

Public Document Pack

COUNCIL

Monday, 18 April 2011

Present:

The Mayor (Councillor Alan Jennings) in the Chair
Deputy Mayor (Councillor Moira McLaughlin)

Councillors	RL Abbey	P Hayes	A Pritchard
	T Anderson	A Hodson	D Realey
	C Blakeley	S Holbrook	P Reisdorf
	E Boulton	P Johnson	L Rennie
	A Bridson	M Johnston	L Rowlands
	A Brighthouse	AER Jones	J Salter
	S Clarke	P Kearney	H Smith
	W Clements	J Keeley	T Smith
	J Crabtree	S Kelly	W Smith
	G Davies	B Kenny	J Stapleton
	P Davies	D Knowles	S Taylor
	WJ Davies	I Lewis	G Watt
	D Dodd	A McArdle	S Whittingham
	G Ellis	D McCubbin	R Wilkins
	S Foulkes	AR McLachlan	I Williams
	P Gilchrist	C Meaden	KJ Williams
	P Glasman	D Mitchell	P Williams
	JE Green	R Moon	S Williams
	J Hale	S Mountney	K Wood
	T Harney	S Niblock	
	K Hayes	C Povall	

Apologies

Councillors D Elderton D Roberts

108 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Jerry Williams on his achievement in completing his 34th London Marathon and raising money for local charities in the process.

The Mayor reported that he would be retiring from the Council at the end of the current municipal year. He commented that his mayoral year had been fantastic and he thanked the Council for accepting his wife Cathy as Mayoress. He also thanked Councillor Moira McLaughlin for her support as Deputy Mayoress.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Green) paid tribute to the outstanding work carried out during the year by the Mayor and Mayoress and to their contribution to the life of the Borough during their period of office. The Leaders of the Liberal Democrat and Labour Groups (Councillors Holbrook and Foulkes) supported those remarks.

The Mayor announced that the recipient of the Andy Day Memorial Award for 2010/11, which was presented annually in memory of a former colleague to confer recognition on a back-bench member of the Council who, in the Mayor's opinion, had

demonstrated the qualities of dedication and selflessness possessed by the late councillor, would be Councillor Dave Mitchell.

The Leader's four Champions presented their annual progress reports:-

(i) Councillor Mark Johnson, Fair Trade – He outlined the initiatives to develop Wirral's status as a Fairtrade Borough and work in the community to champion the need to get a fair and stable price for producers in the developing world. He reported that a sum of £10,000 had been allocated in the budget for next year to support the various initiatives including a high profile campaign "Wirral Loves Fair Trade", and continuation of the Wirral Fair Trade fortnight event.

(ii) Councillor Karen Hayes, Sure Start – She referred to her visits to Sure Start Centres seeking the views of staff and parents on the range of services that were being provided to ensure that all children get a good start in life. The feedback showed that that this was a service to be proud of and each centre would continue to receive support from the Council and additional funding to improve their services.

(iii) Councillor Peter Kearney, Faith Based Groups – He had attended various meetings to learn more about faith based organisations. He highlighted his visits to the Wirral Ark Holmless Hostel and the YMCA support for the holmless projects, the Wirral Fair, Oxton Open Gate Event, and an event involving church members across East Wirral working with Merseyside Police to improve the area. He looked forward to doing more with these organisations.

(iv) Councillor Don McCubbin, Libraries – He highlighted the development of the public partnership with Friends and User Groups, involvement with National Bodies to spread best practice, achievement of national and local performance indicators, and the variety and range of services provided for children and families and social services for elderly customers. He paid tribute to the staff for the way in which they engage with their customers and commented "Wirral libraries have a future let's make it happen."

109 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The members of the Council were invited to consider whether they had a personal or prejudicial interest in connection with any matter to be debated or determined at the meeting and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest. The following declarations were made:

Councillor P Davies declared a personal interest in respect of motion 8 (Transfer of Public Health Responsibilities) and motion 13 (Public Health is Coming Home) by virtue of him being a Non Executive Director of NHS Wirral.

Councillor J Crabtree declared a personal interest in respect of motion 5 (Cuts to Local Radio) by virtue of him being a volunteer at 7 wave's community radio.

Councillor S Whittingham declared a personal interest in respect of motion 5 (Cuts to Local Radio) by virtue of his employment.

Councillor M Johnston declared a personal interest in respect of minute 362 (Cabinet – 17/3/11) (Special Guardianship Order Policy) by virtue of his wife’s employment.

Councillor K Wood declared a personal interest in respect of motion 2 (Ten Wasted Months of Tory/ Lib Dem Rule) and motion 7 (Council Tax Freeze) by virtue of her being a pensioner.

Councillor I Lewis declared a personal interest in respect of motion 5 (Cuts to Local Radio) by virtue of his membership of the Seven Waves Community Radio Board.

Councillor G Davies declared a personal interest in respect of minute 362 (Cabinet – 17/3/11) (Special Guardianship Order Policy) by virtue of his wife’s employment.

110 **PETITIONS**

In accordance with standing order 21, the Mayor received petitions submitted by:

Councillor Jerry Williams on behalf of 19 signatories requesting action to deal with noise disturbances and anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of The George Public House, Higher Bebington.

Councillor Darren Dodd on behalf of 16 signatories requesting pothole repairs and repairs to uneven pavements on Cromer Drive, Poulton.

Councillor Stuart Kelly on behalf of 30 signatories requesting a One Way system for Gorsefield Road, Prenton.

