deliver an effective, efficient in-house service that can remain competitive, in terms of quality and cost. All of our Day Centres at the moment need substantial investment to varying degrees to bring them up to an acceptable quality standard.

This option will involve the complete transformation and improvement of day services; which will result in investing in some centres to make them modern, fit for purpose and suitable to provide the best possible support, but would also mean the Council providing fewer centres. The potential for Social Enterprises is also being explored.

Whilst this proposal may result in the closure of some centres, individuals will still be able to access day services if they choose to do so whilst others, through a personal budget, may choose other ways to receive support. The demand for day services in the voluntary sector may increase as people exercise greater choice through personal budgets. The project to transform day services is developing a service model based on the needs and priorities of service users, with a particular focus on employment needs.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

The Council currently operates six in-house day centres for people with physical and learning disabilities, three day centres for people with mental health needs and six day services offering “work type” placements for people with a disability. These have close links with their communities, operate increasingly personalized services and carry out a range of trading activities including catering and sale of plants and produce.

The model of operation needs to evolve further to meet national expectations and changing needs. The policy of offering people Personal Budgets has changed the profile of service provision. It is increasing demand for flexible support packages, which has in turn reduced demand for traditional long term day care. There is evidence that service users often attend more than one day centre and “mix and match” provision. Young people who are making the transition from children’s to adult’s services are not choosing to attend day centres. Council run day centres have not been maintained to market standard and have sometimes been seen as less flexible and innovative than alternative types of provision.

There is also evidence of an increasing demand for the “work type” placements delivered in six of the council’s day services. These currently offer the equivalent of around 130 full time places a day to service users and are anxious to expand the provision to manage demand.

The following factors have been taken into account to develop options to deliver a modernised service:

- The predicted demand for any future service. This has been based upon an analysis of current levels of occupancy of the day centres, future need in terms of the population of young adults coming through the transition process and the choices they are making about what type of day provision to access. This demonstrates that around 33% of the places currently available are not being used. Given the drive towards more personalised services this is likely to increase in coming years and there is a need for the department to

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consolidate its provision at the same time as ensuring that there is sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the learning disabled, physically disabled and mental health “populations”. Based on this analysis it will be necessary for the department to ensure sufficient capacity to support 312 people with physical and learning disabilities and 36 people with mental health needs on a daily basis.

- Having sufficient capacity to meet high dependency needs. As highlighted above, there is a significant minority of service users with profound disabilities who will continue to need specialist centres.
- Where services are located. Any new model of service provision has to be flexible enough to meet individual needs and take into account the increasing emphasis on services based on a locality model, nearer to where people live.
- The level of capital investment in the current provision which would be required to bring centres up to a modern standard. Full condition surveys have been carried out on all buildings and it has been established that although some centres are in a much better state of repair than others, the cost of basic reparation to bring all buildings up to an acceptable standard would be £1.5m. This estimate covers only the basic repairs needed and does not include any level of improvement.
- The need to deliver savings over three years as part of the council’s budget strategy.

Option 1

a) Close one large day centre and consolidate Mental Health provision into one centre.

b) Continue to consolidate current day centre provision and retain as an in-house service

c) Continued development of the Social Enterprise Network on a limited basis

Option 2

a) Close one large day centre and consolidate Mental Health provision into one centre

b) Continue to consolidate current day centre provision and explore the feasibility of all remaining day care provision to be run as a social enterprise

Either option is based upon certain assumptions which may change. The closure of one large centre and the consolidation of mental health services will impact upon usage of remaining centres. An impact assessment and evaluation will need to be carried out to fully assess the impact upon the feasibility of moving towards a wholesale move to a social enterprise model

If the recommendations are not agreed, the Council runs the risk of providing services at its Day Centres that people will not use. This will result in additional financial pressure as resources will be locked into empty buildings rather than being reinvested into supporting people in the community.

With regard to the social enterprise, the risk is that the Council will miss the opportunity to modernise the service in line with current best practice. This will result in the Council not being

able to meet the aspirations of people with disabilities for work based training and employment opportunities.

IMPACT

Day Centres

1. The closure of one large day centre and the consolidation of mental health services will result in a saving of £2 million over three years but will include a reduction of staff.
2. There will be a resale value to the Council if the sites of the former day centres are sold.
3. There are significant implications for staff arising from these proposals. Posts will be lost and full consultation with staff and trade unions will be undertaken. In addition there are significant skills development issues to be addressed with remaining staff as the service moves into its new model.

