



Council

Town Hall
Wallasey

12 March, 2021

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held at **6.00 p.m. on Monday, 22 March 2021**, virtually, to take into consideration and determine upon the following subjects:

This meeting will be webcast at
<https://wirral.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Contact Officer: Andrew Mossop
Tel: 0151 691 8501
e-mail: andrewmossop@wirral.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

AGENDA

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2. CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive the Civic Mayor's announcements and any apologies for absence.

3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 52)

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 7 and 9 (Extraordinary meeting) December, 2020 and 1 March, 2021 (Budget meeting).

4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

To deal with questions, statements and petitions from members of the public, and Members, in accordance with Standing Orders 10, 11 and 12.

A. Public Questions

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Wednesday, 17 March, 2021 to the Council's Monitoring Officer (committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10.

B. Statements and Petitions

Notice of statements to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Wednesday, 17 March, 2021 to the Council's Monitoring Officer (committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 11.1.

Petitions may be presented to the Council. The person presenting the petition will be allowed to address the meeting briefly (not exceeding one minute) to outline the aims of the petition. The Mayor will refer the matter to another appropriate body of the Council within whose terms of reference it falls without discussion, unless a relevant item appears elsewhere on the Agenda. Please give notice of petitions to committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk in advance of the meeting.

C. Members' Questions

To consider Members' questions to the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council, Committee Chair or a Leader of a Political Group, in accordance with Standing Orders 12.

5. MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL OR CONSIDERATION BY THE COUNCIL

To consider any recommendations and receive reports from the Council's Committees which require the approval or consideration of the Council, and to receive questions and answers on any of those reports.

A. AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD (Pages 53 - 54)

The Council is requested to agree the following recommendation of the Constitution and Standards Committee:

That in respect to the Health & Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference as detailed in Part 3b Section 16.4 of the Constitution, 'Chairing the Board' be revised to read 'The Board will be chaired by the Leader of the Council (or another elected member as their nominee)'.

Constitution and Standards Committee minute 16 (24/2/21) attached.

The report can be viewed [here](#).

B. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2021/22 (Pages 55 - 70)

The Council is requested to approve the Calendar of Meetings for the 2021/22 municipal year, subject to the amendments recommended by the Constitution and Standards Committee.

Constitution and Standards Committee minute 19 (24/2/21) attached, together with the revised proposed Calendar of Meetings.

The report can be viewed [here](#).

C. PAY POLICY 2021/22 (Pages 71 - 82)

The Council is requested to agree a recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee, to be considered at the Committee's meeting on 17 March, 2021.

The report is attached, and the minute extract will be included in a supplementary agenda.

6. REPORTS AND DECISIONS FROM COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND PARTNERSHIP ORGANISATIONS

To receive reports about and receive questions and answers on decisions made by Committees since the last meeting of Council.

A. DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING (Pages 83 - 294)

To receive reports about and receive questions and answers on decisions made by Committees since the week of the publication of the last ordinary Council agenda.

The minutes of all committees which have met since 23 November, 2020 are attached, as below.

Members' attention is drawn to three minutes, in accordance with Part 4, Section 4, paragraph 9 of the Constitution, in that a decision was taken, which was regarded as urgent by the Committee, as follows:

- Minute 32 (Policy and Resources Committee (18/12/20)) – Draft Revenue Budget 2021/22 – Consultation Proposals, as consultation needed to start immediately.
- Minute 43 (Policy and Resources Committee (21/12/20)) – Acquisition of Property in Birkenhead, as the acquisition needed to be completed without delay.
- Minute 20 (Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee (26/1/21)) – Birkenhead Town Deal –

Funding Request, as the submission needed to be completed without delay.

Minutes of Committees:

- Policy and Resources Committee – 18 and 21 December, 2020, 20 January and 17 February, 2021 **(Pages 83 - 118)**
- Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee – 18 January and 2 March, 2021 **(Pages 119 - 137)**
- Children, Young People and Education Committee – 1 December, 2020 and 28 January, 2021 **(Pages 139 – 157)**
- Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee – 26 January and 4 March, 2021 **(Pages 159 - 176)**
- Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee – 3 December, 2020 and 1 February, 2021 **(Pages 177 - 193)**
- Housing Committee – 26 November, 2020 and 27 January, 2021 **(Pages 195 - 201)**
- Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee – 23 November, 2020, 21 January and 3 March, 2021 **(Pages 203 - 223)**
- Partnerships Committee – 13 January, 2021 **(Pages 225 - 230)**
- Audit and Risk Management Committee – 23 November, 2020, 11 and 25 January, 2021 **(Pages 231 - 242)**
- Constitution and Standards Committee – 25 November, 2020 and 24 February, 2021 **(Pages 243 - 257)**
- Pensions Committee – 2 February, 2021 **(Pages 259 - 265)**
- Planning Committee – 17 December, 2020, 14 January and 11 February, 2021 **(Pages 267 - 289)**
- Regulatory and General Purposes Committee – 19 January, 2021 **(Pages 291 - 293)**

B. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

To receive reports about and receive questions and answers on the business of joint arrangements and external organisations, including the Combined Authority.

7. MOTIONS ON NOTICE (Pages 295 - 304)

Motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.1, are attached. They are listed in accordance with Standing Order 13.2, and the full text of each motion is attached.

1. NHS Pay Rise
2. Support for British Values Locally
3. Recognising the Contribution of Those Who Care

4. Community Investment Bonds
5. Liverpool City Region Fair Employment Charter
6. The NHS COVID-19 Vaccination Programme
7. Right to Food
8. Government Support for Wirral
9. Refugees and Asylum Seekers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. V. G.', written in a cursive style.

Director of Law and Governance

Audio/Visual Recording of Meetings

Everyone is welcome to record meetings of the Council and its Committees using non-disruptive methods. For particular meetings we may identify a 'designated area' for you to record from. If you have any questions about this please contact Committee and Civic Services (members of the press please contact the Press Office). Please note that the Chair of the meeting has the discretion to halt any recording for a number of reasons, including disruption caused by the filming or the nature of the business being conducted.

Persons making recordings are requested not to put undue restrictions on the material produced so that it can be reused and edited by all local people and organisations on a non-commercial basis.

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COUNCIL

Monday, 7 December 2020

Present: The Civic Mayor (Councillor Tony Smith) in the
Chair
Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor George Davies)

Councillors	T Anderson	JE Green	Y Nolan
	B Berry	EA Grey	T Norbury
	J Bird	P Hayes	C Povall
	A Brame	S Hayes	L Rennie
	D Burgess-Joyce	A Hodson	J Robinson
	H Cameron	K Hodson	L Rowlands
	K Cannon	J Johnson	C Spriggs
	C Carubia	AER Jones	S Spoor
	P Cleary	C Jones	J Stapleton
	W Clements	T Jones	P Stuart
	C Cooke	M Jordan	M Sullivan
	A Corkhill	S Kelly	J Walsh
	T Cottier	B Kenny	S Whittingham
	T Cox	A Leech	I Williams
	S Foulkes	I Lewis	KJ Williams
	S Frost	M McLaughlin	S Williams
	A Gardner	J McManus	J Williamson
	P Gilchrist	D Mitchell	G Wood
	K Greaney	C Muspratt	A Wright

Apologies Councillors M Collins T Usher
S Jones

30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Prior to Members' declarations of interest, the Civic Mayor asked the Deputy Monitoring Officer, Vicki Shaw, to provide advice to all Members in respect of motion 1, 'Public Sector Pay Freeze'.

Vicki Shaw informed the meeting of the requirements of the Localism Act and the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of declaring interests and that the Leader of the Council had submitted a written request for the Council to grant a general dispensation for this meeting only for all Members to be present, speak and vote were they would otherwise have a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of the first motion, Public Sector Pay Freeze.

Written advice had already been provided to Members by the Monitoring Officer, with which she herself concurred, in that with the number of Members

who would be affected, the test for granting a dispensation would be met on the ground that the representation of different political groups would otherwise be affected so as to alter the likely outcome of any vote. Also, quite possibly there would be too few Members left in the meeting, that the transaction of business would be prohibited as the meeting might become inquorate.

The Monitoring Officer was also of the view that, given the nature of this motion on notice and its content, that it was highly likely the courts would agree with the Council if it were of the view that the test that this would be otherwise appropriate, was also met.

On a motion by the Civic Mayor, seconded by Councillor Janette Williamson, it was –

Resolved - That Council grants a General Dispensation, for this meeting only, to all Members, to be present, speak and vote where they would otherwise have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in respect of Motion 1 on the agenda on the grounds that it is appropriate in the circumstances to grant such a dispensation.

The Civic Mayor then informed the meeting that he had also been informed that all the Labour Members present would wish to declare a personal interest in respect of Motion 5 – ‘Union Learning Fund’.

Members of the Council were then invited to consider whether they had any other 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 the interest.

Having been granted a dispensation the following Members then also chose to declare a prejudicial interest in Motion 1, ‘Public Sector Pay Freeze’, by virtue of themselves or a close family member working in the public sector, Councillors Les Rowlands, Stuart Whittingham, Sarah Spoor, Christina Muspratt, Paul Stuart, Jenny Johnson, Janette Williamson, Chris Jones, Christine Spriggs, Tony Jones, Tony Norbury, Chris Cooke, Yvonne Nolan, Alison Wright, Mike Sullivan, Lesley Rennie, Steve Hayes, Jerry Williams, Steve Williams, Tony Smith, Moira McLaughlin, Samantha Frost and Irene Williams.

Councillor Jeff Green and Anita Leech declared personal interests in Motion 6, ‘It’s Time to Put New Arrangements in Place’ by virtue of a parent being in receipt of care.

Councillor Yvonne Nolan declared a personal interest in Motion 3, ‘Getting Cancer Services Back on Track’ by virtue of her being a governor of Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor Mary Jordan declared a personal interest in Motion 3, 'Getting Cancer Services Back on Track' by virtue of her employment.

Councillor Ian Lewis declared a personal interest in Motion 3, 'Getting Cancer Services Back on Track' by virtue of him being a public member of Clatterbridge Cancer Centre.

Councillor Moira McLaughlin declared a non-pecuniary interest in Motion 7, 'Tackling Child Poverty and Deprivation on Wirral' by virtue of her being a trustee of Feeding Birkenhead.

Councillors Lesley Rennie, Brian Kenny and Jean Stapleton declared personal interests in Motion 2, 'Wirral Council Asked to Back the RSPCA's Fireworks Campaign' by virtue of their membership of the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority.

Councillor Julie McManus declared a personal interest in Motion 7, 'Tackling Child Poverty and Deprivation on Wirral' by virtue of her employment.

Councillor Steve Foulkes declared a personal interest in agenda item 6a and the Housing Minutes, by virtue of his membership of Magenta Living.

Councillor Jenny Johnson declared personal interests in both Motion 5, 'Union Learning Fund' by virtue of her employment and Motion 6, 'It's Time to Put New Arrangements in Place' by virtue of a family member's employment.

Councillor Tony Cox declared a prejudicial interest in Motion 4, 'Supporting Car Clubs in Wirral' by virtue of his employment.

31 **CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Civic Mayor referred to a number of engagements which he and the Mayoress had undertaken recently, including the raising of a Green Flag at Vale Park, New Brighton and thanked all those officers and volunteers involved in maintaining the park. He had also unveiled the 300th bench near to Harrison Park on the promenade in conjunction with the Older People's Parliament.

Green Flags would also be raised on 11 and 17 December, 2020, at Frankby and Flaybrick Hill Cemeteries and he thanked officers and volunteers.

He and the Mayoress had attended the recording of a Remembrance Service at the Priory, Birkenhead, an outdoor service at Egremont Primary School on 11 November, 2020 and a service to honour the Cockleshell Heroes at Woodside Business Park on 6 December, 2020.

He congratulated all the community groups on the Wirral for all the Christmas lights which were on display around the borough along with all the plants and flowers on display maintained by many local volunteers with the support of local businesses.

He and the Mayoress had kept in touch with residents' groups and organisations, throughout lockdown by sending cards and writing letters and he expressed thanks for the remarkable growth of community self help from neighbours and with the support of council officers.

The Civic Mayor announced that apologies had been received from Councillors Sharon Jones, Tom Usher and Mike Collins.

32 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 19 October, 2020 had been circulated to Members.

On a motion by the Civic Mayor seconded by Councillor Anita Leech it was –

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting be approved and adopted as a correct record, subject to the amendment of minute 17, 'Statements and Petitions' in that at paragraph 2, 'Prestbury Avenue' to read, 'Pasture Avenue'.

33 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The Civic Mayor informed the Council that no questions from the public had been submitted.

34 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

The Civic Mayor informed the meeting that no statements had been submitted and no petitions were received.

35 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Councillor Phil Gilchrist asked a question of the Chair of the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee regarding the forthcoming consultation on the libraries strategy and new library model. Councillor Tom Anderson responded accordingly and assured Councillor Gilchrist that the consultation would be thorough, inclusive and comprehensive with Friends of Library Groups included at every stage. Paper and site based consultation, when appropriate and safe to do so, would also take place to ensure all those without access to digital information were included also.

Councillor Pat Cleary asked a question of the Chair of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee on the rollout of Carbon Literacy Training across the Council. Councillor Elizabeth Grey responded accordingly and informed Councillor Cleary that up to 10 December, five courses had been held with 16 Members attending and with Wirral working towards a silver rating.

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

In accordance with Standing Order 2(x) four matters had been submitted for approval by the Council (see minutes 37 to 40 post).

37 **2020/21 REVENUE BUDGET MONITOR QUARTER 2 AND COVID-19 BUDGET POSITION STATEMENT**

The first item requiring approval was in relation to an increase in the budget because of Covid-19 funding.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

Resolved – That the recommendations contained within minute 21 of the Policy and Resources Committee of 11 November, 2020, be agreed in that:

Council approves the increased budget in relation to Covid-19 funding of £42.538m, which is for Council use and notes the additional £132.793m of funds that is to be made available to the Council for onward relay to other organisations as passported funding; a total sum of £175.33m is therefore the combined Covid-19 funding being received by the Council based on current information. Council notes that this recommendation supersedes the recommendation made by Policy and Resources Committee on 7 October, following the recent notification of additional funding.

38 **CAPITAL MONITORING QUARTER 2 2020/21**

The second item requiring approval was in relation to a revised capital programme.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

Resolved – That the recommendations contained within minute 22 of the Policy and Resources Committee of 11 November, 2020, be agreed and that the following be approved:

(1) additional funding for the schemes detailed in paragraph 3.5 of the report as follows:

- Children's System Rationalisation - £0.826m (over a three year period)
- Tree Strategy Delivery - £0.208m (over a four year period)
- Allotments Sites Expansion - £0.127m
- Birkenhead Temporary Market Pre-Development Costs - £50,000
- Concerto Development Asset Management System - £42,000 (over a two year period)
- Capitalisation of Salaries - £0.5m

(2) a revised Capital Programme of £95.1 million for 2020-21, including the virements referred to in paragraph 3.7 of the report.

39 **COUNCIL TAX BASE REPORT 2021/22 (TAX BASE, DISCOUNTS AND EXEMPTIONS AND LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME)**

The third item requiring approval was in relation to the Council Tax Base for 2021/22 and proposed Council Tax discounts, the motion for which was moved by Councillor Janette Williamson and seconded by Councillor Anita Leech

Following a short debate, Councillor Williamson replied and commented that she would get the information on the number of external agencies used for debt recovery during her time as Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources. She commented that every Council did use debt recovery agencies. Her aspiration for the Council was that debt recovery was reviewed and it was ensured that whenever possible it was fair and ethical and that was a priority for the Council.

On the motion moved by Councillor Janette Williamson, it was then -

Resolved – That the recommendations contained within minute 23 of the Policy and Resources Committee of 11 November, 2020, be agreed as follows:

- (1) The figure of 94,198.6 be approved as the Council Tax Base for 2021/22 subject to the items below being approved;
- (2) The level and award of each local discount for 2021/22 be:

Wirral Women's & Children's Aid

To continue to award Wirral Women & Children's Aid 100% discount. This remains unchanged from 2020/21.

Care Leaver's Discount

To award Care Leavers the requisite discount to reduce their Council Tax liability to zero until they are 25. This remains unchanged from 2020/21.

Empty Property Discounts

Discount category D = 0% Full charge on properties undergoing renovations.

Discount category C = 0% Full charge on empty properties from date they become unoccupied.

Both remain unchanged from 2020/21.

Empty Property Premium = 100% (200% Council Tax) for unfurnished properties empty for more than two years. 200% (300% Council Tax) for unfurnished properties empty more than five years. 300% (400% Council Tax) for unfurnished properties empty more than ten years.

Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Relief Scheme

The Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Relief Scheme, approved by Cabinet in October 2013, continues in its current format for 2021/2022. The Scheme offers help and assistance in exceptional cases of hardship.

(3) Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS)

The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, be the approved Scheme for 2021/2022. This remains unchanged from 2020/21 apart from the following:

- a. Where an entitlement to the Care Leaver Discount/Exemption has ceased, Local Council Tax Reduction to be awarded without the need for a further application where their eligibility is known.
- b. The scheme is aligned to all of the DWP's upratings and changes for Housing Benefit and Universal Credit.

40 AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION - COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS

The fourth item requiring approval was in relation to a proposed amendment to the Council's Constitution and its Standing Orders.

On a motion by Councillor Phil Gilchrist, seconded by Councillor Jean Robinson, it was –

Resolved – That the recommendations contained within minute 6 of the Constitution and Standards Committee of 26 November, 2020, be agreed as follows:

That Standing Order 11.1, ‘Representations’ be amended so that the deadline for the public registering to speak be brought forward to no later than midday, three working days before the day of the meeting, in line with the deadline for the submission of public questions.

41 **DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING**

The Civic Mayor introduced the minutes of the various Committees which had met since the beginning of October up until 19 November, and asked for questions to Committee Chairs on any of the minutes being received.

Councillor Phil Gilchrist asked a question of Councillor Janette Williamson in respect of minute 5, of the Policy and Resources Committee of 7 October, 2020 regarding the sale of land at Arrowe Park Road, Upton and the timetable for the advertising of this sale of the public open space and that Members be advised as to how many objections had come forward by the closing date. Councillor Williamson responded that a written response would be provided once enquiries had been made after the meeting.

Councillor Chris Cooke asked a question of Councillor Wendy Clements in respect of minute 9 of the Children, Young People and Education Committee of 20 October, 2020 on what recent progress the Council had made in the light of the report to tackle the acute problem of obesity among Wirral’s children. Councillor Clements responded that the former Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee had accepted the recommendations of the healthy weight workshops at its last meeting in March. Since then other matters had taken precedence for Members and officers, yet the work hadn’t been lost, it remained on the Committee’s work programme. Many of the recommendations that were made were actually cross cutting themes, such as the School Streets initiative, Healthy High Streets programme and matters around business rates. It was accepted at the time that these were out of the remit of the Children, Young People and Education Committee. She commented that hopefully walking had been encouraged by lockdown but there was definitely more to do.

Councillor Ian Lewis asked a question of Councillor Elizabeth Grey regarding the meeting of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee of 22 October, 2020 on whether she would accept his apology for the rude discourteous behaviour shown by a member of the Conservative group at the last meeting of the Committee. In response, Councillor Grey

accepted the apology and appreciated and understood what Councillor Lewis was saying.

Councillor Ian Lewis asked a question of Councillor Julie McManus regarding the Housing Committee minutes of 28 October, 2020 and asked for the Chair's commitment that the Council would respond to the consultation by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, which was closing on 11 January, 2021, and ask for tougher safety measures for tenants in social housing who required better smoke detection and carbon monoxide detections. He also asked that future consultations were brought to the Committee's agenda as and when she saw fit. In response, Councillor McManus stated that she was happy to confirm that officers and members alike welcomed any improved safety measures for residents to be protected. Officers would be considering their full response to questions on those specific issues within the consultation.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham asked a question of Councillor Tom Anderson in respect of minute 9 of the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee of 26 October, 2020 and the Chair's plans to build on the success in recent years of Wirral's cultural programme, particularly when Wirral was the City Region's Borough of Culture. Councillor Anderson responded that the Council was currently going through a budgetary process which would define the Committee's work programme for the future. Councillor Whittingham was welcome to attend the meeting and listen to any discussions and he was always open to any suggestions. With regard to the library consultation, Councillor Anderson also commented that any Member was welcome to raise any issues with him which would be addressed by the committee.

Resolved – That all the Committee minutes be received.

42 **OFFICER DECISIONS**

The Council noted an officer key decision taken by the Director of Neighbourhood Services on 24 November, 2020, in respect of the Covid Winter Grant Scheme.

On a motion by the Civic Mayor, seconded by Councillor Janette Williamson, it was –

Resolved – That the officer key decision be noted.

43 **MOTIONS ON NOTICE**

Motions had been submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.1 and were determined as detailed in minutes 44 to 50 below.

44 **MOTION - PUBLIC SECTOR PAY FREEZE**

Councillor Paul Stuart moved and Councillor Jean Robinson seconded the following motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13:

“Across the UK Over 4 million public sector workers have had the threat of a three year pay freeze imposed on them by the Conservative Government who are determined to make those very people they clapped for each week pay for the Government’s costly mistakes during the Coronavirus pandemic.

This will have huge implications to a large proportion of Wirral residents who are public sector employees. In 2019, the total number of employee jobs was 101,643. Of this number 23.9% are jobs within the public sector with Health being Wirral’s largest industry sector accounting for over 22% of total employee jobs.

Is this how we thank our Nurses, Healthcare workers, teachers, firefighters, civil servants and police officers, who have already had a cut of up to 14% in real terms as a result of the austerity measures brought in by successive Tory governments since 2010?

These same workers risked their lives to save ours during the pandemic, nursed our loved ones, kept our schools open for vulnerable children, cared for the elderly, and kept our streets safe.

The Chancellor seeks to wilfully reignite the damaging debate around public versus private sector workers. The truth is, we need all workers in this country to be treated with dignity, respect and paid a fair wage. There needs to be parity between the two, but not by division, not by a race to the bottom.

This will have a detrimental affect the Wirral economy, with wages of nearly a quarter of the employee population facing a three year pay freeze and the cost of living inevitably rising, people will not have the disposable income they otherwise might to be able to spend locally.

Most families in poverty have at least one member in employment. In-work poverty is increasing. Imposing a three year pay freeze will exacerbate existing levels of poverty across Wirral. We cannot allow our public sector workers to be treated in this way. Government recognition of their vital role during the pandemic must extend further than meaningless gestures. Clapping once a week will not pay the bills.

Council commends the decision to pay the Real Living Wage to care workers; and

Council asks the Leader to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, and ask him to fulfil his pledge to ‘level up’ and not implement a three year pay freeze on public sector workers.”

Councillor Mary Jordan moved and Councillor Jenny Johnson seconded the following amendment, submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.3:

“After final paragraph add:

Council notes that this motion was drafted prior to the Chancellor’s Spending Review and, in the interests of accuracy:

- The Spending Review includes a pay-rise for more than one million nurses, doctors and others working in our NHS
- Guarantees a pay rise of at least £250 for 2.1 million public sector workers who earn below the median UK wage of £24,000

And notes that the combined effect of these two policies will ensure a majority of public sector workers will see an increase in pay next year.

Council also welcomes the Chancellor’s decision to accept in full the recommendations of the Low Pay Commission to:

- increase the National Living Wage by 2.2 per cent to £8.91
- to extend this rate to those aged 23 or above
- to increase the National Minimum Wage as well

These increases will benefit approximately 2 million people – ensuring a full-time worker earning the National Living Wage will see their pay rise by £345 next year, an effective increase of over £4,000 since the policy was introduced in 2016.”

Following a debate conducted in accordance with Standing Order 15, and Councillor Stuart forgoing his right of reply, the amendment was put and lost (25:33) (One abstention).

The substantive motion was then put and it was –

Resolved (39:19) (One abstention) -

Across the UK Over 4 million public sector workers have had the threat of a three year pay freeze imposed on them by the Conservative Government who are determined to make those very people they clapped for each week pay for the Government’s costly mistakes during the Coronavirus pandemic.

This will have huge implications to a large proportion of Wirral residents who are public sector employees. In 2019, the total number of employee jobs was 101,643. Of this number 23.9% are jobs within the public sector

with Health being Wirral's largest industry sector accounting for over 22% of total employee jobs.

Is this how we thank our Nurses, Healthcare workers, teachers, firefighters, civil servants and police officers, who have already had a cut of up to 14% in real terms as a result of the austerity measures brought in by successive Tory governments since 2010?

These same workers risked their lives to save ours during the pandemic, nursed our loved ones, kept our schools open for vulnerable children, cared for the elderly, and kept our streets safe.

The Chancellor seeks to wilfully reignite the damaging debate around public versus private sector workers. The truth is, we need all workers in this country to be treated with dignity, respect and paid a fair wage. There needs to be parity between the two, but not by division, not by a race to the bottom.

This will have a detrimental affect the Wirral economy, with wages of nearly a quarter of the employee population facing a three year pay freeze and the cost of living inevitably rising, people will not have the disposable income they otherwise might to be able to spend locally.

Most families in poverty have at least one member in employment. In-work poverty is increasing. Imposing a three year pay freeze will exacerbate existing levels of poverty across Wirral. We cannot allow our public sector workers to be treated in this way. Government recognition of their vital role during the pandemic must extend further than meaningless gestures. Clapping once a week will not pay the bills.

Council commends the decision to pay the Real Living Wage to care workers; and

Council asks the Leader to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, and ask him to fulfil his pledge to 'level up' and not implement a three year pay freeze on public sector workers.

45 **MOTION - WIRRAL COUNCIL ASKED TO BACK THE RSPCA'S FIREWORKS CAMPAIGN**

Councillor Lesley Rennie moved and Councillor Ian Lewis seconded a motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.

Following a debate conducted in accordance with Standing Order 15, and Councillor Rennie having replied, it was –

Resolved (unanimously) – That,

Council is keen to ensure that all Wirral residents' concerns regarding the correct and safe use of fireworks in the Borough are taken seriously.

Council thanks Wirral residents who have shared concerns over the use, and misuse, of fireworks in the Borough, following the national campaign by the RSPCA and others, in 2019 and this year.

While they can bring much enjoyment to some people, fireworks also cause significant problems and fear for others.

They are a source of fear and distress for many animals, including pets, farm livestock and wildlife. Animals affected not only suffer psychological distress but can also cause themselves injuries – sometimes very serious ones – as they attempt to run away or hide from the noise.

Council also notes that fireworks, when misused, are dangerous and can be used to cause a public nuisance.

Council notes the work undertaken by the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, through Operation Banger, to reduce anti-social behaviour and sporadic events, linked to fireworks and bonfires and thanks all Fire Officers for their work on this.

Council therefore resolves to:

- continue to support a number of organised, local displays with residents encouraged to attend, including the River of Light Festival (a large scale organised public display which the Council plans responsibly for) and when safe to do so;**
- continue with its practice of working with Parks, Communications and other Council Teams and partners to promote safety messages and advertise events well in advance of the planned dates, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people;**
- continue to actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks;**
- ask the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee to investigate how the Council can work with our licensed venues to encourage the safe, responsible and neighbourly use of fireworks within their grounds;**
- request all Group Leaders write to the Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays and to consider options that could limit the private sales of fireworks to individuals;**

- **support visits by Trading standards and the Fire Service to local suppliers of fireworks, including ‘pop up’ fireworks suppliers, to ensure compliance with existing legislation and to encourage fireworks that are appropriate for public display.**

46 **MOTION - GETTING CANCER SERVICES BACK ON TRACK**

Councillor Andy Corkhill moved and Councillor Dave Mitchell seconded the following motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13:

“Council notes that we are seeing unprecedented disruption to cancer services on the Wirral, in the Liverpool City Region and across England.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, thousands of vital cancer treatments, appointments, and care were postponed or cancelled. People in desperate need of help are still unable to access the support they need and the emotional impact of delays is contributing to a crisis in mental health.

Cancer Research has seen hundreds of millions of pounds lost from its budget and a similar amount of charity donations that usually prop up the research system has been unforthcoming as people struggle financially.

We are lucky on the Wirral that we have two world class Cancer Centres on our doorstep, but even here there are residents who have had operations and treatments postponed or suspended. In areas less well served, residents are not even being referred from their GPs to an Oncology Centre. The result of all this inaction means cancers are being caught later, sometimes too late to avoid preventable death.

Council believes that cancer should not be forgotten during the COVID-19 pandemic and requests the Leader of the Council, Group Leaders and Senior Council Officers to write to the Government, demanding urgent action to deliver cancer recovery plans to prevent this happening, to clear the backlog and to get cancer services back on track.”

Councillor Mary Jordan moved and Councillor David Burgess-Joyce seconded the following amendment, submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.3:

“Delete final paragraph and replace with:

Council notes that in May 2020, NHS England directed all NHS trusts providing cancer services to develop and implement Cancer Recovery Plans and that, since then, Trusts have reported every 14 days on their performance against these plans.

Council also welcomes the recent presentation given to the Partnerships Committee by the Clatterbridge Cancer Centre, which included progress

against their recovery plan and the expansion of services at current and new locations to better serve all those diagnosed with cancer, their families and staff.”

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9.1, the Council did not debate this matter.

The amendment was put and lost (19:39) (One abstention).

The substantive motion was then put, and it was –

Resolved (58:0) (One abstention) –

Council notes that we are seeing unprecedented disruption to cancer services on the Wirral, in the Liverpool City Region and across England.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, thousands of vital cancer treatments, appointments, and care were postponed or cancelled. People in desperate need of help are still unable to access the support they need and the emotional impact of delays is contributing to a crisis in mental health.

Cancer Research has seen hundreds of millions of pounds lost from its budget and a similar amount of charity donations that usually prop up the research system has been unforthcoming as people struggle financially.

We are lucky on the Wirral that we have two world class Cancer Centres on our doorstep, but even here there are residents who have had operations and treatments postponed or suspended. In areas less well served, residents are not even being referred from their GPs to an Oncology Centre. The result of all this inaction means cancers are being caught later, sometimes too late to avoid preventable death.

Council believes that cancer should not be forgotten during the COVID-19 pandemic and requests the Leader of the Council, Group Leaders and Senior Council Officers to write to the Government, demanding urgent action to deliver cancer recovery plans to prevent this happening, to clear the backlog and to get cancer services back on track.

47 **MOTION - UNION LEARNING FUND**

Councillor Brian Kenny moved and Councillor Adrian Jones seconded a motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9.1, the Council did not debate this matter, and it was –

Resolved (39:19) (One abstention) – That

Wirral Council notes:

- 1. On Tuesday 6 October, the TUC received a letter from the Department for Education saying that ministers have decided to end the Union Learning Fund from March 2021.**
- 2. The Union Learning Fund (ULF) was set up in 1998 to support trade unions to widen access to learning and training in workplaces for both union members and non-members. The fund supports workplace projects across England, and is coordinated by the TUC.**
- 3. Each year around 200,000 workers are supported into learning or training with union support through the ULF and the TUC. Thousands of workers, based in Wirral, are currently eligible for this support. These learners undertake all sorts of job-relevant learning and training, including basic literacy and numeracy, ICT skills, apprenticeships and traineeships, vocational training, continuing professional development and many other informal and formal courses.**
- 4. In 2019–20, the ULF was worth £12m. If upheld this decision will effectively end union-brokered skills training, and will undermine key government skills and retraining priorities at a crucial moment for our economy.**

Wirral Council understands that:

- 1. Union learning reaches people that other DfE programmes do not reach.**
- 2. There is an independent evaluation of the Union Learning Fund every two years. It was most recently evaluated by the University of Exeter in 2018. They spoke to 2,459 learners, and found:**
 - Over two-thirds (68 per cent) of learners with no previous qualifications got a qualification.**
 - 47 per cent of those with entry level or level 1 qualifications got a qualification at a higher level.**
 - Four in five (80 per cent) said they had developed skills that they could transfer to a new job.**
 - Two in three (62 per cent) said their new skills made them more effective in their current job.**

- One in five (19 per cent) said they had been promoted or given increased responsibility and one in 10 (11 per cent) got a pay rise.
3. **The 2018 independent evaluation found that union learning provided excellent value for money:**
 - For every £1 spent on the Union Learning Fund, there is a return of £12.30: £7.60 to the worker, £4.70 to the employer.
 - The Union Learning Fund delivers an estimated net contribution to the economy of more than £1.4bn as a result of a boost to jobs, wages and productivity.
 - The return to the exchequer (through reduced spending on welfare benefits and other factors resulting from the boost to jobs and wages) is £3.57 for each £1 spent on the Union Learning Fund.
 - The £12m government funding levered in an additional £54m from employers, unions and training providers in 2019–20.
 4. **The government has said it will put reskilling workers at the heart of its economic recovery plans after the pandemic. In September 2020, the government announced a new fully funded entitlement to achieve a first level 3 qualification, delivered through the National Skills Fund. Union learning is ideally placed to support this aspiration, in two ways:**
 - directly, through delivering relevant level 3 courses to workplace learners, which is already a core function of the Union Learning Fund and was assessed as highly effective by the 2018 independent evaluation
 - directly, through enabling those with basic skills to learn and develop, putting them in a position to progress to level 3 skills
 5. **Successive governments of all parties have valued this role – and have supported the Union Learning Fund. As government funding, it is paid as a contract and is subject to stringent monitoring requirements. Union Learning Fund money can only be spent on the direct costs of getting working people into learning and skills training, and the associated costs of delivering this programme.**
 6. **ULF projects adapted quickly to delivering online learning and training for workers during the pandemic and have actually surpassed the number of outcomes expected by government since the beginning of April.**

Wirral Council resolves to:

- (1) **Express its public support for the continuation of the Union Learning Fund.**

(2) Ask the Leader of the Council to raise this issue with our 4 local MPs and encourage them to call on the government to reverse its decision.

48 MOTION - IT'S TIME TO PUT NEW ARRANGEMENTS IN PLACE

Councillor Phil Gilchrist moved and Councillor Dave Mitchell seconded a motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.

In formally moving his motion, Councillor Gilchrist stated that he was happy to accept the Conservative amendment, proposed by Councillor Lesley Rennie and seconded by Councillor David Burgess-Joyce as follows:

“After final paragraph, add:

Furthermore, Council requests the five Group Leaders write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressing the view of Council.”

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9.1, the Council did not debate this matter and it was then –

Resolved (unanimously) –

Council notes that:

- a. in 1999, a Green Paper was announced and the then Government set out to consult on the future of social care funding and a Royal Commission was set up. This published proposals which included a more generous means-test and free personal and nursing care;**
- b. in 2009, the Labour Government’s Green Paper proposed a National Care Service;**
- c. in 2011, the Commission on the Funding of Care and Support, set up by the Coalition Government, proposed a cap on lifetime social care charges and a more generous means-test;**
- d. in 2014, the Coalition Government legislated to implement the Commission’s recommendations with cross-party support;**
- e. in July 2015, the Conservative Government postponed their introduction citing funding pressures and a lack of preparedness by local authorities.**

Council recognises that, since 2017, there has been a succession of promises to fund and reform the long term funding of Social Care. These have included:

The promise of a Green Paper made by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer in March 2017,

- a promise to “work to improve social care and bring forward proposals for consultation” in the Queen’s Speech in June 2017;
- a statement, in November 2017, that a Green Paper would be published by the Parliamentary summer recess in 2018 and would “focus on care for older people”;
- the setting out of seven principles to “guide the Government’s thinking ahead of the Social Care Green Paper” in March 2018;
- the intention announced, in January 2019, to publish a Social Care Green Paper “by April 2019”.

Finally, the Queen’s Speech of 19 December 2019 included this commitment...

‘My Ministers will seek cross-party consensus on proposals for long term reform of social care. They will ensure that the social care system provides everyone with the dignity and security they deserve and that no one who needs care has to sell their home to pay for it.’

Council believes that Wirral’s residents need Parliament to deliver a way forward that will help them plan for their future care needs with some degree of certainty. Council recognises that all those involved in Wirral’s social care sector have worked, through the past months of the pandemic, to support Wirral’s people in care homes and in the community. It has faced shortages of PPE, distressed families who have lost loved ones and, latterly, the anxiety of those who have not been visited and been unable to visit.

In view of this pressured and chequered history, Council requests that Wirral’s Members of Parliament do all they can to secure a consensus on a way forward that will secure funding and meet the needs of the frail and vulnerable members of our community.

Furthermore, Council requests the five Group Leaders write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressing the view of Council.

49 **MOTION - TACKLING CHILD POVERTY AND DEPRIVATION ON WIRRAL**

Councillor Kate Cannon moved and Councillor Paul Stuart seconded the following motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13:

“Poverty is devastating and deeply destabilising to families and communities, and residents from Wirral suffer from poverty at a higher rate than they did ten years ago, and at a higher rate than the national average. (Wirral children in low-income poverty has seen a 23.3% increase since 2015/16.)

It is particularly damaging during crucial stages of development, and the lasting effects that poverty has on physical and psychological processes are now well documented and long-lasting.

Child poverty is not simply about struggling to make ends meet financially but are linked with a wide range of deprivation issues such as poor-quality housing, poor health and low levels of educational attainment. Children in poverty are also more likely to go missing and have increased risk of exploitation and grooming.

Late interventions can be effective, but those made in the first five years of a child's life are by far the most effective. The early interventions are also the most cost-effective.

With the social problems in our borough getting worse over the last decade – not better – and with the complex and varied nature of the causes and effects of poverty, Council recognises the significant work that has already been done to establish a poverty profile in the borough. It endorses the workstreams already going on to reduce child poverty, and asks that Children, Young People and Education Committee considers this motion and requests it begins to lead on compiling a comprehensive child poverty strategy for the borough.”

Councillor Moira McLaughlin moved and Councillor Mike Sullivan seconded the following amendment, submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.3:

“Delete everything in the original Notice of Motion after 3rd paragraph ending in “Children in poverty are also more likely to go missing and have increased risk of exploitation and grooming”

And insert the following:

‘A strategy to eradicate child poverty needs to address family poverty and should have a national, as well as a local dimension which encompasses policies to lift families out of poverty, alongside action to reduce the impact of inadequate income by providing help at community level.

Wirral has been at the forefront of this approach through the work of the community based organisation Feeding Birkenhead Supporting Wirral one of a number of 15 pilot areas across the country that forms Feeding Britain.

To date examples of how this approach has been successful are:

- (1) Using locally gathered evidence, Feeding Britain highlighted to Government that serious delays in payment of Tax Credits was resulting in families being left without income for long periods. This brought about an improvement at national level to the administration of Tax Credits.

- (2) Feeding Britain raised issues of additional charges for people using pre-paid meters for their fuel. These are often people on low income and it was able to negotiate with Ofgem that a cap on pre-payment be introduced.
- (3) The model for school holiday provision developed in Wirral, was presented to MPs by Feeding Britain, got cross party support and was the basis of the School Holiday (and Activity) Bill.
- (4) Feeding Britain developed the scheme which has become Kick Start, aimed at providing employment opportunities for young people.

Any local strategy needs to be comprehensive and work across all Council Departments and with community and voluntary sector, health, business and private sector partners.

Wirral has a well-established network of community and voluntary sector organisation which have a strong history of co-operation to address food and fuel poverty and offer help with debt and other factors which reduce disposable income.

It is 4 years since the Council's strategy "Improving Life Chances" was developed by the then Director of Public Health and though there are several other very good initiatives aimed at reducing poverty, it is clear that there is a need for a more integrated approach which uses the learning from research and builds on the recent activity to alleviate food poverty.

Council therefore requests that:

- (A) The Policy and Resources Committee undertake to pull together the different policies and strategies aimed at alleviating the problems which lead to poverty into a comprehensive Anti-Poverty Strategy and recommends that the expertise and experience of organisations involved in this area of work are used to inform that strategy.
- (B) That a set of performance indicators are developed which can monitor any improvement in poverty rates.
- (C) That these are reported on an annual basis, or as appropriate, to Policy and Resources Committee and the policy is updated as required.' "

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9.1, the Council did not debate this matter.

The amendment was put and lost on the Mayor's casting vote (29:29). (One abstention).

The substantive motion was then put, and it was –

Resolved (58:0) (One abstention) -

Poverty is devastating and deeply destabilising to families and communities, and residents from Wirral suffer from poverty at a higher rate than they did ten years ago, and at a higher rate than the national average. (Wirral children in low-income poverty has seen a 23.3% increase since 2015/16.)

It is particularly damaging during crucial stages of development, and the lasting effects that poverty has on physical and psychological processes are now well documented and long-lasting.

Child poverty is not simply about struggling to make ends meet financially but are linked with a wide range of deprivation issues such as poor-quality housing, poor health and low levels of educational attainment. Children in poverty are also more likely to go missing and have increased risk of exploitation and grooming.

Late interventions can be effective, but those made in the first five years of a child’s life are by far the most effective. The early interventions are also the most cost-effective.

With the social problems in our borough getting worse over the last decade – not better – and with the complex and varied nature of the causes and effects of poverty, Council recognises the significant work that has already been done to establish a poverty profile in the borough. It endorses the workstreams already going on to reduce child poverty, and asks that Children, Young People and Education Committee considers this motion and requests it begins to lead on compiling a comprehensive child poverty strategy for the borough.

50 **MOTION - SUPPORTING CAR CLUBS IN WIRRAL**

Councillor Tony Cox, having previously declared a personal prejudicial interest in this item, left the ‘virtual’ meeting room whilst it was under consideration.

Councillor Pat Cleary moved and Councillor Chris Cooke seconded the following motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13:

“Council notes:

the targets for new housing imposed by government on Wirral, the desire to protect our precious greenbelt and the resulting need to achieve higher density levels in new housing developments;

the unanimous declaration of a Climate Emergency by Council in July last year and the related “clean travel” commitments outlined in the Cool 2 climate strategy with a clear objective to decarbonise local travel

the many changes indicated as part of the Cool 2 strategy which include: “a shift from individual ownership of vehicles to the use of travel services, e.g. car clubs”;

that Car Clubs are an alternative to car ownership. They enable people to share cars, and only pay when they are using them. Although many schemes now operate across the country, there is no established scheme for Wirral;

that many councils actively support local car clubs in a variety of ways – providing financial and/or marketing support, facilitating vehicle access and via specific policies which, for example, mandate provision for car club vehicles in new housing schemes.

Car clubs therefore have a role to play in supporting a number of the council’s objectives for transportation, regeneration, climate change and sustainability.

Council requests that:

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee incorporate a study of car clubs into its work programme, to include:

- A survey of the current provision of car clubs in the Liverpool City Region
- An analysis of council support for car clubs elsewhere in the country and the potential application of similar support in Wirral
- Recommendations as to the specific policies and measures required to help facilitate future car club provision in Wirral”

Councillor David Burgess-Joyce moved and Councillor Andrew Gardner seconded the following amendment, submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.3:

“Replace final bulletin point with:

Recommendations as to the specific non-punitive or sanctionable policies and measures required to help facilitate future car club provision in Wirral.”

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9.1, the Council did not debate this matter.

The amendment was put and lost (18:39) (One abstention).

The substantive motion was then put, and it was –

Resolved (39:18) (One abstention) – That Council notes:

the targets for new housing imposed by government on Wirral, the desire to protect our precious greenbelt and the resulting need to achieve higher density levels in new housing developments;

the unanimous declaration of a Climate Emergency by Council in July last year and the related “clean travel” commitments outlined in the Cool 2 climate strategy with a clear objective to decarbonise local travel;

the many changes indicated as part of the Cool 2 strategy which include: “a shift from individual ownership of vehicles to the use of travel services, e.g. car clubs”;

that Car Clubs are an alternative to car ownership. They enable people to share cars, and only pay when they are using them. Although many schemes now operate across the country, there is no established scheme for Wirral;

that many councils actively support local car clubs in a variety of ways – providing financial and/or marketing support, facilitating vehicle access and via specific policies which, for example, mandate provision for car club vehicles in new housing schemes.

Car clubs therefore have a role to play in supporting a number of the council’s objectives for transportation, regeneration, climate change and sustainability.

Council requests that:

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee incorporate a study of car clubs into its work programme, to include:

- **A survey of the current provision of car clubs in the Liverpool City Region**
- **An analysis of council support for car clubs elsewhere in the country and the potential application of similar support in Wirral**
- **Recommendations as to the specific policies and measures required to help facilitate future car club provision in Wirral.**

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 9 December 2020

Present: The Civic Mayor (Councillor Tony Smith) in the
Chair
Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor George Davies)

Councillors	T Anderson	EA Grey	T Norbury
	B Berry	P Hayes	C Povall
	J Bird	S Hayes	L Rennie
	A Brame	A Hodson	J Robinson
	D Burgess-Joyce	K Hodson	L Rowlands
	H Cameron	J Johnson	C Spriggs
	K Cannon	AER Jones	S Spoor
	C Carubia	C Jones	J Stapleton
	W Clements	T Jones	P Stuart
	M Collins	M Jordan	M Sullivan
	C Cooke	B Kenny	J Walsh
	A Corkhill	A Leech	S Whittingham
	T Cox	I Lewis	I Williams
	S Foulkes	M McLaughlin	KJ Williams
	A Gardner	J McManus	S Williams
	P Gilchrist	D Mitchell	J Williamson
	K Greaney	C Muspratt	G Wood
	JE Green	Y Nolan	A Wright

<u>Apologies</u>	Councillors	P Cleary	S Jones
		T Cottier	S Kelly
		S Frost	T Usher

51 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.

No such declarations were made.

52 CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Civic Mayor announced that apologies had been received from Councillors Pat Cleary, Tony Cottier, Samantha Frost, Sharon Jones, Stuart Kelly and Tom Usher.

POSTHUMOUS CONFERMENT OF TITLE OF HONORARY ALDERMAN

The Council considered the recommendations from the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee held on 18 November 2020 (minute 8 refers) in relation to the posthumous conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman on former Councillor Bill Davies, in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Civic Mayor informed the Council that arrangements would be made to enable the Mayor to present the Honorary Alderman badge to former Councillor Davies' family at a time when it was convenient and safe to do so.

The Civic Mayor stated that Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 provided that the title of Honorary Alderman might be conferred by the Council on persons who have, in its opinion, rendered eminent service as past Members of the Council, (or a predecessor Council), but who were no longer Councillors. The title was to be conferred by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose.

It was formally moved by Councillor Moira McLaughlin and seconded by Councillor Andrew Hodson that the Council be recommended to posthumously confer the title of Honorary Alderman on former Councillor Bill Davies in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

In moving the motion Councillor McLaughlin spoke warmly of her former ward colleague who had given 34 years' service as a councillor in Rock Ferry, and of the high regard and respect in which he was held both by his fellow councillors and by his constituents.

Councillor Andrew Hodson in seconding the motion also spoke warmly of the 27 years he had worked with former Councillor Bill Davies particularly on the Licensing Committees and panels.

Following speeches from a number of Members, who concurred with all the sentiments expressed and shared their own fond memories of the times working with former Councillor Bill Davies, the motion was put to the Council and it was –

Resolved (unanimously) - That the title of Honorary Alderman be posthumously conferred on former Councillor Bill Davies in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

COUNCIL

Monday, 1 March 2021

Present: The Civic Mayor (Councillor Tony Smith) in the
Chair
Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor George Davies)

Councillors	T Anderson	EA Grey	T Norbury
	B Berry	P Hayes	C Povall
	J Bird	S Hayes	L Rennie
	A Brame	A Hodson	J Robinson
	D Burgess-Joyce	K Hodson	L Rowlands
	H Cameron	J Johnson	C Spriggs
	K Cannon	AER Jones	S Spoor
	C Carubia	C Jones	J Stapleton
	P Cleary	S Jones	P Stuart
	W Clements	T Jones	M Sullivan
	M Collins	M Jordan	T Usher
	C Cooke	S Kelly	J Walsh
	T Cottier	B Kenny	S Whittingham
	T Cox	A Leech	I Williams
	S Foulkes	I Lewis	KJ Williams
	S Frost	M McLaughlin	S Williams
	A Gardner	J McManus	J Williamson
	P Gilchrist	D Mitchell	G Wood
	K Greaney	C Muspratt	A Wright
	JE Green	Y Nolan	

Apologies Councillors A Corkhill

54 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Civic Mayor informed the meeting that he had been informed in advance of a number of Members who had a personal interest in agenda item 4c, 'Budget 2021/22 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2022/23 - 2025/26' insofar as it related to the schools budget element by virtue of holding positions as school governors, as follows:

Councillors Bruce Berry, Allan Brame, Chris Carubia, Pat Cleary, Wendy Clements (who was also employed in an early-years setting) Mike Collins, Chris Cooke, George Davies, Andrew Gardner, Phil Gilchrist, Karl Greaney, Brian Kenny, Anita Leech, Dave Mitchell, Tony Smith, Paul Stuart, Mike Sullivan, Stuart Whittingham and Steve Williams.

Additionally, the Civic Mayor reported the following personal interests insofar as they related to the schools budget element, by virtue of those Members either themselves or close family members working in either Schools or the Council's Education and Children, or Young People's Directorate:

Councillors Chris Cooke (employed as teacher) George Davies (daughter in education) Jean Robinson (employed in Early Years) and (son, supply teacher) Les Rowlands (spouse) Paul Stuart (foster carer) and Mike Sullivan (daughter).

The Civic Mayor further reported that the Constitution & Standards Committee at its meeting on 24 February, 2021 had granted a dispensation to Councillor Steve Foulkes in respect to Magenta Housing as he was a Board Member, so as to enable him to participate fully in the budget debate.

Members of the Council were then invited to consider whether they had any further 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 the interest.

