

CABINET

Thursday, 12 March 2015

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	P Davies (Chair)	Leader of the Council
	Councillors	AR McLachlan G Davies AER Jones C Jones C Meaden P Hackett Tony Smith B Mooney S Whittingham	Governance, Commissioning and Improvement Neighbourhoods, Housing and Engagement Support Services Adult Social Care and Public Health Leisure, Sport and Culture Economy Children and Family Services Environment and Sustainability Highways and Transport

LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENT - LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHRONICLE AWARDS

Councillor Phil Davies announced that on Wednesday the Council had won an award for the 'Most Improved Council' at the Local Government Chronicle Awards in London. This was one of the most prestigious awards in local government, a fantastic accolade and the Council had been up against some fierce competition. He informed that he was delighted with this win which demonstrated how much the Council had progressed during the past few years. A challenging process had been gone through involving written representations and a number of presentations.

Councillor Phil Davies thanked the staff for all of their hard work over a challenging three year period. He also thanked all Elected Members and partners in both the public, private and third sectors. Councillor Phil Davies informed that the award had been the result of genuine team effort and the significant work carried out had been recognised. He had the trophy with him and held it up so that all in attendance at the meeting could see it.

150 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bernie Mooney declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No.8 – Residential Nursing Fees Setting Proposal and Agenda Item No 9 – Integrated Health and Social Care Proposed Commissioning and Delivery Arrangements 2015 - by virtue of her employment with Age UK.

All Cabinet Members were also School Governors and therefore declared personal interests in Agenda Item No. 11 – Admission Arrangements for

Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary and Secondary Schools and Co-ordinated Scheme for 2016/17:

151 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 February 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

152 **PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2015/16**

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report by the Strategic Director Transformation and Resources that recommended to Council: That

- (a) the starting salary of the Chief Executive within agreed salary range as already approved by the Council at its meeting on 8 December 2014; and
- (b) the approval of the Council's Pay Policy Statement for the Financial Year 2015/16.

The Strategic Director's report informed the Cabinet that the Localism Act 2011 had set out the requirements for Councils to determine and publish annual pay policy statements. The requirements under the Act included: That

- the Pay Policy Statement be approved by the Council, in advance of the Financial Year to which it related; and
- the Pay Policy Statement be published on the Council's website.

The Cabinet noted that the Pay Policy Statement was required to set out the Council's policies in relation to the following:

- Chief Officers' Remuneration, including salary, allowances and enhancements at termination.
- Remuneration of its lowest paid employees.
- The relationship between Chief Officers' Remuneration and that of other employees.

The Pay Policy Statement was attached to the Strategic Director's report as Appendix 1 for the Cabinet's consideration with a request that it be recommended for approval when it was presented to the Council at its meeting scheduled for 16 March 2015.

The Cabinet was informed that the Department for Communities and Local Government had made some recommendations to revise the code on data transparency and there has been national consultation on this. If approved, this could mean changes to the Pay Policy Statement. In that event the Council would receive an update of the changes made at its meeting.

The Cabinet was also informed that the Pay Policy could be amended by a resolution of the Council. This included in-year amendments.

The Cabinet noted that the 2015/16 Statement reflected key changes and updates that had occurred within the last financial Year as follows:

- The implementation of nationally agreed pay awards. (Paragraph 3.5 of the Pay Policy Statement.) (Final confirmation of the 2014/15 pay award for JNC Youth and Community and the Soulbury Committee were awaited.)
- The changes agreed at the Council meeting held on 8 December 2014 to the salary of the Chief Executive (Paragraph 4.3 of the Pay Policy Statement).
- The annual increase of the Living Wage rate and application of the Living Wage to all employees, including apprentices (Paragraph 3.14 of the Pay Policy Statement).
- Links to the Local Government Transparency Code 2014. The purpose of the Pay Policy was to provide transparency in the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees. The purpose of The Transparency Code was to provide access to data for local people in respect of information relating to the Council, including senior salaries and organisational structure.

The Strategic Director's report reminded the Cabinet that the Chief Executive's salary had been reviewed as part of the recent recruitment process and that the Council had agreed, at its meeting on 8 December 2014, that the salary of the Chief Executive would be within a range of £155- £175k.