Social Enterprise Network

1. It is anticipated that the creation of a social enterprise network will generate additional efficiencies within the day services budget and these will form part of the plan to commission this service.
2. There will be significant implications for staff working within these services as they move forward into a new organisation.

All of the options for modernising day services involve the closure of Council run buildings with the resultant risk to staff employed. Whilst management has been covering vacancies with agency staff there is still a potential impact on up to 82 staff directly employed by the Council.

MITIGATION

The department has already engaged “Skills for Care” to undertake an analysis of the skills required within the workforce and a developmental programme will be implemented.

Specialist Human Resource advice will be sought to ensure that TUPE implications are fully understood and there will be extensive consultation with staff and unions as the Business Plan is developed.

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OPTION: HELP AND ADVICE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

BUDGET SAVING: £350,000

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

The Council provides a service for people who are over 65, which is called the 'promoting older people's independence network', or 'POPIN'. This service is about giving older people, who are not eligible for services under Fair Access to Care criteria, support about benefits, and how to access other voluntary and Council services.

The option in this area is to stop providing the service, and instead use existing contracts with a number of voluntary and community organisations to provide the service on our behalf.

This service aims to increase independence, improve access to health and wellbeing services, and also to delay the need for more intensive care as people get older.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

The Council does not have a statutory obligation to provide this service. There are a range of other organisations providing similar services in the voluntary, community and faith sector. Similar advice and guidance is also available from the Council's One Stop Shops.

IMPACT

Staffing implications include 1 Team Support Officer and 10 FTE Advisor posts (of which one is currently vacant).

There may be a risk that individuals will not be able to access alternative services (in the voluntary community and faith sectors) so readily without the support of POPIN. Alternative routes for information and advice in the voluntary community and faith sectors will need to be established.

MITIGATION

Similar services providing advice and guidance are available from the Council's One Stop Shops and voluntary and community organisations and demand for these services may increase. The voluntary, community and faith sector is already aware that a review of existing contracts and grant payments is underway.

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OPTION: REVIEW OF RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES

BUDGET SAVING: £300,000

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

Many Council's have changed and improved their services for learning disabilities, and developed supported living opportunities as an alternative to residential care. The main principles of supported living are that people with learning disabilities own or rent their home and have control over the support they get, who they live with and how they live their lives.

This option is to develop supported housing arrangements for people with Learning Disabilities as an alternative to residential care.

The option seeks to balance the needs of the people involved to increase choice and control, to redesign services that are out dated and not fit for purpose.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

Half of the population of adults with learning disabilities in England live with their families; most of the remainder (33%) live in residential care. Only 15% of adults with learning disabilities have a secure long-term tenancy or their own home. This is in comparison with 70% of the general adult population who own their own home and nearly 30% who rent.

Having a home guarantees a place in the community and is part of how people are accepted as equal citizens. People with learning disabilities are one of the most socially excluded groups in our society and this is primarily a result of an historical segregation of services that unintentionally deny people their own home, choice and control and a decent income; factors which ultimately deny citizenship and social inclusion.

We are committed to extending the options of all people with Learning Disabilities to encourage greater independence by offering more flexible and responsive alternatives to permanent residential care.

The Supported Living option is not only more beneficial to individuals and their families and Carers as previously stated but is a more cost effective and sustainable option for the Council.

The Council places a high number of people in permanent residential care compared to other Local Authorities. There are currently 195 people with Learning Disabilities placed in Residential Care. Based on the current average cost of residential care and the average cost of supported living it is estimated that reducing the number of residential placements by 20 (a 10% reduction) the Council will realise a saving in the region of £300,000.

Continuation or acceleration of the number of people with LD placed in residential care would be detrimental to the individuals, their families and Carers and would not provide a cost effective sustainable solution for the Council.

IMPACT

Staffing resources will need to be identified to undertake a review of existing arrangements.

MITIGATION

There is a need for close working between the Adult Social Services and Housing Services in order to identify appropriate and suitable housing options. The Learning Disability Housing Panel in conjunction with the Supporting People team will identify appropriate and suitable housing options for individuals.

OPTION: REVIEW OF CONTRACTS

**BUDGET SAVING: Day Care - £100,000
Extra Care Housing - £200,000
Respite and short term care - £300,000**

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

Extra Care Housing

The Council has worked with partners to provide over 200 units of extra care housing for older people across 5 locations in the borough. Extra Care Housing is a form of residential care or sheltered housing, whereby the resident lives with a high degree of independence but also receives constant support and protection.

This option involves the Council re-tendering the contracts for these services to seek to provide a service at the same quality but with better value for money, with consideration of the projected huge increase in our elderly population in the coming years.