Councillor Tony Pritchard Kelly on behalf of 42 signatories requesting a One Way system from Seabank Road to Rake Lane, Wallasey.

Councillor Denis Knowles requesting the resurfacing of the cul-de-sacs off Gorsey Lane, Seacombe.

Councillor Ian Lewis on behalf of 356 signatories objecting to residential development on land adjacent to the Ditton Nature Reserve, Moreton.

Councillor Ian Lewis on behalf of 121 signatories requesting the provision of a multi-use games area on the field in the Lyons/Witley Estate, Moreton

111 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 1 March, 2011 had been circulated to members and it was:-

Resolved - That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

112 **MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL BY THE COUNCIL**

The Leader referred to the recommendation of the Employment and Appointments Sub-Committee that Mr Jim Wilkie be appointed to the post of Chief Executive. He commented that the appointments process for the post of Chief Executive had been rigorous and three excellent candidates were selected for the final shortlist. The Sub-Committee's unanimous decision was that Mr Wilkie was the outstanding candidate demonstrated by the way in which he had guided the Council and its staff through a period of rapid change in his position as Interim Chief Executive. He therefore proposed that the Council appoint Jim Wilkie as the new Chief Executive.

Councillor S Holbrook, Deputy Leader, and Councillor S Foulkes, Labour Group Leader, endorsed the Leader's comments.

Resolved – That the following matters be approved:-

(1) Minute 18 (Employment and Appointments Sub-Committee) – Appointment of Mr Jim Wilkie to the post of Chief Executive.

(2) Minute 349 (Cabinet – 17/3/11) Corporate Plan 2011-14

(3) Minute 350 (Cabinet – 17/3/11) *Nomination of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Municipal Year 2011/12.

*Note: this minute requires approval by the Annual Meeting of the Council.

(4) Minute 351 (Cabinet – 17/3/11) Committee Calendar for Municipal Year 2011/12.

(5) Minute 352 (Cabinet – 17/3/11) Local Transport Capital Funding and the Integrated Transport Block Funding 2011/12.

(6) Minute 361 (Cabinet – 17/3/11) CYPD Capital Programme 2011/12.

(7) Minute 362 (Cabinet – 17/3/11) Special Guardianship Order Policy

(8) Minute 362 (Cabinet – 17/3/11) Job Evaluation and Harmonisation Schools Support Staff

(9) Minute 18 (Employment and Appointments Sub-Committee) – Appointment of Mr Jim Wilkie to the post of Chief Executive.

(10) Minute 379 (Cabinet – 14/4/11) Delivering the Corporate Plan.

(11) Minute 398 (Cabinet – 14/4/11) Local Development Framework for Wirral - Evidence Base - Renewable Energy Capacity Studies

113 MATTERS FOR NOTING

Resolved – That the following matters be noted, as required by the constitution:

(i) In accordance with Article 7.6 (iii) of the Constitution, the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reports that the Leader has made the following changes to the arrangements for the exercise of executive functions:

(i) The appointment of Councillor Stuart Kelly to the Cabinet.

(ii) Revised terms of reference for the Leader’s Portfolio and the Culture, Tourism and Leisure Portfolio.

(iii) Minute 334 Cabinet (21/2/2011) Accommodation in Old Market House, Birkenhead (waiving of call-in).

(iv) Minute 359 Cabinet (17/3/2011) Contracts for Personal Support (waiving of call-in).

(v) Minute 360 Cabinet (17/3/2011) Department of Adult Social Services Progress Report – Interim Management Arrangements (waiving of call-in).

(vi) Tender Report for Cathcart Street Primary School Refurbishment (Cabinet – 14 April) (waiving of call-in).

114 PROCEDURE

On a motion by Councillor A Jones seconded by Councillor Green it was:

Resolved – That SO 7(8) be applied at the end of the debate on Motion 3 (Mortgage Support for First Time Buyers).

115 MATTERS FOR DEBATE

The matters listed for debate in accordance with Standing order 5(2) (m) were dealt with as indicated in minutes 115 to 128 below.

116 REAL HELP FOR LISCARD

Proposed by Councillor Karen Hayes

Seconded by Councillor James Keeley

- (1) Council notes that many shopping areas of Wirral have been hit hard by the recession and the previous Government's increase in Uniform Business Rates. Council notes the redevelopment opportunities now being implemented in Birkenhead and therefore welcomes the additional help in the Council's budget 2010/11 being provided to the Borough's second major retail area in Liscard, namely:
 - Scrapping car parking charges after 3pm during the week in all Council car park spaces
 - A 'deep clean' of the shopping area, to remove years of dirt and neglect
 - Additional money, following the pilot scheme, to tackle empty shops
 - Improved security through 24 hour monitoring of CCTV cameras
 - A permanent team to tackle the people who drop litter and who do not clean up after their pets
- (2) Council notes this support has been welcomed by the Federation of Small Businesses and the Liscard Traders Association and Council looks forward to working with them to draw up the area plan for Liscard to maintain the support for this important retail area.
- (3) Council notes that in his letter to the Leader of the Council, the Labour Councillor for Liscard, Darren Dodd, stated: "Time and time again I hear people say that 'Liscard has gone downhill' or that it is 'untidy and uninviting'."
- (4) Council, therefore, urges the Labour Group to ditch their opposition to this plan and to accept that this is the biggest-ever package of support offered to Liscard.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Darren Dodd

Seconded by Councillor Anne McCardle

Delete all after "Council notes that many shopping areas of Wirral have been hit hard by the recession"

Insert: which will deepen as a direct result of this Government's actions in slashing public sector spending across the board far faster than private sector jobs can be created, including the loss of 1300 jobs from Wirral Council alone, with all the knock on effects on companies dependent on public sector business or contracts.

