

COUNCIL

Monday, 20 March 2017

Present: The Civic Mayor (Councillor Pat Hackett) in the Chair
Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor AR McLachlan)

Councillors	RL Abbey	JE Green	C Povall
	T Anderson	P Hayes	L Reecejones
	B Berry	A Hodson	L Rennie
	C Blakeley	K Hodson	L Rowlands
	E Boulton	T Johnson	T Smith
	A Brighthouse	AER Jones	W Smith
	P Brightmore	C Jones	C Spriggs
	D Burgess-Joyce	T Jones	J Stapleton
	C Carubia	S Kelly	P Stuart
	P Cleary	B Kenny	M Sullivan
	W Clements	A Leech	A Sykes
	A Davies	I Lewis	T Usher
	G Davies	AR McLachlan	W Ward
	P Davies	J McManus	G Watt
	WJ Davies	C Meaden	S Whittingham
	P Doughty	D Mitchell	J Williamson
	D Elderton	B Mooney	I Williams
	G Ellis	C Muspratt	KJ Williams
	S Foulkes	T Norbury	S Williams
	P Gilchrist	M Patrick	

Apologies Councillors J Hale D Realey
M McLaughlin J Walsh
T Pilgrim

135 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

All councillors who have been appointed to serve as governors on school and college sixth form governing bodies declared a Personal Interest in Item No. 11 – Notices of Motion in relation to Government Cuts in School Funding

Councillor Jeff Green declared a Personal Interest in Item No. 11 – Notices of Motion in relation to Government Cuts in School Funding by virtue of his Wife's employment.

Councillor Jeff Green declared a Prejudicial Interest in Item No. 11 – Notices of Motion in relation to Keeping Large Lorries on the Right Road by virtue of his employment. He indicated that he would take no part in the discussion or debate and would leave the Chamber at this point.

Councillor Les Rowlands declared a Personal Interest in Item No. 11 – Notices of Motion in relation to Government Cuts in School Funding by virtue of his Wife's employment.

Procedural matter

It was moved by Councillor B Kenny and duly seconded, that - "Standing Order 9 (meeting guillotine) be applied from 8.30pm."

The motion was put and carried (34:25) (One abstention).

Resolved – That Standing Order 9 be applied from 8:30pm.

NB. The following Councillors requested that their objections be recorded:

Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, D Burgess-Joyce, W Clements, D Elderton, G Ellis, J Green, P Hayes, AC Hodson, K Hodson, I Lewis, C Povall, L Rennie, L Rowlands, A Sykes, GCJ Watt and S Williams.

136 **CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Civic Mayor noted that apologies had been received from Councillors John Hale, Moira McLaughlin, Denise Realey, Tracey Pilgrim and Joe Walsh.

The Mayor announced that the recipient of the Andy Day Memorial Cup for 2017/2018, an award which was presented annually in memory of a former councillor to confer recognition on a member of the Council who, in the Mayor's opinion, had demonstrated the qualities of dedication and selflessness possessed by the late Councillor, was Councillor Warren Ward.

137 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council Meeting, and the Extraordinary Meeting, held on 6 March 2017 had been circulated to Members.

On a motion by the Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor George Davies, it was -

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

138 **PETITIONS**

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

- (i) Councillor Chris Meaden on behalf of 75 signatories “opposing the application for a Children’s Day Nursery in particular the provision of parking at the former Well Lane Police Station. Planning application number APP/16/01585”.
- (ii) Councillor Adrian Jones on behalf of 136 signatories “Calling on the Council to protect St. John’s Church, Egremont”.

RESOLVED – That the petitions be noted and referred to the appropriate Chief Officer in accordance with Standing Order 34.

139 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No public questions had been received.

140 **LEADER’S, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS’ AND CHAIRS REPORTS**

The Mayor introduced the summary reports from the Leader, Cabinet Members and Policy and Performance Committee Chairs and asked for questions on any of the reports.

Councillor Chris Blakeley asked a question of the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care.

Councillor Chris Jones stated in response.

- Further to earlier debate re Girtrell Court, residents accessing care were consulted as to choice of care packages and a varied range of options are to be provided as a result. The number of people accessing care is not always easy to predict, but we are confident that needs will be met in the alternative provision.

Councillor Jeff Green asked two questions of the Leader.

Councillor Phil Davies stated in response.

- Any reduction in unemployment levels are welcomed, and Members and Officers of the Council are working hard to ensure that momentum is not lost. Successes continue with a further 75 new jobs being created as a result of the Wind Farm extension. On the negative side it is shameful that zero hour contracts make up a proportion of the reported national statistics.