At its meeting on 24 February 2015, the Council had confirmed the appointment of the Chief Executive and it was now proposed that the new Chief Executive commence his employment on £165k, with annual incremental progression through the range.

RESOLVED:

That Council be recommended to approve:

- (1) that the Chief Executive 's starting salary be £165k which is within the salary range already agreed, with annual increments of £5k to the top of the salary range; and**
- (2) that the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2015/16 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.**

153 FINANCIAL MONITORING 2014/15 (MONTH 10)

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report by the Acting Section 151 Officer which set out the revenue position for 2014/15, which at Month 10 showed a projected General Fund overspend of £0.77 million (0.3% of the net revenue budget). It was noted that this was an improvement of £50,000 on the Month 9 projected overspend. Councillor Phil Davies informed that he was very pleased to see that the overspend was reducing further and that the Council was on course to, more or less, balance the books.

The Cabinet noted that the Adult Social Services projected overspend had decreased in the month by £30,000 to £2.74 million and management actions required to contain budget pressures had reduced by £0.7 million. The overspend was the result of slippage or non-delivery of in year savings and continued demand pressures. The forecasted overspend within Children's Services had remained the same in Month 10 as in the previous month at £196,000. The overspend largely related to the non-achievement of in year transport savings as well as the costs of external placements. The Families and Wellbeing Directorate had implemented a number of management actions to help compensate and/or limit any adverse variances.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Cabinet notes that at Month 10 (January 2015), the full year forecast projects a General Fund overspend of £772,000;**
- (2) Cabinet notes the changes in budget allocations relating to the re-allocation of the capital financing impairment charges (as outlined in the report) which do not impact on the General Fund position; and**
- (3) Cabinet notes the risks relating to non-delivery of savings detailed within the report and the continued requirement for mitigation and actions to be identified.**

154 **CAPITAL MONITORING 2014/15 (MONTH 10)**

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report of the Acting Section 151 Officer which set out the capital position for 2014/15 at Month 10 (January 2015).

The Cabinet noted that the actual spend against the Capital Programme which was summarised in the report in Table 1. A number of variances had been identified which impacted upon the forecast outturn and these were highlighted in the report in Table 2. The report provides information on the progress in delivering the 2014/15 Capital Programme and the sources of financing.

Councillor Phil Davies informed that he was pleased to see that the Cabinet Member for Support Services had been working hard to release capital receipts which would be reinvested in other Council Services. He thanked Councillor Adrian Jones for being so vigilant.

Councillor Phil Davies invited each Cabinet Member to provide information on important capital projects coming to fruition within each of their portfolios and they responded as follows:

Councillor Chris Meaden informed that the Guinea Gap Leisure Centre in Wallasey had reopened on Monday and the planned leisure facilities in West Kirby would open later in the year. Capital funding had been earmarked to redevelop the Marine Lake in New Brighton.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham referred to major highway improvement works which were actually detailed in the Strategic Directors report at paragraphs 3.26, 3.27 and 3.28. He informed that the Council was investing in the Borough's highway network and now had some of the best roads in the country.

Councillor Chris Jones referred to the Somerville Primary School project and informed that as a consequence it was now a fantastic place for children to go.

Councillor Pat Hackett referred to the recent infrastructure works carried out in New Brighton and informed that it showed the Council's commitment to improving the seafront.

Councillor Bernie Mooney informed that the whole report was a reflection of the Council and the good works it was doing.

Councillor Tony Smith referred to the capital project that was progressing well at Elleray Park Primary School, the new Foxfield Special School which opened in March 2015 and the project to provide two additional classrooms and remodelling works at Fender Primary School. He thanked all of those

involved in these projects and informed that the Council was continuing to update all of the schools in the Council's administrative area.