- (2) Council welcomes any moves that will help local traders in these difficult times, including cleaning up the shopping area in Liscard. However, Council is

concerned that this is not being achieved by a rigorous scrutiny and monitoring of existing substantial street cleansing contracts, and an examination of the gains that can be achieved through modern technology, or by using the “Big Society” ideal to bring local people together to create a new pride in their environment, but by directly pumping a further half a million pounds into the contract with a company that woefully failed to come up to standard in its waste collection during the cold weather.

- (3) Council believes that this failure to act in a cost effective manner removed the opportunity to support vulnerable individuals and their families who made eloquent pleas to the Council to slow down the closure programme of five respite homes to allow a proper transitional period.
- (4) Council recognises that the measures to clean up and improve Liscard’s shopping areas could have been achieved by different means, and believes that the people of Liscard would have supported the Labour approach which would have allowed those most in need to be properly supported and a clean up to go ahead.
- (5) Council further believes that this would have avoided placing Liscard residents in a situation where it would appear that their potential votes were being courted by instigating expensive special initiatives at the direct expense of providing proper support for those most in need.

The amendment was put and lost (23:39) (1abstention)

The motion was put and carries (39:23:1))

Resolved (39:23:1) – That:

(1) Council notes that many shopping areas of Wirral have been hit hard by the recession and the previous Government’s increase in Uniform Business Rates. Council notes the redevelopment opportunities now being implemented in Birkenhead and therefore welcomes the additional help in the Council’s budget 2010/11 being provided to the Borough’s second major retail area in Liscard, namely:

- **Scrapping car parking charges after 3pm during the week in all Council car park spaces**
- **A ‘deep clean’ of the shopping area, to remove years of dirt and neglect**
- **Additional money, following the pilot scheme, to tackle empty shops**
- **Improved security through 24 hour monitoring of CCTV cameras**
- **A permanent team to tackle the people who drop litter and who do not clean up after their pets**

(2) Council notes this support has been welcomed by the Federation of Small Businesses and the Liscard Traders Association and Council looks forward to working with them to draw up the area plan for Liscard to maintain the support for this important retail area.

(3) Council notes that in his letter to the Leader of the Council, the Labour Councillor for Liscard, Darren Dodd, stated: “Time and time again I hear people say that ‘Liscard has gone downhill’ or that it is ‘untidy and uninviting’.”

(4) Council, therefore, urges the Labour Group to ditch their opposition to this plan and to accept that this is the biggest-ever package of support offered to Liscard.

117 TEN WASTED MONTHS OF TORY/LIB DEM RULE

Proposed by Councillor Steve Foulkes

Seconded by Councillor Phil Davies

- (1) This Council deplores the ten wasted months since the Conservatives and their Liberal Democrat allies have been running the country and Wirral Council.
- (2) Nationally, the coalition is hitting people across the country hard through their reckless cuts which go too far too fast. Yet at the same time they have chosen to cut taxes for the banks this year.
- (3) Council notes the negative impact of the coalition’s economic policies, i.e.:
 - The VAT rise will cost families with children £450 this year alone
 - Tax credits and child benefit will be frozen from April
 - Petrol prices are soaring with the VAT rise adding 3p per litre
 - Economic growth has stalled
 - Unemployment is rising again – now at a 17 year high
 - Nearly 1 million young people are now out of work
- (4) Council condemns the decision of the Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, to cut the winter fuel allowance from £250 to £200 for the over 60s and from £400 to £300 for the over 80s and for his decision to omit this announcement from his budget speech and to bury it in the paperwork. Council agrees with Dot Gibson, general secretary of the National Pensioners’ Convention, who has commented: “It is a shabby way to treat Britain’s older generation. If we really are all in this together, why is he going to take £100 off the winter fuel allowance for the oldest members of society at a time when fuel bills are rising and winter deaths amongst older people are a national scandal?”
- (5) Council condemns the utter hypocrisy of the Liberal Democrats for reneging on their promise to abolish tuition fees for young people wishing to study at university and support a trebling of these fees. The Liberal Democrats have also betrayed thousands of 16-18 year olds by their support for the abolition of the Educational Maintenance Allowance, a betrayal which they have tried to rescue by announcing a bursary scheme which will still represent a massive cut in the funding which previously went to this group. Finally, Council condemns the betrayal of the Liberal Democrats for supporting an increase of 3% in VAT.

- (6) Council condemns the Tory-Liberal Democrat led Council which has cut 1300 jobs, including many front-line services, and has still failed to publish any plans about how services will be delivered once these posts are deleted; overseen a £51 million cut in the Council's grant from central government without registering any protest; proposed the closure of 5 highly-valued respite care homes, without proper consultation with clients, their carers and families; and has proposed the privatisation of parks and open spaces and part of the HART service.
- (7) Council also rejects the flawed consultation exercise, on which many of these cuts have been justified, as it involved only 1.8% of the population of Wirral.
- (8) Council is particularly concerned about the draconian cuts to the police service in Wirral, which include the loss of 325 officers and 163 police staff in this year alone.
- (9) Council recognises that Labour Councillors will be the first line of defence for communities against the damage being done by the Tory-LibDem Government and Council. Labour is now the only progressive party who is proposing a clear alternative to the extreme right-wing ideology being proposed by the Tories and their Liberal Democrat allies.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Steve Foulkes

Seconded by Councillor Phil Davies

Add the following paragraph at the end of the motion-

- (10) Council notes the contents of an email from Cllr. Warren Bradley, Leader of the Liberal Democrats on Liverpool City Council to his Party Leader, Nick Clegg, leaked to the Daily Post. Cllr Bradley states:

"I have to date kept my frustrations and criticisms based on policy rather than just having a go because I don't want to be in bed with the Tories; unfortunately the boil is about to come to a head and burst (probably on election night) when we lose some very well respected and experienced colleagues from Liverpool City Council.....