- In terms of the Council's contribution to the new Growth Company, information detailing assets will form part of a detailed report to Cabinet in May 2017. Further information regarding the joint venture and business case may be found in the report considered by Cabinet on 27 February 2017. Elected Member workshops will provide further updates as the project progresses.

Councillor Jeff Green asked a question of the Cabinet Member - Transformation, Leisure and Culture.

Councillor Ann McLachlan stated in response.

- With regard to the staffing costs identified, it should be remembered that the transformation agenda has been born out of austerity. The proposals running over a period of 4 to 5 years must result in an overall saving of £40million. The £1.3million mentioned is a substantial figure, but delivery of the project requires a skilled and knowledgeable team and represents good value given the challenges ahead.

Councillor Angela Davies asked a question of the Cabinet Member - Transformation, Leisure and Culture.

Councillor Ann McLachlan stated in response.

- BWB – Bates Wells and Braithwaite area commercial London law firm that provides a full legal service underpinned by a commitment to the public interest. By utilising their services and sustainable cost models, this Council aims to protect jobs, make best use of its assets and re-invest in Wirral's future.

Councillor Phil Brightmore asked a question of the Cabinet Member - Community Engagement and Communications.

Councillor Matthew Patrick stated in response.

- Elected Members will play an important role in any proposals for Constituency Committee reviews. Along with Councillors, there will be full engagement with other partners i.e. Community Groups, Committee Members, Chairs and Constituency Managers.

Councillor Lesley Rennie asked questions of the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure.

In response comments included:

Councillor Chris Jones.

- Any additional funding for Adult Social Care is welcome, however the £2billion total provided nationally - £12million for Wirral is to be spread over a 3 year term. It is calculated that Wirral is underfunded to the sum of £19million, and this short term one off payment is not sufficient for sustainable planning. This is not just a Wirral problem, but one experienced nationally.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham.

- He was not aware of the specific circumstances on individual locations, regarding failed street lighting, but a written response would be provided to all Elected Members regarding the statistics for the Borough, to include assurance that there is proper ongoing review of all reported failings.

Councillor Tom Anderson asked a question of the Cabinet Member - Community Engagement and Communications and the Cabinet Member – Public Health.

In response comments included:

Councillor Matthew Patrick.

- There was no mention of Wirral View in his report, but the point raised regarding decision and Call-In announcements will be investigated and a written response will be provided.

Councillor Janette Williamson.

- Welcoming the enquiry, Councillor Williamson repeated her strong support of the programme to raise awareness of the over-prescription of antibiotics. It had become increasingly clear of the dangers from over-prescription, and GPs were now leading as 'guardians' in the challenge. She highlighted a new Public Health England antibiotic guardian 'pick-a-pledge' website where members of the public could learn simple actions to help fight antibiotic resistance.

Councillor Pat Cleary asked questions of the Cabinet Member – Housing and Community Safety and the Cabinet Member – Transport and Infrastructure.

In response comments included:

Councillor George Davies.

- The enforced sale of empty properties and business premises such as public houses is supported, particularly when they have a detrimental effect on an area. This Council is working to ensure that good quality housing is available to those who need it. Wirral is progressing well in its endeavours through

engagement with the Liverpool City Region plans and Housing Zone Status providing access to additional funds.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham.

- He was not aware of the specific circumstances on individual locations, but he was assured that programmed works would continue to progress, with funds allocated in the highways maintenance budget. If details could be provided, he would ensure a written response would be made available to all Members.

Councillor Ian Lewis asked questions of the Cabinet Member - Community Engagement and Communications and the Cabinet Member – Transport and Infrastructure.

In response comments included:

Councillor Matthew Patrick.

- There was no mention of the Wirral View in his report, but he was happy to respond to the point raised. Prior to the introduction of Wirral View the Council actually spent more on information dissemination, reaching fewer residents than currently – particularly those living in less affluent areas of the Wirral.

The Assistant Director: Law and Governance provided additional information on rules regarding Purdah and Council statements / publications during the Purdah period.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham.

- There was no mention of trees in his report, and he was not aware of the specific circumstances regarding an individual location, but if Councillor Lewis could e-mail him with the details he would ensure a response would be provided.

Councillor Stuart Kelly asked a question of the Cabinet Member - Transformation, Leisure and Culture.

Councillor Ann McLachlan stated in response.

- A report detailing Wirral's Culture and Leisure assets that includes detailed information and proposals regarding condition surveys and interim investment is scheduled for consideration at Cabinet on 27 February 2017. Scrutiny will be a key part of the process, with the Business Scrutiny Committee being provided with regular updates on progress.

Councillor Phil Gilchrist asked a question of the Leader and the Cabinet Member – Transport and Infrastructure.

In response comments included:

Councillor Phil Davies.