Councillor Ann McLachlan made reference to the project to bring Birkenhead Town Hall "back to life", relocating staff there and disposing buildings no longer required, thereby realising capital receipts. She informed that the Council would continue to renew and refurbish some of its buildings, using what it had to best advantage and ensuring that "the Wirral £" went further.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the spend to date at Month 10 of £25.8 million, with 83% of the financial year having elapsed be noted; and**
- (2) Cabinet agrees and refers to Council:**
 - (a) The revised Capital Programme of £39.6 million in (Table 1);**
 - (b) The re-profiling in respect of the schemes referred to in Table 2 of £5.785 million.**

155 CREATION OF PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report by the Strategic Director - Regeneration and Environment which sought Members approval to create a Property Development Framework that would support the development of new commercial floor space within Wirral. The Framework would set out a number of alternative development models that could be used to address the economic viability of projects where the build costs were greater than the end value. This proposal would enable commercial projects to be delivered that met the objectives of the Council's Investment Strategy.

The Strategic Director was in attendance at the meeting and briefly explained the technicalities associated with a Property Development Framework which would give the Council some different opportunities and options in future. His report outlined how it was proposed that the Council could do things differently. It was suggested that the Council took out head-leases, entering into agreements with developers. The proposal was that the Council would rent new buildings and then rent them on to others. The Strategic Director accepted that there were risks associated with this strategy but it was a way to get businesses to grow and relocate to Wirral. He also proposed to continue gap funding in some circumstances. Head-leases carried the biggest risk but this would be managed by using the reserve in the event that a business went "bust". The Strategic Director informed that he would ensure that buildings being developed were re-lettable.

Councillor Phil Davies reported that the big advantage of looking at the proposed mechanism was that it would enable the Council to retain in Wirral those companies who wanted to expand. He considered it sensible to use £700,000 in this way for this purpose

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet agrees to establish a Property Development Framework based on the three delivery models set out in Section 2 of the report in order to support the delivery of the Council's Investment Strategy;**
- (2) the Cabinet authorises Officers to identify sources of funding to support the implementation of the Property Development Framework – both external and internal resources;**
- (3) the Cabinet agrees that £700,000 from the Working Neighbourhood's reserves be reclassified as Property Development Framework reserve to be used as a contingency budget for the use of the Head Lease delivery model;**
- (4) the Cabinet agrees that any surplus made by the Council from the rental charged through the Head Lease arrangement would be reinvested into the contingency reserve;**
- (5) each and every project considered under the Property Development Framework be brought forward to Cabinet for approval and be accompanied by a detailed report reflecting a full project appraisal and setting out how the specific matter complies with all financial and legal requirements; and**
- (6) an annual report on the performance of the Framework be presented to the Cabinet.**

156 **ENTERPRISE ZONE - RE-INVESTMENT OF BUSINESS RATE UPLIFT**

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report by the Strategic Director - Regeneration and Environment sought approval to develop a Wirral Waters Enterprise Zone Investment Plan. The local plan would build on Government Enterprise Zone Policy to use uplift in business rates within the EZ as a catalyst for the longer-term regeneration proposals of Wirral Waters and other economic regeneration programmes in Wirral.

The Cabinet noted that the Investment Plan would develop a base financial model for growth, identify and assess key risks and propose a schedule of projects that required funding which would be provided through the uplift in business rates generated by the Wirral Waters Enterprise Zone. The

Investment Plan would be presented to the Cabinet for approval and every subsequent project proposal would be considered on a case by case basis.

The Strategic Director explained the technicalities associated with his proposals informing that this followed on from the previous report. He reported that an important consideration was that the Council retained the business rate uplift and reinvested in the enterprise zone. The Strategic Director proposed that the Council utilised the business rate uplift and borrow to develop an Investment Plan. He asked the Cabinet to use the business rate supplement and develop a plan to accelerate further development.

Councillor Phil Davies informed the Cabinet that it was fantastic to see two schemes already underway in the Wirral Waters development. They would be the catalyst for others that would follow.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet agrees to the development of an investment framework for the reinvestment of business rate uplift within the Wirral Waters Enterprise Zone in order to support the delivery of the Councils Investment Strategy and long -term vision of Wirral Waters;**
- (2) the Cabinet will receive the copy of the investment framework and project business plans on a case by case basis;**
- (3) a formal sign off be given to the Enhanced Capital Allowances area of the Enterprise Zone; and**
- (4) an annual report on the performance of the scheme be presented to the Cabinet.**

157 **RESIDENTIAL/NURSING FEES SETTING PROPOSALS**

Councillor Chris Jones introduced a report by the Director of Adult Social Services that reported on the outcome of a consultation with care home providers in respect of the 2015-16 residential and nursing home fees and recommended the fees for 2015-16.