The position is untenable, Mike Storey having given many decades to the party is extremely vulnerable, and could well fall because of the Parliamentary party.

Many other long serving Councillors could be defeated not because of their record, but because of your record and the perception of what we as Liberal Democrats now are.

I only hope on the 6th May, you will meet with Leaders/Groups/ordinary members and seek their views following a set of results, which if mirrored by our canvass returns will place us back 40 years.....

I and many of my colleagues in Liverpool and the North are tired of defending the indefensible, as a party we have to reconsider what and who we are before

we disappear into the annals of history as a political party who promised so much hope, yet failed because they wanted control and power..... at present, after knocking on many doors, all I feel is dejection and upset that the Lib Dems, the party the people trusted implicitly have become like the others and deserted their followers.”

Council agrees with the views of Cllr Bradley and believes that the Liberal Democrats have lost all credibility. Council further notes that many former members and supporters of the Liberal Democrats are joining the Labour Party because they see Labour as the real progressive force in British politics and the only Party which is prepared to stand up against the extreme right-wing policies of the Conservatives.

(The movers of the motion included the additional paragraph (10) in their notice of motion).

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Lesley Rennie

Seconded by Councillor Jeff Green

Delete everything and insert:

- (1) Council notes that all councils, Government departments, non-departmental bodies and other public sector organisations are having to play their part in tackling Labour’s legacy of debt that left the equivalent of £22,300 for every woman, man and child in the country.
- (2) Council expresses it’s alarm that the Labour Group is still seeking to deny the national deficit and notes that the Labour Group have consistently failed to effectively analyse the issues that Wirral faces and have shown themselves to be incapable of putting forward a coherent vision or plan for the future of Wirral.
- (3) Council supports the policies of the Coalition Government in these difficult times to tackle this debt, while at the same time helping the lowest paid and most disadvantaged people by, for example, raising the threshold for income tax; increasing and extending the Minimum Wage; linking the state pension to earnings; introducing the Pupil Premium and extending the number of apprenticeships.
- (4) Council welcomes the approach of the Progressive Partnership running Wirral, after 24 years of a Labour-led Council, which has reduced the running costs of the Council; protected key services such as Sure Start (unlike Labour-led Liverpool); avoided compulsory redundancies (unlike Labour-led Manchester) and is opening up the Council to greater scrutiny, transparency and involvement for our taxpayers.

- (5) Council is particularly keen to welcome the freeze in Council Tax, after it more than doubled under Labour and the Council's commitment to build a bigger and stronger society in Wirral.
- (6) Council therefore welcomes that two of the three parties in Britain, and Wirral, have come together in the national interest and urges Labour, even with their current leader, to put aside tribal, partisan interests and accept the need to tackle the deficit.

The amendment was put and carried (39:23) (1abstention)

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Simon Holbrook

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Delete "wasted" from title.

Delete all remaining text and replace with:

- (1) This Council applauds progress over the ten months since the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats agreed to form a coalition both locally and nationally.
- (2) Nationally, Labour's addiction to debt left Britain needing to borrow an extra £400million, every single day, just to get by. Council welcomes the bank levy, announced in the Chancellor's Budget, to ensure that banks pay their fair share.
- (3) Council notes the positive impact of the coalition's economic policies for Wirral, i.e.:
 - 102,000 Wirral people are getting a £200 income tax cut
 - 4,400 Wirral people have been lifted out of paying income tax altogether, with more to come
 - £625m extra has gone to schools, with £5m for Wirral, aimed at the most disadvantaged pupils - rising to £2.5billion a year by 2015
 - Business regulation is being cut to promote small business and create jobs
 - Wirral has the lowest Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate in the Liverpool City Region at 4.6%,
 - For 18-24 year olds in Wirral there are 290 fewer Job Seekers Allowance claimants in Feb 2011 than in Feb 2010.
- (4) Council welcomes that in Wirral, 70,900 pensioners have been given an extra £4.50 a week – and those retiring from today will be on average £15,000 better off over their retirement. Council notes that the Winter Fuel Allowance in 2011/12 is continuing at exactly the same level as previously budgeted for by the Labour Government: Council also welcomes the announcement in the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review to permanently increase the rate of Cold Weather Payments (CWP) from £8.50 to £25 per 7 day cold period. Finally,

Council welcomes the increase in the electricity rebate from £80 per week to £120 per week, representing targeted support for our poorest pensioners where it's really needed.