- Re-iterating his earlier response, information detailing Council assets will form part of a detailed report to Cabinet in May 2017. Further information regarding joint venture proposals and business case may be found in the report considered by Cabinet on 27 February 2017.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham.

- He was in receipt of Councillor Gilchrist's written question and would respond in detail under the next item of Council business, Item 7 (Member's Questions), minute 141, post.

Councillor David Elderton asked a question of the Leader.

Councillor Phil Davies stated in response.

- With regards to Car Parking charges, the primary driver for consideration of their proposed introduction had been the stringent cuts to the Council's income from Central Government Policy. Proposals had been modified as a result of listening to feedback from the public. This Council would welcome discussions with the Minister at any opportunity to further explain the impact on local government finances, or the opportunity for a 'sweetheart deal' as offered to some other local authorities.

Councillor Chris Spriggs asked a question of the Cabinet Member – Public Health.

Councillor Janette Williamson stated in response.

- Everything possible should be done to raise awareness of Mental Health issues, the services currently provided in Wirral should be commended for what they do with regards to assisting people in their day to day lives and helping people become 'work ready' via such projects as 'First Steps'.

Councillor Cherry Povall asked a question of the Cabinet Member – Transport and Infrastructure.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham stated in response.

- Investment in highways infrastructure is always welcomed and the dropped kerbs provided at the traffic lights / roundabout at Clatterbridge served as part of a scheduled programme of

improvement works. There were a number of bus stops in the location, indicating that there was pedestrian traffic. He further stated that he would investigate the points raised regarding subsidence at Beechway and recent petitions regarding potholes, and would provide a written response to Elected Members.

Councillor Jean Stapleton asked a question of the Leader.

Councillor Phil Davies stated in response.

- Attendance at the MIPIM 4-day real estate exhibition, conference and networking event provided an opportunity to showcase Wirral, Merseyside and other UK City Regions. With a view to future partnerships, and supported by Senior Officers, we were able to pitch Wirral's growth company and have discussion with Ministers, gathering information and making direct contact with 40 prospective investors. Further updates on progress will also form part of the business case update to be reported to Cabinet in May 2017.

Councillor Dave Mitchell asked a question of the Leader.

Councillor Phil Davies stated in response.

- Re-iterating his earlier response to Councillor Elderton, consultation had taken place regarding the proposed introduction of Car Parking charges and proposals had been modified as a result of listening to feedback from the public.

RESOLVED –

(1) That each of the Cabinet Portfolio Summary reports be noted.

(2) That the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs be noted.

141 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

In accordance with Standing Order 10(2) the Council had been advised of two questions.

Councillor P Gilchrist having given notice of questions to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure asked various questions on street lighting.

The Cabinet Member stated that there was no change in the number of lighting faults reported on, on 19th December 2016; total of known units currently unlit including lit signs and bollards was 2,245; number of lights known to be 'out' of action for various reasons was 2,245 which included lit

signs and bollards. He indicated that approximately 100 were being repaired each week on average.

In relation to the time taken to clear the existing backlog, the Cabinet Member indicated that this would vary, since a high percentage required capital investment and £560,000 of capital improvements would be made in 2017/18 to address more significant works required, such as replacement of columns or significant re-cabling. For routine repairs, there were approximately 7 weeks of work for the contract to attend during March and into the 2017/18 year.

In relation to reports being fully transferred from one IT system to another. The Cabinet Member reported that there was a common misunderstanding that because faults logged by residents were no longer visible on the system after 30 days that they had been 'lost'. This was not the case, and that the Councillor could be assured that all logged faults remained on the system until they had been attended to.

He was pleased to report that the service was to implement a completely new version of the system for recording street lighting information including fault reports, from June 2017, which would certainly alleviate most, if not all of the concerns raised, and the system would be far more user friendly than the current system.

142 **MATTERS REFERRED FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES OR OTHER COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (5) the Council was asked to consider the following recommendations of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee (see minutes 143 to 144 post).

143 **NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS - SCRUTINY REVIEW**

The Mayor advised of a referral from Cabinet (16 January, 2017) 'Number of Councillors Scrutiny Review', which originated as a Notice of Motion at Council on 20 October, 2014, "44 Councillors" (minute 57 refers). The minute from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30 November, 2016 (minute 32) and the minute from Cabinet (minute 83) are attached together with the Scrutiny Review. In accordance with Standing Order 7(5) the Council will be asked to consider the recommendation of the Committee and Cabinet.

Prior to the vote on the motion, Councillor Phil Davies and five Labour Members rose to request a 'card vote'.