Extra Care Housing is a valued and beneficial service for those people using it; it is more cost effective and provides a higher level of independence for people than traditional residential care.

Residential and Respite Care

The Council is committed to working with people who use services, their families and carers, partners and providers to develop services and to encourage the market to deliver flexible and personalised respite and short term breaks. The introduction of block contract arrangements for a small number of short term care beds to facilitate assessments post hospital discharge has the potential to generate savings for the Council.

The option involves the introduction of contract arrangements for a small number of short term care beds to help with providing assessments after a person has been discharged from hospital.

Day Care

The Council is committed to working with people who use services, their families and carers, partners and providers to develop services. The Council is developing a contracting framework for day care provided by independent sector providers. This may deliver efficiencies through improved commissioning and the opportunity to standardise daily rates.

The option further proposes that the Council reviews its approach to commissioning day care provided by the independent sector to deliver efficiencies.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

Extra Care Housing

The Council is reviewing these services and developing a contract specification which takes into account future demand from an increasing older population to ensure it delivers a cost effective

alternative to residential care. The proposal involves commissioning a smaller block of care which will make costs between the schemes more consistent.

Residential and Respite Care

The Council currently spends £3.6m on independent respite care.. The cost of this care is generally higher than residential and nursing care because of its short term nature and unpredictable demand. It is anticipated that providers will charge more competitive rates if they have a guaranteed level of demand. In some areas competition may be very limited, which will impact on the savings that could be generated, it will, therefore be necessary also to review the level and type of services.

Day Care

A contract arrangement would enable the Council to implement a standardised rate for day care. The average cost of day care is currently £385 per week, the Council may need to purchase less rather than rely purely on price to deliver a saving in this area.

IMPACT

There may be a positive impact for the voluntary, community and faith sector to have an opportunity for appropriate service providers to bid for these contracts.

MITIGATION

Discussions will take place with relevant providers to mitigate any issues with the market responding at the estimated level.

OPTION: REVIEW OF EMERGENCY DUTY

BUDGET SAVING: £100,000

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

The Council is reviewing its arrangements in the way emergency duty (out of hours) care management processes are delivered.

The proposal is that the current arrangements for out-of-hours emergency response need to be reviewed as the work with the NHS on integrated services progresses.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

Much of the work of the out of hours service relates to mental health and emergency response to older people and disabled adults.

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Trust host Mental Health provision. There is a current review of these services and the Council has been invited to respond to the consultation document. The Council's response will include a proposal that the reconfigured service should incorporate an out-of-hours service. The Council has contracts with supported living providers for older people and disabled adults. These contracts have 24/7 support. These contracts can be developed to provide a point of contact for emergencies.

There will continue to be an out-of-hours rota for Senior Managers and an access to social worker who can be called out if required.

IMPACT

There will be no impact on service. The aim is to achieve a more cost effective model. The changes will have impact on the overall service which is currently shared with Children's services. However the savings are only related to the current adult services contribution to the overall EDT budget.

MITIGATION

This proposal will be developed with all partners.

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OPTION: REVIEW OF EQUIPMENT SERVICES

BUDGET SAVING: £100,000

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

The Council will review its Equipment services and consider alternative options for service delivery. This will include exploring options for a shared service with neighbouring Authorities.

The proposal is that in partnership with the NHS developing a shared service for the provision of equipment for disabled people. The shared service would follow a model that ensured that the arrangement was hosted by a local authority. This will produce savings for both the LA and the NHS.

Further savings potential would become clearer as the shared service option is developed.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

The immediate savings would relate to VAT. In pooled budgets the lead body is responsible for managing the budget and recovers any VAT it incurs under its ordinary VAT recovery mechanism. Therefore if the Council has lead body status, and is responsible for managing the pooled budget expenditure, it should be entitled to recover the VAT it incurs in providing these services. The VAT savings on the LA contribution to the Pooled Budget would be £100k.

IMPACT

There would be no impact on service delivery.

MITIGATION

The required change to the current hosting arrangements would require agreement with the NHS.

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OPTION: SHORT BREAKS

BUDGET SAVING: £320,000 increased income

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

This option proposes a modernisation to short breaks for people with disabilities and mental health needs.

The option involves the following:

Long stay and respite services for people with disabilities

- i) In the short term, the recommended option to progress the move of the 8 residents from Girtrell Court and 'mothball' 50% of Sylvandale.
- ii) In the longer term, subject to consultation with service users and carers and staff, the closure of Sylvandale will result in a further release of resources that will be reinvested into the Community Care Budget, thus making this proposal cost neutral.