- (5) Council recognises that, as the smallest of the three main parliamentary parties, the Liberal Democrats have been unable to deliver their election policy to abolish tuition fees for young people wishing to study at university, given that such a policy was not supported by either Labour or the Conservatives. Nevertheless Council notes that the current scheme is one with no requirement for upfront fees, with repayments only starting when earnings reach £21,000 compared to £15,000 under Labour. Council is reminded of its support for the Liberal Democrat Group's Notice of Motion on Educational Maintenance Allowance on 14th February 2011 and the support within that Motion for an adequately funded, locally managed scheme that will enable funding to be directed sensitively and effectively. Council is pleased to note that, subsequently, the Education Secretary has promised to maintain EMA for students who started two-year college courses last autumn with £194m transitional funding to help them complete their courses and has announced a bursary scheme of £180m each year, and with the biggest amounts (£1,200 per person) given to young people with the greatest needs. Finally, Council notes that none of the three main parties ruled out a VAT rise prior to the general election.
- (6) Council notes that it approved a Budget at its last meeting which protected front line council services whilst cutting the Council's costs, delivering better value to the Council Taxpayer with no increase in Council Tax and no compulsory job losses. Council further notes that the 4 Labour Budget amendments that were defeated would collectively have only redirected £2.66m of Council spending. Council applauds the efforts of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council in ensuring that Wirral's interests are robustly represented through personal contact with the relevant Government figures, including David Cameron, Nick Clegg, Vince Cable, Eric Pickles, George Osborne, Andrew Stunnell, Andrew Lansley and Paul Burstow. Council also thanks officers for their efforts and hard work to ensure as smooth a transition as possible for service users and their carers to access alternative respite provision where this service has moved from its previous locations. Council also welcomes moves to examine how the upkeep of Wirral's parks and countryside and the provision of re-ablement services can be provided to the same, or better, standards at better value for Wirral taxpayers.
- (7) Council also thanks residents for participating in the Wirral's Future – be a part of it consultation exercise to tell us their priorities for council spending and notes that this was the biggest consultation exercise ever carried out by the council, directly engaging with over 10,000 people and gathering over 5,600 responses. Council is dismayed at the Labour Group's inability to share issues and problems with the public at an early stage and their failure to learn this lesson from the previous administration's attempts to transform library provision.
- (8) However, Council remains concerned about the budget reductions to the police service in Merseyside and commits itself to work closely with the Police Service to seek to protect front line services whilst cutting running costs.

- (9) Council recognises that Labour Councillors belong to a political party that, even though its leader Ed Miliband and the ex-Prime Minister Gordon Brown admit the last Labour Government did not do enough to regulate banks and acted too late to prevent the banking crisis, still prefers to criticise those who are working to secure Britain's future financial stability. Labour bankrupted the country, they are bankrupt of ideas and all they have to offer is a blank sheet of paper.

The amendment was put and carried (39:23) (1abstention)

In accordance with Standing Order 9 (p) (Motions which may be moved without notice) it was moved by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor Holbrook that:

“This Council further recognises that, far from being wasted, Officers and Members have worked hard over the last 10 months to manage the measures necessary as a result of the national debt and banking crisis. Further, Council believes that many of the current Government's policies are clearly targeted at improving and strengthening the economy. In particular, Council notes the importance of Wirral Waters as a key strategic site and welcomes the progress made at the site. Council, therefore, strongly supports the Wirral Water's designation by the government as an Enterprise Zone and believes that this will act as a catalyst for further, economic growth and prosperity for the borough's residents, businesses and workforce.”

The amendment was put and carried (39:22) (1 abstention) with the Council dividing as follows:

For the amendment (39) – Councillors T Anderson, C Blakeley, E Boulton, A Bridson, A Brighthouse, SL Clarke, W Clements, , GJ Ellis, PN Gilchrist, JE Green, J Hale, T Harney, K Hayes, P Hayes, AC Hodson, S Holbrook, PSC Johnson, M Johnston, P Kearney, J Keeley, S Kelly, D Knowles, I Lewis, D McCubbin, D Mitchell, RK Moon, SR Mountney, S Niblock, C Povall, A Pritchard, P Reisdorf, Mrs LA Rennie, SL Rowlands, S Taylor, GCJ Watt, R Wilkins, Mrs PM Williams, S Williams and Mrs K Wood.

Against the amendment (22) - Councillors R Abbey, JA Crabtree, G Davies, PL Davies, WJ Davies, D Dodd, S Foulkes, P Glasman, AER Jones, B Kenny, A McArdle, ARC McLachlan, M McLaughlin, CM Meaden, D Realey, J Salter, H Smith, PA Smith, JV Stapleton, S Whittingham, I Williams, KJ Williams.

Abstention (1) – Councillor AJ Jennings.

The substantive motion was then put.

Resolved (39:23:1) - That:

(1) Council notes that all councils, Government departments, non-departmental bodies and other public sector organisations are having to play their part in tackling Labour's legacy of debt that left the equivalent of £22,300 for every woman, man and child in the country.

(2) Council expresses its alarm that the Labour Group is still seeking to deny the national deficit and notes that the Labour Group have consistently failed to

effectively analyse the issues that Wirral faces and have shown themselves to be incapable of putting forward a coherent vision or plan for the future of Wirral.

(3) Council supports the policies of the Coalition Government in these difficult times to tackle this debt, while at the same time helping the lowest paid and most disadvantaged people by, for example, raising the threshold for income tax; increasing and extending the Minimum Wage; linking the state pension to earnings; introducing the Pupil Premium and extending the number of apprenticeships.

(4) Council welcomes the approach of the Progressive Partnership running Wirral, after 24 years of a Labour-led Council, which has reduced the running costs of the Council; protected key services such as Sure Start (unlike Labour-led Liverpool); avoided compulsory redundancies (unlike Labour-led Manchester) and is opening up the Council to greater scrutiny, transparency and involvement for our taxpayers.