A 'card vote' was then taken on the referral and the Council divided as follows:

For the motion (40) Councillors R Abbey, A Brighthouse, P Brightmore, C Carubia, P Cleary, A Davies, G Davies, P Davies, W Davies, P Doughty, S Foulkes, P Gilchrist, T Johnson, A Jones, C Jones, T Jones, S Kelly, B Kenny, A Leech, A McLachlan, J McManus, C Meaden, D Mitchell, B Mooney, C Muspratt, T Norbury, M Patrick, L Reecejones, PA Smith, W Smith, C Spriggs, J Stapleton, P Stuart, M Sullivan, T Usher, W Ward, S Whittingham, I Williams, KJ Williams and J Williamson.

Against (18) Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, D Burgess-Joyce, Mrs W Clements, D Elderton, G Ellis, J Green, P Hayes, AC Hodson, K Hodson, I Lewis, C Povall, L Rennie, L Rowlands, GJC Watt, and S Williams.

Two abstentions – Councillor P Hackett and Councillor A Sykes.

RESOLVED -

The Cabinet referral of the 16 January 2017 (Minute 83 refers) was therefore Carried (40:18) (Two abstentions).

144 **NOTICE OF MOTION - INWARD INVESTMENT**

The Mayor advised of a referral from Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee (24 January, 2017), which originated as a Notice of Motion at Council on 17 October, 2016, "Inward Investment" (minute 67(3) refers). The minute from the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 January, 2017 (minute 51) was attached together with the Notice of Motion.

Moved by Councillor Mike Sullivan as the Chair of Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee and seconded by Councillor P Davies it was –

RESOLVED (39:20) (One Abstention) – That the resolutions of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee be approved.

145 **VACANCIES**

In accordance with Standing Order 25(6) the Council was requested to deal with the following matter in respect of the membership of committees and appointments to outside organisations.

The Mayor indicated that Councillor Denise Roberts sadly passed away on 8 February, 2017 and as a result, the following vacancies had arisen and would require consideration at Council.

The Mayor paid tribute to Councillor Roberts and the following vacancies were a testament to the dedication and devotion of the work undertaken by Councillor Roberts and indeed all Councillors.

Committee Appointments

- Employment and Appointments Committee – Deputy
- Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Deputy
- Licensing Act 2003 Committee - Committee Member
- Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee - Committee Member
- People Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Committee Member
- Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee – Committee Member (Chair)

Outside Body Appointments

- Mersey Port Health Committee
- Tam O'Shanter Cottage Trust
- Charing Cross Play Youth and Community Centre Joint Management Committee
- Birkenhead Sixth Form College Governing Body
- Beechwood Play and Community Centre Joint Management Committee
- Arch Initiatives - Wirral Management Committee
- Wirral Council for Voluntary Service - Management Committee

Councillor P Davies indicated that he would provide nominations to the Assistant Director: Law and Governance in relation to these vacancies

Additional Appointments to Outside Bodies

The West Kirby Charity

- Ms Nadine Smith (to be appointed until 18 October, 2020)
- Mrs Alison Wright (to be appointed until 30 October, 2019)

It was moved by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor George Davies that –

RESOLVED (unanimously) That –

- (1) Nominations for the above memberships to Outside Bodies and Committees of the Members' Development Steering Group be provided to the Assistant Director: Law and Governance; and**

- (2) **Ms Nadine Smith be appointed until 18 October, 2020 and Mrs Alison Wright be appointed until 30 October, 2019 to the West Kirby Charity.**

146 **MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL OR CONSIDERATION BY THE COUNCIL**

In accordance with Standing Order 5(2), five matters were submitted for approval by the Council, and one matter for noting by the Council (see minutes 147 to 151 post).

147 **CAPITAL MONITORING 2016/17 QUARTER 3**

The first matter requiring approval was in relation to the Capital Monitoring Report 2016/17 Quarter 3 and the recommendations from Cabinet of 20 February, 2017 (Minute 89 refers).

It was moved by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor George Davies that the recommendations of Cabinet of 20 February, 2017 (Minute 89 refers).

RESOLVED (59:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within Minute 89 of Cabinet, be agreed.

148 **PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2017/18**

The second matter requiring approval was in relation to the Pay Policy Statement 2017/18 and the recommendations from Cabinet of 27 February, 2017 (Minute 89 refers).

It was moved by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor George Davies that the recommendations of Cabinet of 20 February, 2017 (Minute 97 refers).

RESOLVED (59:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within Minute 97 of Cabinet, be agreed.

149 **DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2017/18 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The third matter requiring approval was in relation to the Draft Calendar of Meetings for the 2017/18 Municipal Year and the recommendations from Cabinet of 20 February, 2017 (Minute 89 refers).

It was moved by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor George Davies that the recommendations of Cabinet of 27 February, 2017 (Minute 99 refers).