In respect of agenda item 4c, 'Budget 2021/22 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 - 2025/26' insofar as it related to the schools budget element, the following Members declared personal interests:

Councillors Adrian Jones (school governor) and (daughter, teacher) Joe Walsh (daughter, teacher), Julie McManus (school governor) and (son in Primary Education) Mike Collins (employment) Yvonne Nolan (school governor) Steve Foulkes (school governor) Chris Jones (daughter, teacher) Samantha Frost (family member in education) Tony Norbury (school governor and voting member of Schools Forum) and (sister works in early years) Sarah Spoor (employment in Liverpool school) Chris Spriggs (partner in education) Jo Bird (partner school governor) Christina Muspratt (daughter-in-law, teacher).

In respect of agenda item 4c, 'Budget 2021/22 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 - 2025/26' insofar as it mentioned Wirral Evolutions, Councillor Irene Williams declared a personal interest by virtue of her brother being a service user.

In respect of agenda item 4d, 'Capital Programme 2021-26' Councillor Anita Leech declared a personal interest by virtue her being a governor of two schools referred to in the report.

55 **CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Civic Mayor announced that apologies had been received from Councillor Andy Corkhill.

He then welcomed back a number of Members who had been unwell since the last meeting. Referring to the fact that it was now almost a year since the first lockdown, he expressed his thanks to all staff, the NHS and volunteers for all their work in the past difficult year. There was now hope on the horizon with the rollout of the vaccine, which both he and the Mayoress had now received. With the focus on Wirral being to keep people safe, there was also a need to recognise the challenges faced by residents and to support their mental, physical and economic wellbeing. Additionally with regard to recovery there would be a need to help those affected by the pandemic, particularly young people, many of whom had struggled with mental health issues. Local Authorities and the NHS would remain on the frontline in the battle against COVID.

56 **BUDGET MEETING PROCEDURE**

The Council was then invited to consider the recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee meeting of 17 February 2021, in respect of the procedure to be adopted for this extraordinary meeting of the Council.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, it was –

Resolved – That, for the duration of this extraordinary meeting of 1 March 2021 (Budget Council):

- (a) the procedure attached as Appendix A to the report, be followed in respect of the meeting; and**
- (b) Council Standing Order 15.4 (timing of speeches) be suspended together with such other standing orders as may conflict with the Budget Council procedure or the Mayor’s administration of the meeting, in such a manner as the Mayor in his or her absolute discretion dictates, to ensure the objective of Council setting a lawful budget and council tax requirement prevails.**

57 **MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL OR CONSIDERATION BY THE COUNCIL - RECOMMENDATION FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF 17 FEBRUARY, 2021 CONCERNING BUDGET DECISION MAKING**

With regard to Budget decision making, seven referrals had been made by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 17 February (see minutes 58 to 64 post).

58 **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING FOR QUARTER THREE 2020/21**

The first item requiring approval was in relation to an increase in the budget because of Covid-19 funding.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

Resolved – That the recommendations contained within minute 66 of the Policy and Resources Committee of 17 February, 2021, be agreed, in that:

Council approves the 2020/21 budget of £41.144m in relation to Covid-19 funding for Council use and notes the additional £134.490m of funds that is to be made available to the Council for onward relay to other organisations as passported funding. Council notes that this recommendation follows on from the recommendation made by Policy & Resources Committee on 11 November 2020, following the recent notification of additional funding.

59 **CAPITAL MONITORING QUARTER THREE 2020/21**

The second item requiring approval was in relation to a revised capital programme for 2020/21.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

Resolved – That the recommendations contained within minute 67 of the Policy and Resources Committee of 17 February, 2021, be agreed in that the following be approved:

- (1) additional funding for the schemes referred to in section 3.5 in the report, as follows:**
 - **Birkenhead Park World Heritage Project Team - £0.085m (over a three year period)**
 - **Connecting Wirral Waters - Detailed Design - £0.610m (over a two year period)**
- (2) a revised Capital Programme of £86.0million for 2020-21, including the virements referred to in Appendix 3 in the report.**

The third item requiring approval was the Council Budget and Council Tax setting. Councillor Janette Williamson moved and then spoke to the Motion, which was seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, and which was set out as a recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee of 17 February 2021 (Draft Minute 68-2020/21) 'Budget 2020/21 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 – 2025/26' but subject to an alteration, as follows:

'That is, that the Motion being proposed remains to adopt a revenue budget of £329.4m, but is altered to accept the amendments from other Groups, in parts, and to make a minor addition:

(1) The following *are deleted*:

1. *Accepting items (1)2 of the Green Group's amendment and (1)5 of the Conservative Group's amendment, Savings proposal № 30*
 "Charging for a range of new and existing Environmental: Services" **£144,000**

2. *Accepting item (1)6 of the Conservative Group's amendment and (2)2 in part of the Green Group's amendment, Savings proposal № 36*
 "Climate Emergency Budget Balance: **£100,000**

(2) *Accepting in part the item (2)1 of the Conservative Group's amendment,:*

1. Savings proposal № 16
 "Suspension of individual Member Ward Budgets: £250,000" *now reads:*

"Mitigate ward member budget pause and allocate £1,000 per Member (£66,000) to support local voluntary organisations and initiatives: £184,000"

(3) The following be inserted, after the list of budget savings proposals at B(2), to read:

"That further budget allocation be provided for the following:

1. *Accepting the item (3)1 of the Conservative Group's amendment and item (2) of the Liberal Democrat Group's amendment*
To enable development of the wider youth offer in £200,000

Wirral:

- (3) The budget gap of £510,000 that would thereby be created is then met, retaining a balanced budget of £329.4m, by

Insertion of the following budget savings proposals:

1. *Accepting the item (4)3 of the Conservative Group's amendment*
Remove the Brexit Reserve: **£100,000**
Included within the earmarked reserves is a reserve of £100k for activities associated with Brexit. We recognise that the funding received for Brexit from Government was ring-fenced, however we believe that this reserve could be charged against salaries and activities undertaken during 2020/21 that have been charged against core council budgets and that therefore this would release £100k that can be made available for other purposes.

2. *Accepting the item (3) of the Green Group's amendment*
Filling Staff Vacancies: **£240K**
To support staff vacancies should be filled in a timely manner, to reduce pressures on our existing staff.
To achieve this council assumes that vacancies are filled at the top of the pay scale which is rare. It is therefore deemed prudent to reduce this to half of the potential £480k.

3. *Accepting in part the item (4)1 of the Conservative Group's amendment*
Zero Based Budgeting: **£170k**
In 2020/221 a saving was agreed at full Council of £600k from this exercise. The saving has not been achieved and is recommended to be removed in full, from the 2021/22 budget. We believe a small proportion of these savings can still be achieved.

- (4) A new paragraph (3)(g)(iii) is inserted, *to read:*

- (iii) **in implementing the proposals Council requests that the Europa Fun Pool re-opens, when its practicable and safe to so in line with government and public health guidance, during the School Summer holidays."**

In stating this request, Council notes that:

- **Unknown intelligence relating to the COVID situation and what that will look like on / post 21 June 2021 and the**

‘previous advice given by the Director of Public Health in that the fun pool would not be able to open under current restrictions’.

- **There is currently no guidance on what a “safe” number of people would be.**
- **To open the Europa Fun Pool would require a recruitment exercise for additional staffing and supported lifeguard training which would be challenging to undertake between 22 June and the start of the summer holidays, given that the Lifeguard Training takes a minimum of 5 weeks.**
- **The following current guidance has been released in relation to events and large gatherings, which would need to be kept under review. The maximum Europa Fun Pool capacity could be considered as similar to a large wedding every 1.5 hours *“DCMS and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy have been working with representatives from industry and civil society to explore when and how events with larger crowd sizes, less social distancing or in settings where transmission is more likely (i.e. indoors), will be able to return safely. This includes sports events, music festivals and large weddings and conferences.”***
- **That a reduction in numbers to what might be considered a safe level could be considered, given this is a much-used facility during the School Summer holidays.” ’**

Councillor Wendy Clements, Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee, then spoke to the Schools Budget element of the proposed budget.

CONSERVATIVE GROUP BUDGET AMENDMENT

Councillor Jeff Green then moved and spoke to the Conservative amendment, which was seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie, as follows:

‘We recommend Council accepts the Policy and Resources Committee Revenue Budget of £329.4 million, building on the Leader of the Council’s Policy & Resources Committee proposal to Council, with the following improvements.

Council notes that in March 2020 the Council agreed a budget of £304.7 million for 2020/21 and that this amendment delivers a budget of £329.4

million for 2021/22 and does not alter the Policy & Resources Committee proposed Council Tax requirement.

That the motion being proposed to adopt a Revenue Budget of £329.4m is amended, so as:

(1) The following Labour Party proposals for savings *are deleted*:

1. Savings proposal No 5
"Reduction in grass cutting and maintenance of roadside verges and all Parks and Open Spaces: **£250,000**"
2. Savings proposal No 6.
"Amenity space and grass verge maintenance cessation: **£100,000**"
3. Savings proposal No 11
"Royden Park Commercial Development – Phase 1: **£80,000**"
4. Savings proposal No 27
"Savings from efficiencies at the Williamson Art Gallery: **£90,000**"
5. Savings proposal No 30
"Charging for a range of new and existing Environmental: Services" **£144,000**"
6. Savings proposal No 36
"Climate Emergency Budget Balance: **£100,000**"

(2) The following:

1. Savings proposal No 16
"Suspension of individual Member Ward Budgets: £250,000" *now reads:*

"Mitigate ward member budget pause and allocate £3000 per Member (£198,000) to support local voluntary organisations and initiatives: £52,000"

(3) The following be inserted, after the list of budget savings proposals at B(2), to read:

"That further budget allocation be provided for the following:

1. **Additional Youth Service Provision at multiple sites around the Borough: £200,000**

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------|
| 2. | Remove all the proposed increases in fees and charges associated with Cemeteries and Crematoria: | £230,000 |
| 3. | Retain and, following public engagement, review grass cutting and maintenance of verges and amenity spaces. Review and, if necessary, restructure Team and processes: | £50,000 |
| 4. | ‘Planting for Pollinators’ and community allotments (in consultation with public and ward councillors): | £100,000 |
| 5. | Rebuilding Council reserves and balances: | £588,000 |
- (4) The budget gap of £2,130,000 that would thereby be created is then met, retaining a balanced budget of £329.4m by

Insertion of the following budget savings proposals:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | “Zero-based budgeting: | £300,000 |
|----|-------------------------------|-----------------|

In 2020/21 a saving was agreed at Full Council of £600k from Zero Based Budgeting exercise. This saving has not been achieved and is recommended to be removed in 2021/22. We believe that some of this saving is still achievable in 2021/22 and that the full pressure should not be removed. We recognise that officers are still working to support the pandemic and that there is less capacity, so we recommend that the exercise is phased. We think that half of this saving of £300k would be achievable in 2021/22.

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------|
| “2. | “Business Change Team (Non-staffing): | £500,000 |
|-----|--|-----------------|

The change programme has not yet been agreed, it is not yet known what this budget will be used for in 2021/22, so it cannot be verified whether this remaining value will be required. Therefore, we consider that an additional £500,000 can be made available for other purposes. This leaves a remaining annual non-staffing budget of £1.73m. In developing and implementing change projects, these projects should be scoped out in advance and the full cost of development and implementation taken into account when the benefits are calculated, and then only the net benefits included within any future budgets.

All Change Projects must be fully costed and budgeted with any overspends reported to a joint Officer Member Panel with the request to access centrally held reserves. Business Change professionals and Change Managers to become an internally Traded Service to future projects and

programmes.

3. **“Remove the Brexit Reserve: £100,000**

Included within the earmarked reserves is a reserve of £100k for activities associated with Brexit. We recognise that the funding received for Brexit from Government was ring-fenced, however we believe that this reserve could be charged against salaries and activities undertaken during 2020/21 that have been charged against core council budgets and that therefore this would release £100k that can be made available for other purposes

4. **“Fund increased 21/22 requirement for Cemeteries and Crematoria from Government Covid Grant: £230,000**

The 2021/22 fees and charges schedule includes details of increases of fees and charges in crematoria. Some of these charges are significant and we recognise that in response to the pandemic, the way cremations are conducted and attended has changed. We understand that costs have increased as a result of this different way of operation, but we feel that these costs can be charged against the Covid-19 Emergency Funding provided by the Government for 2021/22, rather than increasing the charges for the public to cover them.

5. **“Bring forward new Council Model: £1,000,000**

In 2020/21 a saving was agreed at Full Council of £5 million for the new Council Model. This saving has not been achieved and is recommended to be removed in 2021/22. We believe that some of this saving is still achievable in 2021/22 and that the full pressure should not be removed. We recognise that officers are still working to support the pandemic and that there is less capacity, so we recommend that £1 million is removed from this pressure and that Officers be authorised to utilise the EVR Reserve and / or any vacancies no longer required to support this initiative, if required.”

(5) A new paragraph at (3) is inserted, to read:

“h) Recommends to Policy and Resources Committee and Policy and Services Committees, to support the delivery of the 2021/22 budget and formulation of the 2022/23 budget, that:

(i) Carbon Net Zero Impact is introduced as a new criteria for awarding future contracts

The Committees note that in the current mechanism for awarding contracts includes criteria for quality, price and social value, no account is taken for a carbon net zero impact. As the Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019, Council believes that any contracts the Council awards from 2021/22 need to be assessed for their carbon net zero impact to contribute to the Council's Climate Emergency declaration and therefore recommends that officers are tasked with bringing forward proposals for amending the requirements for contracts so that the carbon net zero impact is included as part of the criteria for award.

(ii) A Joint Member Officer Business Change Panel is established

To establish a joint officer/member panel to monitor the performance of major change projects/programmes and to consider any overspends (over agreed contingency levels set out in business case) to change projects.

(iii) A 2022/2023 Budget Preparation Panel is established

To establish a Panel (working group) immediately following agreement of the 2021/22 Budget by Council, to commence detailed work in preparation for the 2022/23 budget cycle. The membership of the Panel to be agreed by Group Leaders.”

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP AMENDMENT

Councillor Phil Gilchrist then moved and spoke to the Liberal Democrat amendment, which was seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia, as follows:

‘That the motion being proposed to adopt a Revenue Budget of £329.4m is amended so that:

(1) A budget savings proposal is inserted as:

**“Budgeting at cost for newly recruited posts:
£100,000”**

(2) The following be inserted, after the list of budget savings proposals at B(2), to read:

“That further budget allocation be provided for the following:

“1. Accepting the monies discussed as now being available for this item with the other Groups,

increasing this amount:

“To enable development of the wider Youth Offer in Wirral: £200,000

Council, in December 2015, was quite clear that the major project...*‘should not detract from the pattern of hubs established some years ago’* and that Council is *‘...absolutely clear that this development will enhance the Borough’s existing youth service and will not replace it’*. Council therefore expects that the further funding allocated to the ‘The Hive’ as an organisation, along with the funding expected from businesses as suggested, will enable that organisation to honour the original arrangements from the year 2022 going forward.

In implementing the budget provision, Council asks that the Children, Young People and Education Committee:

- (i) takes up and progresses the Youth Offer;
- (ii) works to build a consensus on the range of services needed for young people, their wide distribution and staffing levels; and
- (iii) works with Officers to look at virement within appropriate budgets and every opportunity for external funding;

with the express purpose of securing a youth offer that meets the needs of young people throughout Wirral.”

- (3) A new paragraph (3)(g)(ii) is inserted, moving the existing (ii) to become (iii), to read:

“(ii) That the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, in developing and implementing proposals in line with the agreed Budget as authorised at (g)(i)(3) above, take into account that Council:

- (1) has supported a new approach to ‘Verges and Pollinators’, which was a Motion (46-2019/20) passed, as amended, unanimously in July 2019;
- (2) believes clear guidance is needed to define the most effective approach;

- (3) notes that Oxton Fields, The Dips (New Brighton) and Carr Bridge Road (Woodchurch Road) were initially included in the budget option for 'maintenance cessation' by mistake which, as reported to Policy & Resources Committee, were areas subsequently transferred to budget option 'maintenance reduction'; and
- (4) believes before any change in maintenance and grass cutting is introduced within any of the green space amenity areas listed in recent documents, there needs to be substantial consultation with local Ward Members and the community. This must ensure that any changes take account of the need for local recreation and play alongside appropriate environmentally sustainable bee and insect friendly rewilding and planting along with any potential for increased tree cover.
- (5) A programme of work to reduce adverse public reaction is likely to secure this as a project with transformational and environmental benefits.
 Without appropriate planning and thorough consultation there is every possibility of delay in the arrangements making those savings from parks and verges less realistic.
 In the event of the program slipping members should be advised at the earliest opportunity so that any financial considerations can be suitably assessed

(4) A new paragraph (3)(g)(iv) is inserted, *to read:*

“(iv) in implementing the proposals Council recognises that proposals for the future operation of the Williamson Art Gallery have been drawn up by officers and that consultation with staff is in progress .

As these have been developed with the aim of establishing a more flexible pattern of opening, along with new approaches to enhance the visitor offer (including adding to the resources now available on-line) these represent desirable changes.

Given that the revised opening times are intended to enable the use of the building by groups by appointment, along with the hire of the facilities and improved catering arrangements, it is reasonable to accept that the identified saving can be achieved with no overall diminution of service.

(5) A new paragraph (3)(g)(v) is inserted, *to read:*

“(v) in implementing the proposals Council notes the level of public interest in the range of facilities at the Europa Pool, as retained within this budget. Council welcomes the steps taken to date.

In the light of the pandemic and associated Public Health advice the opening of Wirral’s leisure facilities will depend on the availability of the buildings and staff to operate facilities in a Covid safe manner.

As the need for additional ventilation for this at Europa Pool was identified at the latter end of 2020 it is encouraging to note this is now being put in hand.

Nevertheless we now recognise that the time remaining for preparation and opening, along with financial constraints, make a target for opening difficult to achieve in the current circumstances.

Council believes that it is highly desirable for facilities such as these to be available to the general public at the earliest permissible date.’

GREEN GROUP BUDGET AMENDMENT

Councillor Pat Cleary then moved and spoke to the Green amendment, which Councillor Chris Cooke seconded and then spoke to as follows:

‘That the motion being proposed to adopt a Revenue Budget of £329.4m is amended, so as:

‘(1) The following *are deleted*:

- 1. Savings proposal № 11
“Royden Park Commercial Development – Phase 1: £80,000”**

Proposals for a high-wire facility at Royden Park have not been scrutinised thoroughly or subjected to serious, informed, public consultation. Alternative sites have only had a cursory examination. A rigorous assessment needs to be undertaken of the likely impact on Royden Park should this project proceed. In addition, it is very unlikely that a proposal which is still at the design stage and has yet to achieve necessary permissions could deliver a significant surplus in the coming financial year.

- 2. Savings proposal № 30
“Charging for a range of new and existing**

Environmental: Services” **£144,000”**

Proposed increase in charges for environmental services are socially damaging and environmentally regressive. Charging for services including ERIC, wheely bin repairs/replacements and school recycling collections would impact negatively on the amount of waste recycled and could result in additional cost pressures from higher landfill charges and increased fly-tipping

(2) The following:

1. Savings proposal No 1

“Reduce the subsidy to the Hive Youth Centre from £400k to £300k, (instead of £200k in 2021/22 only): £100,000, *to read:*

“Reduce the subsidy to the Hive Youth Centre from £400k to £315k (for 2021/22 only): £85,000”

2. Savings proposal No 27

“Savings from efficiencies at the Williamson Art Gallery: £90,000”, *to read*

“Savings from efficiencies at the Williamson Art Gallery: £75,000”

3. Savings proposal No 36

“Climate Emergency Budget Balance: £100,000”, *to read*

“Climate Emergency Budget Balance: £79,000”

(3) *The budget gap of £275,000 that would thereby be created is then met, retaining a balanced budget of £329.4m by*

Insertion of the following budget savings proposals:

1. **“Filling Staff vacancies: £240,000**

Our people are our greatest asset and council is grateful for the immense efforts our staff have undertaken over the past year to support residents during an incredibly difficult period. To support our staff in the year ahead Council agrees that vacancies should generally be filled on a timely basis. This will reduce pressures on existing staff and support employment in Wirral during a very difficult time for our local economy.

To achieve these aims Council assumes that vacancies filled will, on average, be at the mid-point on the relevant salary scale rather than the top of the relevant salary scale. Whilst this has the potential in an ideal year to generate £480,000 in savings it is prudent for a variety of reasons to assume that half of that potential can be achieved.
Saving = £240,000.

2. **“Changes to golf fees: £35,000**

Council notes the results of the public consultation on the budget and shares our residents’ concern at the level of council subsidy for our public golf courses (currently £335,000 p.a.).
To reduce the level of council subsidy for public golf whilst further work is undertaken on its future provision in Wirral, this Council agrees that fees and charges for public golf are increased across the board by 5% for 2021/22.
Saving = £35,000’

Councillor Moira McLaughlin, as Leader of the Independent Group, then addressed the Council on the budget proposals.

At 7.34pm the Mayor adjourned the meeting for a short break.

The meeting resumed at 7.47pm.

The budget proposals and amendments were then debated.

Having heard from those seconders who had not already spoken, the Mayor adjourned the meeting for a short break at 9.13pm.

The meeting resumed at 9.20pm

Councillors Pat Cleary, Phil Gilchrist, Jeff Green and Janette Williamson, then replied to the debate.

The Mayor then invited Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, to comment in her capacity as Section 151 Officer to the proposals and amendments submitted. She confirmed that all the proposals were achievable and legal and none would change the statutory Council Tax calculations.

The Mayor then invited Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance, to explain the process for voting, having done so, the Council then proceeded to the votes.

In respect of the Green Group budget amendment, the Council divided as follows:

For the amendment (22) – Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, D Burgess-Joyce, H Cameron, P Cleary, W Clements, M Collins, C Cooke, T Cox, A Gardner, J Green, P Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, J Johnson, M Jordan, I Lewis, C Povall, L Rennie, L Rowlands, S Williams and A Wright.

Against the amendment (38) - Councillors J Bird, A Brame, K Cannon, C Carubia, T Cottier, G Davies, S Foulkes, S Frost, P Gilchrist, K Greaney, E Grey, S Hayes, AER Jones, C Jones, S Jones, T Jones, S Kelly, B Kenny, A Leech, M McLaughlin, J McManus, D Mitchell, C Muspratt, Y Nolan, T Norbury, J Robinson, S Spoor, C Spriggs, J Stapleton, P Stuart, M Sullivan, T Usher, J Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, J Williams, J Williamson and G Wood.

Abstention – Councillor T Smith (Civic Mayor).

The amendment was therefore lost (22:38) (One abstention).

In respect of the Liberal Democrat Group budget amendment, the Council divided as follows:

For the amendment (27) – Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, A Brame, D Burgess-Joyce, H Cameron, C Carubia, P Cleary, W Clements, M Collins, C Cooke, T Cox, A Gardner, P Gilchrist, J Green, P Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, J Johnson, M Jordan, S Kelly, I Lewis, D Mitchell, C Povall, L Rennie, L Rowlands, S Williams and A Wright.

Against the amendment (34) - Councillors J Bird, K Cannon, T Cottier, G Davies, S Foulkes, S Frost, K Greaney, E Grey, S Hayes, AER Jones, C Jones, S Jones, T Jones, B Kenny, A Leech, M McLaughlin, J McManus, C Muspratt, Y Nolan, T Norbury, J Robinson, T Smith, S Spoor, C Spriggs, J Stapleton, P Stuart, M Sullivan, T Usher, J Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, J Williams, J Williamson and G Wood.

The amendment was therefore lost (27:34).

In respect of the Conservative Group budget amendment, the Council divided as follows:

For the amendment (20) – Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, D Burgess-Joyce, H Cameron, W Clements, M Collins, T Cox, A Gardner, J Green, P Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, J Johnson, M Jordan, I Lewis, C Povall, L Rennie, L Rowlands, S Williams and A Wright.

Against the amendment (41) - Councillors J Bird, A Brame, K Cannon, C Carubia, P Cleary, C Cooke, T Cottier, G Davies, S Foulkes, S Frost, P Gilchrist, K Greaney, E Grey, S Hayes, AER Jones, C Jones, S Jones, T Jones, S Kelly, B Kenny, A Leech, M McLaughlin, J McManus, D Mitchell, C

Muspratt, Y Nolan, T Norbury, J Robinson, T Smith, S Spoor, C Spriggs, J Stapleton, P Stuart, M Sullivan, T Usher, J Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, J Williams, J Williamson and G Wood.

The amendment was therefore lost (20:41).

In respect of the Labour Group budget motion, the Council voted as follows:

For the motion (61) – Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, J Bird, A Brame, D Burgess-Joyce, H Cameron, K Cannon, C Carubia, P Cleary, W Clements, M Collins, C Cooke, T Cottier, T Cox, G Davies, S Foulkes, S Frost, A Gardner, P Gilchrist, K Greaney, J Green, E Grey, P Hayes, S Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, J Johnson, AER Jones, C Jones, S Jones, T Jones, M Jordan, S Kelly, B Kenny, A Leech, I Lewis, M McLaughlin, J McManus, D Mitchell, C Muspratt, Y Nolan, T Norbury, C Povall, L Rennie, J Robinson, L Rowlands, T Smith, S Spoor, C Spriggs, J Stapleton, P Stuart, M Sullivan, T Usher, J Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, J Williams, S Williams, J Williamson, G Wood and A Wright.

Against the motion – none.

The motion was therefore carried (61:0).

The Council were then invited to vote on the Statutory calculations for the Council Tax levels for 2021/22 in accordance with Sections 32-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The Council voted as follows:

For the motion (60) – Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, J Bird, A Brame, D Burgess-Joyce, H Cameron, K Cannon, C Carubia, P Cleary, W Clements, M Collins, C Cooke, T Cottier, T Cox, G Davies, S Foulkes, S Frost, A Gardner, P Gilchrist, K Greaney, J Green, E Grey, P Hayes, S Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, J Johnson, AER Jones, C Jones, S Jones, T Jones, M Jordan, S Kelly, B Kenny, A Leech, I Lewis, M McLaughlin, J McManus, D Mitchell, C Muspratt, Y Nolan, T Norbury, C Povall, L Rennie, J Robinson, L Rowlands, S Spoor, C Spriggs, J Stapleton, P Stuart, M Sullivan, T Usher, J Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, J Williams, S Williams, J Williamson, G Wood and A Wright.

Against the motion – none.

Abstention – Councillor T Smith (Civic Mayor).

The motion was therefore carried (60:0) (One abstention).

A. Resolved (61:0) – That Council:

- (1) Approves a Revenue Budget of £329.4m but which differs from the proposals included within the public budget consultation as shown at Appendix 4, producing a revised set of Budget Proposals, consisting of:**

Proposal

Value

1.	Reduce the subsidy to the Hive Youth Centre from £400k to £300k, (instead of £200k in 2021/22 only)	£100,000
2.	Modernisation & Social Care combined: Staff Efficiency Savings	£102,000
3.	Review of the Neighbourhood Services Directorate	£350,000
4.	Additional and increased parking charges: Whole scale car parking review	£1,000,000
5.	Reduction in grass cutting and maintenance of roadside verges and all Parks and Open Spaces	£250,000
6.	Amenity space and grass verge maintenance cessation	£100,000
7.	Contract Efficiency Savings with BIFFA	£75,000
8.	Income generated from establishing targeted and discretionary environmental enforcement	£150,000
9.	Culture and Visitor Economy savings	£620,000
10.	Pause re-opening of Woodchurch Leisure Centre	£322,000
11.	Royden Park Commercial Development - Phase 1	£80,000
12.	Birkenhead Market Restructure	£240,000
13.	Budget Allocation for DDA	£200,000
14.	Delay the ceasing of support for Community Alarms	£200,000
15.	Wirral Evolutions review of day services people with Learning Disabilities	£500,000
16.	Mitigate ward member budget pause and allocate £1000 per Member (£66,000) to support local voluntary organisations and initiatives	£184,000
17.	One Stop Shop Service Reduction	£98,000
18.	Restructure of Revenues & Benefits	£150,000
19.	Business Change Service Reduction	£670,000
20.	New Staffing Structure in IT Services	£618,000
21.	Centralised Print Process	£157,000
22.	Business Support Unit - Staffing Reduction	£237,000
23.	Hardship fund and reduction in bad debt provision	£1,000,000
24.	Contract Management & Commissioning	£350,000
25.	Apprenticeships	£148,000
26.	Traded Services Review	£270,000
27.	Savings from efficiencies at the Williamson Art Gallery	£90,000
28.	Savings from closing the Fun Pool only at Europa	£250,000
29.	Provision of additional catering across multi-site and new in-house catering offer at West Kirby	£35,000

30.	Additional savings from workforce efficiencies	£150,000
31.	Reduction in pressure for pay increases for low paid workers	£236,000
32.	Freezing of the Merseytravel Levy for 2021/22 -	£439,000
33.	Funding for the Hive from local businesses -	£100,000
34.	Fund the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme from Covid-19 funding	£200,000
35.	Request to bring forward various asset sales -	£394,000
36.	Remove the Brexit Reserve	£100,000
37.	Filling Staff Vacancies	£240,000
38.	Zero Based Budgeting	£170,000

(2) That further budget allocation be provided for the following:

1. To enable development of the wider youth offer in Wirral: £200,000

(3) That Council:

- a) Adopts the summary Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) set out as Appendix 3 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Financial Resilience Plan (MTFS) set out as Appendix 11.
- b) Adopts the fees and charges set out as Appendix 7, with delegated authority being granted:
 - (i) to the Section 151 Officer to update the Council's Fees and Charges Directory prior to publication before 1 April 2021.
 - (ii) to the relevant Director with portfolio, in consultation with the relevant Committee's Chair and Group Spokespersons, to vary existing fees and charges.
- c) Approves the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy for Business Rates for 2021/22 set out as Appendix 8.
- d) Set and maintain the level of General Fund Balances the higher of
 - (i) £10.7m of general fund; or
 - (ii) 3% of the Council's new revenue budget,
 to be based on a locally determined assessment of the financial risks that the Council may face in the future in accordance with the report of the s.151 Officer (Appendix 10).
- e) Proceeds with the request for exceptional financial support with the conditions outlined in the letter from the Minister of

State for Regional Growth and Local Government dated 2 February 2021.

- f) Approves the 2021/22 Schools Budget of £299.487m.**
- g) Authorises, in respect of the Budget Proposals, that:**
- (i) the relevant Committee receiving the further work being undertaken in respect of:
 - (1) car parking charges;**
 - (2) enforcement costs recovery; and**
 - (3) grass cutting and re-wilding**to develop and implement proposals in line with the agreed Budget; and**
 - (ii) the Director with portfolio to undertake such actions as they consider are necessary to implement the agreed Budget and consequential proposals developed as part of the formulation process and update Committees accordingly.**
 - (iii) in implementing the proposals Council requests that the Europa Fun Pool re-opens, when its practicable and safe to do so in line with government and public health guidance, during the School Summer holidays.”**

In stating this request, Council notes that:

- Unknown intelligence relating to the COVID situation and what that will look like on / post 21 June 2021 and *‘previous advice given by The Director of Public Health in that the fun pool would not be able to open under current restrictions’***
- There is currently no guidance on what a “safe” number of people would be.**
- To open the Europa Fun Pool would require a recruitment exercise for additional staffing and supported lifeguard training which would be challenging to undertake between 22 June and the start of the summer holidays, given that the Lifeguard Training takes a minimum of 5 weeks.**
- The following current guidance has been released in relation to events and large gatherings, which**

would need to be kept under review. The maximum Europa Fun Pool capacity could be considered as similar to a large wedding every 1.5 hours *“DCMS and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy have been working with representatives from industry and civil society to explore when and how events with larger crowd sizes, less social distancing or in settings where transmission is more likely (i.e. indoors), will be able to return safely. This includes sports events, music festivals and large weddings and conferences.”*

- That a reduction in numbers to what might be considered a safe level could be considered, given this is a much-used facility during the School Summer holidays.”

B. Resolved (60:0) (One abstention) –

It be noted that in accordance with Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), that Policy and Resources Committee on 11th November 2020 calculated the Council Tax Base 2021/22 for the whole of the properties in its area as 94,198.6 (Item T in the statutory formula).

That the following amounts be calculated and approved by the Council for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Sections 32-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) (“the Act”);

- a) £156,677,700 being the amount calculated in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act (amended) as the Council Tax Requirement for 2021/22 (item R in the statutory formula). This amount (D) is determined as being the difference between:
 - i) £859,070,000 this being the aggregate of the amounts calculated in accordance with Section 31A (2) of the Act (as amended), i.e. the aggregate of the amounts that the Council estimates that will be charged to a revenue account for the year in performing its functions, that are required to be set aside for contingencies and reserves and required to be transferred from its General Fund to its Collection Fund in the year and
 - ii) £702,392,300 this being the amount calculated in accordance with Section 31A (3) of the Act (as amended), i.e. the aggregate of the amounts of income that the Council estimates will be

credited to a revenue account for the year in accordance with proper practices, the amount of reserves that are estimated to be used to provide for the items referred to in paragraph (a) above, and required to be transferred from its Collection Fund to its General Fund in the year.

- b) £1,663.27 being the amount calculated in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act (amended) as the Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2021/22. This amount being calculated as item R divided by item T (as above).
- c) That in accordance with section 36(1) of the Act that the following amounts are calculated for each valuation band in the area:

Wirral – Basic Amount of Council Tax per Valuation Band

A	B	C	D
£1,108.85	£1,293.65	£1,478.46	£1,663.27
E	F	G	H
£2,032.89	£2,402.50	£2,772.12	£3,326.54

These amounts being the amounts given by multiplying the amount calculated as the Basic Amount of Council Tax by the number which in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act is applicable to dwellings in a particular valuation band which is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D.

It be determined that the amount set in (c) above as the Council’s Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2021/22 is not excessive in accordance with the principles determined by the Secretary of State under section 52ZC of the Act (as amended) and that no Referendum to approve the Basic Amount of Council Tax is required. The principles require a Referendum to be held for any increases of 5% or above, as per the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/22. The Settlement included provision for local authorities with social care responsibilities to increase the level of Council Tax by 3% for the Adult Social Care precept; and by up to 2% for the Council element. Where Council Tax is increased at or above 5% a local referendum will be required. The overall proposed increase in the Wirral basic Council Tax is 4.99%, including a Council increase of 1.99%, and is therefore within the Settlement’s ceilings.

Wirral – Basic Amount of Council Tax Comparison for Referendum

	2020/21	2021/22	Change	Change
	£	£	£	%
Band D	1,584.21	1,663.27	79.06	4.99

To note that the Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside, the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority issue precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area. This will be as indicated in the tables which when received will be included in updated tables to Council.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside

A	B	C	D
£151.31	£176.53	£201.75	£226.97
E	F	G	H
£277.41	£327.85	£378.28	£453.94

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority

A	B	C	D
£54.67	£63.78	£72.89	£82.00
E	F	G	H
£100.22	£118.44	£136.67	£164.00

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority –Mayoral Precept

A	B	C	D
£12.67	£14.78	£16.89	£19.00
E	F	G	H
£23.22	£27.44	£31.67	£38.00

That having calculated the amounts for Wirral together with the Police, Fire and Liverpool City Region – Mayoral Precept the Council in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Act hereby sets the following amounts as the total amount of Council Tax for the year 2021/22 for each of the categories of dwellings.

Total Council Tax for Wirral

A	B	C	D
£1,327.50	£1,548.74	£1,769.99	£1,991.24
E	F	G	H
£2,433.74	£2,876.23	£3,318.74	£3,982.48

61 **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021-26**

The fourth item requiring approval was in relation to the capital programme for 2021-26.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

Resolved – That the recommendations contained within minute 69 of the Policy and Resources Committee of 17 February, 2021, be agreed in that the following be approved:

- (1) new bids as detailed in Appendix 2 to this report requiring £12.133 million borrowing for inclusion in the Capital Programme;**
- (2) any new bids supported by grant funding do not commence until written confirmation has been received from the granting authority;**
- (3) the Capital Programme 2021/26 (as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report);**
- (4) that progress on delivering the Capital Programme will be presented in accordance within the agreed Capital Monitoring arrangements.**

62 **CAPITAL FINANCING STRATEGY 2021/22**

The fifth item requiring approval was in relation to the Capital Financing Strategy for 2021/22.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

Resolved – That the recommendations contained within minute 70 of the Policy and Resources Committee of 17 February, 2021, be agreed in that the following be approved:

- (1) the Capital Strategy for 2021/22;**
- (2) the associated Prudential Indicators to be adopted;**
- (3) the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision policy.**

63 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2021/22**

The sixth item requiring approval was in relation to the Treasury Management Strategy for 2021/22.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

Resolved – That the recommendations contained within minute 71 of the Policy and Resources Committee of 17 February, 2021, be agreed in that the following be approved:

- (1) the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2021/2022;**
- (2) the Treasury Management Indicators.**

64 **INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2021/22**

The seventh item requiring approval was in relation to the Investment Strategy for 2021/22.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

Resolved – That the recommendations contained within minute 72 of the Policy and Resources Committee of 17 February, 2021, be agreed in that the following be approved:

the Investment Strategy for 2021/2022 which includes potential investment in the following activity areas:

- 1. Commercial Property**
- 2. Service Investments: Loans**
- 3. Service Investment: Shares (non-currently held)**
- 4. Loan Commitments and financial Guarantees**

MINUTE EXTRACT

CONSTITUTION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

24 FEBRUARY, 2021

16 AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced the report, which detailed a proposed change to the Constitution to enable the Leader of the Council to nominate another member of the Health and Wellbeing Board as Chair of the Board. The Director of Law and Governance further outlined a forthcoming wider review of the Health and Wellbeing Board to prepare the Council for any changes required as a result of the anticipated legislative changes that would require the implementation of a integrated care system with the NHS and the statutory functions this would place upon the Health and Wellbeing Board.

A Member commented that given that the proposed review of the Health and Wellbeing Board had not yet taken place, the alteration could be delayed to await the outcome of such review. In response, the Leader of the Council outlined that consultation with the Local Government Association had been undertaken, and it was deemed good practice to appoint alternative members of the Board as its Chair, including the lead member for Adult Social Care and in some cases the Chair of the Clinical Commissioning Group.

A further discussion ensued in respect to the possibility of enabling the Health and Wellbeing Board to appoint its own Chair, and the suitability of non-Councillors being appointed as Chair. It was suggested that the Health and Wellbeing Board would benefit from the expertise the Chair of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee would bring as Chair of the Board, and that the Board would also benefit from the continuity such appointment would allow over and above allowing the Board to appoint its own Chair.

An amendment to the recommendation was proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist and seconded by Councillor Steve Hayes, to include 'or another elected member as their nominee'.

Resolved (8:3) – That

it be recommended to Council that in respect to the Health & Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference as detailed in Part 3b Section 16.4 of the Constitution, 'Chairing the Board' be revised to read 'The Board will be chaired by the Leader of the Council (or another elected member as their nominee)'.

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MINUTE EXTRACT

CONSTITUTION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

24 FEBRUARY, 2021

19 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2021/22

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced the report, which recommended draft dates for Council and Committee meetings for the municipal year 2021/22.

Members noted the short period between the May election and the proposed date of Annual Council, and it was suggested that Annual Council (Part 2) be moved to 26 May 2021 to enable further time for the groups to negotiate committee places following the election. Members were advised that moving Annual Council (Part 2) would mean the meetings scheduled for the week commencing 31st May 2021 would need to be rescheduled.

A comment was also made regarding Budget Policy and Resources Committee in February 2022, where it was felt that holding the meeting earlier would enable more time for budget proposals to be developed prior to Budget Council. It was therefore proposed that the Policy and Resources Committee be scheduled a day earlier.

Resolved – That,

- (1) the Annual Council Part 2 meeting scheduled for 19 May 2021 be rescheduled to 26 May 2021.**
- (2) the Policy and Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 16 February 2022 be rescheduled to 15 February 2022.**
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Director of Law and Governance to rearrange the meetings scheduled for the week commencing 31 May 2021.**
- (4) Council be recommended to approve the Calendar of Meetings for the 2021/22 municipal year, subject to the aforementioned amendments.**

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MAY - 2021/22 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS - v5 (Revised -Standards rec)

Saturday	1	
Sunday	2	
Monday	3	Bank Holiday
Tuesday	4	
Wednesday	5	
Thursday	6	Local Elections
Friday	7	
Saturday	8	
Sunday	9	
Monday	10	
Tuesday	11	
Wednesday	12	
Thursday	13	
Friday	14	
Saturday	15	
Sunday	16	
Monday	17	
Tuesday	18	
Wednesday	19	ANNUAL COUNCIL (PART 1)
Thursday	20	
Friday	21	
Saturday	22	
Sunday	23	
Monday	24	
Tuesday	25	
Wednesday	26	ANNUAL COUNCIL (PART 2)
Thursday	27	
Friday	28	
Saturday	29	
Sunday	30	
Monday	31	Bank Holiday

JUNE

Tuesday	1	<i>Half Term</i>
Wednesday	2	
Thursday	3	
Friday	4	
Saturday	5	
Sunday	6	
Monday	7	Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee
Tuesday	8	Economy Regeneration and Development Committee
Wednesday	9	Policy and Resources Committee
Thursday	10	Planning Committee
Friday	11	
Saturday	12	
Sunday	13	
Monday	14	Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee
Tuesday	15	Children, Young People and Education Committee
Wednesday	16	Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee
Thursday	17	Licensing Act Committee; Regulatory and General Purposes Committee
Friday	18	
Saturday	19	
Sunday	20	
Monday	21	Housing Committee
Tuesday	22	Pensions Committee
Wednesday	23	Constitution and Standards Committee
Thursday	24	Planning Committee
Friday	25	
Saturday	26	
Sunday	27	
Monday	28	Audit and Risk Management Committee
Tuesday	29	Partnerships Committee
Wednesday	30	Policy and Resources Committee

Thursday	1	Shareholder Board
Friday	2	
Saturday	3	
Sunday	4	
Monday	5	
Tuesday	6	
Wednesday	7	Health and Wellbeing Board
Thursday	8	Senior Officer Appointments and Staffing Sub-Committee
Friday	9	
Saturday	10	
Sunday	11	
Monday	12	COUNCIL
Tuesday	13	
Wednesday	14	
Thursday	15	Planning Committee
Friday	16	
Saturday	17	
Sunday	18	
Monday	19	COUNCIL (Reserve)
Tuesday	20	
Wednesday	21	<i>School Summer Holidays</i>
Thursday	22	
Friday	23	
Saturday	24	
Sunday	25	
Monday	26	
Tuesday	27	
Wednesday	28	Policy and Resources Committee
Thursday	29	
Friday	30	
Saturday	31	

AUGUST**2021**

Sunday	1	
Monday	2	
Tuesday	3	
Wednesday	4	
Thursday	5	
Friday	6	
Saturday	7	
Sunday	8	
Monday	9	
Tuesday	10	
Wednesday	11	
Thursday	12	Planning Committee
Friday	13	
Saturday	14	
Sunday	15	
Monday	16	
Tuesday	17	
Wednesday	18	
Thursday	19	
Friday	20	
Saturday	21	
Sunday	22	
Monday	23	
Tuesday	24	
Wednesday	25	
Thursday	26	
Friday	27	
Saturday	28	
Sunday	29	
Monday	30	Bank Holiday
Tuesday	31	

Wednesday	1	Policy and Resources Committee
Thursday	2	Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee
Friday	3	
Saturday	4	
Sunday	5	
Monday	6	Housing Committee
Tuesday	7	Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee
Wednesday	8	Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee
Thursday	9	Constitution and Standards Committee
Friday	10	
Saturday	11	
Sunday	12	
Monday	13	Children, Young People and Education Committee
Tuesday	14	Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee
Wednesday	15	Regulatory and General Purposes Committee
Thursday	16	Planning Committee
Friday	17	
Saturday	18	
Sunday	19	
Monday	20	Pensions Committee
Tuesday	21	
Wednesday	22	Shareholder Board
Thursday	23	
Friday	24	
Saturday	25	
Sunday	26	
Monday	27	Audit and Risk Management Committee
Tuesday	28	Partnerships Committee
Wednesday	29	
Thursday	30	

Friday	1	
Saturday	2	
Sunday	3	
Monday	4	
Tuesday	5	
Wednesday	6	Policy and Resources Committee
Thursday	7	Senior Officer Appointments and Staffing Sub-Committee
Friday	8	
Saturday	9	
Sunday	10	
Monday	11	
Tuesday	12	Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee
Wednesday	13	Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee
Thursday	14	Planning Committee
Friday	15	
Saturday	16	
Sunday	17	
Monday	18	COUNCIL
Tuesday	19	Housing Committee
Wednesday	20	Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee
Thursday	21	COUNCIL (Reserve)
Friday	22	
Saturday	23	
Sunday	24	
Monday	25	<i>Half Term</i>
Tuesday	26	Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee
Wednesday	27	Children, Young People and Education Committee
Thursday	28	Licensing Act Committee
Friday	29	
Saturday	30	
Sunday	31	

NOVEMBER

2021

Monday	1	
Tuesday	2	
Wednesday	3	Health and Wellbeing Board
Thursday	4	Shareholder Board
Friday	5	
Saturday	6	
Sunday	7	
Monday	8	
Tuesday	9	Partnerships Committee
Wednesday	10	Policy and Resources Committee
Thursday	11	Planning Committee
Friday	12	
Saturday	13	
Sunday	14	
Monday	15	Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee
Tuesday	16	Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee
Wednesday	17	Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee
Thursday	18	Housing Committee
Friday	19	
Saturday	20	
Sunday	21	
Monday	22	Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee
Tuesday	23	Children, Young People and Education Committee
Wednesday	24	Constitution and Standards Committee
Thursday	25	Regulatory and General Purposes Committee
Friday	26	
Saturday	27	
Sunday	28	
Monday	29	Pensions Committee
Tuesday	30	Audit and Risk Management Committee

DECEMBER

2021

Wednesday	1	Policy and Resources Committee
Thursday	2	
Friday	3	
Saturday	4	
Sunday	5	
Monday	6	COUNCIL
Tuesday	7	
Wednesday	8	Shareholder Board
Thursday	9	COUNCIL (RESERVE)
Friday	10	
Saturday	11	
Sunday	12	
Monday	13	
Tuesday	14	
Wednesday	15	Policy and Resources Committee (Reserve)
Thursday	16	Planning Committee
Friday	17	
Saturday	18	
Sunday	19	
Monday	20	
Tuesday	21	
Wednesday	22	
Thursday	23	
Friday	24	Christmas Eve
Saturday	25	Christmas Day
Sunday	26	Boxing Day
Monday	27	Bank Holiday
Tuesday	28	Bank Holiday
Wednesday	29	
Thursday	30	
Friday	31	

Saturday	1	New Years Day
Sunday	2	
Monday	3	Bank Holiday
Tuesday	4	
Wednesday	5	
Thursday	6	
Friday	7	
Saturday	8	
Sunday	9	
Monday	10	
Tuesday	11	
Wednesday	12	Planning Committee; Senior Officer Appointments and Staffing Sub-Committee
Thursday	13	Policy and Resources Committee
Friday	14	
Saturday	15	
Sunday	16	
Monday	17	Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee
Tuesday	18	Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee
Wednesday	19	
Thursday	20	Regulatory and General Purposes Committee
Friday	21	
Saturday	22	
Sunday	23	
Monday	24	Audit and Risk Management Committee
Tuesday	25	Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee
Wednesday	26	Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee
Thursday	27	Housing Committee
Friday	28	
Saturday	29	
Sunday	30	
Monday	31	Children, Young People and Education Committee

FEBRUARY

2022

Tuesday	1	Pensions Committee
Wednesday	2	Partnerships Committee
Thursday	3	Shareholder Board
Friday	4	
Saturday	5	
Sunday	6	
Monday	7	
Tuesday	8	
Wednesday	9	
Thursday	10	Planning Committee
Friday	11	
Saturday	12	
Sunday	13	
Monday	14	
Tuesday	15	Policy and Resources Committee (Budget)
Wednesday	16	
Thursday	17	Constitution and Standards Committee
Friday	18	
Saturday	19	
Sunday	20	
Monday	21	<i>Half Term</i>
Tuesday	22	
Wednesday	23	
Thursday	24	
Friday	25	
Saturday	26	
Sunday	27	
Monday	28	BUDGET COUNCIL

Tuesday	1	Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee
Wednesday	2	Housing Committee
Thursday	3	Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee
Friday	4	
Saturday	5	
Sunday	6	
Monday	7	COUNCIL (BUDGET RESERVE)
Tuesday	8	Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee
Wednesday	9	Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee
Thursday	10	Children, Young People and Education Committee
Friday	11	
Saturday	12	
Sunday	13	
Monday	14	
Tuesday	15	Audit and Risk Management Committee
Wednesday	16	Policy and Resources Committee
Thursday	17	Planning Committee
Friday	18	
Saturday	19	
Sunday	20	
Monday	21	COUNCIL
Tuesday	22	
Wednesday	23	Regulatory and General Purposes Committee; Health and Wellbeing Board
Thursday	24	COUNCIL (RESERVE)
Friday	25	
Saturday	26	
Sunday	27	
Monday	28	Pensions Committee
Tuesday	29	Partnerships Committee
Wednesday	30	Senior Officer Appointments and Staffing Sub-Committee
Thursday	31	Shareholder Board

Friday	1	
Saturday	2	
Sunday	3	
Monday	4	
Tuesday	5	
Wednesday	6	
Thursday	7	
Friday	8	
Saturday	9	
Sunday	10	
Monday	11	Spring Break
Tuesday	12	
Wednesday	13	
Thursday	14	
Friday	15	Good Friday
Saturday	16	
Sunday	17	Easter Day
Monday	18	Easter Monday
Tuesday	19	
Wednesday	20	
Thursday	21	Planning Committee
Friday	22	
Saturday	23	
Sunday	24	
Monday	25	
Tuesday	26	
Wednesday	27	
Thursday	28	
Friday	29	
Saturday	30	

Sunday	1	
Monday	2	Bank Holiday
Tuesday	3	
Wednesday	4	
Thursday	5	Local Elections
Friday	6	
Saturday	7	
Sunday	8	
Monday	9	
Tuesday	10	
Wednesday	11	
Thursday	12	
Friday	13	
Saturday	14	
Sunday	15	
Monday	16	
Tuesday	17	
Wednesday	18	
Thursday	19	
Friday	20	
Saturday	21	
Sunday	22	
Monday	23	
Tuesday	24	
Wednesday	25	
Thursday	26	
Friday	27	
Saturday	28	
Sunday	29	
Monday	30	
Tuesday	31	

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 17 March 2021

REPORT TITLE:	PAY POLICY 2021-2022
REPORT OF:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE

REPORT SUMMARY

In line with the Localism Act 2011 (the Act), the purpose of the Council's Pay Policy is to provide transparency with regard to the Council's approach to setting pay by identifying:

- The methods by which salaries of all employees are determined;
- The detail and level of the salary package of its most senior staff;
- The Head of Paid Service responsibility for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement are applied consistently throughout the Council and recommending any amendments to Full Council.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy & Resources Committee are asked to:

Recommend to Council the approval of the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2021/22.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Council is required by Section 38 of The Localism Act 2011 to prepare a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options were considered as the Pay Policy Statement is a requirement of the Localism Act 2011. There are a range of policies and discretions contained within the Pay Policy statement itself relating to pay and terms and conditions.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The draft Pay Policy Statement details the Council's current arrangements, using the definitions contained in the Localism Act and associated guidance.
- 3.2 The Localism Act also requires the Council to have regard to statutory guidance entitled 'Openness and accountability in local pay' under the Transparency Agenda.