Respite services for people with mental health needs

- i) Funding of £500,000 to maintain the service at Fernleigh was allocated as a one year policy option until 31 March 2013. If the service remains unchanged this will result in a budget pressure in 2013/14. The closure of Fernleigh will require the commissioning of 7 beds in the independent sector at an estimated cost of £160,000; this will need to be accommodated from within the Community Care Budget. However, revenue pressures of £340,000 and capital investment of £900,000 will be avoided.
- ii) In the longer term, the closure of both Sylvandale and Fernleigh will result in sufficient release of resources in to the Community Care budget to ensure that the provision of short stay places, for people with learning and physical disabilities and mental health need will become cost neutral and contained within the Community Care Budget.

The re-commissioning of these services will allow the disposal of the Fernleigh and Sylvandale buildings.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

The Council currently provides residential respite and crisis services for people with mental health needs. It also provides long stay residential and short breaks services for people with physical disabilities and learning disabilities from three locations. Fernleigh is located in Leasowe, Girtrell Court in Saughall Massie and Sylvandale in Bromborough.

Council run residential services have not been maintained to market standard and have sometimes been seen as less flexible and innovative than alternative types of provision.

The Department is seeking to balance the needs of those known to the services and the cost pressure of continuing to provide all three services. The proposals would allow sufficient capacity to “lease” four beds to the NHS to enable them to relocate their crisis bed service to Girtrell Court. It is anticipated that this would generate additional income of £320,000 in a full year.

An analysis of the type of short breaks provided by neighbouring Councils has revealed a different pattern of services to that provided, again reinforcing the need for change.

The proposed changes will seek to offer choice and control to people and to make best use of available resources. The model is predominantly one of Councils purchasing short breaks beds from other providers on an “as needs” basis. No Council maintains more than 2 short breaks beds compared to Wirral’s 8.

IMPACT

Should recommendations not be agreed, the Council runs the risk of providing services at Sylvandale and Girtrell that people will not use. This will result in additional financial pressure as resources will be locked into empty buildings rather than being reinvested into supporting people in the community.

With regard to Fernleigh the risk is that the Council will miss the opportunity to modernise the service in line with current best practice. This will result in the Council not being able to run the service, not only due to the significant capital investment required to bring the building up to an acceptable standard but also the additional unbudgeted revenue expenditure.

Both of these proposals involve the closure of Council run buildings with the resultant risk to staff employed. Whilst management has been covering vacancies with agency staff there is still a potential impact on the 100 staff directly employed by the Council.

MITIGATION

A market analysis exercise has been undertaken with a number of Wirral residential providers to ascertain whether there was the capacity within the current market to provide respite care. Although only one of the providers had current capacity, 5 of the 6 contacted indicated that they would be interested in providing a short breaks service.

In addition all people able to access secondary mental health services are now offered a self directed assessment and personal budget which enables them to purchase their own care through a personal assistant or agency.

There is also the potential for the VCF sector to be involved in the provision of these services, in particular as the Department will be looking to commission short stay services within the independent sector.

EIA Status

- **EIA not received**

HR staffing template

- **Awaiting HR Confirmation**

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OPTION: TARGETED SUPPORT

BUDGET SAVING: £3.95m savings and increased income

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

Wirral Council works closely with the NHS to provide a whole range of services for vulnerable adults. These include nursing care, residential care, and Reablement among others. Reablement is where a person is supported back to full health following an illness or injury.

The option in this area is to work with the NHS and reduce the use of higher cost services such as nursing and residential care homes and to jointly change services to work much more closely together in an integrated way to focus on community based alternatives including Intermediate Care, Reablement and assistive technology. The option also includes ensuring that multi disciplinary assessments are comprehensive and ensure individuals are provided with appropriate support.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

The current pattern of investment is skewed towards institutional options. This produces poorer outcomes and is a more expensive model of care. A programme of work is now underway between the Local Authority and the NHS to shift the balance and develop sustainable community interventions and support.

There are a number of efficiencies related to the current high usage of residential and nursing homes in the Wirral. These beds are used for intermediate care and to facilitate early hospital discharge. Community alternatives are not well developed and older people may find themselves being placed in care homes on an interim basis due to a lack of access to domiciliary support. The use of beds as opposed to support in the home is an expensive solution and can reduce an individual's confidence to return to their home and be partly related decisions to remain in care homes.