One amendment which had been circulated in advance of the meeting was submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

Amendment

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Council considers that the draft Calendar proposed:

- (a) provides insufficient opportunities for Members to debate issues in a timely manner;
- (b) provides insufficient opportunities for Members to question the Cabinet and hold them to account.

Council notes that Members have resorted to seeking Extraordinary Council meetings intended to secure adequate opportunities for debate.

In order to improve the levels of accountability and opportunities for debate, Council suggests that additional meetings should be added to the diary on 11 September 2017, 13 November 2017 and 5 February 2018. Whilst the Pensions Committee scheduled for 13 November 2017 would need to be rescheduled, the advantages of additional accountability outweigh the inconvenience.

Council requests that Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee should consider the Calendar each year. This should be done with a view to securing agreement on the number of meetings, with the objective of improving the democratic process. The Working Party associated with this Committee would provide a forum for a frank discussion about the use of extraordinary meetings and would be helpful in tackling the current unease.

Council further considers it desirable that Budget Monitoring Reports should be available more frequently than at present. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members should receive the most recently available information, rather than be confined to the quarterly reporting arrangement.

Council requests officers to draw up a timetable for the release of financial information that is, in any case, being collected and analysed by officers on a regular basis. Nevertheless, Council understands the pressures that officers and members face in the months of January and February and is content that any timetable should recognise that.

Following a debate and Councillor Phil Davies having replied, a vote was taken on the amendment.

The amendment was then put and lost (25:34) (One abstention).

A vote was then taken on the substantive motion

RESOLVED (40:19) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within Minute 99 of Cabinet, be agreed.

150 **APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL RETURNING OFFICER FOR THE ELECTION OF THE LIVERPOOL COMBINED AUTHORITY MAYOR**

The fourth matter requiring approval was in relation to the Appointment of Local Returning Officer for the election of the Liverpool Combined Authority Mayor

It was moved by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor George Davies that the recommendations contained within the report of the Chief Executive be approved

RESOLVED (59:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within the report of the Chief Executive be approved.

151 **APPOINTMENT OF AN ACTING SENIOR INFORMATION RISK OFFICER (SIRO)**

The fifth matter requiring approval was in relation to the Appointment of an Acting Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO).

It was moved by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor George Davies that the appointment of Mr Surjit Tour, Assistant Director: Law and Governance as the Interim Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) (pending a review of this matter), in place of Mr Mike Zammit, Head of Digital (SIRO) be approved.

RESOLVED (57:2) (One abstention) – That Mr Surjit Tour, Assistant Director: Law and Governance be appointed as the Interim Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) (pending a review of this matter), in place of Mr Mike Zammit, Head of Digital (SIRO).

152 **NOTICES OF MOTION**

Notices of Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 7(1) were reported to the Council. The Civic Mayor having considered each motion, in accordance with Standing Order 7(4) had decided that they would be dealt with as follows:

- (i) Government Cuts in School Funding.
To be debated.

- (ii) Houses in Multiple Occupation.
To be debated.
- (iii) Keeping Large Lorries on the Right Road.
To be debated.
- (iv) Count Them In.
To be debated.

(See Minutes 153 to 156 post)

- (v) Green Belt.
To be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for detailed consideration.
- (vi) Pavilions in Sports Grounds.
To be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for detailed consideration.

RESOLVED – That

- 1) The Notice of Motion, ‘Green Belt’, be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 2) The Notice of Motion, ‘Pavilions in Sports Grounds’, be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

The Civic Mayor having considered the amendments submitted in respect of Motions (i) and (ii) moved, duly seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, that Standing Order 12(10) be suspended to allow more than one amendment to be discussed during the course of the debates.

153 **GOVERNMENT CUTS IN SCHOOL FUNDING**

Proposed by Councillor Tony Smith
Seconded by Councillor Warren Ward

Council is opposed to the government’s imposition of real term funding cuts on schools by freezing per-pupil funding while inflation and the cost of employer pension and national insurance contributions increase. This affects all schools and academies alike. Without further funding, schools will lose £3bn in real terms by 2020.

This Council does not want children in this country to miss out on a decent education, supplied by dedicated teachers and support staff with sufficient

resources. The average primary school cut is £87,000 or £339 per pupil. The average secondary cut is £405,000 or £477 per pupil. Wirral schools could lose up to £15,696,153. That is 421 teachers or 872 support staff.

Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State for Education to demand that these damaging cuts be reversed.

Two amendments which had been circulated in advance of the meeting were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

Amendment 1

Proposed by Councillor Stuart Kelly

Seconded by Councillor Alan Brighthouse

Insert after final para:

Council notes the introduction of the Apprentice Levy from April 2017 and the fact that Maintained schools' employee costs are included within the overall Council employee budget, whilst Voluntary Aided, Foundation, Academy and Trust schools are not included within the overall Council budget and, as such, are not liable to pay the Levy unless their employee budget exceeds £3m.