3.2.1 Key Changes

The 2021/22 statement reflects key changes and updates that have occurred within the last financial year as follows:

The Living Wage

A new Foundation Living Wage rate was announced by The Living Wage Foundation in November 2020. The new Living Wage rate is £9.50 per hour, an increase of 20p.

Constitutional Changes

The Pay Policy Statement 2021-2022 has been updated to reflect the constitutional changes made in line with the Committee System.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The budget for salary, and associated oncosts are distributed across the directorates and informed by the Pay Policy.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to prepare a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year by 31 March.
- 5.2 The Council remains bound by relevant employment (and other) legislation as the employer and any changes which may be proposed by the policy must bear in mind the requirements of such legislation.

5.3 The Council can amend the pay policy on an annual basis as required by the Act but may also amend the policy as needed to take into account changing legislative requirements.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no resource implications.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The Council is required to prepare and approve its Pay Policy Statement by 31 March each year. The Council will be at risk of not meeting the requirements of The Localism Act 2011 if this is not achieved.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The Trade Unions have been consulted on the key updates and changes for the 2021/2022 Pay Policy.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

9.2 The Council operates all pay arrangements within the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. All pay arrangements are regularly reviewed and assessed to identify any equality issues (see separate reports on this agenda).

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The content and recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of greenhouse gases.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Jenny Woods**
(Jenny Woods)
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Pay Policy Statement 2021-2022

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Localism Act <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Council	3 March 2020
Council	18 March 2019
Council	9 March 2018



WIRRAL COUNCIL

PAY POLICY STATEMENT

2021 – 2022

1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1. In line with the Localism Act 2011 (the Act), the purpose of this statement is to provide transparency with regard to the Council's approach to setting pay by identifying:
 - The methods by which salaries of all employees are determined;
 - The detail and level of the salary package of its most senior staff i.e. 'Chief Officers', as defined by the relevant legislation;
 - The Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service responsibility for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement are applied consistently throughout the Council and recommending any amendments to Full Council.
- 1.2. The Council will consult with the relevant Trade Unions in relation to changes and updates to the Pay Policy, before the Policy is considered by Full Council.
- 1.3. Once approved by Full Council, this policy statement will come into immediate effect and will be subject to review on a minimum of an annual basis; the policy being approved by 31 March each year.
- 1.4. The Council may, by resolution, amend this Pay Policy, including after the beginning of the financial year to which it relates.

2. The Scope of this Policy

- 2.1. This Pay Policy Statement relates to staff employed by Wirral Council whose salary package including rate of pay and terms and conditions are determined by and are within the control of the Council.

3. Other Legislation Relevant to Pay and Salary Package

- 3.1. In determining the pay and salary packages of all of its employees, the Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation.
- 3.2. It is Council policy to ensure that there is no pay discrimination within its terms and conditions of employment, including pay structures. Any pay differentials can be objectively justified through the use of job evaluation, which directly establishes the relative levels of posts by grades according to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the role.
- 3.3. Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities Regulations 2017), the Council is required to publish an annual gender pay gap report, reporting a snapshot of the workforce in scope as at 31 March (previous year).
- 3.4. The Council will ensure that it meets the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2014. The Transparency Code requires that all local authorities publish certain information related to the organisation, salaries and fraud including:
 - Organisation chart
 - Senior salaries
 - The pay multiple

- Trade union facility time
- Fraud
- Constitution

4. Pay Structure

- 4.1. The Council uses the National Joint Council (NJC) nationally negotiated pay spine (i.e. a defined list of salary points) as the basis for its pay structure.
- 4.2. The Council employs staff on other pay and terms and conditions including Craft, Youth and Community, Soulbury, Teachers, NHS, and pay is in accordance with national pay spines.
- 4.3. The Council adopts the national pay bargaining arrangements in respect of the establishment and revision of national pay spines, for example through any agreed annual pay increases negotiated with joint Trade Unions, subject to any local agreements in place.
- 4.4. Where a nationally negotiated pay spine does not apply, the Council will determine the salary rate through local negotiation and agreement.
- 4.5. All other pay related issues are the subject of either nationally or locally negotiated rates, in accordance with collective bargaining.
- 4.6. In determining its grading structure and setting salary packages for any posts which fall outside the scope of the national pay bargaining arrangements, the Council takes account of the need to ensure value for money in respect of the use of public expenditure, balanced against the need to recruit and retain employees who are able to meet the requirements of providing high quality services to the community.
- 4.7. There are circumstances where the terms of Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employees: TUPE) may determine the eligibility of pay awards for employees who transfer into the Council on protected terms and conditions.

4.8. Variations to Pay Grade

- 4.8.1. From time to time it may be necessary to take account of the external pay levels in the employment market in order to attract and retain employees with particular experience, skills and capacity. Where necessary the Council will ensure the requirement for such is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence, including relevant market comparators, recruitment and retention challenges and using data sources available from within the local government sector and outside, as appropriate. Proposals should be made by the recruiting manager, supported by a business case providing objective justification for the proposed variation. Proposed variations must be with the agreement of the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

4.8.2. Any temporary supplement to the salary scale for the grade is approved in accordance with the Council's Honoraria procedure, or any applicable market rate supplement arrangements.

4.9. Job Evaluation

4.9.1 Post grades are determined using Job Evaluation schemes and the Council's pay structures.

4.10. The Living Wage

4.10.1. Living Wage rates are based on Minimum Income Standards methodology and seek to take account of real living costs for essential goods and services.

4.10.2. Through the Council's Pay Policy Statement, the Council is committed to and pays the Living Wage for all employees.

4.10.3. The Living Wage rate is reviewed and announced by The Living Wage Foundation on 1 November each year. The Council will consider any increases to the Living Wage as part of the annual Pay Policy Statement. If agreed, increases to the Living Wage will take effect from 1 April the following year. The provision for the Living Wage will be kept under review.

4.13.4 The current Living Wage rate for outside London increased from 1 November 2020 to £9.50 per hour.

4.11. New Appointments

4.11.1. New appointments will normally be made at the minimum Spinal Column Point (SCP) of the relevant pay scale for the grade. Where the candidate is already in receipt of remuneration above the minimum SCP of the relevant pay scale, the appointment will normally be made at the nearest equivalent SCP in the grade. If the employee is already in receipt of acting up or honoraria this will also apply.

4.11.2. The appointment salary may be varied with the agreement of the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

4.12. Progression through Pay Grades

4.12.1. An employee's progression through the increments of a particular pay grade is linked to length of service. Increments are awarded on 1 April each year, or for new appointments between 1 October and 31 March, six months from the start date.

4.12.2. The arrangements and factors considered in determining an individual's progression through different pay grade may be determined by experience, skills and qualifications as set out in the relevant Job Description and progression criteria.

5. Senior Management Salary

- 5.1. For the purposes of this statement, senior management means ‘Chief Officers’ as defined under section 43(2) of the Localism Act 2011. This includes statutory chief officers, non-statutory chief officers and deputy chief officers as listed within that Act.
- 5.2. The posts falling within the statutory definition are set out in ‘*The Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency (‘the data transparency code’)*’.
- 5.3. The Council’s grading structure for its most senior officers is as follows:
 - Chief Executive
 - Senior Director 1
 - Senior Director 2
 - Director 1
 - Director 2
 - Assistant Director 1
 - Assistant Director 2
- 5.4. The terms and conditions, including the payment of any allowances for Chief Officers is set out within the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities constitution conditions of service salaries. All details of Chief Officer salaries are published in accordance with the Transparency Code.
- 5.5. The Chief Executive handbook sets out the terms and conditions of employment for the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service. Some provisions within this also apply to Council’s Statutory Officers (Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer).

6. Recruitment of Chief Officers

- 6.1. The Council’s rules, policy and procedures with regard to recruitment of Chief Officers is set out in the Officer Employment Procedure Rules at Part 4(7) of The Council’s Constitution. The appointment of Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers is delegated under the committee terms of reference (at Part 3B of the Constitution) to the Senior Officer Appointments & Staffing Sub-Committee.
- 6.2. The determination of the salary to be offered to any newly appointed Chief Officer will be in accordance with the pay structure and relevant policies in place at the time of recruitment. The Council’s Chief Officer pay scales are published on the Council’s website.
- 6.3. The Localism Act Guidance says that Council should have the opportunity to vote before salary packages of £100,000 or more are agreed. Through the Council’s Constitution, this is delegated to the Senior Officer Appointments & Staffing Sub-Committee, as above, which appoints Chief Officers other than for those roles where the full Council has reserved powers in respect of defined posts.

- 6.4. A meeting of full Council will approve the appointment to the following:
- Head of Paid Service;
 - Section 151 Officer (also known as Chief Finance Officer);
 - Monitoring Officer;
 - Returning Officer (for which expenses may be claimed); and
 - Electoral Registration Officer.

7. Additions to Salary

- 7.1. In addition to basic salary, the following posts receive additional pay as set out below:

Post / Tier of post	Payment details
Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service	Returning Officer duties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National statutory amount for Parliamentary/National Elections. • Locally determined amount in accordance with national guidance for Local Government Elections.
All eligible employees	Allowances in accordance with the Council's Terms and Conditions.

8. Pension Contributions

- 8.1. The employer's pension contribution is required to be published under S7 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011.
- 8.2. The Council will automatically enroll all eligible employees into the Local Government Pension scheme and the Council is required to make a contribution to the scheme representing a percentage of the pensionable salary due under the contract of employment of that employee.
- 8.3. The rate of contribution is set by Actuaries advising Merseyside Pension Fund and reviewed every three years in order to ensure the scheme is appropriately funded.

9. Payments on Termination

- 9.1. The Council's approach to statutory and discretionary payments on termination of employment for all employees, including Chief Officers, prior to reaching normal retirement age, is set out within the Council's Enhanced Discretionary Severance Scheme.
- 9.2. The Council will keep its Enhanced Discretionary Severance Scheme under review. Any changes, as approved by full Council are published in accordance with the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006.

9.3 Any payments upon termination in respect of a Chief Officer exceeding £100,000, (apart from contractual payments, where the Council has no discretion) shall be subject to a vote at Council or relevant Committee or Panel of Members with delegated authority to approve such payments. Payments upon termination are subject to any legislative requirements or caps.

10. Lowest Paid Employees

10.1. The lowest paid persons employed by the Council are employed on full time equivalent rates in accordance with the council's grading structures. The grading structures take account of the Living Wage hourly rate (see section 4).

10.2. The relationship between the rate of pay for the lowest paid employee and Chief Officers is determined by the council's job evaluation schemes.

As required by the Localism Act, the following table provides the Council's salary ratios.

Definition	Ratio
The average full time equivalent (fte) earnings and the Chief Executive	1: 5.44
The average full time equivalent (fte) earnings and average Chief Officer earning	1: 3.20
The lowest paid employee full time equivalent (fte) earnings and average Chief Officer earnings	1: 5.77

11. Accountability and Decision Making

11.1. In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, the Senior Officer Appointments & Staffing Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for decision making in relation to Chief Officer recruitment. This may be delegated to the Head of Paid Service.

11.2 The Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service has delegated responsibility for decision-making in relation to the recruitment, pay, terms and conditions and severance arrangements in relation to employees of the Council below Chief Officer level.

12. Re-employment / Re-engagement of Employees

12.1. The Council will not re-employ any former employees that have left the Council through early retirement or under the Voluntary Severance Scheme where there has been a cost to the Council, except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

12.2. The Council will not consider applications from former Wirral employees who were dismissed from employment.

13. Publication

- 13.1. Upon approval by full Council, this statement will be published on the Council's Website and Intranet.
- 13.2. In line with the requirement of the Local Government Transparency Code 2014, the Council will publish an organisation chart covering staff in the top three levels of the organisation, which will include the following information:
- Grade
 - Job Title
 - Salary in £5,000 brackets
 - Salary ceiling (the maximum salary for the grade)
- 13.3. The following information for senior salaries (employees whose salary in that year was at least £50,000) will also be published:
- Job Title
 - Salary

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Friday, 18 December 2020

Present: Councillor J Williamson (Chair)

Councillors A Leech Y Nolan
JE Green P Stuart
P Gilchrist T Anderson
P Cleary W Clements
M McLaughlin A Hodson
EA Grey L Rennie
J McManus C Carubia

Deputies: Councillors B Kenny (In place of C Spriggs)
J Robinson (In place of T Usher)

26 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

27 **APOLOGIES**

The Chair announced that apologies had been received from Councillors Christine Spriggs and Tom Usher and that Councillors Brian Kenny and Jean Robinson were deputising for them respectively.

28 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

29 **MINUTES**

The Committee were asked to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November, 2020.

In respect of minute 20, 'Establishment of a Local Plan Working Group', Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services, made a point of clarification in that at the end of the final sentence of the second paragraph of the preamble the following words should be added, '... in also being made up of one Member from each of the Council's political groups.'

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November, 2020, be approved and adopted as a correct record, subject to the above amendment.

30 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The Chair reported that one question had been received from a member of the public and invited Louise Stothard to put her question, which was:

“When will Wirral Borough Council stop felling trees, we’ve lost over 6,000 trees?”

The Chair responded that she would be referring the question to the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee for when it next meets and that they could provide a much more detailed response.

Councillor Elizabeth Grey commented, as Chair of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, that she was content for the question to be referred.

31 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

The Chair reported that no statements were to be received and that there were no petitions submitted, nor questions from Members.

32 **DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2021/22 - PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTATION**

The Chair introduced the report on the budget proposals for consultation and spoke of the unprecedented challenges which Wirral along with Councils across the country was going through, in particularly financially. She referred to the impact Covid had had on service delivery and the ability to generate income, from Council services such as leisure centres. There were still areas outside of Covid which continued to present financial pressures on the budget and these were what formed the £10m of proposals to be consulted upon.

The Chair thanked everyone for their participation in the workshop meetings, at which a consensus had been reached on the proposals in the report for consultation.

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, spoke to the report, which was part of the Council’s formal budget process, as set out in the constitution and in accordance with the legal requirements to set a balanced and sustainable budget for 2021/22. The report provided an update on the Budget process for 2021/22 previously reported to this Committee on 7 October 2020.

The Council had applied for a capitalisation directive to mitigate the specific, unfunded financial impact associated with Covid-19. At the time of writing the report, there had been no formal notification of the award of this directive, however, it had been assumed it would be successful for the purposes of budget consultation. As the capitalisation directive related only to Covid-19 pressures, it could not be used for other pressures and as such, other savings were required to ensure Wirral could deliver a balanced budget for 2021/22.

Each year the Council did have between £16m and £20m worth of pressures, which had to be mitigated in the form of savings. She highlighted some of the demand pressures such as from Adult Social Care and Children and Families Service. A draft funding settlement had been received from the government on 17 December which was subject to a consultation period running until 16 January, 2021, although until a final settlement figure was received after the consultation ended, potentially at the end of January, the final budget gap would not be known.

The Committee had to recommend a 2021/22 balanced Budget proposal to the Council for its meeting in March 2021, it was good practice for the residents of Wirral to have their say on budget proposals and so the purpose of this report was to agree the budget proposals that would go out for public consultation.

Shaer Halewood responded to a number of comments made by Members and elaborated on the process for issuing a Section 114 Notice.

The Chair thanked all the committees and their Chairs which had been involved in the process and emphasised that this was the start of the budget setting process with many variables yet to play out. She stressed the importance of as many residents as possible getting involved in the consultation.

Members expressed the view that this was an appropriate document to go out to public consultation and on a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Paul Stuart, it was -

Resolved (unanimously) – That the Policy and Resources Committee:

- (1) Approves the financial proposals for 2021/22 that will be subject to consultation and subsequent consideration by Policy and Resources Committee in February 2021.**
- (2) Agrees that this decision is urgent and therefore not subject to review.**

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Monday, 21 December 2020

Present: Councillor A Leech (Vice-Chair in the Chair)

Councillors J Williamson P Stuart
JE Green C Spriggs
P Gilchrist T Anderson
P Cleary W Clements
M McLaughlin A Hodson
EA Grey L Rennie
J McManus C Carubia
Y Nolan

Deputy: Councillor J Robinson (In place of T Usher)

33 APOLOGIES

The Vice-Chair announced that apologies had been received from Councillor Tom Usher, and Councillor Jean Robinson was deputising for him.

34 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Vicky Shaw, Head of Legal Services, informed the Committee that Councillor Janette Williamson was having technical difficulties with her broadband connection and although could be present at the meeting would find it difficult in chairing if connection was lost intermittently. She suggested that the Committee agree to waive the relevant parts of the Constitution in respect of the appointed Chair always chairing the meeting when present, and that Councillor Anita Leech, Vice-Chair, chair the meeting for its duration.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, it was –

Resolved (unanimously) – That Articles 11.3 (ii), 11.5 (b) and Standing Order 7 of the Constitution, be waived, in order that Councillor Anita Leech, Vice-Chair, chair the meeting for its duration.

35 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

36 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

The Vice-Chair reported that no questions from either members of the public or Members had been submitted. Nor were there any statements or petitions to receive.

37 **SMART BUSINESS PROJECT**

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources introduced a report on the SmartBusiness Project regarding the proposed upgrade of the Council's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.

The ERP systems integrated key business processes across Finance, Human Resources (HR), Procurement and other areas. The approach standardised and streamlined procedures to the administration of a number of key business activities. The Council's current ERP system Oracle 1Business had been in operation since 2005 and was now considered obsolete and a critical risk to the business.

The SmartBusiness Project had gone through extensive Discovery and Design phases, including a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) and Outline Business Case (OBC) which was presented to Cabinet on 24 March 2020 and approval was given to complete a tender and evaluation exercise.

A Full Business Case (FBC) for the SmartBusiness Project, was now being prepared to discuss the future of the Council's ERP systems and options to replace the current platform. To support the delivery of the SmartBusiness Project FBC, scrutiny by Members was now sought.

Shaer Halewood and Wendy Nicholls, Senior Business Designer, responded to a number of comments from Members and confirmed that a number of presentations had been made from preferred bidders before a preferred supplier had been chosen.

Councillors Moira McLaughlin and Pat Cleary confirmed that they were happy for Members with experience of these systems to sit on the Task and Finish Group and report back to the Committee.

On a motion by the Vice-Chair, seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia, it was -

Resolved – That this Committee:

(a) appoints Members of the Committee , Councillors Chris Carubia, Paul Stuart and one Conservative Member (to be confirmed), to a Task and Finish group to support the development of the FBC;

(b) agrees that a meeting of the Task and Finish Group be held on 6 January 2021 and that the outcomes of that meeting be reported to the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee scheduled to take place on 20 January 2021.

38 **EDSENTIAL WORKING CAPITAL AGREEMENT RENEWAL**

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, introduced a report which informed the Committee that, the Council with Cheshire West and Chester Council provided a working capital facility to Edsential, a company jointly owned by the two Councils. The report requested the Committee to agree to a renewal of the current working capital facility with Edsential. The renewal would be on similar terms to the existing arrangement which earned a return to the Council as interest was charged on any sum advanced.

In response to a number of comments from Members, Shaer Halewood and Pete Molyneux, Senior Finance Manager, informed the Committee that over the last 12 months Wirral Council had received £50,000 in interest payments. To date Edsential had not required to use the full amount of this facility. The Shareholder Board would receive regular reports in terms of the company's performance.

On a motion by Councillor Wendy Clements, seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia, it was -

Resolved – That the Policy and Resources Committee approves the renewal of the interest bearing working capital cashflow agreement of up to £2 million with Edsential for a 5 year term to commence as soon as applicable.

39 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

A report by the Director of Law and Governance advised how the Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which were within the remit of the Committee.

It was envisaged that the work programme would be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. The report provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Policy and Resources Committee was attached as an appendix to the report.

Members suggested a number of items could be added to the work programme, including:

- How the Council undertakes consultation
- An update on the Change Programme
- An update on plans for income generating projects
- An update on invest to save projects
- An overview of Edsential

In response to a comment, Alan Evan, Director of Regeneration and Place, stated that the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee would be having a workshop and presentation in January, 2021 and an invitation would be extended to all Members. The Growth Company business plan had previously been approved by Cabinet in early 2020, any changes would go to the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee and then to this Committee.

On a motion by the Vice-Chair, seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, it was -

Resolved – That the proposed Policy and Resources Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year, incorporating the suggested additions above, be noted.

40 **REFERRAL FROM COUNCIL - MOTION - CANCEL LOCAL AUTHORITY DEBT**

A motion, approved by Council, at its meeting on 19 October, 2020 (minute 29 refers) regarding the Campaign for Council Housing's call to cancel local authority debt had been referred to this Committee, in accordance with the wording of the motion.

The Vice-Chair informed the meeting that a letter had been sent to the Minister but no response had yet been received, and that if the Committee wished to debate the matter a report would need to come before the Committee.

A Member queried whether or not there was any risk to the Council's capitalisation bid in terms of what this motion was asking for.

Members expressed the view that they knew little about this campaign group and would like an officers' report on this.

On a motion by the Vice-Chair, seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia, it was –

Resolved – That the motion be noted and once a response had been received from Government, the motion be brought back to Committee with an officers' report.

41 **MINUTES OF THE SENIOR OFFICER AND APPOINTMENTS STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Committee was requested to note the minutes of the Senior Officer and Appointments Staffing Sub-Committee meeting held on 26 November, 2020.

On motion by the Vice-Chair, seconded by Councillor Moira McLaughlin, it was –

Resolved – That the minutes of the Senior Officer and Appointments Staffing Sub-Committee of 26 November, 2020, be noted.

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

In response to a Member's comment, Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services, explained the meaning of paragraph 3 in relation to the Act and the reasons for excluding the press and public from the meeting. This related to commercial interests, and information relating to financial or business affairs of the Authority or another party, and in this case there could be commercial interests on both sides.

Vicki Shaw also stated that if a decision was made by the Committee and then acted upon, an officer decision notice could be published which would give further details of the action taken.

On a motion by the Vice-Chair, seconded by Councillor Janette Williamson, it was –

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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

43 **EXEMPT REPORT - ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY IN BIRKENHEAD**

Alan Evans, Director of Regeneration and Place introduced a report on a proposal to purchase a property in Birkenhead as part of the regeneration proposals for Birkenhead Town Centre.

After a lengthy debate and the Director having responded to questions from Members, it was moved by the Vice-Chair, seconded by Councillor Pat Cleary and then -

Resolved (12:5) – That,

- (1) the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to acquire, on behalf of the Council, the site identified in the report for the sum as referred to in the report;**
- (2) it be agreed that this decision is urgent and therefore not subject to review.**

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 20 January 2021

Present: Councillor J Williamson (Chair)

Councillors	A Leech	P Stuart
	JE Green	C Spriggs
	P Gilchrist	T Anderson
	P Cleary	W Clements
	M McLaughlin	L Rennie
	EA Grey	C Carubia
	Y Nolan	

Deputies: Councillors T Jones (In place of T Usher)
J Robinson (In place of J McManus)
H Cameron (In place of A Hodson)

44 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

45 **APOLOGIES**

The Chair announced that apologies had been received from Councillors Andrew Hodson, Julie McManus and Tom Usher and that Councillors Helen Cameron, Jean Robinson and Tony Jones were deputising for them respectively.

46 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

47 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 18 and 21 December, 2020, be approved and adopted as correct records.

48 **LEADER'S UPDATE**

The Chair gave an update on the latest Covid-19 situation in the Borough and informed the meetings that on Monday, 4 January, 2021, Wirral had recorded its highest number of Covid-19 cases to date, with some 537 people testing

positive in Wirral in a single day, some 10 days after Christmas Day. Putting this figure in context, on 2 December, 2020, just 20 people had tested positive for Coronavirus in Wirral.

The highest number of cases were in the working age population (20-59 year olds) which was why Wirral had prioritised symptom-free testing for those people who had no alternative than to leave home each day to go to work, including supermarket workers, bus drivers, taxi drivers, school staff etc.

The average number of cases in the last 7 days (up to 15 January, 2021) was 361 cases per day, which was higher than anything seen in the Autumn when the Liverpool City Region was the first region placed into Tier 3.

Confirmed cases continued to be reported in care homes and in hospital settings, but approximately 51% of all cases reported (in the previous 7 days) related to residential households. Numbers were falling but they were still incredibly high.

The Chair stressed the need for everyone to keep doing the right things to keep each other safe.

Paul Satoor, Chief Executive, thanked residents, Members and Council staff for all their commitment and hard work in supporting the Covid response over the past 10 months. He highlighted the work of the Merseyside Resilience Forum and the Council response in re-mobilising services following the announcement of the new national lockdown, including the helpline, business support grant and food distribution hub. Council services were stretched and all the Group Leaders had agreed that the Council's focus should be on three key priorities, the response to Covid-19, budget challenges and the Local Plan. He also referred to the partnership working with the Council working with NHS colleagues to help Arrowe Park Hospital maintain its capacity and also supporting the NHS in its vaccination roll-out.

The Chair also thanked Council employees for the way they had gone above and beyond in their response since the beginning of the pandemic.

49 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The Chair reported that no questions had been received from members of the public.

50 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

The Chair reported that no statements were to be received but that notice had been given of two petitions to be presented.

The first was presented by Mr Stuart Barnes from the Hive Youth Zone. At the invitation of the Chair, Mr Barnes with the support of two young members, Mollie-Rose McKee and Charlotte Pollard of the Hive, introduced their petition of some 2,500 signatories against any proposed cuts to funding for the Hive Youth Zone.

The second petition was presented by Mr Jon Whyte regarding the potential closure of Europa Pools. At the invitation of the Chair, Mr Whyte introduced his petition, which he stated had some 4,000 plus signatories.

The Chair thanked all those who had spoken to their petitions.

51 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

The Chair reported that one question had been received from Councillor Phil Gilchrist on the subject of disclosure of information relating to the Hoylake Golf Resort. The Chair responded accordingly, explaining the reason for the information remaining exempt. The Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee would be asked if it wished to pursue the difference of opinion with the Information Commissioner over the question of the public interest in not disclosing the information outweighing the public interest in disclosing the information, at its meeting on 26 January, and if that question should be put before the First Tier Tribunal.

The Chair responded to a supplementary question from Councillor Gilchrist and stated that the matters were subject to legal privilege and would be considered by the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee at its meeting next week.

52 **CAR PARKING CHARGES**

The Chair invited Councillor Liz Grey, Chair of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, to introduce the report of the Director of Law and Governance, which provided for consideration the final recommendations of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee in respect to Car Parking Charges resulting from the findings of the Working Group which that Committee had established.

Councillor Grey clarified that the recommendations to this Committee proposed and carried by the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee were for option 4, which was for the re-introduction of charges as to how they were before they were suspended. She went on to elaborate on the reasons to re-introduce car parking charges immediately with the Council currently foregoing income of approximately £1.8m, which would otherwise need to be found from elsewhere by cutting other services and the fact that most other Councils had reinstated their charges. Providing a service for free which was previously paid for did not sit with the Council's Climate

Emergency declaration, in subsidising driving of vehicles which might not be necessary, nor with the Council's health and wellbeing goals.

The Chair thanked all the members of the Working Group and the Committee for all their work on this matter and for the information put before this Committee.

Members expressed a variety of views as to whether or not car parking charges should be reintroduced immediately. Some Members commented that circumstances had once again changed, with the country now in a third lockdown and that now would not be the time to re-introduce these charges. Other Members suggested the need to start charging again due to the substantial loss of income to the Council and the fact that not all these losses were covered by Government grants which amounted to 75%, although, as the Director of Resources clarified, the first 5% of this loss had to be discounted, in effect meaning 75% of the 95% remaining would be eligible for relief. She would be able to provide the figures in relation to the relief received from Government after the meeting.

In response to comments from Members Simon Fox, Assistant Director: Highways and Infrastructure stated that income lost between July and January when Government relief didn't apply could have amounted to anything between £300,000 to £650,000.

Following further discussion on the proposals it was then moved by Councillor Chris Carubia and seconded by Councillor Phil Gilchrist, that:

'Parking charges be re-introduced at all locations immediately, with the exception of Country Parks, for which charges would be reintroduced at the end of this current lockdown.'

The motion was put and lost (2:15).

It was then moved by Councillor Tom Anderson and seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, that:

'In view of the change of circumstances since the Working Party considered this, with the country now in a third national lockdown, the reintroduction of parking charges at the moment would have a detrimental impact on small businesses when they open up, and also have a public health impact and discourage residents from using the Country Parks, therefore Committee resolves to continue with the suspension of Council car parking charges to be reviewed in April, 2020.'

The motion was put and lost (5:12).

It was then moved by Councillor Liz Grey, seconded by Councillor Pat Cleary and -

Resolved (10:7) – That parking charges be re-introduced immediately at all locations.

53 **SMARTBUSINESS FULL BUSINESS CASE**

The Chair thanked the Working Group which had undertaken a review of this project and full business case.

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, then introduced the report on the SmartBusiness Project regarding the upgrade of the council's Enterprise Resources Planning Systems. The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems integrated key business processes across finance, human resources, procurement and other areas. The approach standardised and streamlined procedures and approaches to the administration of a number of key business activities. The Council's current ERP system, Oracle - 1 Business had been in operation since April 2005 and was now obsolete.

The report and supporting Full Business Case (FBC) (attached as an exempt appendix to the report) discussed the future of the system and the requirement to implement an alternative to the current ERP that was now over 15 years old. It was envisaged that by replacing the current systems the Council would take full advantage of recent developments to make a step change to its operational effectiveness.

To date, the SmartBusiness Project had gone through extensive Discovery and Design phases which had resulted in a successful tender and evaluation process.

Councillors Jeff Green, Chris Carubia and Paul Stuart, the members of the Working Group, which had looked in detail at the comprehensive business case, all expressed their support for the project.

On a motion by Councillor Paul Stuart, seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, it was -

Resolved (unanimously) – That this Committee:

- (1) approves the implementation and upgrade from the current unsupported version of Oracle (Release 11) to a new cloud solution;**
- (2) approves the budget and allocation of funding of £4.6 million (£2m capital / £2.6m revenue) for transformation projects that deliver ongoing savings;**

- (3) approves the award of a five-year contract with the option to extend for another two years to the company named in the Full Business Case (FBC) via the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Data and Application Solutions Framework, Agreement (RM3821) for:
- New cloud platform licenses for a 5-year (with the option to extend for a further 2: 5+2 years) period
 - Implementation partner to implement the new platform for a total value detailed in the FBC.
- (4) re-appoints the existing Members of the Working Group, Councillors Chris Carubia, Jeff Green and Paul Stuart, to monitor project performance during Delivery phase.

54 **GOVERNMENT SPENDING REVIEW - IMPACT OF WIRRAL BUDGET 2021/22**

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, introduced a report which provided a summary of the financial impact for Wirral Council as a result of the Government Spending Review for financial year 2021/22. The information contained within this report did not change the requirement for budget savings, as set out in the “draft revenue budget 2021/22 – proposals for consultation” paper considered by the Committee on 18 December 2020 (minute 32 refers).

Shaer Halewood emphasised that the figures in the report were based on the draft settlement received from Government in December, the final settlement would not be known until the end of this month or early February. She elaborated on the detail within the report and referred to a correction to the report with regard to the Social Care Grant at paragraph 3.20, which was an increase of £3.34m (as shown in Table 1 in the report) and not £2.4m. This additional monies was being earmarked for additional pressures on children’s and adults’ social care for next year, 2021/22.

Resolved – That this Committee notes the items impacting Wirral Council as a result of the national spending review announcement.

55 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

A report by the Director of Law and Governance advised how the Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which were within the remit of the Committee.

It was envisaged that the work programme would be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. The report provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Policy and Resources Committee was attached as an appendix to the report.

Resolved – That the proposed Policy and Resources Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year, be noted.

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

Responding to comments from a Member, Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance, confirmed that the appendix to the SmartBusiness Full Business Case report was currently considered exempt due to the commercial sensitivities contained within it. A Member suggested that the commercial elements of the appendix could be removed so that the Full Business Case could then be published.

It was moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia, that:

‘Under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.’

It was then moved as an amendment by Councillor Jeff Green and seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie, that;

‘The commercial elements of the Full Business Case appendix be removed to enable its publication.’

The amendment was put and lost (5:12).

The motion was then put and carried by assent and it was therefore –

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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

57 **EXEMPT APPENDIX - SMARTBUSINESS FULL BUSINESS CASE**

Resolved – That the exempt appendix to the SmartBusiness Full Business Case report, be noted.

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 17 February 2021

Present: Councillor J Williamson (Chair)

Councillors A Leech P Stuart
JE Green C Spriggs
P Gilchrist T Usher
P Cleary T Anderson
M McLaughlin W Clements
EA Grey A Hodson
J McManus L Rennie
Y Nolan C Carubia

58 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

59 APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

60 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest.

Councillor Anita Leech declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 10, 'Capital Programme 2021-26' by virtue her being a governor of two schools referred to in the report.

Councillor Wendy Clements declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 9, 'Budget 2021/22 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 – 2025/26' by virtue of her employment.

61 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 January, 2021, be approved and adopted as a correct record.

62 LEADER'S UPDATE

The Chair gave an update on the latest Covid-19 situation in the Borough and informed the meeting that Wirral had the second lowest (of 9 Local Authorities) for 7-day rate of cases in Cheshire and Merseyside and was also lower than the average for Cheshire and Merseyside overall (146/100k versus 189/100k in

C&M overall). Rates in all Cheshire and Merseyside Councils at the end of December 2020 and in early January 2021 exceeded those seen in both the April and October peaks. Pressure in the hospital was continuing to ease as cases in the community decreased hospital pressures managing patients with a positive COVID diagnosis would continue into March.

Wirral had a comprehensive testing offer for COVID-19 in the Borough with four testing sites operating in Liscard, Bebington, Birkenhead and Heswall, maintaining good access for residents to symptomatic testing. Additional symptomatic testing was also available through deployment of mobile testing units. As part of the Liverpool City Region community testing pilot, Wirral continued to operate four asymptomatic testing sites in New Brighton, Birkenhead, Eastham and Greasby. Access to symptom-free testing was prioritised for key workers, unpaid carers, volunteers, those requiring a test in advance of a medical appointment, and others that were unable to stay at home during the national lockdown.

A dedicated contact tracing team had now been established within Wirral's COVID-19 Hub, with over 15 new staff recruited in early 2021 and a comprehensive training programme based around the wider 'Find, Test, Trace, Isolate, Support' model to be delivered throughout February 2021.

Wirral had been granted £375,000 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Community Champions' Fund to support people shown to be most at risk from COVID-19 including those from an ethnic minority background, disabled people and other high-risk groups. This funding was for 12 months, with the successful bid developed in collaboration with leaders across the borough as part of the BAME thematic group and would be used to support a number of schemes – including in-depth analysis and training relating to 'health literacy' levels, to improve the quality, translation and accessibility of COVID-19 restriction and vaccine information, and to help people to isolate.

Paul Satoor, Chief Executive, confirmed that the Council was awaiting the Prime Minister's announcement on the roadmap out of lockdown, due on 22 February, and that it was anticipated that school's would be first, although they had remained open throughout this lockdown period to support key workers. The vaccination programme was going well and the Council continued with its support of health colleagues in this. He thanked Council workers and Members for their continued support to residents in maintaining as much Covid safety as possible.

63 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair reported that three questions had been received from members of the public and invited Brian Donaldson to ask the first question in respect of the Wirral Evolution contract.

The Chair responded accordingly and informed the meeting that the contract was set and managed by the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee and that Wirral Evolutions would be reporting regularly to that committee on its performance in delivering the contract. The company had said that it was confident that it could deliver the services required of it within the contract price without the benefit of any further financing and that it was a valued service.

The Chair responded to a supplementary question from Mr Donaldson and assured him that the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee would continue to monitor the work of Wirral Evolutions with great sensitivity to the work it did.

The Chair then invited Keith Marsh, Secretary of Brackenwood Golf Club, to ask his question in respect of the narrative pertaining to golf courses in the public budget consultation document.

The Chair responded accordingly and informed the meeting that the information was derived from budget information and did not consider the most recent actual performance information which could affect figures to a greater or lesser extent. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was not considered as part of the information which could further increase any deficit within the service. The initial indicative budget figures considered the four principal courses at Brackenwood, Hoylake, Arrowe Park and The Warren. However, given the potential risk and legal implications associated with historic agreements at Hoylake, it was deemed appropriate to remove Hoylake from within the scope of budget options. This accounted for any change of position in the figures presented in the original budget documentation and should not therefore be considered misrepresentative.

The Chair stated that she would provide a written response with regard to Mr Marsh's supplementary question on any guarantees from the Council on leases which golf clubs currently had for club houses, for booking times and Invigor8 schemes to enable them to plan for their futures.

The Chair then invited Jackie Watts to ask her question in respect of public golf courses and the use of land if they were closed.

The Chair responded accordingly and informed the meeting that the option considered referred to a review of golf which was consulted upon as part of the commitment to setting a balanced budget for 2021/22. Without a decision yet being taken by this committee or this option being considered at a future meeting of the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee, no further information could be provided.

64 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

The Chair reported that notice of one request to make a statement had been received. She then invited Mark Sopp to address the committee and he spoke against any proposed closure of Europa Pools.

The Chair stated that notice had been given of two petitions to be presented.

The first was presented by Mary Compton Rickett, Chair of the Williamson and Priory Friends Trustees. At the invitation of the Chair, Mary Rickett, introduced a petition of some 13,000 signatories against any closure of the Williamson Art Gallery.

The second was presented by Councillor Stuart Kelly on the subject of keeping green spaces usable. At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Kelly spoke to his petition of some 580 signatories against the proposal to cease the maintenance of Oxton's fields and grass verges.

The Chair thanked all those who had spoken to their petitions.

65 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

The Chair reported that no questions had been submitted from Members.

66 **2020/21 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING FOR QUARTER THREE (APR - DEC)**

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources introduced a report which provided a summary of the projected year-end revenue position as at the end of Quarter 3 (December 2020) of the 2020/21 financial year, including:

- the financial risk profile presented by the Covid-19 pandemic and
- a review of pressures and savings contained within the original budget position.

The year-end forecast recorded as part of December's financial monitoring activity represented an adverse variance, net of exceptional financial support, from revenue budget of £8.948m; this comprised:

- £16.378m adverse forecast variance in relation to revenue budget, stemming largely from matters arising through the Covid-19 pandemic.
- £3.3m forecast deficit on expected capital receipts, which support the revenue budget position via flexible use of capital receipts and
- the above items being offset by £10.73m government funding to compensate for lost sales, fees and charges compensation due to the impact of Covid-19.

The change in the position from Quarter 2 to Quarter 3 forecast was mainly as a result of additional Covid-19 funding received by Government which was included in the Quarter 2 forecasts as being funded from Directorate budgets, additional temporary savings being found since Quarter 2 and a reduction in pressures, mainly in relation to Children and Families.

The Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic continued to present financial risk due to uncertainty and fluidity in the external environment, however the ringfenced "tranche" funding, was forecast to a balanced position.

The overall financial position for the Council remained challenging, and a number of actions were in progress to mitigate the overall forecast position presented at quarter 3, including limiting spending to essential areas of service delivery only, with Corporate Directors supported to mitigate the risk of overspending.

In October 2020, the Committee had requested exceptional financial support (capitalisation directive) from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and an offer had recently been provided from MHCLG to enable a balanced budget to be reported for 2020/21 and 2021/22. The Ministry had indicated that they were able to offer a capitalisation direction up to a maximum value of £14.8m for 2020/21, subject to conditions. This value was based on the Quarter 2 forecast at the time of the offer. The Committee's agenda included the 2021/22 Budget Report, which included a recommendation to Full Council that:

The Council proceeds with the request for exceptional financial support with the conditions outlined in the letter from the Minister of State for Regional Growth and Local Government dated 2 February, 2021.

It was assumed that the value of exceptional financial support would be provided at the level required, up to a maximum of £14.8m at the end of the 2020/21 financial year. Therefore a forecast balanced position for 2020/21 could now be reported.

Responding to a Member's comment, Shaer Halewood confirmed the rigid processes in place for vacancy control through the Senior Leadership Team.

A. Resolved - That this Committee:

(1) notes the balanced year-end forecast position;

(2) notes the impact of funding and expenditure as a direct consequence of Covid-19, including the additional funding sources which have been identified, but as yet, not received.

B. RECOMMENDED –

To Council the 2020/21 budget of £41.144m in relation to Covid-19 funding for Council use and notes the additional £134.490m of funds that is to be made available to the Council for onward relay to other organisations as passported funding. This recommendation follows on from the recommendation made by Policy & Resources Committee on 11 November 2020, following the recent notification of additional funding.

67 **CAPITAL MONITORING QUARTER 3 2020/21**

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, provided an update on the progress of the Capital Programme 2020/21 at the end of December 2020. The report recommended that the Committee agree the revised 2020/21 Capital Programme of £86.0 million which took account of re-profiling, virements, additional funding requirements and grant variations identified since the Capital Programme was formally agreed on 2 March 2020.

Shaer Halewood reported upon one change to paragraph 3.8.3 in the report, in that the Capital Receipts flexibilities had now been extended until 31 March 2025 which could be used to support expenditure that was 'Transformational' in nature.

In response to a Member's comment, Shaer Halewood stated that she would need to investigate further in respect of the virement of funds from Beechwood Leisure Centre to West Kirby Sailing School.

On a motion by the Chair seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was -

A. RECOMMENDED –

(1) to Council the approval of additional funding for the schemes referred to in section 3.5 in the report, as follows:

- **Birkenhead Park World Heritage Project Team - £0.085m (over a three year period)**
- **Connecting Wirral Waters - Detailed Design - £0.610m (over a two year period)**

(2) to Council the approval of the revised Capital Programme of £86.0million for 2020-21, including the virements referred to in Appendix 3 in the report.

B. Resolved – That this Committee agrees that the outcome of the on-going review and reprofiling of the Capital Programme is reported to Members in the next quarterly capital monitoring report.

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, introduced a report which was part of the Council's formal annual budget process, as set out in the constitution and in accordance with the legal requirements to set a balanced budget. The report presented details of the annual budget for 2021/22 and the key elements contributing towards the preparation of the budget and set out recommendations on the budget and council tax for 2021/22. The report provided an update on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covering the period from 2022/23 to 2025/26 previously reported to the Committee on 18 December 2020.

The report contained several appendices, some of which were required to be published as part of the statutory annual budget process and others which provided the Committee with relevant financial information relating to next year's budget and future years' financial assumptions. These assumptions would change, and any changes would be reported through the usual governance process for budget monitoring within the Committee system.

Included with the appendices was also the detailed Schools Budget for 2021/22.

The 2021/22 budget had been compiled using the figures in the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/22 as the final figures had not, at the time of the agenda publication, been received. Shaer Halewood confirmed that there had been no changes to the final settlement figures.

Shaer Halewood drew the Committee's attention to two errors within the report, the first being in appendix 1, 'Pressures', in that under the 'Neighbourhoods' heading, the 'Waste Development Fund' should refer to pressures on the waste service. The second was at paragraph 3.75 in the report, in that the level of Earmarked reserves were expected to be £29m and not £57m.

With regard to the precepts from other precepting bodies, referred to in appendix 9, Shaer Halewood confirmed that the vote to be taken at Council would be on the Wirral Council Tax element only.

Shaer Halewood then responded to a number of comments from Members and clarified that there was now a forecast surplus of £1m for the 2021/22 budget, which was included within the body of the report and gave a breakdown of this amount. The £4m for potential EVR's was included within the £29m earmarked reserves figure. Fees and charges had a total increase of £230,000, for cemeteries and crematorium charges to offset some of the cost of the introduction of webcasting at the crematoria and music licences. She had taken a prudent approach with the budget formulation as there were no guarantees that the government compensation scheme would be extended beyond June,

even though social distancing measure could be in place for some time affecting the Council's income, including from leisure related activities, gyms etc.

The Chair then invited Councillor Wendy Clements to comment on the Schools Budget. Councillor Clements welcomed the proposed budget of £299.487m Dedicated Schools Grant, an increase of some £24.5m over the previous year's, and which the Schools Forum had agreed to. Councillor Clements responded to a number of comments from Members and welcomed the work that schools had achieved during this difficult year, remaining open to vulnerable children to the children of key workers.

The Chair then moved, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, the recommendations as set out within the report, but with important changes to be inserted at recommendation 2, as follows:

'Recommend to Council a Revenue Budget of £329.4m but which differs from the proposals included within the public budget consultation as shown at Appendix 4 in that:

(a) The following proposals are removed from the list

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Reduce the subsidy to the Hive Youth Centre from £400k to £300k, instead of £200k, in 2021/22 only - | £100,000 |
| 2. Stopping School Crossing Patrols - | £276,300 |
| 3. Closure of Public Conveniences - | £142,000 |
| 4. 3 weekly collection of general rubbish - | £180,000 |
| 5. Close Europa Pools - | £640,000 |
| 6. Review of 4 Golf Courses - | £273,000 |
| 7. Review of Museums Service - | £327,500 |
| 8. Delay the ceasing of support for Community Alarms - | £200,000 |

Total changes to the 2021/22 draft budget - £2,138,000

(b) The budget gap that this would create is then met by the inclusion of the following proposals:

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Savings from efficiencies at the Williamson Art Gallery - | £90,000 |
| 2. Savings from closing the Fun Pool only at Europa - | £250,000 |

3. Provision of additional catering across multi-site and new in-house catering offer at West Kirby -	£35,000
4. Charging for a range of new and existing Environmental Services -	£144,000
5. Additional savings from workforce efficiencies -	£150,000
6. Reduction in pressure for pay increases for low paid workers -	£236,000
7. Freezing of the Merseytravel Levy for 2021/22 -	£439,000
8. Funding for the Hive from local businesses -	£100,000
9. Fund the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme from Covid-19 funding –	£200,000
10. Climate Emergency Budget Balance -	£100,000
11. Request to bring forward various asset sales -	£394,000
<u>Total alternative budget options found -</u>	<u>£2,138,000</u>

The Chair and Labour Members then responded to a number of comments from other Members on the proposed budget options.

Shaer Halewood clarified that there were a range of assets on the Council's surplus asset list, all within the Borough, which could be brought forward to be sold and that they would come before the relevant Policy and Service Committee and then to this Committee if they were of a value over £100,000.

At 8pm the Chair adjourned the meeting to enable discussions within Groups to take place on the proposals.

The Committee resumed at 8.35pm.

The Chair invited Shaer Halewood to give her opinion, as Section 151 Officer, to the validity of the proposed budget. Shaer Halewood confirmed that all the proposals were all legal and achievable for a balanced budget to be set for 1 April, 2021.

Some Members expressed full support for the proposals and others commented that they could agree with many of the proposals but that there were elements which they believed could be improved upon.

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance, then explained how the voting would proceed and that a separate vote would be taken on part 2 of the recommendation, the Labour proposal, and then a vote on parts 3 to 5 of the recommendation.

Part 1 of the recommendation was agreed by assent.

A vote was conducted on part 2 of the recommendation, and it was carried (8:8) (One abstention) on the Chair's casting vote.

A vote was then conducted on parts 3 to 5 of the recommendation, with the removal of 3 (g) (i) part 2 'Golf provision', as this was now no longer a budget saving (see part (a) 6 of the proposals). The vote was carried (17:0) and it was therefore -

A. Resolved – That the Committee:

- (1) **Notes and considers the response to the financial proposals forming a draft budget for the purposes of public consultation (minute 32 – 18 December, 2020 refers), available between 21 December 2020 and 29 January 2021, set out as:**

Appendix 1 Pressures

Appendix 2 Savings Proposals

Appendix 3 Five Year Medium Term Financial Plan

Appendix 4 Proposals included within public budget consultation.