Appended to the Director's report were comparisons of Residential/Nursing Fees with those of other Councils.

RESOLVED:

That the new fee rates as set out in section 2.5 of the report be supported.

Councillor Chris Jones introduced a report by the Strategic Director - Families and Wellbeing which informed that closer integration of health and social care had been a central driver within National policy. It was underpinned by the Better Care Fund and remained a key theme in the 'Five Year Forward View', which stated that the NHS would need to "take decisive steps to break down the barriers of how care is provided". The Cabinet noted that locally, the Vision 2018 programme had been established to provide a health and social care sector response to the significant system wide pressures in Wirral and the £150m reduction in collective resources by 2018. It was clear that a greater sense of collaboration between commissioners was vital in responding to these challenges and creating a cohesive whole system of care.

Work on the BCF business case, and agreements in relation to key commissioning priorities had shown the value of very close collaboration. The level of collaboration and joint strategic decision making could be further improved by integrating the commissioning response working effectively across the health and social care economy. To this end, colleagues from Wirral CCG and Adult Social Care had been working closely together to explore how the above organisations could work together in greater alignment, moving towards full integration over time, specifically in the areas of joint commissioning, quality assurance and commissioning support arrangements.

The Strategic Director's report informed that in addition to the drive to integrate commissioning arrangements, a key work stream under Vision 2018 had focused on creating a model for the full integration of community Health and Social care teams based within the constituency model. The Integrated Co-ordinated Care Teams would fulfil the delivery functions carried out by social workers and nurses to offer a fully integrated response to meeting people's needs more effectively providing a range of flexible responses closer to home and with a focus on avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions.

The Strategic Director's report outlined progress that was being made towards greater integration of both leadership and management arrangements across health and adult social care, specifically focusing on commissioning and quality assurance, and the operational delivery of social work and support planning. The Cabinet noted that these changes were being made in the interests of providing a single cohesive approach across health and social care services to benefit the people of Wirral and to use resources more effectively.

Councillor Phil Davies informed that this report was very important in terms of the future direction of travel. It was important that the Council used existing

funding that it and the NHS had and pooled their budgets etc. This was the right approach and it should be pursued as quickly as possible.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet notes the direction of travel towards greater integration in relation to; the commissioning and quality assurance of health and social care, and the direct delivery of social work support planning and community nursing services;**
- (2) the Cabinet supports the formation of a formal Management Agreement between the CCG and the Council setting out how, in practical terms, the Director of Adult Social Care will fulfil statutory duties through working across both organisations to drive more effective commissioning outcomes in the areas set out in the report. This is subject to further discussions with Legal and HR Services; and**
- (3) the Cabinet supports the next steps as set out in section 2 of the report including the further development of the specification for the operating model for the integrated teams, including the aims and objectives for integrated community services.**

159 **PENSBY HIGH SCHOOLS - OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION**

Councillor Tony Smith introduced a report by the Director of Children's Services that advised the Cabinet of the outcomes of the consultation process which had taken place in respect of the amalgamation of Pensby High School for Boys and Pensby High School for Girls, as agreed by the Cabinet on November 2014. (Minute No.90 refers.) The report described the responses, and made recommendations with regard to statutory proposals in this area.

Appended to the Director's report was the consultation leaflet as Appendix 1 and a summary of responses as Appendix 2.

Councillor Phil Davies informed that there seemed to be overwhelming support for what was being proposed.

RESOLVED:

That statutory proposals be published in respect of the following linked proposals:

- (a) The closure of Pensby High School for Boys from 31 August 2015.**

- (b) **A prescribed alteration to the gender intake of Pensby High School for Girls from 1 September 2015.**
- (c) **The Director of Children’s Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to publish these proposals and ensure the prescribed procedures are followed in furtherance of the proposals.**

160 **ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND COORDINATED SCHEME FOR 2016/17**

Councillor T Smith introduced a report by the Director of Children’s Services invited the Cabinet to determine the Authority’s admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools and the co-ordinated schemes for 2016-2017. This was a statutory requirement.