Council further notes that, should the Levy be applied to Community and Voluntary Controlled Maintained schools, it is estimated that their budgets will be negatively affected by a total of £369,711 as follows:

- Nursery Schools – £7,065
- Primary Schools – £266,680
- Secondary Schools – £35,100
- Special Schools – £60,866

Council, therefore, calls upon the Leader of the Council to manage the Apprentice Levy corporately within the HR corporate training budget on behalf of the Council and Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and to work with appropriate Maintained schools to develop a mechanism whereby Community and Voluntary Controlled Maintained schools who access the digital account contribute the equivalent training costs from their delegated budget to the Council.

Council agrees to write to appropriate Ministers to request an exemption for schools from the Apprentice Levy.

Amendment 2

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Alan Brighthouse

Insert after para two:

Council recognises the concerns expressed in the report of the National Audit Office on the 'Financial sustainability of schools' published on 14 December 2016 and the more recent concerns expressed at the annual Conference of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL).

Council is aware that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is widely reported to have set aside substantial revenues to deal with the uncertainty surrounding 'Brexit', evidence of which can be found in document Cm 9419 'Economic and fiscal outlook' published by the Office for Budget Responsibility.

Council, therefore, requests that, given the urgent need to retain and improve standards, develop a skilled and productive workforce and prepare the economy for the future, funding from this 'war chest' should be released to prepare for these challenges as soon as possible.

Following a debate and Councillor Smith having replied, the first amendment was then put and lost (5:54) (One abstention).

The second amendment was then put and carried (40:18) (One abstention).

The substantive motion was then put and carried (40:18) (One abstention).

RESOLVED (40:18) (One abstention) - That

- 1) **Council is opposed to the government's imposition of real term funding cuts on schools by freezing per-pupil funding while inflation and the cost of employer pension and national insurance contributions increase. This affects all schools and academies alike. Without further funding, schools will lose £3bn in real terms by 2020.**
- 2) **Council recognises the concerns expressed in the report of the National Audit Office on the 'Financial sustainability of schools' published on 14 December 2016 and the more recent concerns expressed at the annual Conference of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL).**
- 3) **Council is aware that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is widely reported to have set aside substantial revenues to deal with the uncertainty surrounding 'Brexit', evidence of which can be found in document Cm 9419 'Economic and fiscal outlook' published by the Office for Budget Responsibility.**

- 4) **Council, therefore, requests that, given the urgent need to retain and improve standards, develop a skilled and productive workforce and prepare the economy for the future, funding from this 'war chest' should be released to prepare for these challenges as soon as possible.**
- 5) **This Council does not want children in this country to miss out on a decent education, supplied by dedicated teachers and support staff with sufficient resources. The average primary school cut is £87,000 or £339 per pupil. The average secondary cut is £405,000 or £477 per pupil. Wirral schools could lose up to £15,696,153. That is 421 teachers or 872 support staff.**
- 6) **Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State for Education to demand that these damaging cuts be reversed.**

Procedural Matter

At this point Councillor Blakeley requested that the enforcement of the guillotine (Standing Order 9) be removed to allow debate on the remaining Notices of Motion. Having been formally moved and seconded, the motion was put to the vote.

The motion was put and lost (25:34) (One abstention).

NB. The following Councillors requested that their objections be recorded:

Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, D Burgess-Joyce, W Clements, D Elderton, G Ellis, J Green, P Hayes, AC Hodson, K Hodson, I Lewis, C Povall, L Rennie, L Rowlands, A Sykes, GCJ Watt and S Williams.

154 **HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

Proposed by Councillor Ian Lewis

Seconded by Councillor Chris Blakeley

Council notes the Planning Committee's unanimous refusal of an application to create a 10-occupant house of multiple occupation in Laird Street, Birkenhead and congratulates those residents, supported by their Ward Councillors, who opposed this application.

Council wishes to promote the need for quality, affordable homes in Wirral that raise the quality of life for all residents, regardless of tenure.

Council therefore welcomes the recent consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government on proposals to extend mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation, including:

- the extension of the scope of the definition of a HMO, which will enable the quality of potentially 200,000 more properties to be improved
- the introduction of a national minimum room size, in order to ensure no HMO falls below the overcrowding standard established in the 1985 Housing Act
- tougher standards for licensees, including potential DBS checks, and the increase and extension of fines imposed on licensees in breach of these standards

Council urges the DCLG to listen to the views expressed by authorities such as Wirral during the consultation and to introduce legislation in Parliament to secure these objectives.