**Appendix 5 Policy & Service Committee Savings Proposals
Feedback**

Appendix 6 Public Consultation Responses

Appendix 10 Report of the s.151 officer as to the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

Appendix 12 The estimated position for the Dedicated Schools Grant

B. RECOMMENDED –

- (2) **((8:8) (One abstention) carried on the Chair's casting vote)**

To Council a Revenue Budget of £329.4m but which differs from the proposals included within the public budget consultation as shown at Appendix 4 in that:

- (a) The following proposals are removed from the list**

- 1. Reduce the subsidy to the Hive Youth Centre from £400k to £300k, instead of £200k, in 2021/22 only - £100,000**

2. Stopping School Crossing Patrols -	£276,300
3. Closure of Public Conveniences -	£142,000
4. 3 weekly collection of general rubbish -	£180,000
5. Close Europa Pools -	£640,000
6. Review of 4 Golf Courses -	£273,000
7. Review of Museums Service -	£327,500
8. Delay the ceasing of support for Community Alarms -	£200,000
<u>Total changes to the 2021/22 draft budget -</u>	<u>£2,138,000</u>

(b) The budget gap that this would create is then met by the inclusion of the following proposals:

1. Savings from efficiencies at the Williamson Art Gallery -	£90,000
2. Savings from closing the Fun Pool only at Europa -	£250,000
3. Provision of additional catering across multi-site and new in-house catering offer at West Kirby -	£35,000
4. Charging for a range of new and existing Environmental Services -	£144,000
5. Additional savings from workforce efficiencies -	£150,000
6. Reduction in pressure for pay increases for low paid workers -	£236,000
7. Freezing of the Merseytravel Levy for 2021/22 -	£439,000
8. Funding for the Hive from local businesses -	£100,000
9. Fund the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme from Covid-19 funding	£200,000
10. Climate Emergency Budget Balance -	£100,000
11. Request to bring forward various asset sales -	£394,000
<u>Total alternative budget options found -</u>	<u>£2,138,000</u>

Producing a revised set of Budget Proposals, consisting of:

<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Value</u>
1. Reduce the subsidy to the Hive Youth Centre from £400k to £300k, (instead of £200k in 2021/22 only)	£100,000
2. Modernisation & Social Care combined: Staff Efficiency Savings	£102,000
3. Review of the Neighbourhood Services Directorate	£350,000
4. Additional and increased parking charges: Whole scale car parking review	£1,000,000
5. Reduction in grass cutting and maintenance of roadside verges and all Parks and Open Spaces	£250,000
6. Amenity space and grass verge maintenance cessation	£100,000
7. Contract Efficiency Savings with BIFFA	£75,000
8. Income generated from establishing targeted and discretionary environmental enforcement	£150,000
9. Culture and Visitor Economy savings	£620,000
10. Pause re-opening of Woodchurch Leisure Centre	£322,000
11. Royden Park Commercial Development - Phase 1	£80,000
12. Birkenhead Market Restructure	£240,000
13. Budget Allocation for DDA	£200,000
14. Delay the ceasing of support for Community Alarms	£200,000
15. Wirral Evolutions review of day services for people with Learning Disabilities	£500,000
16. Suspension of individual Member Ward Budgets	£250,000
17. One Stop Shop Service Reduction	£98,000
18. Restructure of Revenues & Benefits	£150,000
19. Business Change Service Reduction	£670,000
20. New Staffing Structure in IT Services	£618,000
21. Centralised Print Process £157,000	
22. Business Support Unit - Staffing Reduction	£237,000
23. Hardship fund and reduction in bad debt provision	£1,000,000
24. Contract Management & Commissioning	£350,000
25. Apprenticeships	£148,000
26. Traded Services Review	£270,000
27. Savings from efficiencies at the Williamson Art Gallery	£90,000
28. Savings from closing the Fun Pool only at Europa	£250,000
29. Provision of additional catering across multi-site and new in-house catering offer at West Kirby	£ 35,000
30. Charging for a range of new and existing Environmental Services	£144,000
31. Additional savings from workforce efficiencies	£150,000
32. Reduction in pressure for pay increases for low paid workers	£236,000

33.	Freezing of the Merseytravel Levy for 2021/22 -	£439,000
34.	Funding for the Hive from local businesses -	£100,000
35.	Fund the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme from Covid-19 funding	£200,000
36.	Climate Emergency Budget Balance	£100,000
37.	Request to bring forward various asset sales -	£394,000

(3) (17:0)

That Council:

- a) adopt the summary Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) set out as Appendix 3 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Financial Resilience Plan (MTFS) set out as Appendix 11.
- b) adopt the fees and charges set out as Appendix 7, with delegated authority being granted:
 - (i) to the Section 151 Officer to update the Council's Fees and Charges Directory prior to publication before 1 April 2021.
 - (ii) to the relevant Director with portfolio, in consultation with the relevant Committee's Chair and Group Spokespersons, to vary existing fees and charges.
- c) approve the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy for Business Rates for 2021/22 set out as Appendix 8.
- d) set and maintain the level of General Fund Balances the higher of
 - (i) £10.7m of general fund
 - (ii) 3% of the Council's new revenue budget, to be based on a locally determined assessment of the financial risks that the Council may face in the future in accordance with the report of the s.151 Officer (Appendix 10).
- e) proceeds with the request for exceptional financial support with the conditions outlined in the letter from the Minister of State for Regional Growth and Local Government dated 2 February 2021
- f) approve the 2021/22 Schools Budget of £299.487m
- g) authorise, in respect of the Budget Proposals, that:
 - (i) the relevant Committee receiving the further work being undertaken in respect of:

- (1) car parking charges;**
- (2) enforcement costs recovery; and**
- (3) grass cutting and re-wilding**

to develop and implement proposals in line with the agreed Budget.

(ii) the Director with portfolio undertake such actions as they consider are necessary to implement the agreed Budget and consequential proposals developed as part of the formulation process and update Committees accordingly.

(4) That Council (subject to a separate vote at Council):

a) sets the Band D Council Tax at £1,663.27 for the Wirral Borough Council element of the Council Tax, representing a general increase of 1.99% and 3.00% ringfenced increase to Adult Social Care, and the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2021/22 of £156,677,700 as detailed in Appendix 9.

b) notes that the additional precepts from the Police & Crime Commissioner for Merseyside, the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority remain in estimated form and delegates authority to the Section 151 Officer to implement any variation to the overall council tax arising from the final notification of the precepts.

C. Resolved – That the Committee -

(5) Delegates authority to the Section 151 Officer, following consultation with the Chair and Group Spokespersons of the Policy & Resources Committee, to do anything necessary to give effect to the proposals contained in this report and address any funding changes, if any, arising from the final Local Government Finance Settlement once agreed by Parliament.

69 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021-26

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, introduced a report on the draft Capital Programme 2021/26 for consideration and referral to Council for approval. The report also included information regarding the revenue implications of this Programme and an update on the latest forecast for capital receipts.

The 2021/26 Capital Programme represented a combination of schemes originally approved as part of the 2020/25 Programme, updated through the Capital Monitoring reports in 2020/21 and new bids for inclusion as detailed in this report.

Shaer Halewood confirmed (see minute 68 ante) that the scheme for Beechwood had now been completed and was therefore no longer required to be in the Capital Programme.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was -

RECOMMENDED – To Council -

- (1) the approval of the new bids as detailed in Appendix 2 to this report requiring £12.133 million borrowing for inclusion in the Capital Programme;**
- (2) the approval of any new bids supported by grant funding do not commence until written confirmation has been received from the granting authority;**
- (3) the approval of the Capital Programme 2021/26 (as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report);**
- (4) the approval that progress on delivering the Capital Programme will be presented in accordance within the agreed Capital Monitoring arrangements.**

70 **CAPITAL FINANCING STRATEGY 2021/22**

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, introduced a report on the Capital Financing Strategy. The Authority's treasury management activity was underpinned by CIPFA's 2017 Code of Practice on Treasury Management ("the Code"), in which there was the requirement for Council to approve an annual Capital Strategy. The report fulfilled the Authority's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

RECOMMENDED – To Council -

- (1) the approval of the Capital Strategy for 2021/22;**
- (2) the approval of the associated Prudential Indicators to be adopted;**
- (3) the approval of the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision policy.**

71 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2021/22**

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, introduced a report on the Treasury Management Strategy. The Authority's treasury management activity was

underpinned by CIPFA's 2017 Code of Practice on Treasury Management ("the Code"), which required the production of annual Treasury Management Indicators and a Treasury Management Strategy Statement on likely financing and investment activity. The Code also recommended that Members were informed of treasury management activities at least twice a year.

The report fulfilled the Authority's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code. It did not cover the requirements of the 2018 Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Investment Guidance, which mostly referred to non-treasury investments and was the subject of a separate report.

Members welcomed the use of Ethical, Social and Governance investment criteria for the future investment strategy.

Shaer Halewood, in response to a Member's comment confirmed that she would provide an updated version of Appendix 5 to the report, which referred to possible implications of a 'no deal Brexit'.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

RECOMMENDED – To Council -

- (1) the approval of the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2021/2022;**
- (2) the approval of the Treasury Management Indicators.**

72 INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2021/22

Shaer Halewood, Director of Resources, introduced a report on the Investment Strategy. In February 2018, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published updated 'Guidance on Local Government Investments'. The previous edition covered only Treasury Management investments. In recent years local authorities had had an increasing focus on commercial activities including but not exclusive to property. Such activity had the potential to bring both increased returns and increased positive and negative risk. The revised Guidance on Local Authority Investments required that a separate Investment Strategy focusing on non-treasury investments was produced and approved annually by Council.

This report fulfilled the requirement of the MHCLG to produce an investment strategy that covered non-treasury activities.

Shaer Halewood responded to comments from Members, including on the work of the New Commercial Ideas Panel and the Investment and Change Board

and confirmed that an update would be provided on the investment strategy to the Committee. She also confirmed that she would respond in writing with regard to the current value of the Vue Cinema in Birkenhead.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Anita Leech, it was –

RECOMMENDED - To Council, the approval of the Investment Strategy for 2021/2022 which includes potential investment in the following activity areas:

1. **Commercial Property**
2. **Service Investments: Loans**
3. **Service Investment: Shares (non-currently held)**
4. **Loan Commitments and financial Guarantees**

73 **BUDGET MEETING PROCEDURE**

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance, introduced a report on a proposed process for the Budget decision making meeting of Council.

In response to Members' comments he confirmed that a positive vote in favour of a budget proposal would be required of the Budget Council meeting.

RECOMMENDED – To Council, that for the duration of the extraordinary meeting of 1 March 2021 (Budget Council):

- (a) **the procedure attached as Appendix A to the report, be followed in respect of the meeting; and**
- (b) **Council Standing Order 15.4 (timing of speeches) be suspended together with such other standing orders as may conflict with the Budget Council procedure or the Mayor's administration of the meeting, in such a manner as the Mayor in his or her absolute discretion dictates, to ensure the objective of Council setting a lawful budget and council tax requirement prevails.**

74 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

A report by the Director of Law and Governance advised how the Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which were within the remit of the Committee.

It was envisaged that the work programme would be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. The report provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its

work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Policy and Resources Committee was attached as an appendix to the report.

Resolved – That the proposed Policy and Resources Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year, be noted.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

Monday, 18 January 2021

Present: Councillor Y Nolan (Chair)

Councillors B Berry S Frost
D Burgess-Joyce P Gilchrist
K Cannon (In place of S Jones) M Jordan
M Collins M McLaughlin
T Cottier T Usher

In attendance: Councillor J Green

1 MINUTES

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2020 be agreed.

2 APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

3 MEMBER DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

The following declarations were made:

Councillor Samantha Frost	Personal interest in Item 7 (Extra Care Housing Capital Report) as a participating member of the Planning Committee who would consider any future application.
Councillor Tony Cottier	Personal interest as a director of a construction company contracted by the NHS.
Councillor Thomas Usher	Personal interest by virtue of his employment at a local provider, Autism Together.
Councillor Michael Collins	Personal interests as a Governor of Wirral University Teaching Hospital, by virtue of his employment at a company providing training to the care sector and also his daughter's employment at Wirral University Teaching Hospital.

Councillor Mary Jordan	Personal interest by virtue of her employment for the NHS and involvement as a trustee for 'incubabies'.
Councillor Yvonne Nolan	Personal interest as a governor at Clatterbridge Cancer Centre.
Councillor Moira McLaughlin	Personal interest by virtue of her daughter's employment in the NHS.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS

The Head of Legal Services informed the Adult Social Care and Health Committee that no public questions, or requests to make a statement had been received.

At the request of the Chair, the Committee agreed to rearrange the order of business

5 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NHS

Simon Banks, Chief Officer, NHS Wirral CCG and Wirral Health and Care Commissioning, introduced the report which summarised the proposals set out in the recently published NHS England/Improvement document 'Integrating Care: Next steps to building strong and effective integrated care systems across England.' The report also set out the work in progress to respond to these proposals for Wirral as a 'place' within the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care System.

The Committee was informed that the key practical changes would include the devolution of national functions to a North West level and likewise the devolution of functions from a North West level down to a Cheshire and Merseyside footprint. The idea was that the future health and care systems would be built on local authority areas, and it was felt that Wirral was in a good position to enable this. Further proposals included ensuring providers worked together collaboratively and that clinical leadership within the NHS was maintained.

It was reported that the Joint Health and Care Commissioning Executive Group was looking at what function should be retained on a 'place' level and that committee such as the Health and Wellbeing Board and Adult Social Care and Health Committees would be at the heart of the new system.

Members welcomed the emphasis on local commissioning of services and sought clarification on the footprint that different services would be delivered on.

Resolved – That

- (1) the work to define what a commissioning offer at ‘place’ level should look like, setting out what commissioning functions should be delivered in place and what would best sit with provider partnerships be noted and supported.**
- (2) the work in the creation of a provider collaborative/alliance in Wirral be noted.**
- (3) a further update report on progress be presented at a future meeting of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee.**

6 111 FIRST

Simon Banks, Chief Officer, NHS Wirral CCG and Wirral Health and Care Commissioning presented the report which provided the Committee with a summary of the implementation to date of the national “Think 111 First” project in Wirral, as well as an overview of the anticipated next steps.

It was reported that the project intended to transform the way that patients accessed urgent and emergency care by offering a single point of access. It was hoped that the project would:

- Reduce the risk of nosocomial infection through overcrowding in the Emergency Department;
- Increase the number of patients who got to the right service first time; and
- Increase staff and patient satisfaction with the 111 First service.

The Committee was advised that the project went live on 24 November and within the first ten days, 70% of all urgent referrals into the Clinical Advisory Service had been managed without referring people to the Emergency Department, in addition to fewer unheralded arrivals to the Emergency Department and shorter waiting times.

Members welcomed the project and sought further information on the targets outlined within the report and the data that these were being measured against.

Resolved – That

- (1) the report be noted and the implementation of phase two of NHS 111 be supported.**

- (2) a further report be submitted to a future meeting of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee, including a performance data set.**

7 WIRRAL EVOLUTIONS

Graham Hodgkinson, Director of Adult Care and Health introduced the report which sought the continuation of delivery of adult care services within the Borough through the current provider, Wirral Evolutions.

The report outlined that Wirral Evolutions was set up as a limited company by Wirral Council in 2015 to enable the service to extend and modernise its activities and generate income in addition to the social care contract. However costs associated with day services had increased beyond the contract value leading to a review of the service as requested by Adult Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February 2020, which included the potential for bringing services back 'in-house' to address the financial challenges currently facing the service.

It was reported that the Council had formally commenced consultation on the budget in relation to the Contract for Day Services for people with a Learning Disability, with the intention of removing the over contract spend amounting to £0.5m to bring the contract value in line with the social care budget allocation of £5.015m for 2021/22. Wirral Evolutions had discussed a range of options to modernise the current operating model, and the recommendation was that they would present these proposals to a future meeting of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee.

Members acknowledged that the quality of the service was not an issue and emphasised the need to provide reassurances and a sense of continuity to service users.

Resolved – That

- (1) the Council should continue to deliver Day Services through the current contract with Wirral Evolutions.**
- (2) Wirral Evolutions be invited to the Adult Social Care and Health Committee to present the company's proposals to modernise the current operating model and reduce the operating costs to ensure delivery of the service within the existing contract at the current contract price of £5.015m for 2021 to 2022.**
- (3) Wirral Evolutions be invited to the Adult Social Care and Health Committee to present quarterly reports to update the Committee on its progress, with a six-month formal review of progress against allocated spend under the contract.**

8 FUTURE SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

Jason Oxley, Assistant Director of Care and Health introduced the report which outlined the proposal to step down the Merseyside Safeguarding Adults Board and establish a Local Safeguarding Adults Board in Wirral.

The report detailed how Wirral Council was currently a member of the Merseyside Safeguarding Adults Board alongside Liverpool, Sefton and Knowsley, but that following a peer review by the Local Government Association it had been decided by the existing Board members to change the arrangements to a local level, where it was felt that there was more opportunity to strengthen links with the domestic abuse strategy and services.

Members were supportive of the introduction of a local Safeguarding Board and felt it would complement the local health and social care integration agenda. It was noted that the Children's Safeguarding Board had undergone similar rearrangements and there was an opportunity for learning from those experiences.

Resolved – That

- (1) the establishment of a Wirral Local Safeguarding Adults Board to fulfil the statutory requirements that are currently being met and managed by the Merseyside Safeguarding Adults Board be agreed in principle.**
- (2) a further report outlining the plans to establish a Wirral Local Safeguarding Adults Board be received at a future meeting of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee.**

9 EXTRA CARE HOUSING CAPITAL REPORT

Simon Garner, Health and Care Commissioning Lead, introduced the report of the Director of Care and Health which outlined the funding requirements for the development of an Extra Care Housing scheme on Moreton Road, Upton.

It was reported that there were a number of these schemes across the borough, that provided 24 hour on-site care whilst also supporting independent living, which in turn reduced the need for residential and nursing care.

The previous Wirral Plan set out a target of developing 300 additional units by 2020, but national policy had resulted in delays to this. 101 additional units

had been achieved, and the proposed development before the Committee alongside a further development in Rock Ferry would help to fulfil that target.

The Committee noted the considerable time required to identify and develop sites for developments such as this, and it was suggested that more regular consultation exercises could take place to identify need and to ensure that need could always be met.

Resolved – That

- 1) payment of a grant of up to £3,685,400 to Housing 21 (H21) from the Council Extra Care Capital Programme to enable the delivery of 80 Extra Care Housing units by Housing 21 be approved.**
- 2) it be noted that the council holds nomination rights and that appropriate legal agreements will be put in place to ensure that the Council's financial contribution and nomination rights are protected.**

10 BUDGET CONSULTATION

Graham Hodkinson, Director of Care and Health introduced the report of the Director of Resources and outlined that the report formed part of the Council's formal budget setting process and gave the Adult Social Care and Health Committee opportunity to comment on the proposals that fall within its remit, which would enable those comments to be presented for consideration by Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting in February 2021.

The report included a savings proposal through a service review of the day services for people with Learning Disabilities provided by Wirral Evolutions. The review's aim was to manage the cost of current provision through service changes with potential savings of £500,000.

Members felt that there was no need to further comment on the proposals whilst the public consultation was ongoing, and the comments the Committee made on the budget options at the previous meeting were still pertinent and should still be considered.

Resolved – That

the resolutions agreed under Minute Item 19 at the previous meeting of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee on the budget options be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee as part of the budget consultation.

11 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

Graham Hodgkinson, Director of Care and Health presented the standing revenue budget monitoring report for quarter two of 2020-21 which provided members with an overview of budget performance for adult social care and health.

The Committee was informed that the projected year-end revenue forecast position was a favourable position of £0.06m which it was felt was a positive in the context of the ongoing challenges being faced. It was explained that the favourable forecast was due to several factors including a reduction in demand for social care services in the early stages of the pandemic, alongside hospital discharges being funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group. Members were advised that the demand for services had returned but would be partially offset by further NHS and Government funding.

Members acknowledged that the Revenue Budget Monitoring report was in line with corporate reporting timetable, but felt that a budget monitoring panel should be set up to enable more timely budget monitoring.

Resolved – That

- 1) the projected year-end revenue forecast position of £0.06m favourable, as reported at quarter 2 (Apr-Sep) of 2020-21 be noted.**
- 2) a Budget Monitoring Panel be established with the Chair and Group Spokespersons to meet monthly to monitor the up-to-date financial data.**

12 ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH PERFORMANCE REPORT

Jason Oxley, Assistant Director of Care and Health introduced the report, which provided a regular update on the performance of Adult Social Care and Health as requested at the meeting on 13 October 2020.

The report provided statistics relating to residential and nursing care in the borough and it was reported that there was currently a significant vacancy rate of around 15%, partly as a result of temporary closures for new admissions due to Covid-19 outbreaks or contractual issues.

The Committee discussed the care homes that had been rated inadequate by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the Council's ability to continue to carry out inspections during the pandemic. It was reported that there were ongoing issues with the quality improvement team accessing care settings, but that quality surveillance was still taking place through the observations of district nurses, GPs and specialist health staff alongside regular surveillance meeting.

Members discussed the reasons why care homes moved into the 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate' CQC category and how the performance of care homes could be monitored pre and post Covid-19.

Resolved – That

- (1) the report be noted.**
- (2) case analysis of care homes moving into the 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' Care Quality Commission categories be included in future performance reports.**
- (3) the Assistant Director of Care and Health be requested to undertake a review of the reasons for ending reablement that were currently categorised as "other" and include the findings in future performance reports.**
- (4) the Assistant Director of Care and Health be requested to consider the use of notifiable incidents within care homes as a way of measuring their performance before and during the pandemic and report the findings back to the Adult Social Care and Health Committee.**

13 COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE

Julie Webster, Director of Public Health, introduced the report which provided the Committee with an update on the Council's Covid-19 response and the delivery of the Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan.

The report detailed the key progress made since the last update on the seven priority areas of the Covid-19 Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan which had been the main focus during lockdown, these included:

- Effective Surveillance;
- Governance and Accountability;
- Engagement and Communication;
- High Risk Settings and Communities;
- Local Testing;
- Local Contact Tracing; and
- Supporting Vulnerable People and Communities

Members were advised that the weekly infection data was still available on the Council's website, and the data showed that there was widespread community transmission in Wirral, particularly in the 20-29 year old age group. The number of cases per day was approximately 30 in December but had increased to 537 on 4th January resulting in an infection rate of 800 per

100,000 residents. The Director of Public Health outlined that whilst cases had started to reduce, the number of cases remained extremely high and the pressure on NHS and social care services remained significant.

It was reported that work was ongoing to ensure that once the national restrictions ended there was a smooth transmission into local arrangements, including robust contact tracing and the continued work of the outbreak management hub. Asymptomatic testing had been launched across the borough following the previous meeting, and members were advised that an appointment system had since been introduced to prioritise people going into work.

Members welcomed the current communications strategy and work of the Community Champions and expressed their gratitude to the Public Health team for their ongoing work.

RESOLVED – That

the report and progress made to date be noted and the ongoing Covid-19 response be supported.

14 DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY RELATING TO PEOPLE WHO ARE DEEMED UNABLE TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS

Simon Garner, Lead Health and Care Commissioner, introduced the report of the Director of Care and Health setting out the important context of the work of the Deprivations of Liberty (DoLS) safeguards, the issues and challenges faced during Covid-19 and providing further information on the forthcoming changes to the legislation relating to Deprivations of Liberty.

The report set out that under schedule A1 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, the Council had powers to deprive a person in a care home or hospital of their liberty if certain statutory criteria were met such as the person being unable to consent to their treatment. The ethos of the Act was to assume the person could make their own decision and would be supported to make the relevant decision where required.

The Committee was advised of the challenges in continuing this work during the pandemic. Following the first lockdown in March 2020, all DoLS assessments were conducted remotely, other than those in exceptional circumstances where remote assessments were not able to be conducted, for reasons such as communication issues. It was reported that there had been issues whereby remote assessments had been deemed too distressing for the person being assessed.

A further update was provided on the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 which would introduce Liberty Protection Safeguards to replace DoLS resulting in significant changes to the those who the Council had responsibility for as well as the assessment process. The introduction of the legislation had been delayed until April 2022 but the Council was still engaged in planning for its introduction.

The Committee discussed the end-of-life arrangements under DoLS and the requirement for more regular reviews under the incoming Liberty Protection Safeguards.

RESOLVED – That

the report and the ongoing work to support vulnerable people within the borough be noted.

15 **QUALITY ASSURANCE- CARE HOMES**

Jason Oxley, Assistant Director of Care and Health presented the report which set out the Council and the NHS approach to working with Care Homes to meet required national and local standards and regulations, particularly during the pandemic. The report outlined the approach that the quality improvement team undertook to improve performance to homes rated 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Members noted that the Committee had already held an in-depth discussion on care homes with an 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' CQC rating when considering the Adult Social Care and Health Performance Report.

RESOLVED – That

the report and the ongoing work to support vulnerable people within the Borough be noted.

16 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME - ADULTS COMMITTEE**

Members considered a report of the Director of Care and Health outlining the Committee's work programme and seeking members' contributions.

The Chair outlined to the Committee that in order to enable officers to focus on the Covid-19 response, it had been agreed amongst political group leaders to have reduced agenda content for committees moving forward. Therefore only items relating to budget, Covid-19 response and Local Plan/regeneration matters would be considered by Committee.

Members acknowledged the need to reprioritise officer resource and felt it was not appropriate to propose further items for consideration.

RESOLVED – That the proposed Adult Social Care and Health Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year be noted.

17 **EXTRA CARE HOUSING TENDER**

Jayne Marshall, Lead Community Care Commissioner, introduced the report of the Director of Care and Health which sought the Committee's approval of the Care and Support contract for Poppyfields Extra Care Housing Scheme to the provider outlined in Appendix D to the report.

The Committee were provided with the details of the scheme in Saughall Massie, which contained 78 self-contained flats. The care provider was to ensure 24-hour background support was available in the scheme to all residents. The report set out the procurement timescales following the tender process, and pending approval of the Committee the contract would commence on 15 March 2021.

The Chair outlined that Appendix D was exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Committee would need to agree the exclusion of the Press and Public to discuss it.

RESOLVED – That

- (1) under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Appendix D to the report on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 'Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information) of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.**
- (2) the award of the Care and Support contract for Poppyfields Extra Care Housing Scheme to the Provider to in Appendix D to the report be approved.**

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ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 2 March 2021

Present: Councillor Y Nolan (Chair)

Councillors B Berry S Frost
D Burgess-Joyce P Gilchrist
K Cannon (In place of S Jones) M McLaughlin
M Collins T Usher
T Cottier

1 APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

2 MEMBER DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

The following declarations were made:

Councillor Moira McLaughlin	Personal interest by virtue of her daughter's employment in the NHS.
Councillor Tony Cottier	Personal interest as a director of a construction company contracted by the NHS.
Councillor Tom Usher	Personal interest by virtue of his employment at a local registered care provider, Autism Together.
Councillor Yvonne Nolan	Personal interest by virtue of her son's employment at a local testing centre.
Councillor Mary Jordan	Personal interest by virtue of her employment for the NHS, her son's employment for the NHS and her involvement as a trustee for 'incubabies'.
Councillor Michael Collins	Personal interests as a Governor of Wirral University Teaching Hospital and his daughter's employment at Wirral University Teaching Hospital.

3 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2021 be agreed.

4 **PUBLIC & MEMBER QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

The Head of Legal Services informed the Adult Social Care and Health Committee that no public questions, or requests to make a statement had been received.

5 **EXTRA CARE HOUSING MODEL**

Simon Garner, Health and Care Lead Commissioner, introduced the report of the Director of Care and Health, which set out the standards and design requirements to provide appropriate Extra Care Housing schemes in Wirral that will support Wirral residents with eligible needs.

The report detailed the need for additional units of Extra Care Housing within the borough with the Strategic Housing Market Analysis identifying a need for 2,985 further units up to the period of 2035, as well as the commitments to further developments of extra care housing outlined in the Wirral 2020 Plan. The report outlined how having a model which sets out the Council's expectation to developers and care providers would contribute to the quality of those forthcoming developments.

The need for further sites within the Borough was discussed and the benefits of identifying future potential sites in advance were reinforced. Members were informed that close working arrangements were in place between colleagues in Adult Social Care and Regeneration to help identify potential sites for Extra Care Housing.

The Committee was further kept apprised of how it would be ensured that the model would be adhered to, with care providers commissioned in accordance with the Care and Support framework and the requirement to be registered with the Care Quality Commission. A joined-up approach was taken across the Council to consider developments and manage them going forward, which included contributions from Revenue and Benefits, Housing, Care and Social Work.

Members emphasised the importance of the location of Extra Care Housing to ensure residents could remain in their communities and welcomed the approach of having community and family facilities integrated within extra care sites.

Resolved – That the Extra Care Housing Model be agreed.

6 EXTRA CARE TENDER

Jayne Marshall, Community Care Lead Commissioner, introduced the report of the Director of Care and Health which sought the Committee's approval to re-tender the Care and Support services within the existing Extra Care Housing schemes in Wirral.

The report outlined that there were 250 existing units of Extra Care Housing in Wirral across five sites, the contracts for which were due to end. The proposed retendering of the services was proposed to take place using the Liverpool City Region Extra Care Housing Flexible Purchasing system which enabled providers from across the city region to be used, but also included the current providers. The proposed duration of the contract was five years, with providers able to apply for one or more of the schemes, but only up to a maximum of three schemes in order to spread the risk across the market and ensure equity within the care market to support sustainability.

Members expressed their preference for a provider who would commit to paying the Real Living Wage. It was reported that all of the existing providers had signed up to pay the Real Living Wage and it was anticipated that any future provider would also commit to paying it.

Members felt that payment of the Real Living Wage should be a requirement of the tendering process and therefore an additional recommendation was proposed, moved by Councillor Michael Collins and seconded by Councillor Kate Cannon.

'That the Committee would wish to see that one of the criteria for eligibility to tender for Extra Care Housing would be that the provider would pay the Real Living Wage, subject to legal advice.'

Councillor Tom Usher declared a pecuniary interest by virtue of his employment with Autism Together and left the meeting.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Resolved – That

- 1. the commencement of the procurement process for the Care and Support contracts for the existing Extra Care Housing schemes be agreed.**
- 2. delegated authority be given to the Director of Care and Health to award the tender to the successful bidder following the tender process.**

- 3. the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee would wish to see that one of the criteria for eligibility to tender for Extra Care Housing would be that the provider would pay the Real Living Wage, subject to legal advice.**

7 HEALTHWATCH

Jayne Marshall, Community Care Lead Commissioner introduced the report of the Director of Care and Health, which detailed the proposed recommissioning of the Wirral Local Healthwatch and the Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service.

The report outlined the statutory requirement for Local Authorities to contract the provision of a local Healthwatch service, which went live in Wirral in April 2013 and extended to 2020. The Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service had been transferred to the incumbent Healthwatch provider in April 2018 and it was intended that this service would be recommissioned in conjunction with the main Healthwatch commission.

Members discussed the financial arrangements for funding the local Healthwatch service and the services provided for that cost.

Resolved – That

- 1. the progression of the tendering of the Local Healthwatch and Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Services be approved.**
- 2. delegated authority be given to the Director of Care and Health to award the tender of the Local Healthwatch contract to the successful bidder.**

8 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

Graham Hodgkinson, Director of Care and Health introduced the report which set out the financial monitoring information for the Adult Social Care and Health Committee and provided an overview of budget performance for the area of activity for quarter 3 of the 2020/21 financial year.

It was reported that as at the end of December 2020, the forecast year-end position for Adult Care and Health was an adverse variance of £0.036m against a net budget of £106.627m. The Director of Care and Health outlined the key challenges in budget monitoring in that period, which included steadily increasing client numbers, particularly in Domiciliary care, alongside increasing average cost of care packages. However, access to the Government's additional Covid-19 funding helped to offset the significant amount of additional costs the Council faced.

Members queried when the Committee would see the savings proposals from Wirral Evolutions, and it was confirmed that the proposals were in development and would be reported back to the Committee as soon as possible as part of the consultation process. Members further reinforced the need for the Budget Monitoring Panel to be introduced and align with the committee schedule.

Resolved – That the projected year-end revenue forecast position of £0.036m adverse and the performance of the capital programme, as reported at quarter 3 (Apr-Dec) of 2020/21 be noted.

9 **ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Jason Oxley, Assistance Director of Care and Health introduced the report of the Director of Care and Health, which provided an update on performance in relation to Adult Social Care and Public Health.

The report detailed a number of performance indicators relating to Adult Care and Health, and the Committee was informed that the number of care home residents remained stabled as did the vacancy rate which sat at approximately 16%. The number of people in long term residential care was 597, with a number of new placements resulting from hospital discharge. Members were advised that the priority of the Adult Social Care team was to enable people to return home when they were able to, and there had been a gradual reduction of new placements with a focus on reablement.

The Committee discussed Care Quality Commission inspections of care homes and the approach taken to undertake these during Covid-19 restrictions. It was reported that some inspections had been taking virtually whilst others were in-person, with an emphasis on in-person attendance to focus on specific areas of underperformance.

Members further discussed the key performance indicators relating to safeguarding and the data behind notifiable incidents.

Resolved – That

- 1. the content of the report be noted.**
- 2. the Director of Care and Health be requested to include further information regarding Care Quality Commission care home visits and patterns relating to notifiable incidents in future performance reports.**

10 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NHS

Simon Banks, Chief Officer NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group introduced the report which provided the Committee with a summary of the key proposals set out in the Government White Paper, 'Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all', and the response to the Government's proposals by NHS England/Improvement.

The key measures included in the White Paper were outlined, these included:

- The NHS and local government coming together legally as part of Integrated Care Systems;
- Reduction in requirement to tender healthcare services to only when it would lead to better outcomes; and
- New measures to deliver on specific needs in the social care sector including updated legal framework to enable person-centred models of hospital discharge.

The Committee was advised that the White Paper proposed greater integration within the NHS, but also greater integration between the NHS and local government. This would be done firstly with the introduction of an Integrated Care System Health and Care Partnership made up of the NHS, local government and other partners to support integration and develop a plan to address the systems health and care needs. Secondly, there would be the introduction of an Integrated Care System NHS body responsible for the day to day running of the Integrated Care System. The intention was also that place level commissioning within an Integrated Care System would align geographically to a local authority boundary.

Members expressed their preference for maintaining existing relationships with staff with a working knowledge of Wirral.

Resolved – That

- 1. the report be noted.**
- 2. the Director of Care and Health be requested to submit a report to the next meeting detailing the implications of the White Paper "Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all" from a Council perspective.**

11 COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE

Julie Webster, Director of Public Health, introduced the report which provided the Committee with an update on the Council's Covid-19 response and the delivery of the Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan.

Members were advised that in the 7 days to 24 February 2021 there were 318 cases, with a 7 day incidence rate per 100,000 people reducing from 115 to 98 and the positivity rate reducing to 3.7%. Covid-19 admissions to Arrowe Park Hospital stood at 29 as of 1 March 2021, down from 42 the previous week and 279 as of 22 January 2021. The Director of Public Health welcomed the data moving in the right direction, but urged caution given that the case rate still remained at 98 per 100,000 residents and advised that she would wish to see that rate reduce to approximately 25 per 100,000 before any lockdown measures were eased.

The report further detailed the work being undertaken to support the easing of restrictions and the measures in place to deal with outbreaks. It was reported that the Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan was being updated and would be brought back to the Committee alongside a new testing strategy. Details of the vaccination programme within Wirral were also provided.

Members shared their positive experiences of the vaccination programme and expressed their thanks to the staff and volunteers involved. Further discussions were had around the use of lateral flow tests for care home visits and the uptake of vaccinations for the BAME community and care workers.

Resolved – That

- 1. the contents of the report and the progress made to date be noted and the ongoing Covid-19 response be supported.**
- 2. the Director of Public Health be requested to submit a report to a future meeting detailing the work being undertaken to support the Black and Minority Ethnic community in accessing Covid-19 vaccines.**

12 ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair introduced the report of the Director of Care and Health which outlined the Committee's work programme.

The Chair outlined that the commitment to only considering agenda items relating to Budget, Covid-19, Local Plan/Regeneration or Recovery to enable officers to focus on Covid-19 response remained in place, therefore the Committee would not yet be agreeing to future items for consideration.

Resolved – That the proposed work programme be noted.

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 1 December 2020

Present: Councillor W Clements (Chair)

Councillors	K Cannon	J Robinson
	C Carubia	S Spoor
	AER Jones (In place of T Usher)	P Stuart
	M McLaughlin	A Wright
	Cherry Povall	

10 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed Members of the Children's, Young People and Education Committee, Officers and viewing members of the public to the online, virtual meeting.

11 APOLOGIES

A roll call of Councillors was undertaken by the Head of Legal Services. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tom Usher. Councillor Adrian Jones present as substitute.

12 MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on the agenda and, if so, declare and state what they were.

The following declarations were made.

Councillor Spoor	Sarah	Personal interest by virtue of her parent representative on PCPW, a parent support group and her employment in a Liverpool City Region school.
Councillor Wright	Alison	Personal interest by virtue of her membership of St Bridget's Educational Trust.
Councillor Carubia	Chris	Personal interest by virtue of his position as Chair of Governors of a Primary School.
Councillor Clements	Wendy	Personal interest by virtue of her involvement in Early Learning.
Councillor McLaughlin	Moira	Personal Interest in Item 10, holiday food and activities for school and nursery age children during holidays, by virtue of her role as a Trustee of the Charity 'Feeding Birkenhead'
Councillor Robinson	Jean	Personal Interest by virtue of her role in 'Early Years'

Councillor Jones	Adrian	Personal Interest by virtue of his role as a School Governor and his daughters employment as a teacher.
Councillor Paul Stuart		Personal interest by virtue of his position as a Wirral Foster Carer.

13 **MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS COMMITTEE**

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2020 be agreed.

14 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

The Head of Legal Services informed the Children, Young People and Education Committee that no public questions, or requests to make a statement had been made.

15 **PROPOSED RECOMMISSIONING OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Julie Webster, Director of Public Health introduced a report of the Director for Children, Families and Education that sought agreement to progress Public Health’s proposed commissioning intentions for 2021-2022 for Public Health services for children and young people. These services supported the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme for 0-19 years.

The proposals in the report linked to the delivery of the Wirral Plan 2025 and the statutory responsibilities of the local authority in respect of public health: services which helped people live happy, healthy, independent and active lives, with public services there to support them when they needed it.

The Director of Public Health apprised Members that all Public Health contracts were subject to on-going evaluation as part of a clearly defined commissioning cycle, which is designed to maximise return on investment and improve outcomes. This methodology ensured that Public Health services (and contracts) were consistently and routinely tested against a range of criteria. Criteria against which contracts are tested include the following:

- Evidence base e.g. academic research, engagement feedback, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Performance of targets e.g. financial and activity based and outcomes against plans and benchmarking information
- Value for money
- National policy and technical guidance e.g. Public Health Outcomes Framework
- Strategic direction e.g. Wirral Plan strategic aspirations (narrowing the gap in life expectancy), delivery of Public Health outcomes through council services

- Legal and contractual frameworks e.g. incorporate national updates to contract templates used for NHS providers.

Members noted that the following services were to be retendered during the 2021/2022 financial year as the current contracts concluded on the 31st August 2021:

- Preventative and Early Intervention Secondary School Based Service for young people (counselling - Action for Children)
- Confidential Young People's Online Counselling and Advice Service (Kooth.com - Xenzone)
- Healthy Child Programme (Health Improvement) for 0 -19 year olds (breastfeeding; healthy weight; substance misuse; sexual health and relationship education for professionals) (Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust)
- Sexual Health Education for young people (Brook)

Members questioned the Director of Public Health on a number of matters within the report, and the Director responded accordingly. Members noted that the proposals would provide an opportunity to reconsider the funding and delivery models, enabling the potential release of cost savings and the refocussing of service delivery. The Director highlighted a correction in recommendation one of the report that should have stated a figure of £1,548,858.

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements; and
Seconded by Councillor Moira McLaughlin

and

RESOLVED – That

- (1) **the Director of Public Health be authorised to re-commission contracts totalling £1,548,858 for four Children's Public Health Programmes as detailed in paragraph 3.4 of the report, for initial one year contracts (1 September 2021 – 31 August 2022) with an annual value of £774,429 with the option of a one year extension for each; and**
- (2) **the short-term contract period proposed to enable a more collaborative and joint commissioning approach to be developed across the system be noted.**

16 **SEND STRATEGY**

Paul Boyce, Director for Children, Families and Education introduced his report that set out the Local Area Strategy for improving outcomes and life chances for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and

Disabilities (SEND). Appendix 1 to the report contained the SEND Strategy and Appendix 2 the contained the SEND Improvement Plan. The Director thanked Sue Talbot, Assistant Director: Education for her involvement in the preparation of the report and introduced two key officers who would update Members on the Strategy - Tarun Ghosh, Head of Service SEND and Inclusion at Wirral Council and Richard Crockford, Deputy Director for Quality & Safety Wirral CCG, and lead officer on SEND.

The report informed that for many families, feedback had indicated that the SEND reforms had brought about positive change, but for some the process had been troublesome and not easy to navigate.

The strategy focused on reducing inequality and links to two Council priorities:-

- Brighter futures for young people and families – regardless of their background or where they live
- Services which help people live happy, healthy, independent, and active lifestyles, with public services there to support them when they needed it.

It was reported that considerable consultation had been undertaken to determine the key priorities. Two SEND summits had been held with over 150 stakeholders across the Local Area attending. Feedback had been received from the SEND Youth Voice group, Parent Carer Partnership Wirral, parents, and SEN support young people. Over 250 young SEND people had engaged in the consultation and shaped the four priorities. The main priority was to improve the quality of provision and outcomes for young people with SEND. To do this the focus was on:-

- Identifying needs at the earliest point and providing the appropriate support.
- Ensuring that young people were ready for each stage of their school life and prepared for adulthood.
- Increasing participation and engagement young people and their families. In doing so ensuring that all changes to policy/processes takes account of the views of young people, their parents, and carers as well as professionals.

Members questioned the officers on the content of the report, and the officers responded accordingly.

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements; and
Seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia

and

RESOLVED – That

- (1) the Local Area SEND Strategy be supported; and**
- (2) a copy of the Local Area SEND Improvement plan be circulated to Members following the meeting, with an update on progress to be presented to the January meeting of the Children, Young People and Education Committee.**

17 SEND - SELF ASSESSMENT

Paul Boyce, Director for Children, Families and Education introduced his report, taken in conjunction with the previous item, that set out a summary of the Local Area Special Educational Needs / Disabilities (SEND) self-assessment that had been contributed to by representatives from education, health and social care, as well as feedback from young people, parents and carers.

The Director's report informed that the Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) was a document that provides an ongoing evaluation of how successful the Local Area was at meeting the needs of SEND young people as well as the impact of services. Three questions are used to enable the Local Area partners, young people and parent/carers and all stakeholders to objectively reflect impact. The questions were:

- How effectively does each service area identify children and young people who have (SEND)?
- How effectively does each service area assess and meet the needs of children and young people who have SEND?
- How effectively does each service area improve outcomes for children and young people who have SEND?

The SEF summary also linked with the four key priorities from the SEND Strategy 2020-24.

- To improve the quality of provision and outcomes for young people with SEND.

To do this the focus was on:

- Identifying needs at the earliest point and provide the appropriate support.
- Ensure that young people are ready for each stage of their school life and prepared for adulthood.
- Increase participation and engagement young people and their families. In doing so ensure that all changes to policy/processes takes account of the views of young people, their parents, and carers as well as professionals.

Members questioned the Director for Children, Families and Education on the content of his report, and the Director responded accordingly.

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements; and

Seconded by Councillor Kate Cannon

and

RESOLVED - That

- (1) the SEND SEF Summary be noted; and**
- (2) regular updates on the progress and impact to date around key priorities be presented to the Children, Young People and Education Committee.**

18 **APPOINTMENT OF CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD MEMBERS**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services introduced the report of the Director of Law and Governance that apprised the Children, Young People and Education Committee, in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions and the terms of the Constitution, of the requirement to appoint Members to the Corporate Parenting Board of the Council for 2020 / 2021.

The report informed that under its Terms of Reference, the Children, Young People and Education Committee was responsible for the appointment of a Sub-Committee and Working Group of five (5) or more members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee, politically balanced, together with [two] non-voting co-opted young people with recent (within the last five years) direct experience of being looked after by, or receiving services as a care leaver from the Council, with delegated authority to exercise responsibility for the Council's functions relating to the delivery by or on behalf of the Council, of Corporate Parenting functions with the exception of policy decisions which will remain with the Children and Young People's Committee.

The Head of Legal Services apprised Members that the Corporate Parenting Board Membership (5 members) would comprise of political proportionality 2 (Labour):2 (Conservative):1 (Liberal Democrat).

The following nominations were received and agreed:

Labour

Councillor Kate Cannon

Councillor Tom Usher

Conservative

Councillor Wendy Clement
Councillor Alison Wright
Councillor Cherry Povall (Deputy)

Liberal Democrat
Councillor Chris Carubia

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements; and
Seconded by Councillors Jean Robinsons and Chris Carubia,

and

RESOLVED - That

- (1) **the Corporate Parenting Board be confirmed appointed for 2020-21, including the appointment of named deputies; and**
- (2) **the following Members be confirmed to serve on the Corporate Parenting Board in 2020-21, (names of the remaining deputies to be provided to the Head of Legal Services in due course).**

Labour
Kate Cannon
Tom Usher

Conservative
Wendy Clement
Alison Wright
Cherry Povall (Deputy)

Liberal Democrat
Chris Carubia

19 **HOLIDAY FOOD AND ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOL AND NURSERY AGE CHILDREN DURING HOLIDAYS**

Mark Camborne, Assistant Director Neighbourhood Safety and Transport introduced a report of the Director for Children, Families and Education that provided an update further to the proposal agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee regarding the provision of free school meals (FSM) in school holidays during the COVID-19 pandemic since March. The report also included next steps to develop a sustainable approach to the provision of FSM and support to eligible children and those on the cusp in the medium and longer term.

The report informed that the Policy & Resources Committee agreed a proposal for a project co-ordinated by local charity Neo Community (Feeding Birkenhead), working in partnership with schools and local community-based

feeding groups and organisations, to provide food and activities to children eligible for Free School Meals over the Christmas 2020, February half-term 2021 and Easter 2021 holidays. This built upon learning from the operation of the Edsential Holiday Activity Fund over the summer, providing for adaptation of a successful model of delivery.

As noted at the Policy & Resources Committee and reported by the government after the report had been drafted, the Department for Work & Pensions announced on 8 November 2020 a significant package of extra targeted financial support for those in need over the winter period. This includes:

- £170m COVID Winter Grant Scheme to support children, families and the most vulnerable over winter.
- Holiday Activities and Food programme to be expanded, covering Easter, Summer and Christmas in 2021.
- Healthy Start payments set to rise from £3.10 to £4.25 a week from April 2021.

The report further informed that the Government had also pledged additional funding of £16m for food distribution charities, with conversations with FareShare and others ongoing as to how this is allocated.

Wirral's proposed allocation of the £170m COVID Winter Grant Scheme is £1,224,617; this was for the period 1 December 2020 – 31 March 2021. Through the Humanitarian Cell (Food Sub-Group), partners - agencies, local organisations and groups - have been engaged in the development of proposals for spend of the COVID Winter Grant Scheme. The engagement and additional funding (provided by both the Holiday Activities Fund and COVID Winter Grant) had seen the agreed approach built upon and extended.

Members questioned the Assistant Director Neighbourhood Safety and Transport, and the Assistant Director responded accordingly.

Members discussed nominations for the creation of a Working Group with key partners to explore options in relation to supporting children with food in the medium to longer term.

The following nominations were confirmed:

Labour

Councillor Jean Robinson

Conservative

Councillor Cherry Povall

Liberal Democrat

Councillor Chris Carubia

Independent
Councillor Moira McLaughlin

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements
Seconded by Councillor Moira McLaughlin

and

RESOLVED - That

- (1) **the approach set out supporting school and nursery age children over Christmas 2020 and February half term 2021, be noted;**
- (2) **to the creation of a Working Group, consisting of key partners and nominated Elected Members, to explore options in relation to supporting children with food in the medium to longer term, be agreed. All recommendations to be reported back to the Policy & Resources Committee in the New Year; and**
- (3) **the following Councillors be confirmed to serve on the Working Group.**

Labour
Jean Robinson

Conservative
Cherry Poval

Liberal Democrat
Chris Carubia

Independent
Moira McLaughlin

20 **CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION WORK PROGRAMME**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services introduced the report of the Director of Law and Governance that informed that the Children, Young People and Education Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which are within the remit of the Committee.

It was envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. The report provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its

work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Children, Young People and Education Committee was attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Members questioned the Head of Legal Services on the report and suggested a number of items for inclusion in the committee work programme that included:

- integrated front door, and a standing item for dashboard information;
and
- information on referral rates.

The Chair informed the committee that Members could feed information through to her and party spokespersons at any time for consideration for inclusion on the work programme.

It was:

Moved by Councillor Wendy Clements

Seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia

and

RESOLVED - That

- (1) **the Children, Young People and Education Work Programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year be noted; and**
- (2) **any additional suggestions for items for consideration be submitted to the Chair or Committee Spokespersons.**

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, 28 January 2021

Present: Councillor W Clements (Chair)

Councillors K Cannon S Spoor
C Carubia P Stuart
M McLaughlin T Usher
Cherry Povall A Wright
J Robinson

21 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed Members of the Children's, Young People and Education Committee, Officers and viewing members of the public to the online, virtual meeting.

22 APOLOGIES

A roll call of Councillors was undertaken by the Head of Legal Services. No apologies for absence were received.

23 MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests in connection with any item(s) on the agenda and, if so, declare and state what they were.