(5) Council is particularly keen to welcome the freeze in Council Tax, after it more than doubled under Labour and the Council's commitment to build a bigger and stronger society in Wirral.

(6) Council therefore welcomes that two of the three parties in Britain, and Wirral, have come together in the national interest and urges Labour, even with their current leader, to put aside tribal, partisan interests and accept the need to tackle the deficit.

(7) This Council applauds progress over the ten months since the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats agreed to form a coalition both locally and nationally.

(8) Nationally, Labour's addiction to debt left Britain needing to borrow an extra £400million, every single day, just to get by. Council welcomes the bank levy, announced in the Chancellor's Budget, to ensure that banks pay their fair share.

(9) Council notes the positive impact of the coalition's economic policies for Wirral, i.e.:

- 102,000 Wirral people are getting a £200 income tax cut
- 4,400 Wirral people have been lifted out of paying income tax altogether, with more to come
- £625m extra has gone to schools, with £5m for Wirral, aimed at the most disadvantaged pupils - rising to £2.5billion a year by 2015
- Business regulation is being cut to promote small business and create jobs
- Wirral has the lowest Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate in the Liverpool City Region at 4.6%,
- For 18-24 year olds in Wirral there are 290 fewer Job Seekers Allowance claimants in Feb 2011 than in Feb 2010.

- (10) Council welcomes that in Wirral, 70,900 pensioners have been given an extra £4.50 a week – and those retiring from today will be on average £15,000 better off over their retirement. Council notes that the Winter Fuel Allowance in 2011/12 is continuing at exactly the same level as previously budgeted for by the Labour Government: Council also welcomes the announcement in the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review to permanently increase the rate of Cold Weather Payments (CWP) from £8.50 to £25 per 7 day cold period. Finally, Council welcomes the increase in the electricity rebate from £80 per week to £120 per week, representing targeted support for our poorest pensioners where it's really needed.
- (11) Council recognises that, as the smallest of the three main parliamentary parties, the Liberal Democrats have been unable to deliver their election policy to abolish tuition fees for young people wishing to study at university, given that such a policy was not supported by either Labour or the Conservatives. Nevertheless Council notes that the current scheme is one with no requirement for upfront fees, with repayments only starting when earnings reach £21,000 compared to £15,000 under Labour. Council is reminded of its support for the Liberal Democrat Group's Notice of Motion on Educational Maintenance Allowance on 14th February 2011 and the support within that Motion for an adequately funded, locally managed scheme that will enable funding to be directed sensitively and effectively. Council is pleased to note that, subsequently, the Education Secretary has promised to maintain EMA for students who started two-year college courses last autumn with £194m transitional funding to help them complete their courses and has announced a bursary scheme of £180m each year, and with the biggest amounts (£1,200 per person) given to young people with the greatest needs. Finally, Council notes that none of the three main parties ruled out a VAT rise prior to the general election.
- (12) Council notes that it approved a Budget at its last meeting which protected front line council services whilst cutting the Council's costs, delivering better value to the Council Taxpayer with no increase in Council Tax and no compulsory job losses. Council further notes that the 4 Labour Budget amendments that were defeated would collectively have only redirected £2.66m of Council spending. Council applauds the efforts of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council in ensuring that Wirral's interests are robustly represented through personal contact with the relevant Government figures, including David Cameron, Nick Clegg, Vince Cable, Eric Pickles, George Osborne, Andrew Stunnell, Andrew Lansley and Paul Burstow. Council also thanks officers for their efforts and hard work to ensure as smooth a transition as possible for service users and their carers to access alternative respite provision where this service has moved from its previous locations. Council also welcomes moves to examine how the upkeep of Wirral's parks and countryside and the provision of re-ablement services can be provided to the same, or better, standards at better value for Wirral taxpayers.
- (13) Council also thanks residents for participating in the Wirral's Future – be a part of it consultation exercise to tell us their priorities for council spending and notes that this was the biggest consultation exercise ever carried out by the council, directly engaging with over 10,000 people and

gathering over 5,600 responses. Council is dismayed at the Labour Group's inability to share issues and problems with the public at an early stage and their failure to learn this lesson from the previous administration's attempts to transform library provision.

- (14) However, Council remains concerned about the budget reductions to the police service in Merseyside and commits itself to work closely with the Police Service to seek to protect front line services whilst cutting running costs.
- (15) Council recognises that Labour Councillors belong to a political party that, even though its leader Ed Miliband and the ex-Prime Minister Gordon Brown admit the last Labour Government did not do enough to regulate banks and acted too late to prevent the banking crisis, still prefers to criticise those who are working to secure Britain's future financial stability. Labour bankrupted the country, they are bankrupt of ideas and all they have to offer is a blank sheet of paper.
- (16) This Council further recognises that, far from being wasted, Officers and Members have worked hard over the last 10 months to manage the measures necessary as a result of the national debt and banking crisis. Further, Council believes that many of the current Government's policies are clearly targeted at improving and strengthening the economy. In particular, Council notes the importance of Wirral Waters as a key strategic site and welcomes the progress made at the site. Council, therefore, strongly supports the Wirral Water's designation by the government as an Enterprise Zone and believes that this will act as a catalyst for further, economic growth and prosperity for the borough's residents, businesses and workforce.