The Authority was required to determine admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools. The New School Admissions (England) Regulations (2003) also required the Authority to have in place a co-ordinated scheme for admissions to all primary and secondary schools including Academy schools, in 2016-17. The proposed schemes were attached along with proposed admission numbers for community and controlled schools (Appendices 1 and 2 to the report).

The Cabinet noted that no responses had been received to the consultation.

The Cabinet also noted that subsequent to the commencement of the Wirral consultation on 26 November 2014, on 19 December 2014 the Department for Education issued a new version of the statutory guidance on school admissions, replacing the previous version dated 2012. Relevant sections of the Wirral co-ordinated schemes had, therefore, been updated accordingly in line with the new Code. For example, all paragraphs which previously referred to Statements of Special Educational Needs now also included reference to the new Education Health and Care Plans.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools and the Wirral co-ordinated schemes for 2016-2017 be agreed.

BIRKENHEAD TOWN CENTRE - MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLES

Councillor Pat Hackett introduced a report of the Strategic Director - Regeneration and Environment that sought Members' approval to the key principles of the Master Plan for Birkenhead Town Centre (Appendix 1 to the report) which had been prepared by Neptune Developments Limited. This was a requirement of the lock-out agreement that Neptune had with the Council until 31 March 2015.

The Strategic Director informed that if these principles were supported which was the next key stage in the process they would form the basis for:

the undertaking of a test of lawfulness in relation to the master plan principles;

consultation with the public concerning the proposals

consultation with staff and Trade Unions about the potential relocation of Europa Pools.

The Cabinet noted that, at this stage, the Council was seeking to consult and test Neptune Development's proposals and would bring back a report for the Cabinet, for decision, once the outcome of the lawfulness test and consultations were known.

Appended to the report as Appendix 1 was the Birkenhead Town Centre Development Framework.

Councillor Phil Davies informed that he was pleased to see that there was now a realistic plan to improve the offer in Birkenhead Town Centre. There needed to be foot fall into the retail centre. At this stage the Cabinet was being asked to agree the master plan in principle. It noted that it was intended to carry out consultation exercises.

The Strategic Director – Regeneration and Employment reported that Birkenhead Shopping Centre had been put up for sale, along with six others by the owners LaSalle Investment.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the key principles of the master plan proposed by Neptune Developments Limited set out in Appendix 1 to the report be agreed and be used as the basis for the test of lawfulness and for consultation with the public, staff and Trade Unions as set out in the report;**
- (2) a further detailed report on the outcomes be brought back to Cabinet for a future decision; and**

- (3) the Strategic Director - Families and Wellbeing be authorised to undertake consultation with staff and Trade Unions concerning the potential re-location of Europa Pools.**

162 PERIODIC REVIEW OF FEES FOR SCRAP METAL LICENSES

Councillor George Davies introduced a report by the Strategic Director - Regeneration and Environment that requested that the Cabinet review and approve the schedule of fees for the administration and processing of applications under The Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 with effect from 1 April 2015.

The Cabinet noted that the Council was legally entitled to charge such a fee for licences that it considered reasonable with a view to recover the costs of administering the scheme and ensuring compliance.

Under the provisions of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 the cost of a licence must be related to the cost of the licensing scheme itself. It was therefore, appropriate for a local authority to recover their administrative and other associated costs.

Estimated costs to the Licensing Section of licensing Scrap Metal Dealers had previously been calculated as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report. A review of current costs had been undertaken and it had been identified that from January 2015 the licensing function would be subject to a 2.2% increase in staffing costs. The Cabinet was, therefore, asked to approve an increase in the licensing fees for Scrap Metal Licences as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report to reflect the increase in the cost of the administration.

RESOLVED:

That the fees for Scrap Metal Licences be set as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report and come into effect from 1 April 2015.