The following declarations were made:

Councillor Sarah Spoor	Personal interest by virtue of her parent representative on PCPW, a parent support group and her employment in a Liverpool City Region school.
Councillor Moira McLaughlin	Personal interest in respect of item 13 , working group update: The provision of food and activities during the covid 19 pandemic by virtue of her role as a Trustee of the charity ' Feeding Birkenhead'
Councillor Jean Robinson	Personal interest by virtue of her role

24 **MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS COMMITTEE**

A minor amendment was proposed to the minutes with regards to the incorrect Christian name of one Councillor being mentioned.

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2021 be agreed subject to a minor amendment.

25 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

A question received in advance of the meeting was read out and responded to as follows.

Q: My son has autism and along with most children on the Borough are at home due to the national lockdown. His school have set the children work to be done online which is great but my son with having autism finds this very difficult and causes him great anxiety. I have spoken with the school and they said this is all they will be doing there is no alternative to online lessons.

I find this an indirect discrimination on the grounds of accessibility. What would my council propose as a solution as my son who is 15 is missing vital education and will possibly fail some of his exams next year if this continues?

A: Members of the committee share your concern about the impact of COVID-19 on your sons education. We are very well aware that your concerns are shared by many parents, carers and young people not just in Wirral but across this country particularly in relation to children with additional learning needs.

To minimise the impact of missed education it is absolutely vital that every member of our community complies with the lockdown rules so that we can reduce the spread of the virus as soon as possible. This will enable all our children and young people to go back to school and provide them and our teachers with the opportunity to make up for lost time and return to some form of normality. During this crisis we have seen countless examples of the excellent work in our schools to minimise the impact COVID-19 including for children with additional learning needs to keep children and young people engaged in learning. We have seen some of the highest attendance rates and lowest self-isolation rates in the region. We have seen how the infection control measures in our schools have kept school based outbreaks to the absolute minimum. The new variant of the COVID-19 has brought additional challenges but all the evidence suggests that schools are safer places for children, young people and school based staff than the wider community. Remote learning is being provided as is face to face learning for a larger number of children and young people than in the first lockdown.

However, none of this compensates for the loss of learning in school. This is why as a council we will continue to do all we can to drive down the infection rates in our borough and work with schools in every way we can to keep them safe, and to provide support to help with the catch up on lost learning.

26 **ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND THE CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEMES FOR 2022-2023**

A report by the Director of Children, Families and Education invited the Children, Young People and Education Committee to determine the Authority's admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools and the co-ordinated schemes for 2022-2021. Members were informed how this is a statutory requirement.

The report informed Members that some amendments had been made to the existing co-ordinated scheme in order to take into account Department for Education guidance issues July 2020, "Coronavirus (COVID-19); assessment processes for selective school admissions". Members were advised that the amendments included expanding the number of preferences from three to five.

Members heard how the changes to the scheme were consulted upon with the four non – Catholic selective schools, all other local schools, neighbouring authorities and the Diocesan bodies under paragraph 1.44 of the School Admissions Code, and submitted as per the DfE guidance of the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA), although the variations proposed did not require formal OSA approval.

In response to questions by Members, the Committee heard how prospective parents had partaken in virtual tours of schools and there hadn't been a significant difference in rates of applications in light of the current Covid 19 global pandemic.

Members then heard how last year 96.5% of primary applicants got their first or second preference whilst 96% of secondary applicants got their first or second preference.

On a motion by Councillor W Clements and seconded by Councillor T Usher it was:

Resolved - That the proposed admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools and the Wirral co-ordinated schemes for 2022-2023 as set out in the appendices to the report be approved.

27 **SECTION B - BUDGET REPORTS**

28 **BUDGET CONSULTATION**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services, reminded the Committee that due to the current governance arrangements having only been in place since October 2020, there had been insufficient time to enable the usual full budget consultation process, and therefore the complete public consultation response nor the final Local Government finance settlement figure were yet available. However, the item before the Committee was its opportunity to make public comments on the budget proposals, and those comments would be referred to the Policy and Resources Committee, who would then recommend a final budget proposal to Council.

Paul Boyce OBE, Director for Children, Families and Education then introduced the report, which formed part of the budget setting process and included two savings proposals in appendix 1 for consideration. It was reported that the options were arrived at following a review of all council statutory and discretionary services to support children and young people in the borough, and had been put out to public consultation in the context of the significant budget reductions the council was facing.

Members discussed the £200,000 potential saving in youth provision and noted that there had been public interest in this proposal, particularly in relation to The Hive, and queried whether the proposal was a reduction on any previously committed funding. It was confirmed that Wirral Council had provided 3 non-contractual grants of £400,000 per year to The Hive up to 2019/20, in order to give the provider an opportunity to increase income streams with a view to becoming self-sustainable. A further £400,000 grant had been agreed for the 2020/21 financial year to continue to support The Hive in its efforts to become self-sustainable. Paul Boyce confirmed that the figure of £200,000 within the report had been derived from a service-wide review of youth services funding, and that given the current situation and overall youth provision budget, it was felt that The Hive was the most logical place for the £200,000 savings to be taken from. It was confirmed that there had been no prior commitment to funding for The Hive in the 2021/22 budget.

The Committee further discussed the overall allocation of funding for youth services across the borough and noted that the proposed allocation of funding to The Hive was still greater than all of the three Council providers. It was queried whether a Service Level Agreement had been agreed with The Hive and if so, whether those contractual agreements had been met in 2020/21. Members acknowledged the ongoing pressure of Covid-19 on such services, and reinforced the view that The Hive delivered a much valued service to the children within the borough.

RESOLVED – That both the comments made at the Children, Young People and Education Committee budget workshop and during this Committee meeting be considered by Policy & Resources Committee as part of the budget consultation.

29 **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING**

A report by the Director of Children’s Services set out the financial monitoring information for the Children, Young People & Education Committee. The report provided Members with an overview of budget performance for the area of activity which falls under the remit of the Committee. The financial information detailed the projected year end revenue position, as reported at quarter 2 (April – Sept) 2020/21.

Members heard how the Covid 19 pandemic had resulted in a recognised risk of significant placement demand pressures transpiring later in 2020/21; as the full impact of Covid 19 emerges, the current estimate of this is a 5% increase in placements, which amounts to £0.6m forecast for the full financial year. Members were then informed that a forecast overspend on In House Foster Care Skills payments, which is a 5% contingency of £0.19m for additional Covid-19 pressure for the rest of the year.

In response to questions by Members the Committee heard how Tranche funding will be utilised going forward and that some costs can be reclaimed through Covid funding. The Department are active in reclaiming any costs that can be claimed through Tranche funding.

On a motion by Councillor W Clements and seconded by Councillor C Carubia it was:

Resolved – That the Children, Young People & Education Committee are requested to note the projected year-end revenue forecast position of £2.058m adverse, as reported at quarter 2 (Apr- Sep)

30 **UPDATE ON SEND IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

A report by the Director for Children, Families and Education provided Members with an update on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Improvement Plan. Members were informed how the Improvement Plan underpins the SEND Strategy 2020-2024 that was agreed by the Committee in December 2020.

The report provided detailed activity to be undertaken to support delivery of the Strategy and set out its four main strategic priorities:

1. Provide high quality provision and support focussed on achieving outcomes

2. Ensure early identification of special educational needs and high-quality intervention particularly for children and young people exhibiting social, emotional and mental health issues.
3. Further develop effective transition from one education phase/ setting including preparing for adulthood pathway; and
4. To develop participation, engagement and coproduction with children, young people, parents and carers.

Members were reminded that at its meeting on 1 December 2020, the Children, Young People and Education Committee agreed the SEND Strategy 2020-2024. Members were advised how the Strategy sets out the local area's priorities over the next four years for improving services, support and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

The update presented to Members was set out in appendix 1 of the report and was based on the review of the current action plan and target dates. Members heard how the original improvement plan set out challenging timescales, particularly in the context of delivery within the COVID-19 pandemic and that the refreshed improvement plan reflects a more realistic picture in terms of key milestones and timescale. Progress of priorities were set out within the report.

A Member made comment regarding transitional planning for young people and resources available for moving into suitable employment and asked that a training session be arranged or workshop so that awareness of personal budgets can be raised. In response to a question, Members heard how at present there hasn't been a substantial uptake in the utilisation of personal finance and that work is being undertaken with parents and carers in order to raise awareness.

On a motion by Councillor W Clements and seconded by Councillor S Spoor it was:

Resolved – That the Children Young People and Education Committee agreed to:

- (1) endorse the progress made to date and on achieving the actions set out within the SEND Improvement Plan; and**
- (2) receive a further update on progress towards achievement and evidence of impact in six months**

31 **WIRRAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT**

A report by the Statutory Safeguarding Partners provided the annual report setting out activity undertaken by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) and relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Wirral.

Members heard how the report was designed to provide a transparent assessment of multi- agency safeguarding arrangements that came into force in September 2019, replacing the previous Local Safeguarding Children Board arrangements.

Members were informed how the annual report is presented on behalf of the three statutory safeguarding partners – the Local Authority, Merseyside Police and Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group, who are jointly responsible for the new safeguarding arrangements.

In response to a comment by a Member it was suggested that Members of the Committee would benefit from training on Safeguarding and the Business Manager for the Local Safeguarding Board specified that he could offer this

On a motion by Councillor W Clements and seconded by Councillor J Robinson it was:

Resolved – That the Children, Young People and Education Committee notes the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report.

32 **CHILD POVERTY NOTICE OF MOTION**

A notice of motion referred to the Children, Young People and Education Committee by Council on 7 December 2020 (minute 49 refers), asked that the Committee considers the motion and requested that it begins to lead on compiling a comprehensive child poverty strategy for the borough.

On a motion by Councillor W Clements and seconded by Councillor M McLaughlin it was:

Resolved – That a working group on child poverty be established responsible for compiling a comprehensive child poverty strategy for the borough.

33 **WORKING GROUP UPDATE: THE PROVISION OF FOOD & ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL HOLIDAYS DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC**

A report by the Director for Children, Families and Education provided an update to the progress of the working group of the provision of food and activities for children in school holidays during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Members were reminded that a report presented to the Children, Young People and Education Committee on 1 December 2020 provided an update following the proposal agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee in respect of the provision of free school meals in the school holidays during the

COVID 19 pandemic. The report explained that the Policy and Resources Committee agreed a proposal for a project co-ordinated on behalf of the Council by local charity Neo Community, working in partnership with schools and local community- based feeding groups and organisations, to provide food and activities to children eligible for Free School Meals over the Christmas 2020, February half term 2021 and Easter 2021 holidays. This built upon learning from the operation of the Edsential Holiday Activity Fund over the summer, providing an adaptation of a successful model of delivery.

Members heard how the Working Group had met on 21 December 2020 and 18 January 2021 to be informed of progress and to agree next steps. Members were then advised that during the Christmas holiday period, 23 organisations were involved in the distribution of 8071 hampers and 9961 activity packs that were delivered to those eligible children.

Members were informed that the overall budget of the DWP Covid Winter Grant Scheme (£385,790) and the Budget Tranche 4 (£200,000) is £585,790. The actual spend for Christmas 2020 was £439,621 with an additional projected spend of £243,205 for February half term. The total projected spend was £682,827. It was reported that the estimated contingency for the project is up to £97,037. The way in which the budget was allocated was detailed within the report.

It was reported that individual hampers were costed at £20 each per week, with an enhancement for larger families. Members were advised that the budget attributed to the programme was aimed at a 56% take up rate, based upon delivery of the programme in the summer, but with additional contingency set aside anticipating increased demand over Christmas. In practice, there had been a 66% take up rate from eligible children, and 45% take up rate from early years settings and additionally two colleges requested support. Members were further advised that contingency had been built into the projects costing in order to support this.

Members were advised that the next steps are to continue working alongside organisations to deliver hampers and activity packs during the February half – term and for the Working Group to continue to meet on a monthly basis.

On a motion by Councillor W Clements and seconded by Councillor M McLaughlin it was:

Resolved – That the Children, Young People and Education Committee note the progress of the Working Group for the Provision of Food and Activities in School Holidays during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

34 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

Members gave consideration to the report of the Director of Law and Governance that set out the proposed Children, Young People and Education Committee Work Programme 2020/21 as detailed in the appendix to the report.

The report informed that the Children, Young People and Education Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which are within the remit of the Committee.

It was envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. The report provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Children, Young People and Education Committee was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Tom Usher, it was:

RESOLVED - That the proposed Children, Young People and Education Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year be noted.

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ECONOMY REGENERATION & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 26 January 2021

Present: Councillor A Leech (Chair)

Councillors J Bird D Mitchell
D Burgess-Joyce J Stapleton
A Gardner K Greaney
S Hayes C Povall (In place of
T Jones A Hodson)

10 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

11 APOLOGIES

The Chair noted apologies from Councillor Andrew Hodson, who was deputised by Councillor Cherry Povall.

12 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

13 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Economy, Regeneration & Development Committee held on 27 October 2020 be approved and adopted as a correct record.

14 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

The following question had been received from David Maguire, CEO of WIRED (Wirral Information Resource for Equality & Diversity).

Question

How have Wirral Council, in relation to the Birkenhead Town Centre development and demolition plan, specifically considered the future of the shop mobility service in the discussions and actions to date that Wirral Council have participated in and can you provide the name of the meeting/s, the date of the meeting/s and copies of any documentation or meeting minutes that relate to these discussions and actions?

Answer

This is in effect a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act and I have therefore asked officers to refer the query to the Information Management Team to respond in accordance with the applicable timescales.

15 **REVISED STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The Chair of the Committee advised Members that it had come to the attention of Council officers that the Government had published new regulations which made changes to consultation arrangements in respect of sustainability appraisals prepared for Local Plans which needed to be reflected in the revised Statement of Community Involvement.

The Director of Regeneration and Place therefore stated that the report was withdrawn and Members were asked to note that a further report will be brought to the next convenient meeting of this Committee with further updates to the draft Statement of Community Involvement to take account of the new regulations.

This was noted.

16 **PLANNING ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

A report by the Director of Regeneration and Place recommended a revised Planning Enforcement Policy which was intended will act as a guide to enable the Council to carry out its planning enforcement activity, in a way that was appropriate to its area.

It built upon the Council's overarching enforcement policy approved in 2020 and set out in further detail how the Council would monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where it was appropriate to do so. The policy was set into 5 priorities and set out 6 milestones to be reviewed every three years.

Members questioned the resources involved but were reassured that they were kept under review with targets monitored quarterly.

RESOLVED – That the revised Planning Enforcement Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be adopted.

17 **ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE BUDGET CONSULTATION**

The report of the Director of Resources formed part of the Council's formal budget setting process, as set out in the Constitution and in accordance with the legal requirements to set a balanced and sustainable budget for 2021/22.

Policy and Resources Committee had to recommend a 2021/22 balanced Budget proposal to the Council for its meeting in March 2021. The Committee was asked to consider and provide feedback on Budget proposals.

The Director of Law and Governance advised this it was helpful for the public to understand that the process this year differed from other years. He stated that this municipal year was truncated, and things had gone through at speed. The normal budget consideration had not happened because of the timescales required. Members of the Committee had received the options by way of workshops and the Committee's suggestion then went to Policy and Resources Committee.

The public consultation was underway, and the final settlement figure central Government had not been received so the figures were estimates based on experience. The Director for Regeneration and Place stated that the budget looked to capitalise on National Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax projections. Initiatives such as integrating Birkenhead Market would assist with this as would the proposals around the disability access budget. All Council offices are compliant, so any future adaptations could be met by the existing budget. The chair commented that anything we want to draw down on in the capital budget can be bought back to Committee.

RESOLVED – That the budget proposals which fall under the remit of the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee be presented for consideration to the Policy and Resources Committee in February 2021.

18 **ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme, to align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which are within the remit of the Committee. The work programme for the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee was attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Members raised a question about the proposed application to Government by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for Freeport status. The Director of Regeneration and Place suggested that a workshop be held to brief members on the Freeport proposal.

RESOLVED: That the work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year be agreed subject to the addition of the Freeport issue.

19 **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 paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

20 **BIRKENHEAD TOWN DEAL - FUNDING REQUEST**

In September 2019 the Government announced a new 'Town Deal', an opportunity that invited 101 places to develop proposals as part of a £3.6bn Towns Fund. The Government invited the Council to enter into a 'Town Deal' agreement for Birkenhead, which would see investment of up to £25m, or for proposals with regional significance up to £50m, to boost productivity, skills and living standards.

A Town Deal for Birkenhead would complement other activities being undertaken as part of the wider growth and regeneration programme for Birkenhead. If successful, a Town Deal for Birkenhead would see capital investment in the town. However, the services provided within the new infrastructure delivered could be accessed by people across the borough.

Officers were preparing the bid submission, comprising a Town Investment Plan and supporting documentation, ready for the submission deadline on 31 January 2021.

The report provided Members with an update regarding the development to date of the funding bid and sought approval to allow the final sign-off of the Town Investment Plan and any necessary supporting documentation.

Members discussed topics around the Deal including the green corridor, priorities, metrics and the Town Deal Board.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the themes of the emerging Town Investment Plan be endorsed**
- (2) authority be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economic Regeneration and Development Committee and the Chair of the Town Deal Board, to agree the content and submit the Town Investment Plan.**
- (3) authority be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economic Regeneration and Development Committee, and the Chair of the Town Deal Board, to agree the Town Deal Heads of Terms with Government.**

(4) It be agreed that this decision is urgent and therefore not subject to review.

21 **CELTIC MANOR RESORT, HOYLAKE**

At its meeting of 27th June 2019 the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved that it be recommended to Cabinet (13:0) (no abstentions) that

- 1) The financial and investment landscape has changed significantly since the Council sought the option to further invest in this project in 2016 to sit alongside its commitments under the development agreement.
- 2) In that time, the Council has expanded its acquisition and investment portfolio considerably, seeking to create income to invest in services, to make wider economic and social returns, to regenerate areas and to continue to attract high quality investment by businesses in the Borough.
- 3) This has led to increased borrowing by the Council to invest elsewhere than that envisaged by Cabinet when it last looked at the development agreement and outline proposals, a revised risk profile for those wider investments and further thought to the priorities that the Council should employ in making investment decisions.
- 4) In the light of that, this Committee considers that the Council's investment profile and limited resources would be better served if this business venture was funded on the open market, rather than through Council borrowing, and it is therefore recommended that Cabinet do not enter into a separate agreement to fund the Celtic Manor project at this time. In doing so, the Committee and Cabinet received due diligence and funding and phasing reporting in respect of the funding application that included commercially sensitive information that was not published for reason that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act and that the public interest test had been applied and considered to favour exclusion.

That recommendation was endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting of 8th July 2019. The Cabinet decision was to not invest in the Hoylake development (known as the Celtic Manor Resort) in response to the funding application submitted under the Development Agreement entered into between the Council and Nicklaus Joint Venture Group. That Development Agreement would subsist until December 2022.

A legal challenge had been received in respect of the contractual provisions of the Development Agreement by way of a Dispute Notice and also in respect of the exempting of information from publication in that regard by way of a decision of the Information Commissioner delivered in December 2020.

The Director of Law and Governance explained the legal background to the situation and the issues being considered, and he answered Members' questions.

RESOLVED: That the actions taken thus far in responding to the legal challenges received be ratified and the continuation of such actions as the Director of Law and Governance considers is necessary and in the public interest to implement the outcomes of the meetings of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 27th June 2019 and the Cabinet of 8th July 2019 be endorsed.

ECONOMY REGENERATION & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 4 March 2021

Present:

Councillor A Leech (Chair)

Councillors	A Hodson	T Jones
	J Bird	D Mitchell
	D Burgess-Joyce	J Stapleton
	A Gardner	K Greaney
	S Hayes	

22 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting including the member of the public who had submitted a question.

23 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

24 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jo Bird declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item 11 (Minute 38) (Business Support Services: Commissioning Intentions Paper) as she was a Community-Led Housing accredited advisor who sometimes had paid work for Breaking Ground who would be in a position to bid for this this element of the proposed BSS contract.

Councillor Jean Stapleton declared a personal interest in item 11 (Minute 38) (Business Support Services: Commissioning Intentions Paper) as she represented the Council on Birkenhead improvement District Steering Group.

Councillor Tony Jones declared a personal interest in items 8 and 9 (Minutes 35 and 36 concerning the Maritime Knowledge Hub) as he was a Council appointee on Mersey Maritime.

Councillor Andrew Gardner declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item 12 (Minute 39) (Wirral Ways to Work) as Involve Northwest were a professional client of his.

25 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting of the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee held on 26 January 2021 be approved and adopted as a correct record.

26 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

One question had been received.

Question from Gillian Homeri:

Can the committee explain why a large sum of money is being given to the People's Pool for a feasibility study rather than expecting any company capable of creating such a project to be in a position to fund such a study themselves.

Answer: I would like to thank you for your question regarding the award of feasibility funding for the People's Pool project. The decision to grant up to £80,000 to contribute towards feasibility work for the People's Pool project was made at Council on the 2nd March 2020. However, in the light of a material change in circumstances for the council, namely the financial pressures due to Covid and the commissioning of the New Brighton Masterplan, the Committee will tonight be considering a report on the project. This report sets out details of the first phase of the feasibility study and outlines the next stages of work to be progressed which would require Members to agree to the allocation of the remaining £67,500 of grant funding. I am sure members will consider your contribution, as part of the debate that will take place on this proposal.

Supplementary question:

Gillian Homeri: There are the remains of a tidal pool in New Brighton which volunteers sad they could renovate. In my view it is acceptable. I cannot understand how the People Pool will be carbon neutral as people will be travelling as well as using hot tubs, and it will be heated in the winter.

Answer from Councillor Leech:

I am sure this will be taken into consideration. It is very much in the early stages. It will need planning permission. To progress with the feasibility study they are asking for the remainder of funding to be allocated to them so all the matters you addressed can be adhered to.

27 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

No statements or petitions had been received.

28 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

No questions from Members had been received.

The Chair proposed to amend the order of business so that all items which had confidential information in appendices were grouped toward the end of the meeting.

This was agreed by assent.

29 FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place set out that in December 2020, the Council received notification of the outcome of two submissions it had made to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Future High Street Fund. Birkenhead had received its full requested allocation of £24.6m and New Ferry was offered an in-principle award of £3.2m from its requested value of £4.6m, subject to an updated proposal to reflect the lower funding offer. The report set out the next steps for both areas, including more detailed information regarding a temporary solution for Birkenhead Market, as well as the process to reprofile and resubmit the New Ferry proposal.

Sally Shah, Chief Regeneration Officer, presented the report and answered Members questions, which mainly concerned the moving of Birkenhead Market and wanting the development of New Ferry to move forward as quickly as possible.

RESOLVED - That Policy and Resources Committee be requested to approve the following recommendations:

- (1) Note the content of the report and the announcement from Government regarding the Future High Street Fund award in relation to Birkenhead and the in-principle award in relation to New Ferry.**
- (2) Note that a re-profiled application was submitted to Government on 3 February 2021 in respect of the New Ferry Future High Street Fund in-principle award.**
- (3) Authorise the Director of Regeneration and Place to consider and approve final sign off of the Future High Street Fund grant funding agreements for Birkenhead and New Ferry, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance.**
- (4) Authorise the Director of Regeneration and Place to commence delivery of the Birkenhead and New Ferry Future High Street Fund programmes in line with the grant funding agreement and change control process.**
- (5) Authorise the Director of Regeneration and Place to progress with scoping out a design, costed model and fit out of the current preferred option for the temporary market, namely Unit 2 St**

- Werburghs Square and St Werburghs Square itself, that will be used as a temporary holding position while the current Birkenhead Market site be made available for re-- development.**
- (6) Note that a further report will be brought forward to Members for approval of the finalised proposal for the temporary market.**

30 **REVISED STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place sought approval of a revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The existing SCI had been adopted in March 2014 and set out the Council's minimum consultation and engagement requirements during the preparation of the Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents, Neighbourhood Plans and the determination of planning applications. It had been necessary to update the SCI to be legally compliant, take account of Government regulations, guidance on temporary changes to consultation arrangements arising from the Covid 19 emergency, guidance on arrangements for Neighbourhood Plans and to reflect new opportunities for best practice engagement offered by web-based applications.

RESOLVED – That:

- (1) The Statement of Community Involvement attached at Appendix 1 to the report be adopted; and**
- (2) Authority be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Place to make minor, non-material formatting and typographical changes to the Statement of Community Involvement prior to publication.**

31 **NEW FERRY – IMPLEMENTING THE REGENERATION PLAN**

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place set out that in March 2017 an explosion in New Ferry devastated the heart of the New Ferry retail centre, destroying businesses and homes, having a significant impact on the local community. Since that time, the Council had been fully supporting the recovery of the area, seeking additional funding to acquire the interests of key properties and parcels of land which would enable the regeneration and redevelopment of the town centre to proceed under the New Ferry Regeneration Plan.

The plan sought to protect local businesses and bring a mix of new residential and retail units into the town to create a sustainable future for New Ferry. However, negotiations for the acquisition of a number of property interests were not progressing. The use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers was therefore recommended as the Council was unlikely to be able acquire these interests by agreement. The report also detailed a preferred development option. This had been endorsed by a Leader Decision in December 2019,

then followed by an outline planning application for the preferred development option approved by Council in September 2020. The scheme would be taken forward for delivery and a preferred developer partner would be appointed to deliver the scheme in 2021. It was anticipated that the overall scheme would be delivered by 2024.

Members were keen that the redevelopment be accelerated where possible and asked questions about potential delays. Members offered their thanks to the team who had worked on the proposals.

RESOLVED –

That Policy and Resources Committee be requested to approve the following:

- (1) The making of a Compulsory Purchase Order(s) (“the Order”) under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 226(1)(a), and section 13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 for the acquisition of land and new rights in respect of the area identified in the plan and table of Appendix 1 of the report to enable the regeneration of New Ferry to be undertaken and that the process for the Order shall be subject to following the procedures laid down by the Acquisition of Land Act 1981.**
- (2) The draft skeleton Statement of Reasons (Appendix 2 to the report) which (in addition to the information in this report) sets out the justification for making the Order.**
- (3) The Director of Regeneration and Place in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance be granted delegated authority to:**
 - (a) finalise the Statement of Reasons.**
 - (b) draft the Order Map and Schedule before the making of the Order (if required).**
 - (c) negotiate, agree terms and enter into agreements with interested parties including agreements for the withdrawal of blight notices and/or the withdrawal of objections to the Order and/or undertakings not to enforce the Order on specified terms, including (but not limited to) where appropriate seeking the exclusion of land or rights from the Order, making provision for the payment of compensation and/or relocation.**
- (4) The Director of Law and Governance be granted delegated authority to:**
 - (a) take all steps to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of the Order including the publication and service of all notices and the promotion of the Council’s case at any public inquiry.**
 - (b) in the event the Order is confirmed by the Secretary of State, to advertise and give notice of confirmation and thereafter to take all steps to implement the Order.**

- (c) take all steps in relation to any legal proceedings relating to the Order including defending or settling claims referred to the Upper Tribunal and/or applications to the courts and any appeals.
- (5) That where required to assist in the delivery of the New Ferry Preferred development option land may be appropriated for planning purposes pursuant to Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 to enable Section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to be utilised to override any third-party rights of land or part thereof.
- (6) The Economy, Development and Regeneration Committee be authorised to make all necessary further decisions that are not otherwise delegated to officers, in relation to the Compulsory Purchase Order and consequential on the Compulsory Purchase Order including the selection process for and approval of a development partner the structure of that partnership arrangement whether through a land transaction or otherwise and any related land transactions and settlement of compensation and the engagement of appropriate advisors to advise on compensation for any business interests.

32 **2020/21 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING FOR QUARTER THREE**

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place provided a summary of the projected year-end revenue and capital position for Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee as at the end of Quarter 3 (December 2020) of the 2020/21 financial year. The Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic presented financial risk due to uncertainty and fluidity in the external environment.

The overall financial position for the Council remained challenging, and a number of actions had been in progress to mitigate the overall forecast position presented at quarter 3, including limiting spending to essential areas of service delivery only, with Corporate Directors supported to mitigate the risk of overspending.

RESOLVED – That:

- (1) The adverse year-end forecast position presented at Quarter 3 of £0.714m be noted; and
- (2) The impact of funding and expenditure as a direct consequence of Covid-19 be noted, including the additional funding sources which have been identified but, as yet, not received.

33 **ACTIVE TRAVEL CROSS PARTY MEMBER WORKING GROUP**

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place sought approval for the establishment of a Member Working Group focussed on active travel. The Working Group would be within the category of an Advisory Group and would support the Council to secure a positive outcome in delivering increased levels of sustainable travel as set out in the emerging Local Plan and the target in the Cool2 Strategy to 'a complete transition to fossil fuel free local travel by around 2030'. Recommendations and findings from the Working Group would be presented to the Economy Regeneration and Development Committee.

The Chair proposed that the recommendations be adopted subject to an amendment to enlarge the membership to 8. Having regard to the current membership of the Council this would allow all parties on the Council to be represented with 3 Labour group members, 2 Conservative group members and the remaining groups having 1 representative. The Chair also proposed that the Chair of the Working Group be selected from its number. This was seconded by Councillor Jo Bird.

Members were advised that the proposed terms of reference enabled relevant officers and representatives of the Combined Authority and other local or national organisations to attend meetings of the Working Group as required.

RESOLVED – That:

- (1) The Active Travel Working Group be established with the Terms of Reference as attached to this report at Appendix 1 subject to the following amendments to the Membership:**
 - (i) The Working Group will comprise of eight members. In addition, Members of other Committees may be invited to attend as and when appropriate at the discretion of the Chair of the Working Group.**
 - (ii) A Chair will be selected by the Group from amongst its number.**
 - (iii) The Working Group shall appoint a Chair.**
- (2) The Monitoring Officer be authorised as proper officer to carry out the wishes of the Group Leaders in allocating Members to membership of the Active Travel Working Group and to appoint those Members with effect from the date at which the proper officer is advised of the names of such Members.**

34 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme, to align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key

decisions which are within the remit of the Committee. The work programme was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED – That the content of the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year, as set out within the report, be agreed.

Members resolved en bloc that the appendices that are marked exempt/confidential items to the remaining agenda items contained exempt information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and other persons of a commercially sensitive nature, as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and that they would be treated as confidential information items during their public consideration by members.

35 **MARITIME KNOWLEDGE HUB**

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place explained that the Maritime Knowledge Hub was a catalytic project to support wider development within Wirral Waters. It was to create a world class centre of excellence for maritime business growth and sector development. It would also bring together the region's key maritime assets in business, research, education and training to address challenges around innovation and skills within a refurbished and new build high profile centre.

Participating in the development of the Maritime Knowledge Hub through a Forward Funding Agreement and taking of a 250-year lease would create a world class centre of excellence for maritime business growth and sector development. It would bring together the region's key maritime assets in business, research, education and training to address challenges around innovation and skills within a refurbished and new build high profile centre. The project would be an investment vehicle for the Council with the potential to deliver a financial return to offset the capital investment.

RESOLVED – That Policy and Resources Committee be requested to approve the following recommendations:

- (1) The Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Resources, be authorised to finalise the Heads of Terms substantially in accordance with the draft Heads of Terms attached as Appendix 3 to the report.**
- (2) The Full Business Case for Maritime Knowledge Hub be approved.**
- (3) The Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Director of Regeneration and Place and the Director of Resources, be authorised to finalise agreements for the Council to enter into a conditional Forward Funding Agreement, Agreement for Lease**

and Lease, based on the finalised heads of terms, with Peel Land and Property (Intermediate) Ltd.

- (4) The Director of Regeneration and Place in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Resources be authorised to accept the terms of the Grant Funding Agreement, subject to successful award, from Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government in respect of the pre-test and trial Maritime Accelerator Project and to commence necessary procurement exercises to enable the delivery of the Accelerator.

36 **WIRRAL WATERS ENTERPRISE ZONE INVESTMENT FUND - MARITIME KNOWLEDGE HUB**

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place sought approval to provide a grant to the Council to enable the delivery of new high quality Maritime Knowledge Hub floorspace in Wirral. The Maritime Knowledge Hub would create a world class centre of excellence for maritime business growth and sector development. It would bring together the region's key maritime assets in business, research, education and training to address challenges around innovation and skills and build a high-profile centre. The funding package had been set up within the Enterprise Zone to reinvest business rates and could operate up to 2037.

RESOLVED –

That Policy and Resources Committee be requested to approve funding from the Wirral Waters Investment Fund to the Council to support the development of new high quality mixed use floorspace at the Maritime Knowledge Hub.

37 **WIRRAL WATERS ENTERPRISE ZONE INVESTMENT FUND - EGERTON VILLAGE**

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place sought approval to provide a grant to Peel Land and Property Investments (Intermediate) Limited to enable the delivery of new high quality mixed use floorspace at Egerton Village within Wirral Waters. Egerton Village would be a new, low carbon 14,671 sq ft gateway community, amenity and arts facility located in the Four Bridges area of Wirral Waters, and would provide a focal point for arrival and orientation around Wirral Waters. The development had been designed to create a new semi-public, semi-covered 'square' at its heart that would be used for events and other activities.

RESOLVED –

That Policy and Resources Committee be requested to approve the following recommendations:

- (1) A grant from the Wirral Waters Investment Fund to Peel Land and Property Investments (Intermediate) Limited be approved to support the development of new high quality mixed use floorspace at Egerton Village.**
- (2) The Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Director of Regeneration and Place, be authorised to draw up and sign a conditional legal agreement between the Council and Peel Land and Property (Intermediate) Limited to reflect the grant arrangements.**

38 BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES: COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS PAPER

Councillor Jo Bird, having expressed a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in this item, left the meeting for the debate and vote.

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place summarised progress of Wirral Council's Business Support Service commission which was to run to May 2021, and asked the Committee to endorse the extension of the current contract to September 2021 to align procurement timescales with the complementary Third Sector Infrastructure service and sought authority to undertake market procurement for a re- prioritised Business Support Service in 2021.

RESOLVED –

That Policy and Resources Committee be requested to approve the following recommendations:

- (1) An extension of the Business Support Services contract to 30 September 2021 be endorsed.**
- (2) The Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economy and Regeneration and Development Committee, be authorised to:**
 - a. Approve the final Business Support Services specification for delivery of a new service from October 2021 to October 2024, with an option to extend by one year to October 2025 based on satisfactory performance.**
 - b. Commence procurement and select the most economically advantageous supplier(s) to deliver the commissioned services.**
 - c. Conclude the final contract award.**

39 WIRRAL WAYS TO WORK

Councillor Andrew Gardner, having declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, left the meeting for the debate and vote.

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place sought authority for the Council to enter into an extension of a supplier agreement with Involve Northwest whilst the Council awaited formal award of European Social Fund. Following a competitive tender exercise, Involve Northwest had been selected as preferred supplier to deliver the Worklessness Support Service, which was part of the Wirral Ways to Work Programme. The contract was due to expire on 30th June 2021 but an application had been made for funding from the Liverpool City Region which would enable the Council to extend this contract for 16 months until October 2022. An option to extend for 3 months at risk was also sought whilst this application was processed.

RESOLVED –

That Policy and Resources Committee be requested to approve the following recommendations:

- (1) The Director of Law and Governance in consultation with the Director for Regeneration and Place be authorised to enter a contract extension and sign the supplier contract with Involve Northwest to continue delivery of the Wirral Ways to Work Worklessness Support Service.**
- (2) An option be authorised for the Director of Regeneration and Place in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter a 3-month contract extension from July to September 2021 to cover off the risk of awaiting a grant funding agreement from Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and then proceed to a full extension once confirmation of EU funds is received, should this option need to be utilised.**

40 **THE PEOPLE'S POOL**

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place provided an update on a proposal brought forward by an external organisation named Our Lido Ltd (OLL) to build a lido complex on a Council site within Wirral, fully funded by external grant funding applied for by OLL. The proposal ('The People's Pool') was to provide a hub for the community with a mixed business model to support this to include a food and drink offer, retail, spaces for community use, a proactive employment and training policy, and potentially partnerships with local independent businesses and social enterprises. The aspirations for the pool itself were that it would provide a 50-metre-long pool, open all year round and heated using environmentally sustainable energy.

A decision had previously been taken by the Council to approve up to £80,000 grant funding to contribute towards feasibility work for the People's Pool project through the Council's Capital Budget (Council, 2 March 2020, Minute 122 refers). A decision had also previously been taken by the Leader of the Council to support the People's Pool project and to approve the investigation to identify a Council site within Wirral to potentially be transferred under the

community asset transfer process or occupied in some other way to be decided at a future date (Leader Decision, 24 March 2020 refers). Since its previous decisions, the Council had faced significant financial pressures largely connected to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which required it to review its commitments. The New Brighton Masterplan had also been commissioned to develop a long-term framework to inform future decisions in New Brighton. It was considered that this represented a material change of circumstances.

Members asked questions about the proposal and were concerned at the use of Council funds at a time when budgets were under pressure, and the lack of risk for OLL. Officers had investigated OLL who were a Community Interest Company and they had applied elsewhere for funding. A proposal in line with the recommendations within the report was voted on and lost with 4 votes for and 6 against.

Members continued discussion on the issue and were in favour of the Lido in principle but could not justify the spending of funds at the current time.

Councillor Andrew Hodson proposed that the Committee resolve to be in favour of the Lido in principle but could not justify the spending of funds at the current time and Councillor David Burgess-Joyce seconded this proposal.

**RESOLVED (6 in favour, none against and 4 abstentions) –
That the People’s Pool project be supported, in principle, but the
Committee could not support the funding request from Our Lido Ltd
from the Council’s Capital Budget of £67,500 at the current time.**

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 3 December 2020

Present: Councillor EA Grey (Chair)

Councillors	C Cooke	S Foulkes
	B Berry	C Muspratt
	H Cameron	T Norbury
	A Corkhill	I Williams
	T Cox	A Wright

11 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

12 APOLOGIES

The Chair announced that no apologies had been received.

A membership query was raised which would be taken up as a potential issue for Standards Committee.

13 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest.

No declarations of interest were made.

14 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October, 2020, be approved and adopted as a correct record subject to an amendment to the proposed work programme from parking charges which is already covered in the work programme to the problem of litter as an additional item.

15 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

The Chair reported that no questions from Members had been submitted. However, five questions from the public had been submitted and the Chair invited each individual to ask their question. The questions, answers and any supplementaries are details in the attached document.

16 STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS

A statement was made by Mr Paul Brownbill regarding Hoylake Beach.

Mr Brownbill noted that as a Wirral resident he felt the management of the beach was not just an issue for Hoylake and Meols but was important to all Wirral residents who used it. He stated his support for the recent policy with regards to allowing nature on the beach and asked that it be noted that the beach was very popular with families and appreciated by many for its natural beauty.

The Chair noted Mr Brownbill's statement.

17 NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Simon Fox, Assistant Director for Highways and Infrastructure, introduced a report from the Director of Neighbourhood Services on the Network Management Plan (NMP) and sought approval to appoint a statutory Traffic Manager. The NMP outlined the Council's approach to the network management duty placed upon it by the Traffic Management Act 2004. The plan reflected updates to the local network arrangements, changes in national and local priorities as well as legislative changes.

The Chair thanked Simon Fox and all the officers involved for the report and commended the references to sustainability and air quality.

Members acknowledged it was a comprehensive report and commended officers for achieving level 3 funding based on how well the Local Authority looks after the Network as part of the devolved City Region. Members asked that reference to electric vehicle charging points, bike hire schemes, car sharing schemes, and provisions for pedestrians be added which Simon Fox agreed could be considered and built into the plan. It was requested that 'may' be changed to 'will' in point 10 regarding the Environment and Climate implications which it was agreed would be the case for future reports as well. Concerns were raised about potential congestion and pollution from freight routes following Brexit and it was agreed that this would be investigated further. It was asked that hyperlinks be inserted when reference to other documents and it was agreed these would be added to the final version.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Steve Foulkes, it was -

Resolved – That

- (1) the report be noted and the Council's approach to its Network Management duty be endorsed;**

- (2) the draft Wirral Network Management Plan (NMP) be approved and the Director of Neighbourhood Services be authorised to finalise any further minor changes in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee;
- (3) it be noted that the post of Senior Network Manager, Highways & Infrastructure, performs the role of Traffic Manager for Wirral Council under the Traffic Management Act, 2004.

18 **HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY, STRATEGY AND STREET LIGHTING POLICY**

Simon Fox, Assistant Director for Highways and Infrastructure, introduced a report from the Director of Neighbourhood Services to approve and adopt the 2020 Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy (HIAMP), 2020 Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy (HIAMS) and 2020-2025 Street Lighting Policy.

The HIAMP and HIAMS represented no change in direction from those approved by the Cabinet Member in February 2020 but were reviewed and updated to align more closely with the Wirral Plan 2025, specifically the themes for 'Safe and Pleasant Communities' and 'Sustainable Environment'. The 2020-2025 Street Lighting Policy outlined the positive effect street lighting had on the ambiance of a place and its reputation, and the role it plays in reducing crime and fear of crime. The Policy stated that lighting equipment provided should be suitable for fulfilling the lighting needs in each specific area, illuminating it in the most effective manner.

Members queried the luminosity of the streetlights, when the full LED replacement would be completed, whether areas with older residents could be prioritised, and whether the streetlight map displayed all the streetlights accurately. Simon Fox confirmed a Public Consultation was being carried out to understand residents attitudes with regards to luminosity and backlighting and stated that the contractual finish date for the LED project was Autumn 2021 but additional works may result in a legitimate extension to early 2022. It was noted that streetlights across the whole borough were being replaced and that the contractor had been given the ability to determine where resources were best placed to ensure value for money, but that demographics were always considered and could be looked at again. It was agreed that specific cases where the new streetlight map may not locate all the streetlights could be investigated and that Councillors would be liaised with regarding any planned changes to columns.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Chris Cooke, it was -

Resolved: That

- (1) the report be noted and the authority's approach to the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management be endorsed.**
- (2) the draft Wirral 2020 HIAMP, 2020 HIAMS and 2020-2025 Street Lighting Policy be approved and the Director of Neighbourhood Services be authorised to make any further amendments that the Director considers will correct errors and omissions or will otherwise aid in the operation of the policy in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee.**

19 **HOYLAKE BEACH MANAGEMENT**

Colin Clayton, Assistant Director for Parks and the Environment, introduced a report from the Director of Neighbourhood Services on the management of Hoylake beach. The future management of Hoylake beach aligned with both the Sustainable Environment and Safe and Pleasant Communities themes of the Wirral Plan 2025.

The report set out the progress in delivering the recommendations of the Executive Member Decision of 13 March 2020 to determine a long-term management strategy for Hoylake beach and provided an update on the decision to cease mechanical raking. In line with the guidance from Natural England Officers had established that a scientific evidence base of the beach ecology and geomorphological changes was needed in order that the future options for the beach could be developed. Based on the draft specification it was estimated that this would cost in the region of £30,000 from existing budgets including the Climate Emergency fund.

Members asked officers to outline the objectives of the scientific study, to which it was clarified that the objectives of the ecological and geomorphological studies were to define the extent and variety of vegetation growth on Hoylake foreshore, as well as how it will respond to sediment changed in order to model how the foreshore would evolve. It was confirmed that the studies would look at both the short and longer term so current drainage could be assessed as well as the future of the beach.

The cost of the studies was discussed and the issue of value for money raised, with Members recommending accredited academics be approached for the contract and querying whether it would be appropriate to use Climate Emergency Funding. Colin Clayton confirmed that academic institutions would be welcomed to bid for the contract through the formal bidding process as long as they met the procurement requirements.

The Committee debated the parameters of a public consultation given the legal limits which would be applied by Natural England and agreed an independent and transparent process consulting all stakeholders was needed. It was agreed that given the public interest in the topic, officers would work with the Chair and spokes to identify all groups which should be consulted.

An amendment to the recommendations was then moved by Councillor Christina Muspratt, seconded by Councillor Steve Foulkes, that –

- (1) Note the progress in developing a specification for an ecological and geomorphological survey and, subject to a suitable budget being identified in consultation with the E, CE & T Committee, to agree to the procurement of independent studies as a scientific evidence base upon which to develop future management options for Hoylake beach.
- (2) Agree that the Director of Neighbourhoods produces a Communications Strategy for the development of the beach management plan for Hoylake in consultation with a politically proportionate Working Group.
- (3) Approve the submission of an extension request for assent to NE for the continuation of non-vegetation management activities at Hoylake beach which were not subject to cessation as a result of the Cabinet Member decision of 13 March 2020, subject to clear specification of these activities and agreement with the Committee, and that all such activities be publicised and local councillors and this committee be notified at least a week in advance of any such planned activities.

The amendment was put and won (10:1).

Resolved – That

- (1) the progress in developing a specification for an ecological and geomorphological survey be noted and, subject to a suitable budget being identified & in consultation with the Environment, Climate Emergency & Transport Committee, to agree to the procurement of independent studies as a scientific evidence base upon which to develop future management options for Hoylake beach.**
- (2) the Director of Neighbourhoods produce a Communications Strategy for the development of the beach management plan for Hoylake in consultation with a politically proportionate Working Group.**
- (3) the submission be approved of an extension request for assent to Natural England for the continuation of non-vegetation management activities at Hoylake beach which were not subject to cessation as a result of the Cabinet Member decision of 13 March 2020, subject to clear specification of these activities and agreement with the Committee, and that all such activities be**

publicised and local councillors and this committee be notified at least a week in advance of any such planned activities.

20 **UPDATE ON THE EXERCISE TO TRIAL ALTERNATIVES TO GLYPHOSATE IN THE USE OF WEED CONTROL**

Colin Clayton, Assistant Director for Parks and the Environment, introduced a report from the Director of Neighbourhood Services on an update of the position regarding the exercise to trial alternative methods of weed control. The Council has historically used glyphosate, under licence, for weed control across the authority and was under licence until 2022 with the delivery of weed control operations undertaken by the Council's contractor Man Coed.

In response to the recommendations of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 28th November 2019, officers had conducted a series of exercises to trial alternative methods of weed control with the report providing the findings identified for each method. The Committee was also updated on the delivery of the weed control programme, which was subject to delay caused by service cessation during the initial Covid-19 lock down. The exercise had so far demonstrated that alternative weed control methods were less effective, and the machinery required was more expensive. It was concluded that alternatives would continue to be sought and the Committee updated, but that glyphosate was the only practical method in the short to medium term in certain areas.

The Committee debated the matter at some length given that other countries had banned glyphosate and other councils were also struggling to find a workable alternative. It was suggested that international case studies be considered and community involvement with clearing weeds was proposed, however Colin Clayton explained upscaling community involvement like that trialled at New Brighton would be difficult and required significant training. Members agreed that glyphosate would have to be phased out while working to find an effective alternative.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Steve Foulkes, it was –

Resolved – That

- (1) the contents of this report and outcome to date of the exercise to trial glyphosate alternatives for weed control be noted.**
- (2) glyphosate will not be used for weed control operations across the Parks and Countryside estate (with the limited exceptions set out in this report).**
- (3) the exercise to trial alternative methods of weed control will continue during the next 12 months with Committee updated further following this.**

21 **CAR PARKING CHARGES - WORKING GROUP**

The Chair introduced and presented the report from the Working Group on Car Parking Charges which was then considered by Members.

The report was brought to the Policy and Resources Committee on the 7th October 2020 by the Director of Neighbourhood Services. This report 'car parking charges options' informed Members of considerations for the reintroduction of the current car parking charges in Wirral in 2020/21 and alternative options for parking charges in 2021/22 and beyond. The group considered the request made by the Policy and Resource Committee to consider the options attached in appendix 1 of the report. After much debate, Members considered options 4 and 6 (to re-introduce parking charges immediately at all locations and respectively and to re-introduce charges at long-stay and on-street and County parks but not 'shoppers' car parks) acceptable with some caveats. They wished to submit these to the Policy and Resource Committee for consideration.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Christina Muspratt, it was –

Resolved (7:4) – That

(1) the findings of the Working Group attached as appendix 1 of this report be noted and the recommendations be agreed:

- **Members support the upcoming transport strategy and recommend that any future transport strategy consults with Members, businesses, communities to ensure that it is environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable.**
- **The panel also recommends that a comprehensive review and survey is undertaken in Wirral as to the local impact of car parking charges on footfall and spend in retail areas and the high street.**
- **Members considered the request made by the Policy and Resource committee to consider the options attached in appendix 1 of this report. After much debate, Members considered the following options were acceptable and wish to submit them to the Policy and Resource Committee for consideration.**

Option 4 (re-introduce parking charges immediately at all locations)

Members understood that there would be no reintroduction of car parking charges until early 2021. They acknowledge the need to support local retailers during the second lockdown and in the run up to Christmas. Five of the six working group Members wished to put

forward Option 4 to be considered alongside any subsequent reviews or studies.

Two of the five Members requested an additional caveat that Country Parks remain free until after lockdown due to the perceived health and wellbeing implications. Concerns were raised that introducing car parking charges in Country Parks would limit their accessibility to low-income car owners, especially during COVID-19 when more people are facing financial pressures. One Member also raised the point that charging for parking in country parks did not reduce visitor number and that the income generated would help with repairs and maintenance of the parks.

Option 6 (re-introduce charges at long-stay and on-street and County parks but not 'shoppers' car parks) One Member of the working group also wished to put forward option 6 for consideration. This Member was satisfied with this option in its entirety, however other working group members again raised concerns about reintroduction of car parking charges in Country Parks, for the reasons stated above and because of the environmental impact.

(2) this report be referred to the Policy and Resources Committee for their consideration.

22 ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair presented the Work Programme for review.

Members asked that allotments be removed as they had been thoroughly considered by a previous Working Group; that Hoylake Beach Management be addressed at the next meeting which the Chair agreed could be discussed at the agenda setting meeting; and that a Road Safety Working Group be established.

Resolved –

That the proposed Environment, Climate Emergency, and Transport Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year be noted, subject to additional requests and the deletion of further allotment working group meetings.