118 MORTGAGE SUPPORT FOR FIRST TIME BUYERS

Proposed by Councillor Simon Holbrook
Seconded by Councillor Alan Brighthouse

Council:

- (1) Welcomes the 'Lend a Hand' local authority mortgage scheme, currently being piloted in the North West in Warrington and Blackpool (as well as Northumberland County Council, Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council; and East Lothian Council).
- (2) Notes this scheme is aimed at first time buyers finding it difficult to raise the 20-25% deposit needed to obtain an affordable mortgage interest rate. These NW

pilot authorities have each pledged £5 million to 'underwrite' part of the mortgage for first time buyers, excluding new build properties, by loaning applicants up to 20% of a first time buyer's mortgage, by lodging the funds with the lender. Council notes that interest is paid on the money pledged at a rate of 4.2%. Council also notes that, based on current repossession rates (according to The Council of Mortgage Lenders), the risk to local authorities is around 0.3 per cent – or £3,000 for every £1 million invested.

- (3) Also welcomes the £250 million 'First Buy' shared equity scheme announced in the Coalition Government Budget and financed by the Bank Levy to help around 10,000 new homebuyers purchase newly-built houses and flats with loans of up to 20% of the property's value to put down as a deposit on a mortgage. Council notes the scheme, designed to support the mortgage and housing market, will only be open to those with a household income lower than £60,000, and homebuyers would also have to put down their own 5% deposit, bringing the total deposit up to 25%.
- (4) Believes that, taken together, these two schemes have the potential to support housing markets in areas at risk of housing market failure, stimulating the local housing market and benefiting the wider local economy.
- (5) Therefore, instructs the Director of Finance and the Interim Director of Corporate Services to bring forward a report outlining how these schemes could be implemented in Wirral, identifying the funds that would need to be made available, both for investment and as a reasonable provision to mitigate against the risks of repossession.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley

Seconded by Councillor Simon Mountney

Delete paragraph (5) and insert:

- (5) Therefore, instructs the Director of Finance to bring forward a report reviewing the impact of the 'Lend a Hand' local authority mortgage scheme and any lessons that would need to be learnt prior to the implementation of such a scheme in Wirral.

The amendment was put and carried (48:13)

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor George Davies

Seconded by Councillor Jean Stapleton

Insert new paragraph (2) and renumber accordingly.

- (2) Recognises that this scheme is the final Treasury agreed outcome to a policy option which was first put forward by this Council for investigation as part of the Labour led administration's 2009/10 budget, which was awaiting Treasury permission for this and other councils to proceed.

Insert new paragraph (6) ((7) as renumbered)

- (7) Recognises the contribution made by the Labour Government's Mortgage Protection scheme which prevented wholesale repossessions in a time of economic downturn, unlike the situation which prevailed under a previous Conservative Government where repossessions reached an all time high.

The amendment was put and lost (22:39)

The substantive motion was then put.

Resolved (unanimously) –

That Council:

(1) Welcomes the 'Lend a Hand' local authority mortgage scheme, currently being piloted in the North West in Warrington and Blackpool (as well as Northumberland County Council, Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council; and East Lothian Council).

(2) Notes this scheme is aimed at first time buyers finding it difficult to raise the 20-25% deposit needed to obtain an affordable mortgage interest rate. These NW pilot authorities have each pledged £5 million to 'underwrite' part of the mortgage for first time buyers, excluding new build properties, by loaning applicants up to 20% of a first time buyer's mortgage, by lodging the funds with the lender. Council notes that interest is paid on the money pledged at a rate of 4.2%. Council also notes that, based on current repossession rates (according to The Council of Mortgage Lenders), the risk to local authorities is around 0.3 per cent – or £3,000 for every £1 million invested.

(3) Also welcomes the £250 million 'First Buy' shared equity scheme announced in the Coalition Government Budget and financed by the Bank Levy to help around 10,000 new homebuyers purchase newly-built houses and flats with loans of up to 20% of the property's value to put down as a deposit on a mortgage. Council notes the scheme, designed to support the mortgage and housing market, will only be open to those with a household income lower than £60,000, and homebuyers would also have to put down their own 5% deposit, bringing the total deposit up to 25%.

(4) Believes that, taken together, these two schemes have the potential to support housing markets in areas at risk of housing market failure, stimulating the local housing market and benefiting the wider local economy.

(5) Therefore, instructs the Director of Finance to bring forward a report reviewing the impact of the 'Lend a Hand' local authority mortgage scheme and any lessons that would need to be learnt prior to the implementation of such a scheme in Wirral.

119 ENTERPRISE ZONE

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green

Seconded by Councillor Andrew Hodson

- (1) Council welcomes the inclusion of Wirral Waters within the new Enterprise Zones and welcomes the opportunity for Wirral to attract additional, private sector investment to help rebalance the local economy and provide jobs and training for local people. Council believes this new generation of Enterprise Zones will benefit Wirral's economy and will assist employers, through lower taxes, superfast broadband and simplified planning rules.
- (2) Council also welcomes the creation of new jobs at the Contact Company (224 posts); ASDA (300); Neptune at New Brighton (686) and the first phase of jobs announced last week by Peel at Wirral Waters (1,000 posts).
- (3) Council, however, understands the difficulties of existing employers to survive the recession and therefore welcomes the plans in the recent Budget to accelerate reductions in Corporation Tax and for a reduction in regulatory burdens on employers.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Phil Davies

Seconded by Councillor George Davies

Delete everything after 'local people' in paragraph (1) and replace with the following:

However, Council is concerned that evidence from independent think-tanks, The Work Foundation and The Centre for Cities, have found that the UK's experience of Enterprise Zones in the 1980s indicate that they suffer from a number of weaknesses, i.e.:

- (a) most of the jobs (around 80%) created are displaced from other areas;
- (b) Enterprise Zones do very little to promote lasting local economic prosperity;
- (c) They are hugely expensive – evidence from the 1980s indicates that they cost at least £23,000 per job they create.