163 SELECTIVE LICENSING

Councillor George Davies introduced a report by the Strategic Director Regeneration and Environment which set out the results of the consultation exercise on a proposal for a Selective Licensing Scheme for private landlords in four designated areas in the Borough known as :-

- Area 1 - Birkenhead South
- Area 2 - Egerton North
- Area 3 - Seacombe Library
- Area 4 - Egremont Promenade South

Councillor George Davies informed that selective licensing was intended to address the impact of poor quality private landlords and anti-social tenants. It had primarily been developed with the need to tackle problems in areas of low housing demand in mind.

The report set out the background and key issues, the statutory consultation requirements in respect of local authorities designating a licensing scheme, the consultation that the Council had actually undertaken the resulting changes to the Business Plan as well as the risks, other options considered and the financial planning and community safety and legal implications.

Appended to the report as Appendix 1 was the proposed fees structure drawn up following the consultation that had been carried out.

The Cabinet noted that Maps and Address lists could be found in the Draft Business Case which was available in the Council's web library.

Based on the feedback from the consultation undertaken and the robust evidence used for the Business Case rationale, Members were asked to approve the introduction of a Selective Licensing Scheme for all private rented properties within the four designated areas under Section 80 of the Housing Act 2004.

The Strategic Director was in attendance at the meeting and informed that some costs of the overall service would be offset by the fee income generated as part of the licence process however it was also anticipated if a Scheme was taken forward, the reduction of vacant and poorly managed properties would drive increases in Council Tax income as more people would choose to reside in the areas because of an improved quality of housing offer. Empty houses being brought back into use would generate additional Council tax.

The Strategic Director also informed the Cabinet that he was aware that draft Orders were being laid before Parliament but he did not believe that they would have an impact.

Councillor Phil Davies informed that the Selective Licensing Scheme for private landlords was one of his Administration's flag ship policies and he was very pleased that it was being rolled out now.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the proposal for the designation of Selective Licensing in the four areas in the Borough as set out in the Business Plan to cover all private tenancies in accordance with Section 80 of the Housing Act 2004 be approved;**

- (2) the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment and the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Engagement be given delegated authority to take all necessary steps to implement the operational delivery of selective licensing including recruitment of staff;
- (3) it be agreed that the selective licensing designation shall come into force on 1 April 2015 with an anticipated target commencement date of 1 July 2015;
- (4) delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for neighbourhoods Housing and Engagement to discuss co-regulation options with the National Landlords Association and other representative organisations; and
- (5) the report be referred to the Council meeting scheduled to be held on 16 March 2015 for its approval.

164 **NOMINATION OF CIVIC MAYOR AND DEPUTY CIVIC MAYOR 2015/16**

The Cabinet was requested to make nominations for the roles of Civic Mayor and Deputy Civic Mayor for the Municipal Year 2014/2015, which would then be submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED:

That the following nominations be made for the Municipal Year 2015/2016 at the Annual Meeting of the Council scheduled to be held on 18 May 2015.

- Councillor L Rowlands for the role of Civic Mayor.
- Councillor P Hackett for the role of Deputy Civic Mayor.

165 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

166 **APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report by the Strategic Director - Regeneration and Environment that sought approval to provide a grant to a company to assist it with its business expansion project.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a grant, paid from the date of the signing of the legal agreement, be approved towards the business growth project being undertaken by the company named within the report; and**
- (2) the Head of Legal and Member Services be authorised to draw up and sign a legal agreement between the Council and the business based upon the content of the report and subject to the detailed contracting process.**

167 **PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: HEAD LEASE WITH COMPANY**

Councillor Pat Hackett introduced a report by the Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment which sought approval to authorise the Council to take out a Head Lease with a local development company for an initial period of ten years to allow it to use the Authority’s covenant strength to render a new build industrial unit commercially viable. The new accommodation would be constructed for a known end-user who was a Wirral based company who wanted to expand its operations. The costs of the Head Lease would be underwritten using resources from the proposed Property Development Framework that had been discussed earlier in the meeting. (Minute No. 155 refers.)

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet agrees to the principle of the Council taking out a ten year Head Lease on a new industrial development which will then be sub-let to the company named in the report; and**
- (2) the cost of the Head Lease will be underwritten from the newly established Property Development Framework.**