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Monday, 1 February 2021

Present: Councillor EA Grey (Chair)

Councillors C Cooke I Williams
B Berry A Wright
H Cameron A Brame (In place
T Cox of A Corkhill)
S Foulkes T Cottier (In place
G Wood (In place of
C Muspratt)

23 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest.

Councillor Steve Foulkes declared a personal interest in item 26 (Liverpool City region Digital Connectivity Dig Once Policy) as he sat on the Transport Committee to the Metro Mayor and City Region which was previously referred to as Merseytravel.

24 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee held on 3 December 2020 be approved and adopted as a correct record subject to:

- (1) In the supplement to the questions (Minute 15) the first repeat of question 5 be replaced by question 4 and the full wording of the question given as supplemental question 6.**
- (2) In Minute 19 an amendment to the Hoylake beach resolution for clarity by inclusion of an '&' between 'identified' and 'in consultation with'**
- (3) in Minute 22 an amendment for clarity to replace 'and the deletion of allotments 'with 'and the deletion of further allotment working group meetings.**

25 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

6 Questions were received, all for the Chair

Question 1

From Gillian Homeri.

“Is the Environment Committee able and willing to write to George Eustace asking him to reinstate the ban on neonicotinoids?”

Are they aware and concerned that neonicotinoids are toxic to bees and this lifting of the ban will undermine the hard work Wirral Borough Council and others are doing to protect pollinators.

Globally the number of bee species has already fallen by 25% since 1990. We cannot allow this to continue.

I would also like to know if neonicotinoids (should the ban not be reinstated) are likely to be used by farmers on the Wirral.”

Answer 1

I am happy to write to George Eustace and can say so. Rest of committee agreed to sign letter.

Question 2

From Louise Stothard from 'For Trees Wirral'

“When will Wirral Borough Council stop felling trees, we’ve lost over 6,000 trees?”

Answer 2

Wirral Council will only fell trees when it is a last resort and is absolutely necessary to protect public achieve and maintain public safety.

Clearly trees are not permanent landscape features so have a finite safe life expectancy when growing in our parks or adjacent to the highway, so we will always have a small proportion of trees which have reached the end of their life cycle and which are just not safe to be left standing.

In less occupied areas we do allow trees to collapse slowly and naturally over time but as I’m sure you can appreciate this natural destabilisation isn’t something we can accommodate next to the highway or a footpath.

Our trees are inspected by fully qualified and highly experienced arboricultural inspectors. This service was outsourced to a private contractor but we have just hired two full time arboricultural inspectors to internalise the service. It is worth noting that the tree inspection company is absolutely independent from the tree maintenance company who carry out the works. Every member of this team is a fully qualified and experienced arboriculturalist.

We are confident that this natural loss is being successfully mitigated through our significant tree planting programme. We have moved beyond just maintaining continuity of tree cover as we seek to deliver the goal of the tree strategy to double tree cover over the next ten years. Approximately 21,000 new trees have / will be planted this current planting season (November to March) which delivers a healthy replanting ratio. We are currently recruiting a dedicated landscape manager who will be tasked with delivering the goals of the tree strategy and seeking funding for future tree planting and habitat creation projects across the borough.

It has been observed from our tree inventory that a great majority of our trees are mature, therefore substantial new tree planting will add resilience to our tree population. We do value the cultural and ecological value of very old

veteran trees and to ensure that we can maintain these trees for longer in confidence there has been significant financial investment in state of the art sonic decay detection apparatus. There are approximately 170 trees which the inspectors have noted basal and stem decay, however rather than just felling these trees without further investigation, these trees will be tested with the decay detection equipment to provide the clearest assessment of their structural integrity to allow a fully informed decision to be made on the management interventions required. If not dangerous, they will not be felled. Wirral Council recognises the value of its tree population and has grown the tree management team over a short period of time to seven members of staff to ensure that trees are maintained correctly and safely, are given full consideration during the planning process, and are re-planted in abundance across the borough.

Question 3

From John Rodgers

“Recently I enquired about whether or not Wirral Borough Council had a policy or provision to discourage motorists waiting in parked cars with the engine running.

I was prompted to this as each and every day that I walk my dog I see at least one parked car with its engine idling whilst the occupant is engrossed by their telephone.

As I only see about 30 cars throughout my daily journey these are presumably the tip of an iceberg that isn't melting away.

Can a question be raised concerning enforcement or raising public awareness of existing laws?

Is Wirral Borough Council taking the minimisation of avoidable environmental pollution as a serious matter?”

Answer 3

Thank you for raising your concerns about engine idling.

As part of Wirral Councils plan to tackle avoidable pollution across the Borough, our Environmental Health Officers have been working with our Highways and Infrastructure team to address issues of idling by educating drivers, where we have had complaints or observed engine idling during our routine enforcement activities. Wirral Council takes all complaints by residents very seriously and Officers are working tirelessly to address problems of this nature.

There are limitations to the current legislation which has made enforcement of the Anti-idling regulations difficult, in order to serve an FPN the driver must firstly be approached be asked to switch the engine off first, if they switch off their engine a notice cannot be served. It is only if they refuse to turn it off that we can then serve notice. In addition, the regulations provided circumstances where vehicles are permitted to be stationary with their engine running (e.g. running the engine to detect a defect) and the guidance to the regulations states that enforcement personnel must consider mitigating circumstances.

In addition to these limitations, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has put strain on many aspects of our work and the priorities to protect public health; With this in mind, we are in the process of planning new targeted education for drivers surrounding the topic, informing them of the dangers to their own health as well as the impact on Air Quality in their communities, which will raise public awareness of the matter. This will be set out in a positional statement in the coming weeks.

I would encourage you to contact our Environmental Health Team (environmentalhealth@wirral.ov.uk), if you do have concerns about specific areas so that we can include them on the enforcement routes, this helps us to build a picture of where the idling is taking place so that we can target these areas specifically.

Question 4

From Ryan Haughey

“I am a resident of port sunlight village, in March 2020 the council installed a temporary lamppost outside my house on central road. The temporary lamppost does not conform to the conservational rules of the village and the light is a stark white light which differs from the other lampposts on the street. When will this modern lamppost be replaced with a traditional lamppost that conforms to the conversation rules of the village?”

Answer 4

Thank you for your question about a lighting column in Port Sunlight. Any recently erected lighting column is not temporary has been erected because of concerns over the structural condition of the previous column and risk to public safety. Where column replacements are carried out we will frequently also replace the lantern with a modern LED one.

Cllr Grey explained that the Council’s funding had been cut by hundreds of millions of pounds in the last ten years and that, unfortunately, this impacted on what we can do.

The funding for the LED replacement programme was approved by the Council only on a strict financial and safety-related business case, and unfortunately there is no budget available for heritage columns or luminaries. However, we would be happy to work with relevant Community Groups, elected Members and, in this case, the Village Trust, to explore what opportunities exist to secure supplementary funding and whether heritage features may be incorporated into our lighting infrastructure. Meanwhile, the LED replacement programme will continue as planned.

Question 5

From Kelly Newall

“Over 9000 residents are concerned about the safety of Spital Cross Roads including the phasing of the lights and the very poor condition of the road surface and I am asking this committee to make urgent improvements to prevent any further accidents.”

Answer 5

Thank you for raising your concerns about Spital Cross Roads.

Cllr Grey said that a full written response can be provided and reassured Ms Newall that her concerns were very much taken on board and that Cllr Grey has set up a road safety working group which is currently looking at road safety across the borough and will consider these concerns very seriously as they make recommendations to this committee.

Question 6

From Carmel & Peter Sibbald.

“Will the members of the Committee establish a review of road traffic management in Port Sunlight village with the purpose of establishing whether:

- Port Sunlight village would be a suitable candidate for 20mph zoning
- gateway road signage could be improved
- effective traffic calming measures could be introduced to reduce speeding & anti-social driving
- CCTV could be installed on an existing street lighting column to monitor the roundabout
- there could be changes to road surfaces, for example strips of granite setts”

Answer 6

Road safety across the borough is currently being reviewed, including 20mph zones, under a cross party Working Group which will report back to this Committee.

26 STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS

Denise Roberts presented a petition with 80 signatures for lighting to be installed in Rake Park to discourage anti-social behaviour after dark following several issues of vandalism.

Kelly Newell presented a petition with 9,200 signatures to improve safety at Spital Cross Roads junction following the injury of her son who was knocked down there.

The Chair thanked the presenters and both of the petitions would be passed on for consideration and response.

27 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

Councillor Jo Bird expressed disappointment in the lack of responses to public questions and petitions on road safety but the Chair reminded her that the road safety working group was meeting to consider all road safety issues.

28 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY DIG ONCE POLICY

Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority were building a 200+ km underground fibre network running through all six local authorities and delivered through a Combined Authority (CA) Joint Venture partnership with a

private company. The purpose was to create a new telecommunications network infrastructure to provide ultrafast broadband connectivity across the region. The initial network will consist of four ducts which will run through all 6 Local Authority Areas and would connect LCR to external national and international networks. An initial route has been proposed for Wirral which took in our major regeneration areas. In time it was planned that the network would be expanded to other parts of Wirral. The plan was to build the initial network in 3 years starting from mid-2021. As part of the build Wirral Council had been asked to sign up to a “Dig Once” policy, to install ducting at the same time that we undertake road, cycling and walking schemes. This approach can reduce the cost of deployment by as much as 50%, minimises disruption to road and public transport users and helps avoid any future embargos in specific locations across LCR. The CA team have secured £6.39m from LCRCA’s Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) for Dig Once. The CA team will assess each “Dig Once” opportunity and decide if the particular scheme met their criteria. If it did, they would fund the authority to put ducting in the ground as part of the project delivery. Once the work was completed ownership of the ducts and fibre network will revert to LCRCA.

Project Officer John Williams described the proposed network and its expected benefits.

Members praised the scheme which appeared to be a positive move which would help the Council reach a number of goals including digital connectivity and environmental protection. The need for a digital network had been highlighted during lockdown as people and children did their work from home.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Dig Once Collaboration Agreement and the Inter Authority Agreement be approved and**
- (2) the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to arrange the execution of the documents on behalf of the Council in accordance with the Council’s Constitution.**

29 **ACCEPTANCE OF TENDER AND AWARD OF CONTRACT - ARBORICULTURAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

The report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended acceptance of a tender from Man Coed VM Ltd and award of a term service contract for the Wirral Arboricultural Services Contract (Corporate Tree Maintenance Contract). The contract was to run from April 2021 until March 2026 with a conditional extension option of 2 further years.

Simon Fox, Assistant Director of Infrastructure and Highways, clarified that the report was about the procurement exercise not how the Council managed its trees, which was covered by the tree strategy. The Council had trained, qualified, specialist arboricultural officers to deliver the strategy and make

decisions about which trees were felled or pollarded and what happened to deadwood, but the Council needed a specialist contractor to enable it to deliver the strategy and keep residents safe. There had been a rigorous analysis of the tenders submitted, by senior Council officers including from Legal, Procurement and Finance professions.

Members were clear that the Council had a duty of care to residents and wished to keep a watching brief on the delivery of the contract. Members questioned the pricing of the bid but were reassured that prices quoted were in line with expectations and had not concerned officers. Members also asked if community groups could be involved in tree planting and it was confirmed that the Council had secured funding and welcomed suggestions.

Councillor Steve Foulkes proposed an additional resolution:

3. committee welcomes all member workshops will take place on this matter. furthermore to reassure the public, this committee should receive regular reports on this contracts performance.

This was seconded by Councillor Gill Wood, then clarified slightly before being agreed.

RESOLVED - That

- (1) the tender for the Wirral Arboricultural Services Contract Apr 2021- Mar 2026 submitted by Man Coed VM Ltd to Wirral Council on 8 January 2021 be accepted;**
- (2) the award of the contract to Man Coed VM Ltd be approved, subject to contract and subject to the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) standstill period;**
- (3) Committee welcomes all member workshops will take place on this matter (the performance of the contract). Furthermore to reassure the public, this Committee should receive regular reports on this contracts performance.**

30 ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE BUDGET CONSULTATION REPORT

The report of the Director of Resources formed part of the Council's formal budget setting process, as set out in the Constitution and in accordance with the legal requirements to set a balanced and sustainable budget for 2021/22. Policy and Resources Committee had to recommend a 2021/22 balanced Budget proposal to the Council for its meeting in March 2021. It was good practice for service committees to consider and feedback on Budget proposals.

On Friday, 18th December 2020 the Policy and Resources Committee approved the 'Draft Revenue Budget 2021/22 - Proposals for Consultation' to begin public consultation on 21 December 21 to 22 January. The consultation was primarily conducted through the council's specialist "Have Your Say"

online portal but included many other methods including an online questionnaire; an ideas board for residents to post their 'ideas' and suggestions about the council budget; paper copies of the survey, including an easy read version; 'Virtual' Public Events for residents, young people and council staff; Council staff Facebook page; directly to the project team, Councillors, MPs and Senior Officers; and a specific email inbox. Results included 2,715 completed questionnaires, 236 "ideas" added to the Ideas Board and 74 questions. There was a relatively even spread of responses from the four Wirral constituencies. Full details of the responses were circulated to Members. Most comments were categorised predominantly into three themes: Children's Services including The Hive, arts and culture (in particular noting retention of the Williamson Art Gallery) and refuse collection.

It was explained that this year the budget consultation process was truncated because of the shorter period of meetings caused by the pandemic, and the budget was under considerable pressure due to various effects linked to the Covid-19 pandemic. The final settlement figures from Government had not been received but the Committee were being asked their views on the options offered although Members had a duty to the whole of borough to set a balanced budget on 2 March.

Budget proposals were:

Options Review of the Neighbourhood Services Directorate

Additional and increased parking charges: Whole scale car parking review

Stopping School Crossing Patrols

Reduction in grass cutting and maintenance of roadside verges and all Parks and Open Spaces

Amenity space and grass verge maintenance cessation

Closure of Public Conveniences

3 weekly collection of general rubbish

Contract Efficiency Savings with BIFFA

Income generated from establishing targeted and discretionary environmental enforcement.

Members expressed the opinion that they did not want to see many of the options but were forced by the temporary budget situation. They were heartened that the feedback from the consultation showed that the public endorsed the Committee's initial recommendations, including a rejection of both cuts to school crossing patrols and closure of public toilets and that there were positive suggestions such as rewilding that should allow for longer term benefits which were endorsed by the public. They discussed the application and consequences of rewilding in certain areas and acknowledged again that there was potential to reduce expenditure and assist biodiversity by appropriate reductions in grass cutting and maintenance. It was recognised that features such as flower meadows could not be created without cost. It was agreed that there would need to be consultation between officers,

members and local residents about the appropriate treatment of specific small open spaces. It was also suggested that income generating options made at the workshops could be explored in the future utilising experience of officers.

RESOLVED: That the Committee endorses the feedback from the budget workshops and recommends that the comments made during this meeting be considered by Policy and Resources Committee as part of the budget consultation.

31 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme.

The Chair commented that we could add in for a future meeting the report of the Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group.

RESOLVED –

That the proposed Environment, Climate Emergency, and Transport Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year be noted, subject to the addition at a future meeting of the report from the Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group.

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HOUSING COMMITTEE

Thursday, 26 November 2020

Present: Councillor J McManus (Chair)

Councillors A Brame P Hayes
J Bird J Johnson
G Davies J Robinson
I Lewis S Whittingham

Deputy Councillor M McLaughlin (In place of M Sullivan)

8 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed Members of the Housing Committee, Officers and viewing members of the public to the online meeting.

9 APOLOGIES

The Chair announced that apologies had been received from Councillor Michael Sullivan, and Councillor Moira McLaughlin was deputising for him.

10 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

No such declarations were made.

11 MINUTES

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Committee held on 28 October 2020 be approved and adopted as a correct record.

12 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

The Chair reported that no questions or statements from members of the public had been submitted.

13 **NORTHBANK HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND**

Sally Shah, Chief Regeneration Officer, introduced a report which updated Members on the progress made on bringing forward brownfield land for residential development at Wirral Waters, Northbank site with the support of Housing Infrastructure Funding grant from Homes England.

The report also provided an update on the forthcoming Strategic Housing Infrastructure Fund announced by Government in March 2020. It set out actions being taken to ensure that the Council, working with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, is well placed to secure potential Strategic Housing Infrastructure Fund funding once the details of the funding are confirmed.

Resolved – That the progress to date in delivering the Housing Infrastructure Funded activity at the Wirral Waters, Northbank site in order to bring forward the agreed number of homes be noted. That it also be noted that this supports the delivery of the Wirral Plan 2025 strategic ambitions, specifically with regard to driving forward the ‘Inclusive Economy’ theme, which seeks to generate inclusive and sustainable growth.

In addition, the opportunities for future Strategic Housing Infrastructure grant and the actions being taken to secure this funding in support of wider housing delivery targets be noted.

14 **HOUSING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Members gave consideration to a report of the Director of Law and Governance that set out the proposed Housing Committee Work Programme 2020/21 as detailed in the appendix to the report.

The report advised that the Housing Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which were within the remit of the Committee.

It was envisaged that the work programme be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. The report provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

Resolved – That the Housing Committee Work Programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year be noted.

HOUSING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 27 January 2021

Present: Councillor A Brame (Vice-Chair in the Chair)

Councillors J Bird I Lewis
G Davies J Robinson
P Hayes M Sullivan
J Johnson S Whittingham
A Jones

Apologies Councillor J McManus

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed Members of the Housing Committee, Officers and viewing members of the public to the online meeting.

2 APOLOGIES

The Chair announced that apologies had been received by Councillor Julie McManus, and Councillor Adrian Jones was deputising for her.

3 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

No such declarations were made.

4 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the Housing Committee held on 27 January 2021 be approved and adopted as a correct record.

5 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

The Chair reported that no questions or statements from members of the public had been submitted.

6 **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION ASSISTANCE POLICY**

Lisa Newman, Head of Operational Housing Services, introduced a report which briefed Members on the proposed revisions to the Council's Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy.

Members commented on the report and thanked Lisa Newman and her team for the work they have done.

Resolved – The Housing Committee considered and agreed the proposed changes to the Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy, with immediate effect.

7 **BUDGET CONSULTATION**

Alan Evans, Director of Regeneration and Place introduced the report of the Director of Resources and outlined that the report formed part of the Council's formal budget setting process and gave the Housing Committee opportunity to comment on the proposal that falls within its remit, this would enable those comments to be presented for consideration by policy and Resources Committee at its meeting in February 2021.

The report included a savings proposal to Cease support for Community Alarms with a potential saving of £500,000.

The Chair commented that further information had been requested regarding this budget proposal at the workshop on 26 November 2020.

The Director of Regeneration and Place stated that further information had been sought from service providers who were given questionnaires at the same time the public consultation began. He stated it had been hard to get a full response due to staffing issues associated with Covid-19. He also clarified that while this saving was being considered for the Housing Service, Adult Social Care was looking into digital devices that would perform a similar function at a much lower cost.

Members stated that without further information on the impact that this budget proposal might have on those that currently benefit from it, it was not possible to make informed comments at this meeting.

Members expressed concerns on the effect it would have on vulnerable people.

Lisa Newman, Head of Operational Housing Services clarified that the budget proposal wouldn't remove the ability of residents to have a community alarm; but it would remove the council's contribution to their funding. The service

would still be available with responsibility for full payment going to the provider or the resident.

The Director of Regeneration and Housing stated that further information from service providers would be received shortly and would be fed back to Committee Members for comment.

Resolved - That Housing Committee notes the report and would like to communicate all concerns raised with the Policy and Resources Committee, and; if information is forthcoming within the relevant timeframe, a workshop be arranged of this committee in the interim.

8 HOMELESSNESS IN WIRRAL AND THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Sheila Jacobs, Supported Housing and Homelessness Senior Manager, introduced a report that gave the committee an overview of homelessness within the borough, and the measures in place to prevent and respond to it. The report described the significant impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on the Council's housing team and its commissioned services that respond to homelessness and sets out proposed actions to respond moving forward. Members thanked Sheila for the report and endorsed the work her team are doing.

Following further discussion of the work being carried out by the Homelessness Team, it was then moved by Councillor Jo Bird and seconded by Councillor Michael Sullivan, that:

'In addition to recommendations on homelessness, Wirral Council Housing Committee notes that the [most common cause](#) of homelessness is being evicted at the end of a private rented tenancy contract.

We urge the government to:

- Extend its ban on eviction orders until all regions are in Tier One
- Uphold their promise to end the use of Section 21 'no-fault' eviction orders
- Provide financial support for private renters
- Provide sustainable funding for the successful Housing First programme.

We would like to thank all housing officers on the Wirral for their particularly excellent work during this pandemic. We note that it was possible to get Everyone In during the pandemic.'

The motion was agreed unanimously.

Resolved – That Housing Committee:

1. Note the content of the report and the excellent work undertaken on partnership between the Council, local communities, voluntary and charitable agencies and Housing Providers that have responded to homelessness throughout the pandemic.
2. Endorse the Wirral Triage Assessment process and the Next Steps Programme to provide longer-term response to the pressures arising from covid.
3. Wirral Council Housing Committee notes that the [most common cause](#) of homelessness is being evicted at the end of a private rented tenancy contract.

We urge the government to:

- Extend its ban on eviction orders until all regions are in Tier One
- Uphold their promise to end the use of Section 21 ‘no-fault’ eviction orders
- Provide financial support for private renters
- Provide sustainable funding for the successful Housing First programme.

We would like to thank all housing officers on the Wirral for their particularly excellent work during this pandemic. We note that it was possible to get Everyone In during the pandemic

9 EMPTY PROPERTY UPDATE REPORT

Emma Foley, Strategic Housing Services Senior Manager, introduced a report which updated Members on the implications and negative effects on housing markets that high levels of empty properties can have and the work the Housing Standards Team have done to get empty homes back into use.

The Chair and other Members thanked Emma for her teams’ work on bringing empty properties back into use.

Resolved – That Housing Committee

- a) note the content of the report and;
- b) approved the approach to interventions in this report to continue to tackle private sector empty homes in the Borough

10 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Members gave consideration to a report of the Director Regeneration and Place that set out the proposed Housing Committee Work Programme 2020/21 as detailed in the appendix to the report.

The report advised that the Housing Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which were within the remit of the Committee.

The report provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

Resolved – That the Housing Committee Work Programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year be noted.

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TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Monday, 23 November 2020

Present:

Councillor T Anderson (Chair)

Councillors	P Stuart	B Kenny
	H Cameron	C Povall
	A Corkhill	J Walsh
	J Johnson	KJ Williams
	C Jones	

10 **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

11 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interests.

12 **MINUTES**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee held on 26 October 2020 be approved for accuracy.

13 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

There were no questions, statement or petitions from the public or Members.

14 **BIRKENHEAD PARK: HERITAGE PROJECT REVIEW AND UPDATE**

Nikki Butterworth, Director of Neighbourhood services, introduced this report on the project to obtain World Heritage Site recognition from UNESCO for Birkenhead Park. She spoke of the history of the Park which was reputed to be one of the first publicly funded parks and was pivotal in influencing the creation of urban parks worldwide.

The recognition could bring benefits including increased investment, local regenerations, employment opportunities, increase in property values and growth in visitor economy. The process was outlined where the first stage was submission of the draft document to the Government's list of potential sites.

At the same time, parks restoration and enhancement would continue with an application for a Heritage Support Grant.

The Committee discussed the issue and were supportive of it and of the work done by the Friends groups who volunteered to maintain the park.

Resolved: That:

- (1) That the progress made regarding the Birkenhead Park heritage project be noted.**
- (2) the proposals to progress as set out in this report be supported: (i) the aspiration for Birkenhead Park's ultimate inscription as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO; and (ii) the further significant regeneration of the Park, including through the submission of a grant application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF).**
- (3) the Policy and Resources Committee be asked to consider submitting a Capital bid in future. This will cover the ongoing running costs associated with the NLHF Round 1 grant application and ensure that funding is secured until 2023/24.**

15 **GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT**

Andy McCartan, the Assistant Director for Leisure, Libraries and Customer Engagement introduced a report which provided an update on the developing role that football had to play in the Borough, and the development of provision of high-quality artificial grass pitch (AGP) all-weather facilities, for use by all.

It was stated that the Borough was 22 pitches short of meeting the demand for grassroots football and five priority sites had been determined, with two being taken forward first. Other organisations were helping to meet demand elsewhere and the Council provided guidance and assistance to them. The potential finances were explained, including potential Football Foundation funding of £80,000 which is being decided in December. In the longer term, the developments would sustain themselves.

Cheshire West and Chester Council had invited Members and officers to view their facilities and Members were interested in being involved.

Members commented on particular areas, and it was emphasised that there were other organisations, including clubs and schools, developing pitches around the Wirral which the Council was advising but they were not part of this decision.

Resolved: That

- (1) the development of the business case and grant application process to the Football Foundation for the first two priority AGP proposed sites at Woodchurch Leisure Centre and Wirral Tennis**

- Centre, Bidston be approved and supported, subject to Council approval for the match funding from the capital programme.
- (2) the development of the business case and grant application process to the Football Foundation, for the remaining three priority sites Leasowe, Arrowe Park and Bromborough, in due course be approved and supported, subject to Council approval for the match funding from the capital programme.
 - (3) the revenue grant application process to the Football Foundations' 'Active Through Football' fund be approved and supported.

16 THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY FOR WIRRAL

Andy McCartan, the Assistant Director for Leisure, Libraries and Customer Engagement introduced a report which was not only a leisure strategy considering facilities but aimed to tackle wider social issues such as obesity, inequality and engaging with the community.

The Strategy was not a statutory one but was seen as good practice, to guide external and internal partners. It noted an aging stock of facilities and social barriers to activity.

Members queried the application of the strategy including provision of outdoor gyms and maintenance of facilities.

Resolved: That

- (1) the new outline Sport and Physical Activity Strategy presented in this report and the accompanying appendix be noted and approved.
- (2) the Director of Neighbourhood Services be authorised to engage with residents, communities, and other stakeholders to design and deliver a fit-for-purpose and sustainable service that meets the differing needs of the communities within Wirral.
- (3) the strategy be included within the Committee's ongoing work programme.

17 LIBRARY STRATEGY AND NEW LIBRARY MODEL

Andy McCartan, the Assistant Director for Leisure, Libraries and Customer Engagement introduced a report which included the draft library strategy and model.

The focus of the draft strategy had been to provide library services that addressed increased service take-up in areas of greatest need by providing attractive and relevant facilities and services, thus reducing inequalities around literacy, skills for work, digital inclusion, health and community

cohesion. An effective library service had the capacity to support the delivery of every one of the council's priorities for 2025. Work had been done to understand the needs of local communities so new services were co-designed with residents.

The strategy identified different types of library that served different purposes (central, community hub, community managed etc) along with outreach services (pop up libraries, home reader, virtual library).

Members expressed their wishes that community and friends groups be involved.

Resolved: that

- (1) the new draft Library Strategy and model outlined in this report be noted.**
- (2) the Director of Neighbourhood Services be authorised to commence consultation on the proposals contained in the draft Library Strategy and model ,with residents, service users and stakeholders in order to design and deliver a modern and sustainable service that meets the needs of different communities across Wirral and report back to a future meeting of the Committee the outcome of that consultation.**

18 TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Resolved:

That the work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year be agreed.

19 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.

20 DEVELOPING LEISURE VEHICLE PROVISION ACROSS WIRRAL

Stuart Bellerby, Senior Commercial Manager, introduced a report which sought agreement on a set of key principles, business model options and a process for determining sites for the Council to develop leisure vehicle provision across Wirral. This followed concerns about the amount of overnight parking by motorhomes in coastal areas around New Brighton and a

scrutiny review which had recommended establishing a managed site. There was evidence of a growing leisure vehicle market and commercial opportunities, potentially with a variety of sites with different business models.

Members discussed the report and options, with deterrents for people avoiding the sites, but the secondary spend and increases in people staying in this country for holidays would provide opportunities for increased visitors and potential revenue for the Council and local businesses.

Resolved – That

- (1) the vision and the 4 key principles for the Council to develop leisure vehicle provision across Wirral as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.**
- (2) the range of business model options for consideration for leisure vehicle provision in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.**
- (3) the review process for determining the proposed leisure vehicle sites for development outlined in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.**
- (4) a member workshop be established, in order to review potential sites for leisure vehicle provision against an agreed list of business model options and types of provision, and then ultimately make recommendations back to a future Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee.**

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TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Thursday, 21 January 2021

Present: Councillor T Anderson (Chair)

Councillors	P Stuart	C Povall
	H Cameron	J Walsh
	J Johnson	KJ Williams
	C Jones	A Brame (In place of A Corkhill)
	B Kenny	

21 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

22 MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee meeting held on 23 November 201120 be approved for accuracy.

23 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

There were no questions, petitions or statements received from the public or Members.

24 CULTURE AND HERITAGE UPDATE

A report of the Director of Regeneration and Place provided an update on the culture and heritage work programme being undertaken within the Regeneration and Place Directorate. In particular, the report detailed the development of a Culture and Heritage Strategy for Birkenhead, commissioned in support of the Council's ambitious regeneration plans. The key points were presented by Chief Regeneration Officer Sally Shah and Senior Manager Culture Strategy Jane Morgan.

The Council's regeneration plans provided significant opportunities for culture and heritage as well creativity and innovation. There were particular challenges for the creative sector brought about by COVID-19 as well as this being a catalyst to look at new ways of engaging with existing and future audiences. Town Deal proposals, including the emerging Dock Branch Park (formerly Green Corridor) project, were informed by culture and heritage considerations and opportunities.

With the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, a strategy for Birkenhead was being prepared which was to set out clear priorities for culture and heritage linked to the Council's plans. This strategy was to provide a blueprint for further work to ensure culture and heritage is embedded in local masterplans as well as bringing forward a borough-wide strategy in due course.

In questions, Members were reassured that the focus on Birkenhead in respect of regeneration plans resulted from a strategic approach to local planning and unlocking major government support for development. Members were also reassured that heritage issues were being considered as part of plans and that key partners would be consulted throughout.

RESOLVED - That the action being undertaken to deliver the culture and heritage work programme and to develop a Culture and Heritage Strategy for Birkenhead be noted.

25 COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY

A report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services outlined the development process for the Community Safety Strategy for 2021 to 2025. The report detailed the thematic framework within which the strategy was to operate. These themes were: Anti-Social Behaviour; Crime and Violence Reduction; Modern Slavery; Hate Crime; Emergency Planning; Road Safety; and Community Safety.

In addition, the report presented the innovative approach to building the Strategy in a collaborative, co-produced way with partners. The Strategy would be developed by working in partnership with key organisations across the borough to ensure comprehensive buy-in across the statutory, business, voluntary and community sectors and, as a consequence, maximise the impact/outcomes of the strategy and efforts to make a difference in our communities.

Mark Camborne, Assistant Director for Neighbourhoods and Transport, spoke to the report, and informed Members that the consultations had happened via the Community Safety Partnership and that detailed plans for each theme sat beneath the main Strategy. Engagement had included Members, third sector and voluntary groups using the network built up during Covid pandemic. The intention was to bring back the Strategy for sign-off in March or April.

Police Superintendent Martin Earl demonstrated to Members the Safer Wirral Tracker which was a dashboard showing police crime figures across the Wirral, including anti-social behaviour, which had risen due to breaches in Covid rules, domestic abuse and hate crime which had risen overall, and other types of crime which had shown a decreases year on year. Some figures stood out – violence was higher in Birkenhead and peaked among 26-

35 year olds. The focus for the near future was on preventive work and improving the victim's journey through the system. The Tracker was to be provided to Members.

Members questioned the logistics of the tracker and it was confirmed that the domestic violence campaign for silent calls to 999 followed by 55 as a way to report domestic abuse was captured, as was reporting on social media.

RESOLVED: That

- 1. The contents of the report be noted**
- 2. the co-production approach to developing the strategy be endorsed.**

26 **BUDGET CONSULTATION REPORT**

This report formed part of the Council's formal budget setting process, as set out in the Constitution and in accordance with the legal requirements to set a balanced and sustainable budget for 2021/22. Policy and Resources Committee had to recommend a 2021/22 balanced budget proposal to the Council for its meeting in March 2021, and this Committee had been given 6 proposals to consider.

Gail Mooney described the work so far including a consultation which had been launched on 21 December 2020 and closed on 22 January. This had included an online portal and surveys. Almost 13,000 people had accessed the portal and about 2,600 surveys had been completed. Part of registering comments was to provide a postcode which would allow an analysis of responses by area. Many ideas and questions had been suggested and all would be considered. There had also been question and answer sessions and petitions were expected. Policy and Resources Committee on 17 February would have full details of what had been received and a summary. Officers explained that the short municipal year caused by the Covid-19 pandemic made the timescales very short, and the costs on the Council of the pandemic had created a budget deficit which needed to be covered.

Members expressed strong concerns and frustration that there were options provided that had not previously been >to this Committee for consideration.

Each proposal was then discussed and comments included:

Culture and Business Economy Savings

These had been agreed in November and Members had no issues with them.

Close Europa Pools

Members were informed that the element of Europa Pools which was more expensive to operate was the fun pool, and there had been many requests to

keep the competitive pool open as it was the only one in the borough with a grandstand and a movable floor.

Financial figures were not available which made an informed decision impossible.

There would be an effect on ability to exercise which could impact on the Leisure Strategy, where Sport England would be undertaking a detailed needs analysis.

Europa Pools was not included in the latest business plan for the redevelopment of Birkenhead but remained as an option.

There were capital works needed at the fun pool to bring it up to standard.

Pause re-opening of Woodchurch Leisure Centre

The delay was likely to be until April 2022.

There were worries that it could be regarded as 'mothballed' and the delay would be used to justify permanent closure, but Members were informed that there were plans at the site for developments including new 3G football pitches and the improvement of existing grass pitches. The pool was in good condition.

This was another element that would impact on opportunities for exercise following the pandemic, which had benefits regarding physical and mental health and activity.

Review of 4 Golf Courses

Since the development of the initial savings option based on the provision of all golf as a non-statutory service, it had transpired that Hoylake Golf Course could not be included in the review as there was a Development Agreement in place until December 2022. Furthermore, the course is committed as a support facility and practice course for the 2023 Open Championship.

In 2020 Environment Scrutiny Committee had considered the future of golf courses in detail connected with call-in of a decision and had put forward proposals. Some of these were being implemented including plans, delayed by the pandemic, to develop Arrowe Park with improved Clubhouse and a sports village, and the recruitment of a head greenkeeper.

Brackenwood was important due to archaeological finds.

There may be opportunity to generate income around the Open Championship in 2023.

Courses were being surveyed to see what was involved in bringing them up to a good standard.

There had been a surge in play after the first lockdown.

Golf was important to the Leisure Strategy and the courses were important for introducing new people to golf.

Review of Museums Service

Members were informed that £212,000 of the proposed savings of £327,000 related to the Williamson. Initial savings were based on the inclusion of the Priory and Tramway Museum however these were subsequently removed.

The Williamson had recently had lighting upgraded and was a hub of cultural activities.

Artwork could be sold to generate funds however the museum had accredited museum status and could apply for specific funding pots which may not be available if it were to sell off artwork and so may not be available to the Council. Closing could actually create a negative effect on future budgets.

Members had received many letters and emails opposing the closure of the Williamson as people found relaxation, solace and socialising there.

The venue could be marketed for corporate business use.

It was a hub of the community with international connotations.

When the pandemic ends Members would want a Wirral worth living in and the Williamson was part of that – a jewel in the crown.

There may be legal covenants preventing any other use however further investigatory work with Legal services would be required to establish the extent of this.

Royden Park Commercial Development - Phase 1

It was unclear whether the income generated by the high ropes activity planned for Royden Park would affect the budget of this Committee.

RESOLVED:

That Policy and Resources Committee in February 2021 consider the comments on the budget proposals which fall under the remit of the Tourism, Communities and Leisure Committee.

27 **TOURISM, COMMUNITIES CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This was to align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which were within the remit of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted.

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TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 3 March 2021

Present: Councillor T Anderson (Chair)

Councillors P Stuart C Poval
H Cameron J Walsh
J Johnson KJ Williams
C Jones A Brame (In place
B Kenny of A Corkhill)

28 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

29 APOLOGIES

Councillor Andy Corkhill had sent apologies for absence and was deputised by Councillor Allan Brame.

30 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

31 MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting of the Tourism, Communities Culture and Leisure Committee held on 21 January 2021 be approved and adopted as a correct record.

32 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were two questions from the public.

Question 1 I believe the council are looking at various places on the Wirral to create official Motor Home sites. One area mentioned is the large overflow car park at Station Road, Thurstaston.

I wish to raise the following concerns with any such proposal:

The area around Thurstaston and this part of the Country Park has been overcome with visitors and their vehicles.

The local infrastructure and car park facilities at Thurstaston are already unable to cope with the amount of visitors to this area. More parking spaces are urgently required, so to lose any parking spaces at all will greatly increase the existing problems with traffic flow.

As a member of Thurstaston Caravan Owners Association, whenever I visit the area I regularly witness issues with parking. When people are unable to park in the designated car parks they search for alternatives, such as parking on double yellow lines, on grass verges, along the length of Station Road, or on the private spine road leading to the Dee Sailing Club and often blocking their access requirements.

All of Station Road is very narrow. Any vehicle which parks on the road can create blockages for other traffic. The part of Station Road from the humpback bridge to the Dee Sailing Club has no pavements. All this creates major safety hazards to pedestrians, many with young children. Parking here causes blockages which hamper the movement of the Dee Sailing Club boats, the Caravan Club's visitors and most importantly any urgent or emergency access. This was evident in the recent incident when people needed rescuing after becoming trapped due to Thurstaston cliff erosion.

This is an area of natural beauty and needs environmental protection. There are ongoing problems with nightly antisocial behaviour which Council Officers have been informed about. Additional demands on the Country Park risk adding to these issues, and could lead to environmental damage to the area.

In conclusion Thurstaston already has an established well-run national motor home site, so what are the benefits to the area in creating something similar that will result in the loss of any current parking facilities and that will add to the problems to an area with limited infrastructure?

A.1. Wirral Country Park Overflow Car Park is one of the sites included in the proposal presented by the officers for improving the leisure vehicles offer across the Borough. At this stage we are looking for a steer from the Councillors as to what principles to apply when selecting sites and which sites to prioritise short and long term. Business cases for approved sites will take into consideration challenges and risks associated with possible new developments, including their impact on nature, communities and businesses.

The site on Station Road is being considered as Wirral Country Park is a popular leisure vehicle destination in the Borough. Broadening the current offer to reach new target groups while building on the recognition of Wirral Country Park is being viewed as a possibly strong marketing proposition. Due to its unique natural features, it is suggested that the site is developed as an intimate, tranquil leisure vehicle location.

Officers are aware of parking issues and have taken into consideration the site as the front bays of the carpark are scheduled to be resurfaced before September 2021. The £210K proposed capital investment will enable the council to operate all front bays in any weather condition. Based on the assessment conducted - as part of the capital investment application procedure - scheduled improvement is expected to reduce the amount of pressure in the area in terms of parking.

Furthermore sections of the Station Road are currently double yellow line marked and that is considered to be extended and also increased visits of traffic officers will likely further reduce issues with access.

Should the site be approved for business case development, the possibility to operate back bays as hybrid leisure vehicle & carpark site will be considered. This option would cater for more flexibility in case of large events requiring more parking space. In addition, the business case will consider possible impact on anti-social behaviour, disturbance to residence and visitors also associated expenses if suitable solutions are identified.

Wirral Country Park is a flagship country park on the Wirral and an important section of the Wirral Way. It is also the oldest Country Park in England being recognised by nature lovers across the country and abroad. Any business case development linked to the park will have to ensure that environmental priorities are not compromised.

Q.2. In principle we aren't against more caravan facilities. However if there is to be more traffic down Station Road then this will exacerbate the issues we are already experiencing with illegal parking and general access to the club. Over the past few years at the sailing club we have traditionally held 2 national sailing events, and an international one that can be every 4 years. We have always had difficulties enabling access for visitors with their extra wide craft down such narrow roads, but recently with the irresponsible and careless parking that has taken place since lockdown, this is likely to make the task of hosting future events much more problematic. While initiatives such as the new signs should help, it doesn't address the issue that the parking capacity is not sufficient for the high demand, which we expect will continue even when lock down easing happens, as the public have really enjoyed the fabulous open spaces. We think it would be irresponsible to add to what can already be an extremely congested area by encouraging motorhomes to attempt such an ordeal, creating friction and even violence between those showing a disregard for the rules and those wishing to enjoy their stay. I personally am a frequent user of motorhome sites in difficult to access areas, but every-one I have visited over the past 20 years have no parking at all on the approach roads, and suitable passing places for towing vehicles. Without such measures in place, we at Dee Sailing Club would be against such a site.

Will WBC be able to guarantee safe passage and access for our visitors and emergency services, and transport of large craft to the sailing club, by ensuring no parking (except in the Car Parks) from Telegraph Road down to the sailing club and take action to stop further decay to the eroding cliffs to protect and create safe passage along the beach for new visitors, given we have already had two serious incidents over the last 2 months?

A.2. Wirral Country Park Overflow Car Park is one of the seven sites included in the proposal presented by the officers for improving the leisure vehicles offer across the Borough. At this stage we are looking for a steer from the Councillors as to what principles to apply when selecting sites and which sites to prioritise short and long term. Business cases for approved sites will take into consideration challenges and risks associated with possible new developments, including their impact on nature, communities, and businesses. Through colleagues at Parks and Countryside, officers would be aware of major events held in the area.

Officers are aware of parking issues and have taken into consideration the site as the front bays of the carpark are scheduled to be resurfaced before September 2021. One of the key arguments acknowledged by the Council was the expected improvement of the situation on Station Road. The £210K proposed capital investment will enable the council to operate all front bays in any weather condition. Based on available evidence, planned improvement is expected to reduce the amount of pressure in the area in terms of parking while technology to be used will guarantee a natural impact neutral solution. Furthermore, sections of Station Road are currently double yellow line marked and that is considered to be extended and also increased visits of traffic officers will likely further reduce issues with access.

Should the site be approved for business case development, the possibility to operate back bays as hybrid leisure vehicle & carpark site will be taken into account. This option would cater for more flexibility in case of large events held at Thurstaston requiring more parking space. amount of pressure in the area in terms of parking while technology to be used will guarantee a natural impact neutral solution. Furthermore, sections of Station Road are currently double yellow line marked and that is considered to be extended and also increased visits of traffic officers will likely further reduce issues with access.

Should the site be approved for business case development, the possibility to operate back bays as hybrid leisure vehicle & carpark site will be taken into account. This option would cater for more flexibility in case of large events held at Thurstaston requiring more parking space.

33 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

Statement - I am the site manager for the Caravan & Motorhome Club Site at Wirral Country Park. On hearing that the council are proposing to open a Motorhome Park and one of the sites proposed is the overflow car park at Station Road, Thurstaston. I need to raise a few concerns with the committee as this additional site will cause problems in this already confined and congested area.

Having an additional number of people staying in the area is going to produce more waste, i.e. effluent, foul water. At present we have a major problem with the pumping of sewage from the 3 main occupants, that being TCOA,static site, Wirral Country Park and ourselves. All effluent and it seems alot of the surface water runs into our sewage chamber to then be pumped off site down to Caldy sewage works. The pumping station cannot cope with the large amount of foul water as it is. It tends to overload the pump several times a year, causing raw sewage to back up and sometimes flow onto the site. This apparently is being investigated by the council as to where all the water is coming from, but these investigations have been going on for several years with no outcome, can we be assured that the Motorhome Park will not be emptying into our system, without action being taken to rectify the existing problem.

34 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

There were no questions from Members.

35 **DEVELOPING LEISURE VEHICLE PROVISION ACROSS WIRRAL UPDATES**

This report sought agreement on developing business cases for identified sites for the Council to develop leisure vehicle provision across Wirral.

At a Councillor workshop, four of the sites: Leasowe Lighthouse Car Park, Woodside Ferry Car Park, Price Street Car Park and Perch Rock Car Park, were identified as a possibility for development by Members. The final three sites: Wirral Country Park Car Park, Derby Pool and the Circus Field failed to reach a consensus. Members acknowledged the commercial benefits of several sites, but also the possibility for residents' concerns and complaints. It was proposed that officers brought these options back to committee, with emphasis on capitalisation and the feasibility for each site. This report should also include a plan (for each site) moving forward, including time scales and relevant data. Members asked officers to propose recommendations based on feedback from the workshop and findings from business cases.

Also requested was a plan to go out and consult with councillors and residents. It was agreed unanimously that residents needed to be consulted and kept informed of developments.

Members discussed the proposals and were informed by the Senior Commercial Manager that the business cases would take into account lessons from sites outside of the Wirral and that the sites could be aimed at different customers. Members also noted that there was a possibility of a restrictive covenant at the Circus Field site. The Chair took each recommendation separately.

The Chair moved recommendation 1 which was to agree to authorise the Director of Neighbourhoods to continue working on developing proposals for the leisure vehicle provision at four potential sites, Leasowe Lighthouse Car Park; Woodside Ferry Car Park; Price Street Car Park; and Perch Rock Car Park. This was seconded by Councillor Paul Stuart and agreed by assent.

Councillor Helen Cameron moved to amend recommendation 2 to instead include a delay in the proceeding of business cases until proof of concept from the first four sites is available. This was seconded by Cllr Jenny Johnson. The amendment was taken to a vote which was lost.

Councillor Paul Stuart moved to agree recommendation 2 which was to agree to authorise the Director of Neighbourhoods to develop a business case for leisure vehicle provision at the Wirral Country Park Car Park site. This was seconded by Cllr Joe Walsh. This motion was taken to a vote and carried.

The Chair moved not to proceed with Recommendation 3 which was to agree to authorise the Director of Neighbourhoods to develop a business case for leisure vehicle provision at the Derby Pool site. This was seconded by Councillor Helen Cameron. This motion was taken to a vote and lost.

Councillor Paul Stuart moved to agree recommendation 3. This was seconded by Councillor Joe Walsh. This motion was taken to a vote and carried.

The Chair moved not to proceed with recommendation 4 which was to agree to authorise the Director of Neighbourhoods to develop a business case for leisure vehicle provision at the Circus Field site. This was seconded by Councillor Paul Stuart then agreed by assent.

The Chair moved recommendation 5 which was to agree to authorise the Director of Neighbourhoods to bring back relevant recommendations on detailed proposals for leisure vehicle provision, following agreed business case developments, taking account of consultation, to a future Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee. This was seconded by Councillor Paul Stuart then Agreed by assent.

RESOLVED: That

- 1. the Director of Neighbourhoods be authorised to continue working on developing proposals for the leisure vehicle provision at four potential sites, Leasowe Lighthouse Car Park; Woodside Ferry Car Park; Price Street Car Park; and Perch Rock Car Park.**
- 2. the Director of Neighbourhoods be authorised to develop a business case for leisure vehicle provision at the Wirral Country Park Car Park site.**
- 3. the Director of Neighbourhoods be authorised to develop a business case for leisure vehicle provision at the Derby Pool site.**
- 4. the Director of Neighbourhoods not develop a business case for leisure vehicle provision at the Circus Field site.**
- 5. the Director of Neighbourhoods be authorised to bring back relevant recommendations on detailed proposals for leisure vehicle provision, following agreed business case developments, taking account of consultation, to a future Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee.**

36 WIRRAL MUSEUMS SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN

This report outlined the proposed strategic direction for Wirral Museums Service and updated the Committee on the progress of two Capital Programme funded projects. The service plan for Wirral Museums Service built on the achievements of the Wirral 2020 plan, creating more opportunities for our residents, regardless of age or income, to enjoy cultural events and supporting the tourism offer through programming of good quality exhibitions and events.

The Williamson and Priory Service Development Manager spoke to this report and noted that the vision for the Birkenhead Priory site was closely linked with the mission of the Church of England as they have an active chapel on site, and there was a balance between visitors and people using the space for quiet contemplation. The report proposes upgrading visitor facilities and refurbishing the chapter house. The plan could contribute to the regeneration of Birkenhead with a programme of events proposed to be delivered in partnership with organisations in the Priory Quarter. It was noted that the Williamson Art Gallery would be expanded as a vibrant community cultural hub and support local artists and makers. Proposals for the Transport Museum and Heritage Tramway were included.

In answer to Members questions it was clarified that the service had been set to double its income target prior to closing for lockdown, however it is not predicted to achieve more than its income target for 2021/22 due to continuing COVID-19 restrictions. It is also not assumed that the service will get back to delivering over £50k of annual income until 2024.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the plans and aspirations of Wirral Museums Service in the context of the Wirral 2020 Pledges and the emerging Wirral 2025 plan be noted and endorsed.**
- (2) the exploration of opportunities for developments at Birkenhead Priory offered by the investment from central Government be supported.**

37 COVID - 19 UPDATE

This report provided an update on surveillance data and key areas of development in relation to Wirral's COVID-19 response and delivery of the Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan and was presented with a 'dashboard' of statistics.

The Chair thanked the staff on behalf of the Committee for going above and beyond and show exceptional dedication to the people of Wirral.

RESOLVED -

That the contents of the report and associated presentation be noted and the ongoing work associated with COVID-19 response be supported.

38 2020/21 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING Q3

This report provides a summary of the projected year-end revenue and capital position for Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee as at the end of Quarter 3 (December 2020) of the 2020/21 financial year. The Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic continues to present financial risk due to uncertainty and fluidity in the external environment. The overall financial position for the Council remains challenging, and a number of actions are in progress to mitigate the overall forecast position presented at quarter 3, including limiting spending to essential areas of service delivery only, with Corporate Directors supported to mitigate the risk of overspending.