Two amendments which had been circulated in advance of the meeting were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

Amendment 1

Proposed by Councillor Stuart Kelly

Seconded by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Insert after final paragraph:.

In addition, Council notes that Planning Policy HS14 does not set out minimum communal facilities (washing/toilet) for HMOs, rather it is determined as a matter of 'fact and degree'.

Council notes that the Planning Committee has refused applications where the communal facilities have fallen short of a ratio that would be considered acceptable to members of the Planning Committee, often against officer recommendations for approval; Members have also been successful at appeal where inspectors have upheld refusal due to poor standards of communal facilities, most recently at 63A Argyle Street, Birkenhead and at 151 Victoria Road, New Brighton.

Council considers that a local standard for communal facilities should be drawn up as local planning policies are reviewed. Council believes it essential to encourage responsible architects, planning to bring forward applications for HMO developments, to have due regard to the standard of accommodation and communal facilities expected by members for those who will be living in the HMO.

Amendment 2

Proposed by Councillor Adrian Jones

Seconded by Councillor George Davies

Revise as follows:

Council notes the increasing conversion for multi-occupancy of former family dwellings and shops in many areas of Wirral, often to the aesthetic and social detriment of surrounding neighbourhoods. Council further notes the Planning Committee's unanimous refusal of an application to create a 10-occupant house of multiple occupation in Laird Street, Birkenhead and congratulates those residents, supported by their Ward Councillors, who opposed this application.

Council therefore seeks ~~wishes to promote the need for~~ to facilitate the supply of quality, affordable homes in Wirral that raise the quality of life for all residents, regardless of tenure.

Council ~~therefore~~ welcomes the recent consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government on proposals to extend mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation, including:

- the extension of the scope of the definition of a HMO, which will enable the quality of potentially 200,000 more properties to be improved
- the introduction of a national minimum room size, in order to ensure no HMO falls below the overcrowding standard established in the 1985 Housing Act
- tougher standards for licensees, including potential DBS checks, and the increase and extension of fines imposed on licensees in breach of these standards

Noting that many of the present generation, growing up in the wake of the world financial crash of 2008, may earn less during a working life-time than their parents, obliging many to seek privately rented accommodation, Council urges the DCLG to listen to the views expressed by authorities such as Wirral during the consultation and to introduce legislation in Parliament to secure these objectives.

The first and second amendment were put to the Council as one amendment, and carried (58:0) (Two abstentions).

RESOLVED – That

- 1) Council notes the increasing conversion for multi-occupancy of former family dwellings and shops in many areas of Wirral, often to the aesthetic and social detriment of surrounding neighbourhoods. Council further notes the Planning Committee's unanimous refusal of an application to create a 10-occupant house of multiple occupation in Laird Street, Birkenhead and congratulates those residents, supported by their Ward Councillors, who opposed this application.**
- 2) Council therefore seeks to facilitate the supply of quality, affordable homes in Wirral that raise the quality of life for all residents, regardless of tenure.**
- 3) Council welcomes the recent consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government on proposals to extend mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation, including:**
 - the extension of the scope of the definition of a HMO, which will enable the quality of potentially 200,000 more properties to be improved**
 - the introduction of a national minimum room size, in order to ensure no HMO falls below the overcrowding standard established in the 1985 Housing Act**
 - tougher standards for licensees, including potential DBS checks, and the increase and extension of fines imposed on licensees in breach of these standards**
- 4) Noting that many of the present generation, growing up in the wake of the world financial crash of 2008, may earn less during a working life-time than their parents, obliging many to seek privately rented accommodation, Council urges the DCLG to listen to the views expressed by authorities such as Wirral during the consultation and to introduce legislation in Parliament to secure these objectives.**
- 5) In addition, Council notes that Planning Policy HS14 does not set out minimum communal facilities (washing/toilet) for HMOs, rather it is determined as a matter of 'fact and degree'.**
- 6) Council notes that the Planning Committee has refused applications where the communal facilities have fallen short of a ratio that would be considered acceptable to members of the Planning Committee, often against officer recommendations for approval; Members have also been successful at appeal where**

inspectors have upheld refusal due to poor standards of communal facilities, most recently at 63A Argyle Street, Birkenhead and at 151 Victoria Road, New Brighton.

- 7) Council considers that a local standard for communal facilities should be drawn up as local planning policies are reviewed. Council believes it essential to encourage responsible architects, planning to bring forward applications for HMO developments, to have due regard to the standard of accommodation and communal facilities expected by members for those who will be living in the HMO.

Note: The above minute has been subject to correction and republished as agreed by Council on Tuesday 16 May, 2017 (minute 8 refers).