There is a programme of work ongoing with the NHS, supported by the Kings Fund to achieve greater integration. This programme is focused on delivering streamlined responsive services, better outcomes for people and more efficient use of resources. Jointly with the NHS there is also work underway to develop the market, particularly in the areas of intermediate tier and domiciliary care. This should significantly reduce the numbers of older people going into residential and nursing home care. Over the next few months there will be joint work to develop a commissioning strategy for early intervention and prevention, and this will be the basis for future commissioning with the third sector and help to reduce dependence on some high cost statutory services.

In partnership with the NHS there is further agreement to increase investment in intermediate tier and reablement services. This will include some retendering of existing reablement contracts to ensure they are more outcome focused. The Council will also increase the use of assistive technology and the use of moving and handling equipment to ensure more efficient use of domiciliary care. Finally, it is also recognised that extra care housing is a genuine alternative to residential care and there is a strong evidence base for increasing extra care housing capacity over the next 3 years.

IMPACT

Voluntary, Community and Faith groups will have an increasing contribution to make as individuals are supported in the community and their own homes. They will play an essential part in the formulation of the early intervention and prevention commissioning strategy.

Much of the above is being delivered through a formal programme supported by the Kings Fund. This means that risks are identified and managed within a formal project management approach. There will be some need for operating two models of the service at the same time and there will be a need to ensure that this is tightly managed and resources shifted appropriately.

MITIGATION

Doing nothing is not an option as it produces poorer outcomes and is unaffordable in the medium and long term.

OPTION: REVIEW OF VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR GRANTS

**BUDGET SAVING: £500,000 – review of VCF contracts
£320,000 – review of drugs and alcohol rehabilitation**

DESCRIPTION OF OPTION

The Department of Adult Social Services currently commits £2,218,343 per annum to the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sectors to provide a number of services such as luncheon clubs, advocacy support and day care with funding provided by the Council.

The proposal is that the Council reviews these services as part of a wider Council approach to commission more targeted and cost effective services based on delivering prevention and early intervention services.

This proposal will also include a review of drugs and alcohol assessment and rehabilitation services to commission services that will deliver better outcomes for individuals and to promote harm reduction, treatment, rehabilitation and recovery. This will include stopping funding for organisation core costs with the focus shifting to delivering improved outcomes for people.

RATIONALE FOR SAVINGS

A review of Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Contracts and Grant Funding has highlighted:

- Many contracts are historical and have not been monitored or reviewed for many years. They do not reflect the current agenda for personalisation or demonstrate effective evidence or outcomes for individuals.
- There is a need to secure a sound basis on which prevention and early intervention will be available to members of the public and to demonstrate that resources are deployed in an efficient and effective manner.
- The sector needs to be seen as an integral part of a range of services on offer for the residents, particularly vulnerable people, and fit within the evolving commissioning frameworks that will embrace prevention and early intervention, targeted service provision and dedicated learning disability services.
- There is also a need to recognise the growing purchasing power of individuals and the advent of individual budgets that will enhance choice and control, in contrast to a commissioning and contracting culture based upon contracts that characterise the voluntary. The Council therefore need to afford a community infrastructure that both gives choice and control to individuals and is sustainable within the resources that will be available.

IMPACT

Whilst recognising the integral part played by the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sectors, there is a need to evidence efficient and effective use of current resources. It is proposed that services are reshaped and refocused to address prevention and early intervention. The proposed efficiencies will impact directly in relation to the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sectors with the potential loss of contracts or a rationalisation of current business, with the associated resource implications.

The Council has proactively engaged with Drug and Alcohol Team Commissioners to raise the historic anomaly of grant funding to Arch Initiatives and the need to cease such funding. The removal of the grant will be placed within the overall context of substance misuse funding to mitigate the consequences of reduced funding and the impact upon Arch Initiatives. The primary

risk is the ability of Commissioners to reposition funding to accommodate the loss of grant funding by 31st March 2013 to minimise service disruptions.

MITIGATION

The Council recognises the part to be played by the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sectors in the development of prevention and early intervention but this will require the transformation of how services are currently provided. The reshaping of services will continue to embrace information and advice, advocacy, carers related support services, day opportunities for older people and a range of support services for people with particular needs involving mental health, blind and partially sighted and deaf and hard of hearing.

The grant provided by Adult Social Services for Arch Initiatives has been discussed with representatives from the Drug and Alcohol Action Team to reinforce the need to contain service provision within the National Pooled Treatment Budget Allocation, and reflect service funding trends occurring elsewhere to enable the cessation of the historic grant funding provided by DASS into mainstream substance misuse services. The removal of the grant is considered appropriate given the current level of overall funding received by Wirral services to support substance misuse.