The Chair proposed for future reports to include line by line accounting of what falls under each headline. This was seconded by Cllr Cherry Povall and was subsequently agreed by assent.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the adverse year-end forecast position presented at Quarter 3 of £9.662m be noted.**
- (2) the impact of funding and expenditure as a direct consequence of Covid-19, including the additional funding sources which have been identified, but as yet, not received be noted.**
- (3) the year-end forecast capital position for Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee presented at Quarter 3 be noted.**

(4) the Committee's budget headlines be defined and brought to the June committee meeting.

39 **TOURISM COMMUNITIES CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which are within the remit of the Committee. It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

The Chair proposed that due to the unprecedented amount of work currently ongoing under this Committee and prevalence of events in the Summer period an additional committee meeting be recommended to full council for the 14th July 2021. This was seconded by Councillor Paul Stuart and Agreed by assent.

RESOLVED: That the work programme proposed in this report for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year be noted.

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PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 13 January 2021

Present: Councillor C Spriggs (Chair)

Councillors L Rennie C Muspratt
T Cottier S Spoor
J Johnson M Sullivan
I Lewis J Walsh
D Mitchell S Whittingham

10 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

11 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Christine Muspratt declared a personal interest in item 6 (strategic developments in the NHS) as she had one daughter who worked for the NHS and another daughter who was a GP.

Councillor Tony Cottier declared a personal interest in item 6 (strategic developments in the NHS) as he was the Director of a company engaged in the refurbishment of an NHS crisis café in Birkenhead.

Councillor Michal Sullivan declared a personal interest in item 6 (strategic developments in the NHS) as he had a daughter who was a GP and worked in oncology.

12 MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Partnerships Committee held on 9 November 2020 be agreed as a correct record, subject to it being noted that Councillor Christina Muspratt declared, in relation to Minute 5, that she had a daughter who was the manager of the integrated discharge team.

13 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Kevin Donovan had submitted and asked the following question of the Chair:
Given that:

1. The introduction of a so-called integrated care system (ICS) for Cheshire and Merseyside will lead to wholesale further privatisation, fragmentation and loss of democratic accountability in our National Health Service; and that:
2. Any changes will end democratic control of a genuinely NATIONAL health service, including even the limited accountability provided by the existence of a Wirral clinical commissioning group; and that:

3. At a previous meeting it was resolved *“That the Partnerships Committee considers that local people, patient groups and other invested parties be consulted before any large scale Clinical Commissioning Group mergers are considered for Wirral. Furthermore, this Committee calls for a meeting with our counterparts from all other authorities involved in these proposals.”*; and that:
4. Opposition to the plan for so-called integrated care is the policy of many political parties (including the party of Wirral Council’s majority); and that:
5. Campaigners have exposed the dangerous rationale behind these proposed changes to the NHS (see for example [We say NO! to proposed NHS legislation that would restrict access to care and profit global companies – Calderdale and Kirklees 999 Call for the NHS \(wordpress.com\)](#))

Can I ask:

Will this Committee pause all involvement in the development of the Cheshire and Merseyside ICS, including any nomination of members to the new Joint Health Scrutiny Committee for Cheshire and Merseyside, pending such consultations and meeting referred to in 3 above?

The Chair answered the question as follows:

The Partnership Committee of Wirral Council is new and have a statutory role to scrutinise new proposals and developments in the NHS and it is the Committee’s role to hear a range of views in this matter, including those of the NHS, the public and other stakeholders. It is really important that you raise something that I voted with along with colleagues at our first meeting that the Partnerships Committee consider that local people, patients groups and other invested parties be consulted before any large scale Clinical Commissioning Group mergers are considered for Wirral, and furthermore the Committee calls for a meeting with our counterparts in other authorities involved in these proposals and I was proud to vote in favour of that as were my colleagues on the Committee. We will continue to liaise closely with Health and Care Committee of Wirral Council in relation to the views of elected Members who are more closely engaged with the details of the care and health system matters that are developing and reassure you as Chair that I am determined that we will undertake this role with due diligence.

14 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

There were no statements or petitions.

15 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

There were no questions from Members.

16 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NHS

Simon Banks, Chief Officer of NHS Wirral CCG introduced this report. On 26th November 2020 NHS England/Improvement (NHSE/I) published 'Integrating Care: Next steps to building strong and effective integrated care systems across England' which set out proposals for legislative reform and focused on the operational direction of travel for the NHS from 2021 onwards. The report summarised the proposals. The public consultation closed on 8 January and a response was submitted that due regard should be given to Wirral as a place with the local authority continuing to have a role in partnership, with strategic leadership through Wirral Health and Care Commissioning Board.

Members debated the issue and strong concerns were expressed at the lack of detail of the implications of changes, the potential reduction of scrutiny and the lack of opportunity for users to have their voices heard, although there was a legal duty to consult. There was also concern at the amount of jargon in the consultation document and at the lack of opportunity to affect the outcome of the proposals.

Members also asked about particular aspects of the proposals. They were reassured that services would remain free at the point of delivery and that lobbying continued to ensure that the Council area was still distinct.

Councillor Sarah Spoor proposed an amendment which was seconded by Councillor Christine Muspratt. This was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted and the Partnership Committee will continue to return to this crucial piece of work to enable us to scrutinise the effectiveness of the proposals so that we can see that they are turning into effective actions which will ensure that improvements in the health and well being of our residents takes place and that serious health inequalities that exist in our Borough are tackled and ended.

17 HEALTHWATCH WIRRAL - UPDATE

Following a discussion held at a workshop in December 2020, the Chair and Spokespersons of the Partnerships Committee requested an update from Healthwatch Wirral. The core purpose of Healthwatch was to be the consumer champion for health and care service users. They involved patients, service users and the public in shaping local health and care services and raised awareness of their views and experiences in relation to those services amongst those in charge of services including commissioners and providers. Their vision was to ensure that the voice of the individual was heard and services were responsive to their needs, and that everyone had the

opportunity to have their say and understood how and when to access their local health and social care services.

Karen Prior, Chief Executive of HealthWatch Wirral provided the update, explaining that HealthWatch Wirral:

- had a volunteer board of Directors and five staff.
- had won two national HealthWatch awards in the last four years.
- had diverted from their planned work to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, working on vaccination and testing sites, printing and distributing thousands of leaflets for feedback.
- was working on meeting with families of residents in care homes about their experiences.
- called all patients discharged from hospital on pathway zero (requiring no support) to check if they are caring for others.

Members thanked Karen for the presentation and asked questions which drew out extra information such as that people were confused about the requirement for a second Covid vaccine treatment and whether the first vaccine was enough to allow normal activity to be resumed whereas it still allowed transmission. Members were also interested in restarting visits to care homes when the pandemic was under control, and in dealing with the low wages and stress of staff in the care sector.

RESOLVED - That the HealthWatch Wirral update be noted.

18 **CITIZENS ADVICE WIRRAL - UPDATE**

Following a discussion held at a workshop in December 2020, the Chair and Spokespersons of the Partnerships Committee requested an update and presentation from Citizens Advice Wirral. Citizens Advice Wirral was a local charity providing advice, information, advocacy and representation across Wirral. They had provided free, impartial and confidential advice to Wirral residents since 1939 and were formerly known as Wirral Citizens Advice Bureau, were members of the national Citizens Advice charity but were independent from them. They had 160 staff and were funded through a range of contracts and grants. Their services included general advice, specialist debt advice and specialist primary care mental health advice and advocacy. Pension wise, a specialist pension advice service, and a Financial Capability advice service were also delivered at Citizens Advice Wirral by other local Citizens Advice organisations. Citizens Advice Wirral actively worked for change in the policies and practices of organisations that impacted on the lives of clients.

Carol Johnson-Eyre, Chief Executive, and Jeannette Morgan, Deputy Chief Executive, gave a presentation to Members about the organisation and its workload and client base. Highest demand was from ages 30-59 in the most deprived Wards. 61% of clients had a disability or long-term health condition.

The main advice was on benefits, debt, housing, employment, relationships, immigration, tax, consumer rights, discrimination, abuse and hate crime. It also provided services such as gambling support.

Since the lockdown began over 43,000 clients had been supported, with 65% of website users being new. The nation organisation had been contacted by 120,000 Wirral users. The key issues presented were concerning: benefit applications; furloughing entitlement; loss of income; non-Covid safe working environment; relationship breakdown; preventing homelessness; keeping warm; evictions; digital exclusion; mental health; loneliness; and bereavement. Emerging issues included people more excluded by not being digitally linked; people newly applying for benefits; long Covid health conditions affecting employment; housing; and Brexit.

Members asked questions and were told in answer that 80% of calls were answered but the limit was in funding, although the reduction in partner organisations, who may have taken calls, also caused additional calls.

RESOLVED - That the presentation and update by Citizens Advice Wirral be noted.

19 **APPOINTMENTS TO THE JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHESHIRE & MERSEYSIDE**

In accordance with the protocol established as the framework for the operation of joint health scrutiny arrangements across the local authorities of Cheshire and Merseyside, the Partnerships Committee was requested to nominate Members to sit on the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee to reflect Wirral's own political balance. Depending on the issue to be scrutinised, meetings will be attended by either 2 or 3 Members. If three Members, the proportion would be 2 Labour and 1 Conservative but if two, then only one Labour Member and one Conservative Member.

RESOLVED - That Councillors Christine Spriggs, Christina Muspratt and Leslie Rennie be appointed to the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee.

20 **PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Partnerships Committee, in co-operation with the Policy and Service Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. The Council had a number of statutory scrutiny functions including matters relating to the health of the authority's population, the activities of those responsible for crime and disorder strategies, as embodied by the Safer Wirral Partnership, under the Police and Justice Act 2006, and flood risk management and coastal erosion management functions which may affect the local authority's area. These overview and scrutiny functions were to be carried out by the Partnerships Committee, which would

also scrutinise the functions and responsibilities undertaken by other public bodies within the Borough. The work programme for the Partnerships Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

There had been a Workshop in December 2020 when priorities were provided and the resulting list was attached to the report and is attached to these minutes.

RESOLVED - That the Partnerships Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year be noted.

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday, 23 November 2020

Present: Councillor K Hodson (Chair)

Councillors S Whittingham D Burgess-Joyce
J Bird AER Jones
K Cannon I Lewis
K Greaney S Kelly

Deputies: Councillors A Gardner (for T Cox)

10 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

No such declarations were made.

11 2019/20 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR WIRRAL COUNCIL AND MERSEYSIDE PENSION FUND UPDATE

Prior to the commencement of consideration of this item the Director of Resources informed the Committee that an amendment should be made to recommendation 3 as follows" the Director of Resources should be given authority to approve accounts in consultation with the Chair" The recommendation was sought to be amended accordingly.

A report by the Director of Resources updated Members on the 2019/20 statement of accounts for Wirral Council and Merseyside Pension Fund. A report detailing the draft accounts was presented to the Committee on 21 September and the purpose of this report was to bring an update to the Committee and to seek delegated approval for the Director of Resources in conjunction with the Chair to approve the final accounts for publication.

By way of background, Members were informed that the preparation and publication of annual accounts provides information that is intended to be of use to a range of stakeholders (including Members, employees, members of the public, government and investors etc) in evaluating the financial performance of the Council and its stewardship of public money.

Members were advised that the accounts are not yet final as the external audit is still ongoing by Grant Thornton. The Audit will be completed by 30 November and therefore Members were not able to approve accounts within this Committee.

Members had reference to the Draft Statement of accounts as included in appendix 1 and were advised that the statement reflected the comments made by the auditors and agreed by Officers up to Thursday 5 November. Amendments to the financial statements were detailed in appendix 2 of the report and appendix 3 included the Merseyside Pension Fund Accounts considered by the Pension Committee on 2 November 2020.

The summary of the statement of accounts set out the comprehensive income and expenditure statement and Members were advised that for 2019/20, the deficit, after taking into consideration all operating expenditure and the receipt of taxation and non-specific general grant income totals £55.78m. Members were then informed how the Council's assets had been valued at £899.35m, offset by liabilities of £901.76m, resulting in net assets of £2.4m.

Members heard from Di Grisdale, Senior Finance Manager Strategy, Policy & Financial Accounts who summarised progress and changes to the audit as was previously presented to Members in September 2020

Members then heard from Mark Stocks, Grant Thornton regarding the current position of their external audit. Members were advised of the difficulties incurred to Audit an organisation in the current situation, with regards to the global pandemic. He informed Members that the Audit was close to completion and should be complete before Christmas. Mr Stocks advised of control issues regarding the use of journals and authorisation procedures and informed the Committee that this would be raised within the Audit. He then raised the issue of the financial sustainability of the Council and the impact of Covid upon the Authority. He informed the Committee that this could mean that the Council's reserves would be significantly depleted and as a result the Council has applied to the MHCLG for a capitalisation directive. Members heard how given the circumstances, the external Auditor agreed that this was a suitable response, however, he raised some concerns over sustainability and advised of the importance of the Council working upon a service plan. The external Auditor expressed significant concerns on the overall financial position of the Council.

In response to questions by Members the external auditor regarding the change in Governance arrangements of Wirral Council from a Cabinet to Committee system, he stated he had no concerns with the new arrangements; he also informed the committee that the authorisation of journals is all IT based and therefore accessible to audit effectively.

Some concerns were raised by Councillors regarding perceived poor controls, the Council's debt collection, Council spending and reserves. Further concerns were then mentioned such as council tax arrears and the methods in which they are collected.

In response to a suggestion from a Councillor, a session between Councillors and the External Auditor was requested and would be arranged.

Members then heard from Stuart Basnett, external audit manager for Merseyside Pension Fund who outlined the Audit for Merseyside Pension Fund and advised that the Audit is close to completion, but can only complete once the Council's Audit Opinion has been given.

Ian Miles, outlined the Annual Governance Statement and advised of a small change to

On a motion by Councillor Stuart Whittingham and seconded by Councillor Kate Cannon it was **Resolved That:-**

- (1) a meeting of the Committee be arranged to approve the accounts upon their completion of the audit by Grant Thornton;**
- (2) a private briefing take place immediately prior to the committee meeting between the external auditors and the members of the committee;**
- (3) members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee note the revised draft Statement of Accounts, and the findings report from the external auditor Grant Thornton For Merseyside Pension Fund;**
- (4) Members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee note the changes from the published draft accounts set out in Appendices 2 and 3**
- (5) Members agree that the Director of Resources (s151) in conjunction with the Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee be given delegated authority to approve the accounts on behalf of the Committee upon the completion of the audit by Grant Thornton, subject to no material or significant changes; and**
- (6) Members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee approve the Annual Governance Statement.**

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AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday, 11 January 2021

Present: Councillor S Whittingham (Vice Chair in the Chair)

Councillors	J Bird	AER Jones
	K Cannon	T Cox
	K Greaney	I Lewis
	D Burgess-Joyce	S Kelly

Deputies: Councillor P Hayes (for K Hodson)

12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received by Councillor K Hodson, in her absence Councillor S Whittingham acted as Chair to the Committee.

13 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

No such declarations were made.

14 2019/20 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR WIRRAL COUNCIL AND MERSEYSIDE PENSION FUND

A report by the Director of Resources set out the statement of accounts for Wirral Council and Merseyside Pension Fund. The Draft Accounts had been presented to to the Committee on 21 September and 23 November. The report also included and sought approval the Annual Governance Statement.

Members were advised how the Statement of Accounts set out the Council's and Merseyside Pension Funds financial positions as at the 31 March 2020 along with a summary of its income and expenditure for the year that ended 31 March 2020 and comparative data for the preceding year. Members heard how the draft accounts were prepared and submitted for external audit on 27th August 2020. The external auditors – Grant Thornton UK LLP had concluded the Audit for 2019/20.

The Senior Finance Manager addressed the Committee to present the Statement of Accounts and to set out the amendments to the accounts that had been agreed by Council Officers and Auditors and sought approval from members. The amendments were set out in appendix two of the report.

Members heard how an additional paragraph had been included to the statement of accounts under financial resilience to inform that as at Quarter 2 the Council has a projected deficit of £75.6m (after Sales, Fees and Income compensation scheme of £9.3.). Members were advised that to support this deficit, which is primarily due to Covid-19, the Council had applied to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to request a Capitalisation Directive from HM Treasury on our behalf to fund Covid-19 losses of income and cost pressures. Members heard how the Council's financial position would change as a result of the Spending Review but this will not be fully known until the final funding settlement is received in January.

The Senior Finance Manager informed Members that there had been 21 changes to the accounts as set out in appendix 2 of the report. The Committee were advised that the vast majority minor changes and all with the exception of three were implemented.

Mark Stokes, External Auditor then addressed the Committee and informed that the Audit is now complete subject to the approval of the Audit and Risk Management Committee. Members heard how the accounts would not be adjusted in a significant way. Members were informed that the outbreak of the Covid -10 Coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on the normal operations of the Council. The impact has meant that the Council have not been able to meet the savings plans they had set for the financial year in question.

Members heard how it would be unsustainable to continue to draw from Council's reserves. Members were advised that the Council may need to borrow in order to balance the Council's book. The External Auditor set out significant audit risks including: Covid 19, fraud, management override of controls, valuation of land and buildings and valuation of pension fund net liability. Overall, Members heard how the audit had gone well with value for money aspect classified as adverse.

In response to questions by Members of the Committee heard how the council has a responsibility for regeneration of its area and the Council need to make sure where your making investments in the private sector you are aware of the risks involved and have a clear plan. The Committee then heard in response to a further question that the use of reserves is a cultural matter within the Council as there is a clear history of the Council using reserves.

In response to a further question the Committee heard how it would be difficult to make the judgement that the Council would have presented a balanced

budget should the global pandemic not have occurred. Members were advised that there is no doubt that Covid has impacted on the Council's ability to deliver significant savings.

With regards to the current position of council reserves and current figures the Senior Finance Manager advised that she would obtain figures

In response to a question regarding the Wirral Growth Company Members heard how the activity is under constant review and the company's financial accounts are due shortly.

On a motion by Councillor Stuart Whittingham and seconded by Councillor Kate Cannon it was:

Resolved - That

- (1) the Audit and Risk Management Committee note the changes to the draft accounts, and the External Audit Findings Report for Wirral Council and Merseyside Pension Fund;**
- (2) the final accounts (Council and Pension Fund) as presenting a true and fair view of the Council's and Pension fund income and expenditure for the year and its overall financial position are approved; and**
- (3) the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 be approved.**

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AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday, 25 January 2021

Present: Councillor K Hodson (Chair)

Councillors	S Whittingham	AER Jones
	J Bird	T Cox
	K Cannon	I Lewis
	K Greaney	S Kelly
	D Burgess-Joyce	

In attendance: Councillor J Green

15 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed Members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee, Officers and members of the public viewing online to the meeting.

16 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham declared a personal interest in Item 8 by virtue of his employer taking a position during the recent trade union dispute.

17 MINUTES

The Chair highlighted that minute item 14 contained several typographical errors.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 16 November 2020 and 11 January 2021, be approved, subject to the following amendments:

Under minute Item 14 paragraph 6, £9.3, be replaced with £9.3m.

Under minute Item 14 paragraph 8, Mark Stokes be replaced with Mark Stocks.

Under minute Item 14 paragraph 8, Covid-10 be replaced with Covid-19.

18 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

The Chair informed the Audit and Risk Management Committee that no petitions, public questions, or requests to make a statement had been received.

19 INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

Mark Niblock, Chief Internal Auditor, introduced his report that summarised the work of the Internal Audit Service for the period 1 November to 31 December 2020. The report identified the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on scheduled audit work and included an analysis of planned work for the remainder of 2020/21.

It was reported that as a result of the pandemic, many internal audits had been suspended therefore the team had refocused its activity towards supporting the corporate response to Covid-19 in other areas of the Council. Furthermore work was underway to evaluate and test the effectiveness of the control arrangements in operation for the Merseyside Pension Fund and Wirral Growth Company, alongside further work being undertaken on cyber security.

The report further detailed the work planned for the remainder of the year as identified in the revised Internal Audit Plan, based upon the significance of the risks presented as a result of Covid-19.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

20 CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Helen Turner, Risk, Continuity & Compliance Manager, introduced the report which provided the Committee with an update on the Council's risk management framework and highlighted areas of risk management work in the coming year.

Members were reminded that the Corporate Risk Register was undergoing a review to align to the Wirral Plan 2025 priorities. In addition, the Council had adopted a new Performance Management Framework, with risks to be monitored at the Organisational Performance Board and areas of non-compliance addressed at the Corporate Governance Group.

An update was provided on the Council's information management arrangements following a query at a previous meeting. A detailed report on the work undertaken on information management was due to be submitted to the Audit and Risk Management Committee's next meeting, however members were advised that new and updated corporate e-learning courses

had been made available and key policies were being reviewed to ensure that they covered the changes towards agile working as a result of the pandemic.

Members discussed the varying risk appetites across the Council and how this was factored in, as well as the corporate risk benchmarking exercises that were undertaken.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

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

In response to comments from members, the Committee was advised by the legal representative of the reasons for excluding the press and public from the meeting. The report revealed the identity of individuals whose privacy was protected by General Data Protection Regulations, and that it was not necessary for the individuals identity to be disclosed to the public in order for the report to achieve its purpose. It was the view of the legal representative that any discussion held in open session may result in that information being disclosed.

Members were supportive of the reasons for the report being exempt, but the view was expressed that further reassurances to Wirral schools were needed in public and a further action report should be brought back to the next meeting to be heard in 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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

22 **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - WOODCHURCH ROAD PRIMARY**

Iain Miles, Audit Manager introduced a report which detailed an internal audit report for Woodchurch Road Primary School.

After a significant debate and the Audit Manager having responded to questions from Members, an additional recommendation was proposed by Councillor Stuart Whittingham and seconded by Councillor David Burgess-Joyce:

“That the Audit and Risk Management Committee requests that this report be considered by the Children, Young People and Education Committee. Furthermore that a further report be prepared for consideration in public at the next meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee, and that this report also be considered by the Children, Young People and Education Committee.”

The motion was approved unanimously.

Resolved – That

- (1) the report be noted.**
- (2) the Audit and Risk Management Committee request that this report be considered by the Children, Young People and Education Committee. Furthermore that a further report be prepared in a format suitable for consideration in public at the next meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee, and that this report also be considered by the Children, Young People and Education Committee.**
- (3) representatives of the Director of Children, Families and Education and the Director of Resources be requested to attend the next meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee for the consideration of the additional item on Woodchurch Road Primary School.**

CONSTITUTION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 25 November 2020

Present: Councillor P Gilchrist in the Chair

Councillors C Cooke J Robinson
T Cox J Stapleton
P Gilchrist S Williams
P Hayes J Williamson
S Hayes G Wood
C Jones

In attendance: Independent Persons
Professor R Jones
Mr G Kerr

1 **NOMINATION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE CONSTITUTION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The Director of Law and Governance welcomed Members of the Constitution and Standards Committee, Officers and viewing members of the public to the online, virtual meeting.

Following his introduction, the Director of Law and Governance called for nominations for the role of Chair of the Constitution and Standards Committee. It was:

Moved by Councillor Chris Cooke
Seconded by Councillor Steve Hayes

that Councillor Phil Gilchrist be appointed as Chair of the Constitution and Standards Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21.

No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED – That Councillor Phil Gilchrist be appointed as Chair of the Constitution and Standards Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21.

Councillor Phil Gilchrist in the Chair

The Chair called for nominations for the role of Vice Chair of the Constitution and Standards Committee. It was:

Moved by Councillor Janette Williamson
Seconded by Councillor Gillian Wood

that Councillor Jean Robinson be appointed as Vice Chair of the Constitution and Standards Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21.

No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED – That Councillor Jean Robinson be appointed as Vice Chair of the Constitution and Standards Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21.

2 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Chris Jones, Independent Person.

3 **MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

No declarations of interest were received.

4 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

The Chair informed the Constitution and Standards Committee that no petitions, public questions, Member questions, or requests to make a statement had been received.

5 **CHANGE IN GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS: UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION**

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced his report that provided the Committee with an overview in respect to the implementation of the change in governance arrangements following the adoption of a new Constitution by the Council at the Annual Meeting held on the 28 September 2020. The report was divided into three parts: Implementation of the Committee programme, Training Update, and Constitution Review and Work Programme

The Director of Law and Governance informed Members that the Council had now completed its first cycle of committee meetings and that lessons continued to be learned.

Steve Fox, Head of Democratic Services provided a brief analysis of briefings for committees, amount of time and demand on member time – partly a result of remote meetings. He further informed of the ongoing training update project (for both Members and Officers) that included Induction and the Members Portal.

Members focused questions to the Director of Law and Governance on the Change in Governance Arrangements and update on implementation including methods to prioritise the work programme for the Constitution and Standards Committee, these included:

- Member Code of Conduct – Subject of a separate report to this meeting.
- Financial Regulations – These have been updated to accommodate the change to the Committee system but are due a further and complete review will be undertaken in coming months. This will seek to simplify the Financial Regulations and give consideration to shortening them, with day to day detailed material transferring to a Financial Handbook.
- Contract Procedure Rules (Standing Orders) – Minor amendments have been made and updates included, such as transposing the Social Value Policy into the rules, but a full review is required in due course.
- Whistleblowing Policy – This is a review, considered by the Audit and Risk management Policy, that is almost complete and a report is to come before Members shortly but has not yet been considered.
- The list of appointments to outside bodies will also require a review in due course.

Members of the current Governance Working Group had identified and noted that experience is likely to highlight a number of issues that the Committee may wish to consider in greater detail. Officers have also identified issues that they would like Members to give further consideration to. With that in mind, the Constitution and Standards Committee was requested to nominate Members to sit on a Governance Working Group and further request the Director of Law and Governance to make arrangements for that group to discuss the following:

- Public Statements – clarification in respect to speaking on non-procedural items and deadline for registering to speak.
- Review of the Petition Scheme/deadline for submission.
- Interruption of the meeting - clarification in respect to Standing Orders 9.1 and 15.11
- A further discussion in respect to the Media Guidelines.
- Meeting times.
- Substitutes for Decision Review Committee when a Member has a conflict of interest.

Members questioned the Director of Law and Governance on his report. The Director responded and stated that these and other issues were best left to the Governance Working Group to consider, and that he was content that all Members put forward issues for consideration to him, or feed them through to the Working Group.

Note: Changes to membership of the Governance Working Group were to be notified to the Director of Law and Governance after the meeting, and are summarised at Recommendation 3 below.

RESOLVED – That

- (1) the report be noted;**
- (2) additional items for consideration by the Constitution and Standards Committee be fed through to the Director of Law and Governance; and**
- (3) a Governance Working Group be established, comprising:**

Councillors

Tony Cox, Chris Cooke, Phil Gilchrist, Steve Hayes and Gill Wood.

Note – all political group leaders also be invited to attend meetings of the Governance Working Group.

6 REMOTE MEETINGS UPDATE

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced his report that provided the Constitution and Standards Committee with an update in respect to the implementation of the programme of remote Committee meetings since April 2020 in direct response to the Covid pandemic and requested the Committee give consideration to the future application of Standing Order 11.1 'Representations' for remote meetings .

Steve Fox, Head of Democratic and Member Services informed the Constitution and Standards Committee on the work undertaken by Officers in the delivery of a full committee programme of remote council committee meetings since September 2020. He further informed that during first period of Covid-19 lockdown the Democratic Services team ran a series of Planning, Licensing, and other regulatory committee meetings, delivering in excess of 50 meetings. He added that during May and June a further 408 individual school admission appeals meetings had been successfully delivered remotely.

The Head of Democratic and Member Services apprised Members that this had been challenging, and the speed of transition had been difficult, but

successful. He expressed his thanks to the political group office managers and IT department in their assistance in helping to support Councillors and his service in the delivery of meetings, and a series of Member training sessions covering meeting etiquette and the Chairing of meetings.

The Constitution and Standards Committee's attention was drawn to paragraph 3.3 of the Director's report that had identified a key concern in respect of engagement with members of the public and the provision whereby any member of the public can present questions and/or speak for up to 15 minutes at a committee meetings (or Council). Officers requested that in an effort to aid meeting management Members consider aligning the opportunities available to the public, and standardise a deadline of noon, 3 days prior to meeting for all methods of addressing committees.

The Chair sought Members views and comments on the matter of submission deadlines to help provide the public access to meetings alongside a practical way to administer the process.

Following a short debate and noting that any change to procedures would require the consent of Council, Members' also requested that this facility be further communicated to members of the public in the most practical manner.

Additional Recommendation

It was:

Moved by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Steve Williams

"That the provision in respect of public speaking, submission of public questions and statements is made known to members of the public by appropriate means."

RESOLVED – That

- (1) the report be noted;**
- (2) RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL that in respect to Standing Order 11.1 'Representations' and in line with other provisions – the deadline for the public registering to speak be brought forward to no later than the midday three working days before the day of the meeting; and**
- (3) the provision in respect of public speaking, submission of public questions and statements is made known to members of the public by appropriate means.**

7 **UPDATE ON THE PREPARATION OF THE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT**

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced his report that provided Members of the Constitution and Standards Committee with an update on progress in respect of the preparation of a revised Model Code of Conduct.

This report provided Members of the Constitution and Standards Committee with an update on progress in respect to the preparation of a revised Model Code of Conduct.

The Committee on Standards in Public Life (CoSPL) report published in January 2019 recommended creating an updated model Code of Conduct, by the Local Government Association (LGA) in consultation with representative bodies of councillors and officers of all tiers of local government.

Members were apprised that LGA Workshops of Members and Monitoring Officers had taken place to discuss the approach and content of the revised Code, and that consultation on a draft Code had run for 10 weeks from Monday 8 June until Monday 17 August 2020.

The Director of Law and Governance informed the Constitution and Standards Committee that in light of the feedback and discussion on 22 October 2020, the LGA would now review the draft and a final Code would then be prepared for submission to the LGA board for approval on 3 December 2020, after which the approved Code will then be published.

Members questioned the Director of Law and Governance on his report, and the Director responded accordingly. He informed that Wirral's Code of Conduct would remain in place, having been reviewed by the Governance Working Group as part of the introduction of the new Council Constitution. This would not preclude further review by the Committee.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8 **SUMMARY OF STANDARDS COMPLAINTS**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced the report of the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer that provided a summary of Standards complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct and Protocol for dealing with complaints against Members between 31 October 2019 and 31 October 2020. A summary of standards complaints was set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

The report informed that in order to assist with the effective administration of standards complaints, the Committee, as part of its monitoring role, is invited

to consider the nature and handling of complaints received pursuant to the Members' Code of Conduct.

The Head of Legal, Deputy Monitoring Officer apprised the Constitution and Standards Committee that all Local Authorities must have arrangements in place to deal with complaints against Elected Members, and procedures for dealing with such complaints in a confidential manner.

The report further informed that one complaint which was received in July 2019 and was still outstanding at the time of the last report to the Committee in November 2019 was investigated and referred to the Standards Panel on 4 December 2019. The Panel found that there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct and required a number of actions to be undertaken by the subject Member and the Monitoring Officer. The full decision was published on the Council website and all of the required actions have been undertaken by the Monitoring Officer and the subject Member.

The Head of Legal, Deputy Monitoring Officer further apprised the Committee that during the period under report five complaints had been received in respect of five Elected Members from five Individuals.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9 **ESTABLISHING THE STANDARDS PANEL AND STANDARDS APPEAL PANEL**

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer introduced his report that requested that the Constitution and Standards Committee formally establish a Standards Panel and Standards Appeal Panel in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Part 2, Article 8), paragraph 14.3 of Part 3B Responsibility for Functions, and the Protocol for Dealing with Complaints against Members.

The Chair questioned the Director of Law and Governance on the composition and size of the Standards Panel, and the Director informed that generally such a Panel would comprise between 3 and 5 members, which allowed for stand-ins / deputies dependent upon the complaints under consideration. He added that similar provisions were established for licencing panels and that names (in a priority order) from each political group could be provided subsequent to the meeting.

RESOLVED - That

- (1) a Standards Panel and Standards Appeal Panel be formally established pursuant to paragraph 14.3 of Part 3B Responsibility for Functions of the Council's Constitution;**

- (2) each political group through their Group Leader/Deputy Group Leader or Party Spokesperson confirm the names of the Members who shall be their representative members on the Standards Panel and Standards Appeal Panel to the Director – Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer at the earliest opportunity; and**
- (3) where a representative Member, proposed / confirmed under (2) above, is unavailable to attend a proposed meeting of the Standards Panel or Standards Appeal Panel but that meeting can be attended by all other persons required, then the relevant political group through their Group Leader / Deputy Group Leader or Party Spokesperson shall promptly confirm another representative member who is able to attend that meeting.**

CONSTITUTION AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 24 February 2021

Present: Councillor P Gilchrist (Chair)

Councillors C Cooke J Robinson
T Cox J Stapleton
P Hayes S Williams
S Hayes J Williamson
C Jones G Wood

In attendance: Independent Persons
Mr G Kerr

10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Professor Ronald Samuel Jones, Independent Person.

11 MEMBER DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

No declarations of interest were received.

12 MINUTES

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2020 be agreed.

13 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

The Chair informed the Constitution and Standards Committee that no petitions, public questions, Member questions, or requests to make a statement had been received.

14 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION - MODEL COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance, introduced the report which provided detail on a recently published model Councillor Code of Conduct by the Local Government Association (LGA) and sought the endorsement of the publication and the establishment of a Working Group to review the Council's current Code of Conduct.

The Committee was advised that the Model Code had been developed following a recommendation from the Committee for Standards in Public Life to try to address variations in local codes. A ten-week consultation had taken place to give Councillors and Local Government officers opportunity to feed into the development of the Code, and upon completion it was expected that Councils would adopt it as a minimum, with the provision for additional local variations. It was further reported that the Local Government Association had since recognised that there were areas within the Code that required clarification and had commissioned guidance to be published alongside the code.

Members noted the proposal for close working across the Liverpool City Region to develop a common Code of Conduct and emphasised the desire for Wirral Council's Code to be implemented in a timely manner.

Resolved – That

- (1) the publication of the Local Government Association (LGA) Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 be noted and endorsed.**
- (2) the commissioning by the Local Government Association of guidance to better understand and apply the Model Code be noted and endorsed.**
- (3) the working together across the City region to develop a common Member Code of Conduct across the six councils and three combined authorities be noted and endorsed.**
- (4) a Member Working Group be established to review the Council's current Code of Conduct for Members and make any recommendation for revision to Council.**

15 **WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced the report which outlined a proposed new Whistleblowing Policy. Members were advised that following a review in 2018, it was agreed that the Whistleblowing process should be updated to align itself to both peer and national best practice. The new draft policy had been reviewed by the charity PROTECT and benchmarked nationally.

Resolved – That

- 1. The contents of the report be noted and the Whistleblowing Policy be approved.**

2. the report be referred to the Audit and Risk Management Committee for information.

16 **AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced the report, which detailed a proposed change to the Constitution to enable the Leader of the Council to nominate another member of the Health and Wellbeing Board as Chair of the Board. The Director of Law and Governance further outlined a forthcoming wider review of the Health and Wellbeing Board to prepare the Council for any changes required as a result of the anticipated legislative changes that would require the implementation of a integrated care system with the NHS and the statutory functions this would place upon the Health and Wellbeing Board.

A Member commented that given that the proposed review of the Health and Wellbeing Board had not yet taken place, the alteration could be delayed to await the outcome of such review. In response, the Leader of the Council outlined that consultation with the Local Government Association had been undertaken, and it was deemed good practice to appoint alternative members of the Board as its Chair, including the lead member for Adult Social Care and in some cases the Chair of the Clinical Commissioning Group.

A further discussion ensued in respect to the possibility of enabling the Health and Wellbeing Board to appoint its own Chair, and the suitability of non-Councillors being appointed as Chair. It was suggested that the Health and Wellbeing Board would benefit from the expertise the Chair of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee would bring as Chair of the Board, and that the Board would also benefit from the continuity such appointment would allow over and above allowing the Board to appoint its own Chair.

An amendment to the recommendation was proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist and seconded by Councillor Steve Hayes, to include 'or another elected member as their nominee'.

Resolved (8:3) – That

it be recommended to Council that in respect to the Health & Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference as detailed in Part 3b Section 16.4 of the Constitution, 'Chairing the Board' be revised to read 'The Board will be chaired by the Leader of the Council (or another elected member as their nominee)'.

17 REVISION OF THE PETITION SCHEME

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced the report which provided the Committee with an opportunity to comment on the Council's pre-existing Petition Scheme and sought support for a review of the scheme to be undertaken and reported back at the next meeting. The Committee was advised that following discussions with the Chair and Group Spokes, it was felt that more time was required to undertake a comprehensive review of the scheme and that reporting back to a later meeting would be more practical.

Resolved – That

the Director of Law and Governance be requested to undertake a review of the existing petition scheme and report back to a future meeting.

18 MEMBER SUPPORT STEERING GROUP

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced the report which set out a proposal to establish a Member Support Steering Group, which would combine the work of the existing Member Development Steering Group and the Equipment Steering Group. It was outlined that the inception of the Equipment Steering Group was to facilitate the transition from paper agendas to devices, therefore following the success of that project the regular monitoring of equipment could be undertaken by one group alongside member learning and development.

It was proposed that the Member Support Steering Group would meet in mid-March in advance of the member induction programme to enable the group to be consulted on the approach to be taken with new members. Furthermore the group would also have oversight on longer term member learning and development, alongside the member portal.

Resolved – That

- 1. a Member Support Working Group be established, combining the support work previously undertaken by the Member Development Steering Group and the Equipment Steering Group.**
- 2. membership nominations be sought via the Political Groups to the Director of Law and Governance to form the Steering Group on the basis seven members, being:**
 - 2 Labour**
 - 2 Conservative**
 - 1 Liberal Democrat**
 - 1 Green Party**
 - 1 Independent**

- 3. the Director of Law and Governance be requested to arrange a meeting of the new Steering Group in March 2021, with quarterly meetings thereafter.**

19 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2021/22

Philip McCourt, Director of Law and Governance introduced the report, which recommended draft dates for Council and Committee meetings for the municipal year 2021/22.

Members noted the short period between the May election and the proposed date of Annual Council, and it was suggested that Annual Council (Part 2) be moved to 26 May 2021 to enable further time for the groups to negotiate committee places following the election. Members were advised that moving Annual Council (Part 2) would mean the meetings scheduled for the week commencing 31st May 2021 would need to be rescheduled.

A comment was also made regarding Budget Policy and Resources Committee in February 2022, where it was felt that holding the meeting earlier would enable more time for budget proposals to be developed prior to Budget Council. It was therefore proposed that the Policy and Resources Committee be scheduled a day earlier.

Resolved – That

- (1) the Annual Council Part 2 meeting scheduled for 19 May 2021 be rescheduled to 26 May 2021.**
- (2) The Policy and Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 16 February 2022 be rescheduled to 15 February 2022.**
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Director of Law and Governance to rearrange the meetings scheduled for the week commencing 31 May 2021.**
- (4) Council be recommended to approve the Calendar of Meetings for the 2021/22 municipal year, subject to the aforementioned amendments.**

20 REMOTE MEETINGS UPDATE

Steve Fox, Head of Democratic and Member Services introduced the report of the Director of Law and Governance, which provided an update in respect to the implementation of the programme of remote Committee meetings since April 2020 in direct response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Committee was provided with an update on the latest position following its previous meeting

and informed that for the period from 1 April 2020 to 12 February 2021, 85 Council and Committee meetings had taken place virtually, in addition to 22 Working Group meetings and 22 Budget Workshops. The Head of Democratic and Member Services expressed his gratitude to Democratic and Member Services colleagues, Group Office Managers and ICT officers for their excellent work in delivering remote meetings.

The Committee was also provided with an update on the recently undertaken Member Survey, which had been completed to ascertain the views of members on their experience of remote Committee meetings and their views on the future running of Committees virtually. It was outlined that 34 members had responded, and the key feedback included:

- Further support was required for Committee Chairs;
- There was a good level of support from Democratic Services Officers and IT;
- Members were able to participate fully in remote meetings; and
- Concerns over the duration of virtual meetings.

A further update was provided on the future of remote Committee meetings, where it was explained that the legislative changes required to allow remote Committee meetings to continue once the regulations set out in the Coronavirus Act 2020 expire on 7 May 2021, had not yet been confirmed. Therefore, pending further advice Democratic Services had made arrangements for Committee meetings to take place both remotely and in-person, alongside an additional approach known as “Hybrid meetings” which was a mixture of remote and in-person attendance.

Members expressed their support for the continuation of remote meetings in the short-term to allay anxieties some members may have about returning to in-person meetings. It was outlined that site visits and risk assessments had been undertaken at potential venues, and assurances were given to the Committee that in-person Committee meetings could be delivered safely should they be required.

Resolved - That

- (1) the report be noted.**
- (2) the Director of Law and Governance be requested to update Group Leaders on the progress of the continuation of remote meetings after 7 May 2021.**
- (3) the thanks of the Committee be expressed to officers involved in the facilitating of remote meetings.**

21 **LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE OF THE NEW CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The Chair explained that he had requested the item to be added to the agenda in order to give members an opportunity to highlight any issues they wished to be considered as part of a future review of the constitution. A discussion ensued and the following points were raised:

- The possible extension of the 1 minute allowed for the introduction of petitions;
- further clarity on what business can be considered via a working group and what business should be discussed in public at Committee; and
- further training on motions, amendments and voting in Committee meetings.

RESOLVED – That

the Director of Governance be requested to progress the comments made by the Committee on the Constitution through the Governance Working Group.

22 **URGENT ITEM: DISPENSATION**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal outlined that the Monitoring Officer had received a written request for a dispensation from Cllr Steve Foulkes to enable him to vote on an item at Budget Council in which he had an interest. The interest related to his membership of the Board of Magenta and the outcome of the Policy and Resources Committee decision in relation to community alarms which would be considered by Council.

The Committee was informed that the Localism Act 2011 defined a number of grounds for requests for dispensation, and the request before the Committee was made on the basis that the interest was structural and if the Member left the chamber the representation of different political groups would otherwise be affected so as to alter the likely outcome of any vote. The Head of Legal advised the Committee that should Cllr Foulkes be unable to vote, it could alter the likely outcome of the vote.

Resolved – That

a dispensation be granted to enable Councillor Steve Foulkes to remain in the room, participate in the debate and vote on item 4c at Budget Council on 1 March 2021, in which he has an interest by virtue of his membership of the Board of Magenta.

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PENSIONS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 2 February 2021

Present:

Councillor P Cleary (Chair)

Councillors C Povall T Jones
C Carubia B Kenny
G Davies L Rowlands
A Gardner A Jones (dep for
Cllr S Foulkes)

Councillors J Aston, Knowsley Council
M Bond, St Helens Council
P Lappin, Sefton Council

Mr R Bannister, Unison retired member representative

Apologies

Councillors T Cottier
S Foulkes

26 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed Members of the Pensions Committee and viewing members of the public to the online, virtual meeting.

27 APOLOGIES

A roll call of Councillors was undertaken on behalf of the Head of Legal Services. Apologies had been received from Councillors Tony Cottier and Steve Foulkes.

28 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

The following declarations were made:

Mr Roger Bannister	Pecuniary interest by virtue of being a member of Merseyside Pension Fund.
Councillor George Davies	Pecuniary interest by virtue of his wife being a member of Merseyside Pension Fund.

Councillor Gardner	Andrew	Pecuniary interest by virtue of being a member of Merseyside Pension Fund.
Councillor Jones	Tony	Pecuniary interest by virtue of himself and his wife being a member of Merseyside Pension Fund.
Councillor Lappin	Paulette	Pecuniary interest by virtue of being a member of Merseyside Pension Fund.
Councillor Povall	Cherry	Pecuniary interest by virtue of her daughter being a member of Merseyside Pension Fund.
Councillor Rowlands	Les	Pecuniary interest by virtue of his wife being a member of Merseyside Pension Fund.

29 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November, 2020 be agreed.

30 **LGPS UPDATE**

The Head of Pensions Administration, Yvonne Murphy, introduced a report that updated Members on the judicial review of the ‘Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020’, and the publication of the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government (MHCLG) guidance on employer applications for the relaxation of the exit cap for local government employees.

The report also raised awareness of communication materials produced by LGA to assist scheme members, administering authorities and employers in understanding the implications of the public sector exit cap on redundancy packages, operational processes and legal obligations.

On 16 December, MHCLG had published waiver guidance for the £95k exit cap in compliance with HM Treasury Directions for circumstances where mandatory or discretionary waivers may apply. The guidance was largely directed at employers and provided information on the process MHCLG would follow in deciding whether to approve a request for a waiver. The Head of Pensions Administration noted that the report contained a link to the guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-exit-pay/local-government-exit-pay-a-guide-for-local-authorities-for-the-interim-period-until-mhclg-regulations-come-into-force#process>

The Committee were also informed that the Pension Fund members website had been updated: -

<https://mpfmembers.org.uk/content/public-sector-exit-cap-faqs-lgps-members>

Moved by the Chair and formally seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall, it was;

Resolved - That the report and the resource implications in administering the Public Sector Exit Payment Regulations be noted.

31 **FSS POLICY UPDATES**

The Head of Pensions Administration, Yvonne Murphy, introduced a report that updated Members covered updates to the Funding Strategy Statement's termination policy and the new contributions flexibilities policy in light of the new Regulations that came into force on 23 September 2020. The Regulations required these policies to be included in the Funding Strategy Statement. Appendix 1 to the report contained the Draft Termination Policy updates regarding exit debt payments and deferred debt agreement flexibilities and Appendix 2 to the report contained the Draft Policy regarding flexible contributions.

The report informed that the default position for exit payments was that they were paid in full at the point of exit. The termination policy had therefore been updated to allow for the new Regulations which allowed exiting employers (subject to a suitable review of the unaffordability of an immediate exit debt payment) to spread their exit debt over a set period or to enter into a Deferred Debt Arrangement allowing them to remain in the Fund with no active members. The policy set out the process that must be followed by the Fund when an employer exits the Fund (usually triggered when the last active contributing member leaves pensionable service).

The new Regulations also permitted contribution rates to be adjusted between valuations. Currently the contribution rates set out in the valuation report stayed in place until the next valuation (except in limited circumstances or where an employer exits the Fund). These Regulations allowed changes to contributions to be made before the next valuation if an employer's circumstances meet the specified criteria. The policy set out the situations where contributions may be reviewed between actuarial valuations and the conditions that must be met.

The Head of Pensions Administration responded to Members questions and being moved by the Chair and formally seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall, it was;

Resolved – That;

- 1. the draft policy for 'Deferred Debt Agreements' based on HMRC's draft statutory guidance and the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) guide be approved.**
- 2. the draft policy for 'Flexibility in Contribution Rates' based on HMRC's draft statutory guidance and the SAB guide be approved.**
- 3. any final changes to the draft policies – following consultation with employers on the updated Funding Strategy Statement, and after having taken advice from the Scheme Actuary along with consideration**

of the publication of the final statutory guidance and SAB guide be delegated to the Director of Pensions.

32 AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES

The Head of Finance & Risk, Donna Smith, presented a report that set out proposed changes to authorised signatories at Merseyside Pension Fund (MPF) following a review of the current signatories against business needs and was updated to reflect staff changes.

The report described the different requirements for various institutions and functions, including the banks, custodian, and overseas pensions payment agent, as well as the granting of power of attorney where appropriate.

The report also formed a part of the Fund's scheme of delegation and set out the management and authorisation arrangements, for the avoidance of doubt by organisations undertaking due diligence on MPF as an investee company or as a financial services provider, or for purposes of overseas jurisdiction.

Moved by the Chair and formally seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall, it was;

Resolved – That;

1 the arrangements set out in section 3 of the report in relation to the internal control arrangements at Merseyside Pension Fund be approved.

2 the officers designated in section 3 of the report as authorised signatories for Merseyside Pensions Fund be approved.

33 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY

Donna Smith, Head of Finance & Risk, presented a report that requested that Members approve the treasury management policy statement and the treasury management practices for Merseyside Pension Fund (MPF) for the year 2021/22.

The report set out that the main aims when managing liquid resources were the security of capital; the liquidity of investments; matching inflows from lending to predicted outflows; an optimal return on investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. Effective management and the control of risk were prime objectives of the treasury management policy and practices.

MPF would comply with the twelve treasury management practices set out in the treasury management policy statement.

The policy statement was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The Head of Finance and Risk responded to Members questions and having been moved by the Chair and formally seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall, it was;

Resolved – That the treasury management policy statement and the treasury management practices for Merseyside Pension Fund for the financial year 2021/22 be approved.

34 **MEMBERS' LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT 2021**

The Director of Pensions, Peter Wallach, presented a report that provided Members with an outline of the potential opportunities for learning & development in 2021. An outline training programme was attached as an appendix to the report. The Director of Pensions informed that considering the restrictions arising from Covid, it was anticipated that most, if not all, of the events would be virtual. As and when in person events recommence or officers become aware of other appropriate events, Committee members would be advised. The Chair encouraged Members participation in training opportunities.

Moved by the Chair and formally seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall, it was;

Resolved – That the proposed learning and development plan for 2021 be noted and approved.

35 **LOCAL PENSION BOARD MINUTES**

The Director of Pensions introduced a report that provided members with the minutes of the previous meeting of the Local Pension Board. The Chair noted the Committee's thanks to the Local Pension Board for its comprehensive coverage of items relating to the Fund.

Moved by the Chair and formally seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall, it was;

Resolved - That the minutes of the Local Pension Board be noted.

36 **NORTHERN LGPS UPDATE**

Members gave consideration to a report of the Director of Pensions that provided Members with an update on pooling arrangements in respect of MPF and the Northern LGPS. Minutes of the previous Joint Committee meeting were appended for noting. The Chair commented that Members may be aware of a letter received from the Friends of Palestine and noted that this

matter had been taken forward to the next NLGPS meeting being held on Thursday 4 February 2021.