155 KEEPING LARGE LORRIES ON THE RIGHT ROAD

Having previously declared a personal interest in this item, Councillor Green vacated the Council Chamber whilst the matter was under consideration, and did not take part in the voting thereon.

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist
Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

This Council supports the initiative taken by the Local Government Association in seeking the use of the most appropriate satellite navigation devices being used in lorries as opposed to those designed for motor cars.

Council believes this is necessary to reduce the damage caused to the highway infrastructure arising from vehicles being misdirected to roads that are too narrow or bridges that have weight or height restrictions, aimed at keeping the largest or heaviest vehicles off that route.

Council recognises that a number of incidents have taken place in Wirral, involving damage to both railway and road bridges, necessitating expensive repairs and highly visible markings to warn of height restrictions. Whilst these have been few in number, the introduction of better navigation systems could well minimise the possibility of future incidents.

Council considers that the cost of the most appropriate devices is not excessive. Council understands that the road haulage industry considers that good practice and common sense should prevail and lead with the use of the devices that give due warning of height and weight restrictions. However, Council believes that the Local Government Association is right to seek legislation aimed at ensuring and enforcing the use of proper systems,

resolves to advise them accordingly and advise Wirral's Members of Parliament of this opinion.

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9 the Council did not debate the matter, and having been formally moved and seconded, the motion was put to the vote.

The motion was put and carried (59:0) (One abstention).

RESOLVED – That

- 1) **This Council supports the initiative taken by the Local Government Association in seeking the use of the most appropriate satellite navigation devices being used in lorries as opposed to those designed for motor cars.**
- 2) **Council believes this is necessary to reduce the damage caused to the highway infrastructure arising from vehicles being misdirected to roads that are too narrow or bridges that have weight or height restrictions, aimed at keeping the largest or heaviest vehicles off that route.**
- 3) **Council recognises that a number of incidents have taken place in Wirral, involving damage to both railway and road bridges, necessitating expensive repairs and highly visible markings to warn of height restrictions. Whilst these have been few in number, the introduction of better navigation systems could well minimise the possibility of future incidents.**
- 4) **Council considers that the cost of the most appropriate devices is not excessive. Council understands that the road haulage industry considers that good practice and common sense should prevail and lead with the use of the devices that give due warning of height and weight restrictions. However, Council believes that the Local Government Association is right to seek legislation aimed at ensuring and enforcing the use of proper systems, resolves to advise them accordingly and advise Wirral's Members of Parliament of this opinion.**

Councillor Jeff Green returned to the Council Chamber.

156 **COUNT THEM IN**

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green
Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie

Council notes the Leader of the Council has pledged his support to The British Legion's 'Count Them In' Campaign to include questions concerning military service and membership of the Armed Forces community in the next 2021 census.

Council wishes to add its full support to this campaign as the data collected will provide essential information for the Council to accurately map the profile and needs of our Armed Forces Community in Wirral.

Council notes the UK Statistics Authority is responsible for coordinating the census arrangements across the UK but it is for the UK Parliament, Scottish Parliament and Northern Ireland Assembly to determine what questions feature in the final census documents.

Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Borough's four Members of Parliament and to Charles Byrne, Director General of The Royal British Legion, confirming Council's full support for the 'Count Them In' campaign.

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9 the Council did not debate the matter, and having been formally moved and seconded, the motion was put to the vote.

The motion was put and carried (59:0) (One abstention).

RESOLVED – That

- 1) Council notes the Leader of the Council has pledged his support to The British Legion's 'Count Them In' Campaign to include questions concerning military service and membership of the Armed Forces community in the next 2021 census.**
- 2) Council wishes to add its full support to this campaign as the data collected will provide essential information for the Council to accurately map the profile and needs of our Armed Forces Community in Wirral.**
- 3) Council notes the UK Statistics Authority is responsible for coordinating the census arrangements across the UK but it is for the UK Parliament, Scottish Parliament and Northern Ireland Assembly to determine what questions feature in the final census documents.**
- 4) Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Borough's four Members of Parliament and to Charles Byrne,**

Director General of The Royal British Legion, confirming Council's full support for the 'Count Them In' campaign.

157 **MAYOR'S CLOSING**

The Mayor commented that this was the last ordinary meeting of the Council he would be presiding over and indicated that it had been a privilege to represent Wirral. He referred to the great pleasure he had taken during his year in office, in particular the school group visits and varied events in the community, thanking all those who had supported him during his year in office.

The Leader of the Council thanked both the Mayor and Mayoress for all the work they had undertaken during the year, particularly with schools and volunteer groups and referred also to the fair manner in which meetings of the Council had been chaired.

The Leader of the Conservative Group and the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group associated themselves with the remarks made by the Leader of the Council.