Appendix 1 to the report contained exempt information. This was by virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of Local Government Act 1972 i.e. information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Moved by the Chair and formally seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall, it was;

Resolved – That the minutes of the Joint Committee meeting be noted.

37 **MINUTES OF WORKING PARTY MEETINGS**

Moved by the Chair and formally seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall, it was;

Resolved – That, subject to the amendment to the Investment Monitoring Working Party minutes to include Councillor Tony Jones in the list of apologies received for the meeting held on 17 November 2020, the Minutes of the Working Party be approved.

38 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Moved by the Chair and formally seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall, it was:

Resolved – That in accordance with section 100 (A) 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 it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The public interest test had been applied and favoured exclusion.

39 **ADMISSION BODY APPLICATION**

The Head of Pensions Administration, Yvonne Murphy, introduced a report that sought approval to delegate authority to the Director of Pensions to admit an applicant to Merseyside Pension Fund (MPF) as a community admission body.

The report was exempt by virtue of paragraph 3.

The report informed that the formal process to admit the applicant was conditional on receipt of the Secretary of State direction to substitute MPF for CPF in accordance with Part 2 of Schedule 3 of the LGPS Regulations 2013.

In addition, Wirral Council's Group Solicitor must be satisfied that the operations of the organisation align with the regulatory criteria to participate as community interest admission body under the LGPS regulations.

On a motion by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall it was:

Resolved - That authority be delegated to the Director of Pensions:

- **to respond to the consultation issued by the Secretary of State on the final terms of the substitution of Funds.**
- **to admit the applicant as a community admissions body of MPF following consideration of the Group Solicitor's advice, the financial strength of the body, the accessibility of security and the risks to the Fund's stakeholders.**

40 UPDATE ON TAX MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Director Pensions, Peter Wallach, introduced a report that provided members with an update on the progress made by the Fund in Tax Management Arrangements.

The report was exempt by virtue of paragraph 3.

On a motion by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall it was:

Resolved - That the report and the progress being made in the recovery of taxes be noted.

41 NORTHERN LGPS UPDATE EXEMPT MINUTES

The appendix to the report on Northern LGPS Update was exempt by virtue of paragraph 3.

42 EXEMPT MINUTES OF WORKING PARTY MEETINGS

The appendix to the report on Working Party Minutes was exempt by virtue of paragraph 3.

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PLANNING COMMITTEE

Thursday, 17 December 2020

Present:

Councillor	S Kelly (Chair)	
Councillors	S Foulkes	P Stuart
	K Hodson	M Jordan
	G Davies	A Wright
	S Frost	A Gardner
	B Kenny	

15 MINUTES

The Director of Law and Governance submitted the minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2020 for approval.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2020 be approved.

16 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any application on the agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

The Members of the Labour party declared a personal interest in item 4 – APP/20/01151: 41 Albion Street, New Brighton – by virtue of the lead petitioner being known to them (minute 18 refers).

17 APP/20/00467:11 BUFFS LANE, BARNSTON, CH60 2SQ - DEVELOPMENT OF 3 DETACHED 4-BEDROOM HOUSES TO REAR OF PROPERTY

The Director of Regeneration and Place submitted the above application for consideration.

The Lead Petitioner addressed the Committee

It was moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor B Kenny that the application be approved subject to the following conditions.

The motion was put and carried (9:0). Councillor G Davies lost connection during consideration of this matter and therefore (having regard to the LLG Remote Meetings Protocol and Procedure Rules) took

no part in the decision and was unable to vote on this matter as he had not heard all the facts.

Resolved (9:0) – That the application be approved with the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 24/3/20 (unless otherwise stated) and listed as follows:

**BLH/PL01 - LOCATION PLAN REV A received electronically 4/12/20
BLH/PL02 - PLANNING LAYOUT REV D received electronically 4/12/20
BLH/PL03 - STREET SCENE
BLH/HT/P1-01 PLOT 1 FLOOR PLANS
BLH/HT/P1-02 PLOT 1 ELEVATIONS
BLH/HT/P2-01 PLOT 2 FLOOR PLANS
BLH/HT/P2-02 PLOT 2 ELEVATIONS
BLH/HT/P3-01 PLOT 3 FLOOR PLANS
BLH/HT/P3-02 PLOT 3 ELEVATIONS**

3. Before any construction commences, samples of the facing materials to be used in the external construction of this development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved materials shall then be used in the construction of the development.

4. No construction equipment, plant or materials shall be brought onto site until:

i) A tree protection plan and specification has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority demonstrating the provision of root protection area fencing in line with the requirements of British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Construction - Recommendations' or any subsequent amendment to that document, around all trees, hedges, shrubs or other planting to be retained; the provision of ground protection during construction; and a location plan and method statement for the installation of any 'no-dig' surfacing for the vehicular access parking and turning areas; and

ii) The Root Protection Area fencing and ground protection has been installed in accordance with the approved plan and specification.

Thereafter development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and the fencing and ground protection shall be retained until development subject to this consent is completed. There shall be no

excavation or other alteration of ground levels, storage of materials or plant, parking of vehicles, deposit of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids within any area fenced off as part of the tree protection plan and specification.

5. The dwellings hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a detailed scheme for landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall comprise of a plan and specification and demonstrate:

- i) The materials to be used for hard and soft surfacing;
- ii) Compensatory tree planting to replace those specimens removed as part of the development to include the location, number, species and size of trees to be planted;
- iii) Any earthworks required;
- iv) The location and design of fences, gates, walls, railings or other means of enclosure; and
- v) The timing of implementation of the scheme.

Thereafter development shall be carried out as approved.

6. If, within a period of five years from the date of planting of any tree under the landscaping scheme approved by condition, that tree or any tree planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies or becomes in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority seriously damaged or defective, another tree of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted in the same place unless the Local Planning Authority agrees to any variation.

7. No vegetation removal shall take place within the main bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August inclusive) until a pre-commencement check is carried out by a qualified ecologist no earlier than 48 hours before works take place and the qualified ecologist confirms in writing to the Local Planning Authority that no actively nesting birds will be affected by the works.

8. No treatment or removal of *Rhododendron R. ponticum* or Variegated Yellow Archangel (both listed as 'invasive' within Schedule 9 of Part 2 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) shall take place until a method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The method statement shall include:

- i) A plan showing the extent of the plants;
- ii) The method(s) to be used to prevent the plants spreading further, including demarcation;
- iii) The method(s) of control to be used including details of post control monitoring; and
- iv) How the plants will be disposed of after treatment/removal.

Thereafter the works shall be carried out as approved.

9. No development shall take place until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the approved plan shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The plan shall provide for the following:

- i) Location(s) for the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;**
- ii) Location(s) for the loading and unloading of plant and materials;**
- iii) Location(s) for the storage of plant and materials used in construction of the development;**
- iv) Measures to control the emission of noise, vibration and dust during construction;**
- v) Construction phase delivery and working hours not to exceed 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturday and not at all on Sunday or public holidays.**

10. The site shall be developed with separate systems of drainage for foul and surface water.

11. The dwellings hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of the provision to be made for bat roosting and bird nesting on the development site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter development shall be carried out as approved.

12. Prior to first occupation of the use hereby approved arrangements for the storage and disposal of refuse including recycling facilities, and vehicle access thereto, shall be made within the curtilage of the site, in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

13. Before any above ground construction work is commenced details of the proposed finished floor levels and the ridge and eaves heights of the dwellings hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted levels shall be measured against a fixed datum and shall show the existing and finished ground levels and the eaves and ridge heights of surrounding properties. The development shall be carried out as approved.

18 **APP/20/01151: 41 ALBION STREET, NEW BRIGHTON, CH45 9LE - CHANGE OF USE OF GUEST HOUSE (USE CLASS C1) TO 12-BEDROOM LARGE HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO) (USE CLASS SUI GENERIS)**

The Labour Councillors on the Committee declared a personal interest in this matter (minute 16 refers).

The Director of Regeneration and Place submitted the above application for consideration.

The Lead Petitioner addressed the Committee.

A Ward Councillor addressed the Committee.

It was moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor K Hodson that the application be approved subject to the following conditions.

The motion was put and carried (10:0).

Resolved (10:0) – That the application be approved with the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

2. Unless modified by other conditions of this consent, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 24 August 2020 and listed as follows:

5408-1 (Floor Plans and Elevations as Existing)

5408-2 (Floor Plans as Proposed)

5408-03 (Kitchen Layout Plans as Proposed)

3. Prior to the development hereby permitted being first brought into use, details of secure covered & lockable cycle parking and/or storage facilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These facilities shall be provided in accordance with the approved details and made available for use prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted and shall be retained for use at all times thereafter.

4. Prior to first occupation of the use hereby approved arrangements for the storage and disposal of refuse including recycling facilities, and vehicle access thereto, shall be made within the curtilage of the site, in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in full and thereafter

retained unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

5. Prior to the development hereby permitted being first occupied, the existing external fire escape stair to the east side elevation of the building (as shown on drawing 5408-1) shall be removed and hard surfaced, level access provided between the public highway and the cycle and bin storage areas to the rear of the building.

6. The house in multiple occupation hereby permitted shall not be occupied by more than twelve people.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Thursday, 14 January 2021

Present:

Councillor	S Kelly (Chair)	
Councillors	S Foulkes	P Stuart
	K Hodson	M Jordan
	G Davies	A Wright
	S Frost	A Gardner
	B Kenny	

19 MINUTES

The Director of Law and Governance submitted the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2020 for approval.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2020 be approved.

20 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any application on the agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

21 ORDER OF BUSINESS

With the consent of the Members of the Committee, the Chair agreed to vary the order of business.

22 APP/20/01065: LAND TO THE REAR OF 9 & 10 COPSE GROVE, IRBY, CH61 4YP - ERECTION OF 2 NO DETACHED HOUSES WITH ASSOCIATED FREE-STANDING GARAGE

Resolved – That consideration of this application be deferred to a future meeting of this Committee for consideration of additional representations.

23 **APP/20/00720: TEVIOT BANK, 6 COTTAGE LANE, GAYTON, CH60 8PB - DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND ERECTION OF BUILDING CONTAINING 8 NO. APARTMENTS, WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING, PARKING, BIKE STORE AND BIN STORE**

The Director of Regeneration and Place submitted the above application for consideration.

The Lead Petitioner addressed the Committee.

The Applicant addressed the Committee.

A Ward Councillor addressed the Committee.

It was moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor B Kenny that the application be approved subject to the following conditions.

The motion was put and carried (9:0).

Councillor A Gardner lost connection during consideration of this matter and therefore (having regard to the LLG Remote Meetings Protocol and Procedure Rules) took no part in the decision and was unable to vote on this matter as he had not heard all the facts.

Resolved (9:0) – That the application be approved with the following conditions:

- 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.**
- 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 2nd June 2020 and listed as follows: 19-425-001; 19-425-002; 19-425-003; 19-425-005; 19-425-101; 19-425-201; 19-425-202; 19-425-203; 19-425-204, and the amendment plans received on 2nd October 2020 and listed as follows: 19-425-205 A; 19-425-206 A; 19-425-207 A; 19-425-301 B; 19-425-302 B; 19-425-401 B; 19-425-601; 19-425-602; 19-425-701**
- 3. Before any construction above ground level commences, samples of the materials to be used in the external construction of this development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved materials shall then be used in the construction of the development.**
- 4. The proposed bin and cycle storage facilities, as shown on Drawings 202 and 203, shall be provided as shown prior to first occupation of the development and retained as such for use at all times afterwards, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority**

5. Prior to the construction of the new access, a full scheme of works for the new access onto Long Meadow, including adequate visibility splays as shown on the approved drawings and the reinstatement to standard footway levels of any existing vehicle accesses from the highway that are rendered obsolete by the development shall be submitted and approved in writing by the LPA. The development shall not be occupied until the approved works have been completed in accordance with the approved scheme.

6. The windows above ground floor level in the north-eastern elevation (serving the stairwell) shall be obscurely glazed prior to first occupation and shall be retained as such thereafter

7. No development shall take place until a drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall provide for the disposal of foul, surface and land water, and include an assessment of the potential to dispose of surface and land water by sustainable means. Thereafter the scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the development and no further foul water, surface water and land drainage shall be allowed to connect directly or indirectly with the public sewerage system.

8. PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT, detailed drawings indicating the finished site and ground floor levels intended at the completion of the development in relation to the existing site levels and the levels of the adjoining land shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

9. No development above ground level shall take place before details of a scheme of landscaping, which shall include details of both hard and soft landscaping works, all boundary treatment, earthworks and retained trees, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme as approved shall be carried out no later than the first planting season following the completion of development. Any trees, shrubs or plants that die within a period of five years from the completion of development, or are removed and/or become seriously damaged or diseased in that period, shall be replaced (and if necessary continue to be replaced) in the first available planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives prior written permission for any variation

10. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted arboricultural method statement (Arbtech, 1 July 2020) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority

11. Prior to the commencement of site clearance, demolition, storage of plant

(non-tree related), materials, machinery, including site huts and WCs, Tree Protection Barriers shall be installed and shall conform to the specification within the method statement. The Tree Protection Barriers and Ground Protection shall not be removed, breached or altered without prior written authorisation from the Local Planning Authority or client arboriculturist, but shall remain in a functional condition throughout the entire development, until all development related machinery and materials have been removed from site. If such protection measures are damaged beyond effective functioning then works that may compromise the protection of trees shall cease until the protection can be repaired or replaced with a specification that shall provide a similar degree of protection.

The tree protection measures shall not be dismantled until all construction related machinery and materials have been removed from site and not without written authorisation from the local planning authority or client arboriculturist. Once authorisation has been given the protection measures can be removed by hand and transported off site. During which time, no machinery or vehicles shall enter the area previously protected. No excavations, storage of materials, soil stripping, the raising or lowering of levels or the laying of hard surfacing without prior approval of the arboricultural consultant and / or the Local Planning Authority. Any issues regarding tree protection should be agreed and implemented prior to commencement of development.

12. The following activities must not be carried out under any circumstances:

- a, No fires to be lit within 20 metres of existing trees and shrubs to be retained.
- b, Storage of removed topsoil should be located outside of the Root Protection Areas of retained trees and away from those parts of the site allocated for soft landscaping.
- c, No equipment, signage, fencing, tree protection barriers, materials, components, vehicles or structures shall be attached to or supported by a retained tree.
- d, No builders debris or other materials to be stored within the Root Protection Areas.
- e, No mixing of cement, associate additives, chemicals, fuels, tar and other oil based liquids and powders shall occur within 10 metres of any tree Root Protection Area. A dedicated washout area shall be a used and located not within 10 metres of any Root Protection f, No alterations or variations to the approved works or tree protection schemes shall be carried out without the prior written approval of the LPA.
- g, No excavations, trenches, stripping, cultivation with a rotavator or changes in surface level to occur within the Root Protection Area, unless authorised.

13. NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE UNTIL a Construction Management Plan or Construction Method Statement for the construction of the development hereby approved has been submitted to, and approved in

writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The construction works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Details submitted in respect of the method statement shall provide for routes for construction traffic, the provision of parking facilities for contractors and visitors during all stages of the development, hours of operation, the provision of a means of storage and/or delivery for all plant, site huts, site facilities and materials and shall provide for wheel cleaning facilities during the site preparation and construction stages of the development and/or method(s) of prevention of mud being carried onto the highway.

- 24 **APP/19/01177: WILLOWBANK, 33 OLDFIELD ROAD, HESWALL, CH60 6SN - ERECTION OF THREE 5-BEDROOM DETACHED DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, PARKING AND LANDSCAPING.**

The Director of Regeneration and Place submitted the above application for consideration.

The Applicant's Agent addressed the Committee.

It was moved by Councillor K Hodson and seconded by Councillor S Foulkes that the application be approved subject to the following conditions.

The motion was put and carried (10:0).

Resolved (10:0) – That the application be approved with the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

2. Unless modified by other conditions of this consent, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 22 September 2020 and listed as follows:

SHACK373 B102 Revision C (Proposed Site Plan)
SHACK373 B103 Revision B (House Type 1A)
SHACK373 B104 Revision C (House Type 1B)
SHACK373 B105 Revision B (House Type 2)
SHACK373 B106 Revision B (Context Elevation)
SHACK373 B107 Revision B (Site Sections A-A and B-B)
SHACK373 B108 Revision B (Site Sections C-C and D-D)

3. PART A

No development shall commence (to include demolition and site clearance) until further revisions to the submitted Landscape Habitat Restoration Note and Landscape Proposals General Arrangement Plan have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such revisions shall make provision for:

i) Amendment to the Landscape Restoration proposals insofar as they relate to land to the rear of plot 4 to ensure that the domestic garden area of plot 4 does not extend beyond the red line boundary of the application site and to ensure a defensible boundary is erected between the domestic garden of plot 4 and land within the Heswall Dales SSSI which does not allow access between plot 4 and the SSSI,

ii) Detailed proposals for the treatment of site and plot boundaries, and

iii) Confirmation of timing for the implementation and completion of the Landscape Habitat Restoration Scheme.

Thereafter development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Landscape Habitat Restoration Note and Landscape General Arrangement Plan.

PART B

Within one month of completion of the Landscape Habitat Restoration Scheme a verification report shall be submitted for the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. Such report shall include a photographic schedule of the works carried out, demonstrate how the works carried out have complied with the scheme approved under Part A of this condition, set out a schedule of on-going management and maintenance works required to maintain the habitat in a favourable condition for the following 12-month period, and set out the timescale for carrying out the work.

Thereafter the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

PART C

On the first anniversary of the submission of the verification report under Part B, and on every anniversary thereafter for a period of a further four years, a Landscape Habitat Management Annual Monitoring Report shall be submitted for the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. Such report shall:

i) Assess the condition of the Landscape Habitat Restoration Area (to include a photographic schedule),

- ii) State the management and maintenance works that have been carried out over the preceding 12 months,
- iii) Set out a schedule of management and maintenance works required to maintain the habitat in a favourable condition over the next 12 month period, and
- iv) Set out the timescale for carrying out the work.

Thereafter the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

4. No development shall commence (to include demolition and site clearance) until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include the specific measures required to protect the Heswall Dales Site of Special Scientific Interest during the construction period. Thereafter development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

5. No dwelling shall be occupied until a Homeowner Information Pack has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The information pack shall provide details on the Heswall Dales SSSI and its habitats, and the requirements for on-going management and maintenance work on their land. In particular the Information Pack shall, amongst other requirements:

- i) Contain the detailed planting proposals for the restoration area section of their garden.
- ii) Set out the list of approved species for replacement planting in the restoration area section of their garden,
- iii) Set out a list of invasive species that should not be planted anywhere on their property, and
- iv) Make specific reference to the restricted access to the Dales.

Thereafter the Information Pack, as approved, shall be issued to occupiers of the development.

6. No development shall commence until detailed engineering drawings of the site access road, comprising plans and sections drawn to an appropriate scale, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such drawings shall demonstrate the engineering solution to be adopted to span the Root Protection Areas of protected trees where they conflict with the line of the access road. Thereafter the access road shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and completed prior to first occupation of any dwelling hereby approved.

7. No development shall commence until a Highways Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local

Planning Authority. For each phase of development the plan shall demonstrate:

- i) Location(s) for the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors clear of the public highway,**
- ii) Location(s) for the loading, unloading and storage of plant and materials used in construction of the development,**
- iii) Measures to prevent the deposit of mud/grit/dirt on the public highway, with wheel washing facilities where appropriate, and**
- iv) Management, routing and control of HCV construction traffic.**

Thereafter development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

8. No other plant or materials shall be brought onto site until tree protection fencing and ground protection has been installed around all trees to be retained as part of the development in accordance with the submitted tree protection plan and tree protection method statement (Tree Solutions Arboricultural Consultants 'Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement' dated June 2019 reference 19/AIA/WIRR/46).

Thereafter development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and all fencing and ground protection shall be retained until development subject to this consent is complete. There shall be no excavation or other alteration of ground levels, storage of materials or plant, parking of vehicles, deposit of soil or rubble, disposal of liquids, or lighting of fires within any area fenced off as part of the tree protection plan and method statement.

9. No development above ground floor slab level shall take place until samples of the external walling and roofing materials to be used in the construction of the dwellings hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

10. No development above ground floor slab level shall take place until a detailed scheme for landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall address those areas of the site outside the SSSI Landscape Restoration Areas managed under condition 3 of this consent and it shall be informed by the West Wirral Heathlands and Arrowe Park Nature Improvement Area. The scheme shall demonstrate:

- i) The materials to be used in hard and soft surfacing,**
- ii) The planting of trees, shrubs and hedgerow species of local provenance with details of the species, location, number, stock size and planting densities,**

- iii) Details of the type, size and external appearance of any gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure, and
- iv) The timing of implementation of the scheme.

When considering species for tree, shrub and hedge planting, consideration should be given to suitable species that produce berry bearing fruit, and attract a range of insects, to encourage bird and bat foraging.

Thereafter the landscaping scheme shall be carried out as approved.

11. If, within a period of five years from the date of planting any tree, shrub or hedgerow (planted as part of the landscaping scheme approved under condition 10 or the SSSI Landscape Restoration Area proposals approved under condition 3) that specimen, or any specimen planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies or in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority becomes seriously damaged or defective, another specimen of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted in the same location, unless the Local Planning Authority approves any variation.

12. No vegetation removal shall take place within the main bird nesting season (April to September inclusive) until a pre-commencement check is carried out by a qualified ecologist no earlier than 48 hours prior to the commencement of works, and the qualified ecologist confirms to the Local Planning Authority in writing, no later than 48 hours after the check has taken place, that no actively nesting birds will be affected.

13. The following priority species reasonable avoidance measures shall be put in place during the construction phase of the development hereby approved:

- i) A pre-commencement check by a qualified ecologist for common lizard, common toad and hedgehog within suitable habitats on site.
- ii) All trenches and excavations shall have a means of escape (such as a ramp)
- iii) Any exposed open pipe systems should be capped to prevent mammals gaining access, and
- iv) Raised storage of materials on pallets and in such a manner that mammals are not able to use them for shelter.

14. No external lighting shall be installed until an external lighting scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall comprise of a suitably scaled plan and lighting schedule and shall demonstrate:

- i) The location, type and luminance of each light fitting to be installed, and
- ii) How the scheme has been designed to take account of Bat Conservation Trust guidelines at www.bats.org to prevent excessive light spill onto areas

containing bat commuting and foraging habitat.

Thereafter the external lighting scheme shall be carried out as approved.

15. Prior to first occupation of the dwelling(s) hereby approved arrangements for the storage and disposal of refuse including recycling facilities, and vehicle access thereto, shall be made within the curtilage of the site, in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

16. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and/or re-enacting that Order) no extension or enlargement (including additions to roofs) shall be made to the dwellinghouse(s) hereby approved, or any detached building erected swimming or other pools, hard surfaces, raised platforms, gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure (other than those expressly authorised by this permission), without the express permission in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

17. Before any above ground construction work is commenced details of the proposed finished floor levels and the ridge and eaves heights of the dwellings hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted levels shall be measured against a fixed datum and shall show the existing and finished ground levels and the eaves and ridge heights of surrounding properties. The development shall be carried out as approved.

25 **APP/20/01435: MILL HOUSE, BLAKELEY ROAD, RABY MERE, CH63 0LZ - ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING BOUNDARY FENCING AND ENTRANCE GATES.**

The Director of Regeneration and Place submitted the above application for consideration.

A Ward Councillor addressed the Committee.

It was moved by Councillor M Jordan and seconded by Councillor A Gardner that the application be refused for the following reason:

Having regard to the sites location at the edge of the urban area and taking into account that the site is visible from the surrounding open countryside, having regards to the visual impact of the proposals, it is considered that the proposed railings do not form appropriate boundary treatment in terms of the visual amenities of the area and the character of the surrounding landscape. The proposals therefore do not comply

with Policy LA7 (Criteria for Development at the Urban Fringe) of the adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

The motion was put and lost (4:6).

It was further moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor P Stuart that the application be approved with the following conditions.

Resolved (6:4) – That the application be approved with the following conditions:

- 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.**
- 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on (26 October, 2020 and 16 December, 2020) and listed as follows: (drawing refs: 'Proposed Main Entrance Gates' and 'Proposed Rear Entrance Gate and Fencing', dated: 16 December, 2020; and 'Proposed Site Plan', dated: 26 October, 2020)**
- 3. The existing 2.4m high close boarded timber fence shall be removed and replaced by the approved 1.8m wall mounted railings no later than 1 month from the date the application was granted.**
- 4. Development shall not commence until full details of the boundary treatment have been submitted for written approval by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of works. These shall include cross sectional drawings illustrating the thickness of the railings at 1:1 or 1:2, cross section drawings of the boundary treatment (wall and railings) scale 1:20 and elevational section details at 1:20 scale (or similar) of the wall itself. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.**
- 5. No works or development shall take place until a scheme for the protection of the retained trees - The Tree protection plan (section 5.5, BS 5837:2012, Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations) has been agreed in writing with the LPA. This scheme shall include:**
 - a). the details of each retained tree as required at section. 4.4 of BS5837 in a separate schedule;**
 - b). a plan or relevant drawings, including proposed site layout plans, to a scale and level of accuracy appropriate to the proposal that shows constraints posed by existing trees (section 5.2 BS 5837), the position, crown spread and Root Protection Area (section 4.6 of BS5837) of every retained tree on site and on neighbouring or nearby ground to the site in relation to the approved plans and particulars. The positions of all trees to be removed shall be indicated on this plan;**
 - c). a schedule of tree works for all the retained trees in paragraphs (a) and (b)**

above, specifying pruning and other remedial or preventative work, whether for physiological, hazard abatement, aesthetic or operational reasons. All tree works shall be carried out in accordance with BS3998, 2010, Tree work-Recommendations.

An arboricultural method statement (section 6 BS 5837) containing;

- d). the details and positions (shown on the plan at paragraph (a) above) of the Tree Protection Barriers (section 6.2 of BS5837), identified separately where required for different phases of construction work (e.g. demolition, construction, hard landscaping). The Tree Protection Barriers must be erected prior to each construction phase commencing and remain in place, and undamaged for the duration of that phase. No works shall take place on the next phase until the Tree Protection Barriers are repositioned for that phase;
- e). the details and positions (shown on the plan at paragraph (a) above) of the Ground Protection Zones (para 6.2.3 of BS5837);
- f). the details and positions (shown on the plan at paragraph (a) above) of the Construction Exclusion Zones (section 6 of BS5837);
- g). the details of any changes in levels or the position of any proposed excavations within 5 metres of the Root Protection Area (para. 5.5.6 of BS5837) of any retained tree, including those on neighbouring or nearby ground;
- h). the details of any special engineering required to accommodate the protection of retained trees (section 7 of BS5837), (e.g. in connection with foundations, bridging, water features, surfacing);
- i). the details of the working methods to be employed with regard to site logistics and storage, including an allowance for slopes, water courses and enclosures, with particular regard to ground compaction and phytotoxicity;
- j). the details of tree protection measures for site works, landscaping operations and management (section 8 of BS5837);
- k). the timing of the various phases of the works or development in the context of the tree protection measures.

The development shall then be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement.

6. The following activities must not be carried out under any circumstances:

- a). No fires to be lit within 20 metres of existing trees and shrubs to be retained.
- b). Storage of removed topsoil should be located outside of the Root Protection Areas of retained trees and away from those parts of the site allocated for soft landscaping.
- c). No equipment, signage, fencing, tree protection barriers, materials, components, vehicles or structures shall be attached to or supported by a retained tree.
- d). No builder's debris or other materials to be stored within the Root Protection Areas.

- e). No mixing of cement, associate additives, chemicals, fuels, tar and other oil-based liquids and powders shall occur within 10 metres of any tree Root Protection Area. A dedicated washout area shall be a used and located not within 10 metres of any Root Protection**
- f). No alterations or variations to the approved works or tree protection schemes shall be carried out without the prior written approval of the LPA.**
- g). No excavations, trenches, stripping, cultivation with a rotavator or changes in surface level to occur within the Root Protection Area, unless authorised.**

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PLANNING COMMITTEE

Thursday, 11 February 2021

Present:

Councillor	S Kelly (Chair)	
Councillors	S Foulkes	P Stuart
	K Hodson	M Jordan
	G Davies	A Wright
	S Frost	A Gardner
	B Kenny	

26 MINUTES

The Director of Law and Governance submitted the minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2021 for approval.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2021 be approved.

27 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any application on the agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

Councillor S Foulkes declared a personal interest in respect of Item 5 – APP/20/01065: Land to the rear of 9 & 10 Copse Grove, Irby – by virtue of having been involved in a historic decision in this matter (minute 28 refers).

28 APP/20/01065 - LAND TO THE REAR OF 9 & 10 COPSE GROVE, IRBY, CH61 4YP

Councillor S Foulkes declared a personal interest in respect of this matter (minute 27 refers).

The Director of Regeneration and Place submitted the above application for consideration.

The Lead Petitioner addressed the Committee.

A Ward Councillor addressed the Committee.

It was moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor A Gardner that the application be refused.

The motion was put and carried (8:2).

Resolved (8:2) – That the application be refused for the following reason:

The Local Planning Authority consider the site to be an area of visual importance to the locality and wider area. UDP policy GRE1, paragraph (iv), seeks to protect land with local amenity value. The Local Planning Authority considers development of the area would be harmful to local amenity contrary to GRE1 (paragraph (IV)) and the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.

29 **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE – PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020**

The Director for Regeneration and Place submitted a report updating Members on the performance of the Development Management Service with regard to determining planning applications.

The report outlined performance against government targets in terms of the speed of processing all applications.

It was reported that during 2019/20 the Service had surpassed the requirements for all targets in each category of applications.

Councillor Foulkes expressed his thanks to Councillor Davies for his work as Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning in securing the extra resources for the Development Management Service and stated that the report showed that the Council provided an efficient planning service.

The Chair reiterated the fact that the first three quarterly performance remained consistently high in a particularly difficult year and thanked officers for their hard work in achieving this performance.

Resolved – That the report be noted and that officers be thanked for their hard work in achieving a high level of performance.

30 **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE – PLANNING APPEALS**

The Director for Regeneration and Place submitted a report to update Members on the performance of the Development Management Service regarding planning appeals and specifically the percentage of the Council's decisions overturned (on appeal) by the Planning Inspectorate.

The Principal Planning Team Leader reported that costs were put forward for four cases and no costs were awarded for any case which had resulted in 100% success.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

31 **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE -
ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020**

The Director for Regeneration and Place submitted a report to update Members on the performance of the Development Management Service with regard to its planning enforcement activity for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020.

Members were advised that the performance of the enforcement service would be reported to the Planning Committee on a quarterly basis in future.

The Assistant Director, Chief Planner reported that 366 new cases had been opened between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2020 and that during this period 340 cases had been closed and that the pandemic had led to some delays in commencing investigations in some cases, such as those that required an internal inspection of a building and that these cases would be progressed when it would be safe to do so.

The report outlined some examples of key successes achieved during 2020 which included the Hamilton Square Project, an updated Planning Enforcement Policy, Hillbark Hotel, Frankby, 34 Stanley Road, Hoylake and 1 Belford Drive, Moreton.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

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REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 19 January 2021

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	AER Jones (Vice-Chair in the Chair)	
	Councillors	AER Jones M Collins C Cooke G Davies K Greaney C Jones D Mitchell	L Rowlands J Stapleton I Williams KJ Williams S Williams
<u>Deputies:</u>	Councillors	C Muspratt (for T Norbury) A Wright (for A Hodson)	
<u>Apologies:</u>	Councillors	A Hodson T Norbury	

Vice-Chair in the Chair

9 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor G Davies declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 4 - Wirral Award (minute 12 refers), by virtue of having submitted two nominations.

Councillors A Jones, D Mitchell and C Cooke declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 4 - Wirral Award (minute 12 refers), by virtue of having been Members of the Wirral Award Working Party who considered the nominations.

10 MINUTES

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee held on 18 November 2020 be approved.

11 **REFERRAL FROM COUNCIL - MOTION - WIRRAL COUNCIL ASKED TO BACK THE RSPCA'S FIREWORKS CAMPAIGN**

A motion, approved by Council, at its meeting on 7 December, 2020 (minute 45 refers) regarding the RSPCA'S Fireworks Campaign had been referred to this Committee, in accordance with the wording of the motion.

Councillor L Rennie, proposer of the motion, addressed the Committee and advised that one of the resolutions of the motion was to ask this Committee to investigate how the Council can work with our licensed venues to encourage the safe, responsible and neighbourly use of fireworks within their grounds.

Councillor Rennie proposed that Members of this Committee work with officers to encourage venues to comply with a Code of Conduct outlining how they could be good neighbours to people and animals within the vicinity of their premises should they wish to set off fireworks.

The Licensing Manager informed Members that she would research and investigate the matter to draw up a Code of Conduct to share with Councillors Rennie and Lewis (as proposer and seconder of the motion) and requested that any other Councillors of this Committee who wished to be involved notify the Democratic Services Officer.

Resolved – That the motion be noted and that a nominated group of Councillors from this Committee, together with Councillors Rennie and Lewis, work together with the Licensing Manager to draw up a Code of Conduct in order that venues be encouraged in the safe, responsible and neighbourly use of fireworks within their grounds.

12 **WIRRAL AWARD 2020**

Councillor G Davies declared a non-pecuniary interest in this matter by virtue of having submitted two nominations (minute 9 refers).

Councillors A Jones, D Mitchell and C Cooke declared a non-pecuniary interest in this matter, by virtue of having been Members of the Wirral Award Working Party who considered the nominations (minute 9 refers).

A report by the Director of Law and Governance requested agreement from the Committee that the Wirral Award be conferred on the nominees as recommended by the Wirral Award Working Party held on 10 December 2020. The Wirral Award is intended to confer civic recognition upon individuals or organisations resident or located in Wirral for an outstanding achievement within the previous twelve months, or for distinguished service to the Borough over a period of twenty years or more.

It was reported that once nominations were agreed, due to the current pandemic, certificates would be issued to the successful nominees or a virtual presentation ceremony would be arranged which would be attended by The Mayor of Wirral, the Leader of the Council, Group Leaders or their nominees, the Chair and spokespersons of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee or their nominees and the award nominees.

Members considered the recommendations of the Wirral Award Working Party and the nominations which were attached to the report as an exempt appendix.

On a motion by Councillor M Collins and seconded by Councillor S Williams it was -

Resolved –

- (1) That the Wirral Award 2020 be conferred upon those recipients recommended by the Wirral Award Working Party.**
- (2) That the recommendation to make appropriate arrangements for the presentation ceremony to take place (if possible due to the current pandemic) as set out in paragraph 3.0 of the report or to hold a virtual ceremony be approved.**

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Council – 22 March, 2021

Motions

The following motions have been submitted in accordance with the notice required by Standing Order 13.1 and are listed in accordance with Standing Order 13.2.

1. NHS PAY RISE

Proposed by Councillor Janette Williamson

Seconded by Councillor Yvonne Nolan

During the pandemic NHS staff gave their all. Doctors, nurses, porters, and others have worked tirelessly to preserve life on Wirral. Our continued efforts to deal with the impacts of the pandemic on the health of residents is reliant on a strong healthcare system filled with skilled and experienced individuals.

Council notes that the government's settlement will likely achieve the opposite of that. The Royal College of Nursing has stated there are already 40,000 nursing vacancies and that "significant numbers" will leave after this "slap in the face..." Council notes the local Trust (WUTH) had the equivalent of 158 Band 5 full time vacancies (18.05%) in August 2020 and is already dealing with rising sickness rates as demands of the pandemic takes its toll on frontline staff.

Reducing agency spend, and levels of sickness is something that the local Trust has been working to address, following the most recent CQC visit published in March of last year. Council wishes to add its voice to those telling the government that their proposed pay increase will harm our collective effort alongside health partners to address these problems and provide the best possible care and environment for Wirral health staff and patients alike.

Council notes this meagre pay rise does not take place in isolation but in the context of nearly a decade of disappointing pay settlements that have risked devaluing the over 10,000 people who work for NHS providers on Wirral. Even with a 1% pay rise, nurses' pay on Wirral will be £2,500 less than in 2010 when adjusted for inflation, with equivalent falls of £3,330 for paramedics and £850 for porters.

The government has defended its decision, with the Prime Minister stating, "We tried to give as much as we could". Wirral Council is acutely aware of the difficulties of balancing a budget, but fundamentally this comes down to priorities, not finances.

Council requests that the Leader calls upon the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to reconsider what is being viewed by many NHS staff as an insulting pay rise of 1%. It urges all local party leaders to work through their relevant channels to highlight their disappointment.

2. SUPPORT FOR BRITISH VALUES LOCALLY

Proposed by Councillor David Burgess-Joyce

Seconded by Councillor Michael Collins

The United Kingdom has a long and proud history on the world stage and has been a beacon for peace and democracy, both within its own shores, and as a promulgator abroad. We have, as a result, a great reputation for attracting peoples from across the globe who want to make their home here for those very reasons; not least our tolerance of race, lifestyle, politics, religion and gender.

The exiting of the European Union in January 2020 prompted a flurry of new international trade deals, designed to complement the existing EU arrangement, together with a ramping-up of the establishment of the UK as a sovereign nation free to engage at will. This will lead to a greater drive to 'Buy British' and Wirral Council should play its part.

A number of key moments in 2020 proved that the British public, whether they voted for or against leaving the EU, do not feel any less proud of their country and it is important we as public officials support this important view as we extend our reach on the world stage. As a primary display of this, Council therefore requests Policy and Resources Committee to consider and to support the visible display of the Union Flag in all public areas with immediate effect and show it on all correspondence.

3. RECOGNISING THE CONTRIBUTION OF THOSE WHO CARE

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Council notes that the British Medical Association, the Royal College of Nursing, the Royal College of Midwives and Unison have, rightly, been highly critical of the Government's submission to the NHS Pay Review Body.

Council observes that The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, has attempted to defend the Government's 1% pay recommendation for nurses by saying it *"reflects the difficult financial circumstances that the country is in"*.

Council fully understands the concerns raised by Professor Dame Donna Kinnair DBE, the Royal College of Nursing's Chief Executive & General Secretary, that ...

"At a time when many experienced nurses are burnt out, exhausted and considering leaving the career they love, the link between unfair pay, staffing levels and patient safety is stark. A pay increase is vital so that existing staff stay in post and the health service is able to begin to fill the tens of thousands of nursing vacancies" (18.12.2020).

Council recognises that a trained, qualified and suitably remunerated workforce is desirable to secure the quality of health and care provision in the Borough.

In seeking remuneration that encourages workforce development and retention, it has in mind these issues:

- (i) The residents of Extra Care Housing Schemes in the Borough such as Mendell Court, Harvest Court, Granville Court and Willow Bank Court, all benefit from the care and expertise of both social care and NHS staff.
- (ii) The need for enough qualified nurses in Wirral was highlighted when staff from the Walk In Centre at Eastham were re-allocated to Arrowe Park Hospital when it faced particular pressures over waiting times in its Emergency Department.
- (iii) the Terms of Reference of the Health and Wellbeing Board refer to 'a collaborative approach to commissioning improved health and care services' and also refer to a role which does 'review the financial and organisational implications of joint and integrated working across health and social care services'.
- (iv) A large proportion of the workforce at Wirral University Teaching Hospital and other Health Service locations will be Wirral residents who would benefit from appropriate remuneration and career opportunities.

Having regard to these issues, Council therefore believes that the interests of Wirral's residents are best served by the award of a pay offer which encourages the recruitment and the retention of sufficient numbers of nurses, locally and nationally, and properly recognises the commitment of all those who have served our community with such dedication throughout the difficulties over the past year.

Accordingly, Council requests that Groups Leaders call upon the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to recognise that the Government's submission is completely misjudged and offensive in the circumstances. Council agrees, therefore, that whilst the Review Body is still considering the evidence, representations to that effect must be made to the NHS Pay Review Body.

4. COMMUNITY INVESTMENT BONDS

Proposed by Councillor Chris Cooke
Seconded by Councillor Pat Cleary

Against the background of having to tackle a serious budget deficit, Council recognises the need to be innovative in securing a firm financial footing for the future of the borough.

Council believes that alternatives to borrowing from the Treasury via the Public Works Loans Board can be considered.

An increasingly popular and effective means of raising money for projects such as active travel, charging points for electric vehicles and renewable energy are Community Investment Bonds, sometimes known as Community Mutual Investments.

For example, these have been used successfully by West Berkshire Council to raise £1m to fund installation of solar panels on council buildings and by Warrington Council to fund its Affordable Green Homes project.

Community Investment Bonds can empower local residents by enabling them to invest in ethical projects benefiting their local communities for modest, but safe returns. They are an attractive and constructive alternative to saving with banks at low interest rates and with no guarantee that the money will be invested ethically. They can be an important addition to an area's community wealth building approach.

Council, therefore, asks that the Policy and Resources Committee includes in its work programme for the upcoming financial year an examination of Community Investment Bonds. This work to include:

- A review of the use of Community Investment Bonds elsewhere in the country
- An assessment of their potential application to fund projects in Wirral
- An outline of the practical steps required to set up Community Investment Bonds in Wirral

5. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION FAIR EMPLOYMENT CHARTER

Proposed by Councillor Brian Kenny
Seconded by Councillor Adrian Jones

Wirral Council notes:

- A landmark partnership agreement on employment and skills, and public sector workforce development has been reached between the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, LCR Local Authorities and Trade Union partners.
- Brokered by the TUC, Metro Mayor, Acting Mayor and local leaders, the agreement will see Trade Unions and political leaders working together to develop the public sector workforce, promote good practice on learning and development and developing partnerships to deliver good quality Employment and skills projects across the city region.
- The recent launch of the Liverpool City Region Fair Employment Charter by Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram.
- That the Charter is a welcome move to help raise employment standards and working practices for people across Wirral and the wider City Region.
- That low-pay, insecure work and a lack of employee voice are problems that we are committed to tackling.
- That Decent jobs, access to quality training, upskilling and reskilling, and a strong focus on equality, diversity and inclusion are all necessary if we are to create a fair and inclusive city region.

- That this is a positive step to work with good employers to share best practice and improve conditions for local workers.

Therefore, Wirral Council resolves to:

Continue working with the Metro Mayor of the Liverpool City Region to champion healthy, fair, inclusive and just workplaces.

6. THE NHS COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie

Council recognises that, at the time of submission of the motion, 22,213,112 people have been vaccinated in the UK. In Wirral 128,633 residents have been vaccinated which includes all Wirral residents in Priority Groups 1-9 to be offered a vaccine. This covers the following residents:

1. Residents in a care home for older adults and staff working in care homes for older adults.
2. All those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers.
3. All those 75 years of age and over.
4. All those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.
5. All those 65 years of age and over.
6. Adults aged 16 to 65 years in an at-risk group.
7. All those 60 years of age and over.
8. All those 55 years of age and over.
9. All those 50 years of age and over.

Council wishes to commend the people of Wirral for their steadfastness and compliance with the rules around the use of face coverings, regular handwashing and maintaining social distancing coupled with working from home, when possible. We all recognise the huge impacts and difficulties this will have had and commit to supporting action on the consequential impacts on residents' mental health that the pandemic will have caused.

As Wirral follows the Roadmap and lockdown is cautiously eased, Council encourages Wirral residents to continue to follow the hands, face, space guidance, adhere to national guidance and reject the spurious anti-vaccine propaganda. Council

encourages any Wirral resident who has not taken up their opportunity to be vaccinated to do so.

Council wishes to place on record its sincerest thanks to the scientists (publicly and privately funded), pharmaceutical companies, procurement professionals, GPs, healthcare professionals, Council staff and volunteers who have made this miracle a reality by ensuring the success of the vaccination programme here in Wirral.

Council therefore requests the Leader of the Council to write to Wirral Council's Chief Executive and the Chair of Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group thanking them and their staff, on behalf of the Council, for this heroic effort.

7. RIGHT TO FOOD

Proposed by Councillor Janette Williamson
Seconded by Councillor Christine Spriggs

We are seeing a crisis of food poverty born out of the political choices and systemic failings created over the past four decades, which have now reached a tipping point for so many in our communities. The figures are devastating for one of the richest nations in the world and highlight the inequality of the UK in 2020.

The Trussell Trust reports a soaring 81% increase in emergency food parcels from food banks in its network during the last two weeks of March 2020 compared with the same period in 2019, including a 122% rise in parcels given to children as the coronavirus pandemic continued to unfold.

There are consistently high rates of poverty across Wirral. We recognise the growing concern amongst our health and care professionals of the current situation and the likely exacerbation of poverty figures through the impact of the Covid19 pandemic and economic uncertainty as we enter 2021. Council notes the following information:

- During the pandemic Wirral Council has delivered nearly 18,000 food parcels to vulnerable residents across Wirral.
- In 2019, 17.7% of children lived in low-income poverty in Wirral. That equates to 10,687 children affected by poverty, and 16,512 people [who] used Wirral Foodbank, with a 25% increase in single parents using it last year.
- 14,753 is the number of people supported by Wirral Foodbank in 2020. This equates to 132,777 meals.

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the need for children to be able to access food and support activities during school holidays.

The National Food Strategy is the first independent review of England's entire food system for 75 years. Its purpose is to set out a vision for the kind of food system we should be building for the future, and a plan for how to achieve that vision. It is headed by Henry Dimbleby and next reports to Government in early 2021.

The Right To Food campaign is arguing that the 11 million people in food poverty should be central to this strategy. As the sixth richest nation in the world it is a travesty that our citizens are unable to feed themselves.

Enshrining the 'Right To Food' into law would clarify Government obligations on food poverty and would introduce legal avenues to hold Government bodies accountable for violations.

This Council calls for the 'Right To Food' to be incorporated into the 'National Food Strategy'. We ask the Leader to write to Henry Dimbleby to further this request.

8. GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR WIRRAL

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie

Council acknowledges the unprecedented support provided by Government to the residents and businesses of Wirral throughout the Covid pandemic.

So far, the Council has received more than £206.4 million in direct Covid funding support from the Government, on top of the Council's base budget of £304.7 million, set in March 2020.

Council notes that, of this £206.4 million from the Government:

- £128.9 million was to support businesses in the form of non-discretionary and discretionary grants, business rates relief and business district improvement funding
- £39.4 million was for the Council to manage the delivery of services and alleviate pressures resulting from the Coronavirus pandemic
- £10 million was to help prevent the spread of Covid infection in Care Homes
- £8.6 million was for Test, Trace and Outbreak Management support
- £7.5 million was to replace lost Council income
- £3.9 million was for Council Tax Hardship support
- £2.1 million was for Community Testing
- £1.3 million was for homelessness support to ensure 'Everybody In'
- £1.2 million was for supporting our most vulnerable families with food and power via the Covid Winter Grant Scheme
- £0.9 million was for increasing workforce capacity in Care Homes
- £0.5 million was to support Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents
- £0.5 million was for emergency food and supplies
- £0.4 million was for Test & Trace £500 Payment Support Payment Scheme
- £0.3 million was for re-opening our High Streets safely
- £0.3 million was for new burdens relief
- £0.2 million was for ensuring Covid compliance

In addition, the Council has requested and received exceptional financial support

(capitalisation directive) by the Government whereby a further £24 million of funding can be realised.

Government has continued to demonstrate it is committed to levelling-up Wirral, with £28.2 million awarded to Wirral as part of the Future High Streets Funding programme and the announcement of Freeport status for the Wirral dockland areas as part of the LCR bid.

Council further notes that:

- 139,000 Wirral jobs were protected through the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- £62.3 million was distributed to Wirral residents via the Government's Self Employment Income Support Scheme
- £209.9 million has been loaned to Wirral businesses via the Government Business Interruption and Bounce Back Loan schemes

Council believes it is right that all political parties recognise the Government's ongoing support for Wirral and work together to ensure the future prosperity of our residents.

Council therefore, on behalf of Wirral residents and businesses, thanks the Government for the unprecedented and necessary level of support and requests the Chief Executive and political Group Leaders write to the Government thanking them for their support so far and committing to working together, constructively, with the Government for the prosperity of Wirral's residents and our current and future businesses.

9. REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

**Proposed by Councillor Tony Norbury
Seconded by Councillor Christine Spriggs**

We as Wirral Borough Council recognise the extreme hardships faced by refugees, asylum seekers and migrants from across the world, many fleeing from war, oppression and other human rights violations.

Council believes we as a council want to help and play our part in making the World a better place for all by pledging to become a recognised Borough of sanctuary, officially joining the network of councils who are already recognised as places of sanctuary and welcome for all.

Council would wish to make to make Wirral a borough where:

- Refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are treated with respect, dignity and equality
- A fair, humane and effective process is in place to support migrant communities
- An empathetic, people centred approach is in place
- Co-production and collaborative processes are valued, to engage the wider community and migrant communities
- The barriers to integration and interaction within the community are removed.

Council asks the Policy and Resources Committee to include in its work programme for the forthcoming municipal year, to consider:

- (1) embedding a borough of sanctuary and welcome workstream into our policy committee structure linking into the work already underway through our MEAS team linked to our schools and expanding BAME communities supported by our council partners at Wirral Change, The Deen Centre and The multi-Cultural Organisation
- (2) by pledging to:
 - Challenge and campaign for migrant rights and against the 'hostile environment'
 - Celebrate the contribution refugee, asylum seeker and migrant communities bring to the borough of Wirral
 - Raise awareness about some of the issues these communities face
 - Facilitate training for local businesses and organisations to ensure they can offer a service which is welcoming to all migrants
 - Be inclusive throughout the process by listening and engaging with people with lived experience, community organisations, statutory services, faith groups, businesses and much more.

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