The following changes have been suggested in order to address these weaknesses:

- (a) Enterprise Zones should be made bigger so that they do not take jobs from within the same area;
- (b) Enterprise Zones should be accompanied by targeted investments in skills and infrastructure, to ensure that they lead to lasting improvements in competitiveness;
- (c) They should be supported by local communities and not governed in a way that is incompatible with localism;
- (d) Zones should be able to draw from a menu of policy options using different policy mechanisms in different places to fit with local economies' needs.

- (2) The Government should ensure that local authorities have an input into decisions about the removal of planning restrictions in areas covered by Enterprise Zones.
- (3) Whilst Council welcomes any new jobs created in Wirral, it is concerned that there is no evidence of sufficient growth in the private sector to compensate for the thousands of jobs which will be lost in the public sector as a result of Tory-LibDem policies.
- (4) In a period during which economic policies should be geared towards growth, Council believes that the Tory-Lib Dem Government's decision to increase VAT will severely damage consumer demand and therefore jobs. Furthermore, Council does not support the Tory-LibDem Council's decision to cut 1300 local authority jobs as this will massively reduce the spending power of Wirral families.
- (5) Council believes that the 2011 Budget was a missed opportunity to get the economy back on a path of growth.

The amendment was put and lost (22:39).

The motion was put and carries unanimously.

Resolved (unanimously) –

(1) Council welcomes the inclusion of Wirral Waters within the new Enterprise Zones and welcomes the opportunity for Wirral to attract additional, private sector investment to help rebalance the local economy and provide jobs and training for local people. Council believes this new generation of Enterprise Zones will benefit Wirral's economy and will assist employers, through lower taxes, superfast broadband and simplified planning rules.

(2) Council also welcomes the creation of new jobs at the Contact Company (224 posts); ASDA (300); Neptune at New Brighton (686) and the first phase of jobs announced last week by Peel at Wirral Waters (1,000 posts).

(3) Council, however, understands the difficulties of existing employers to survive the recession and therefore welcomes the plans in the recent Budget to accelerate reductions in Corporation Tax and for a reduction in regulatory burdens on employers.

120 **CUTS TO LOCAL RADIO**

Proposed by Councillor Steve Foulkes

Seconded by Councillor Jim Crabtree

- (1) Council notes that the BBC is considering cutting back the radio service it provides in some 40 different locations throughout England. These proposals are part of cost saving measures brought about by a six year freeze on the revenue it gets from the public licence fee.

- (2) Council believes that local radio is the essence of democracy in action for the listener, covering the events in the catchment area of each station. Local radio is listened to by people of all ages and groups such as the elderly, housebound, young mothers and disabled people who would be seriously disadvantaged if local radio stations were axed.
- (3) Council is, therefore, totally opposed to any move to close down local radio stations and agrees to write to the Director General of the BBC, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and Wirral MPs informing them of our support for this vital service.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Ian Lewis

Seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall

Insert after (1):

Council supports the provision of a diverse media including vibrant local newspapers, local and community radio, local television and hyper local blogging and news channels.

- (2) Council, in particular, congratulates Radio Clatterbridge on its anniversary and also reiterates support for Seven Waves Community Radio in Leasowe.

Then reorder paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) and renumber as (3), (4) and (5)

In paragraph (3) ((5) as renumbered) insert: ‘, the Chairman of the BBC Trust’ after ‘Director General of the BBC’

The amendment was put and carried unanimously.

The substantive motion was put and carried unanimously.

Resolved (unanimously) –

- (1) Council supports the provision of a diverse media including vibrant local newspapers, local and community radio, local television and hyper local blogging and news channels.**
- (2) Council, in particular, congratulates Radio Clatterbridge on its anniversary and also reiterates support for Seven Waves Community Radio in Leasowe.**
- (3) Council notes that the BBC is considering cutting back the radio service it provides in some 40 different locations throughout England. These proposals are part of cost saving measures brought about by a six year freeze on the revenue it gets from the public licence fee.**
- (4) Council believes that local radio is the essence of democracy in action for the listener, covering the events in the catchment area of each station. Local radio is listened to by people of all ages and groups such as the elderly,**

housebound, young mothers and disabled people who would be seriously disadvantaged if local radio stations were axed.

(5) Council is, therefore, totally opposed to any move to close down local radio stations and agrees to write to the Director General of the BBC, the Chairman of the BBC Trust', the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and Wirral MPs informing them of our support for this vital service.

121 **DEVELOPING WIRRAL'S ECONOMY**

Proposed by Councillor Simon Holbrook

Seconded by Councillor Alan Brighouse

This Council:

- (1) Welcomes the Government announcement to create a Local Enterprise Zone at Wirral Waters and believes this has the potential to act as a catalyst to start the economic transformation of the Borough and will help to accelerate positive opportunities to attract new business into the Wirral.
- (2) Welcomes the recent announcement by Peel that they are seeking to locate a Trade Centre in excess of 1 million square feet that would enable up to a 1,000 separate companies from China, India, Korea and other emerging economies to exhibit, sell, assemble and distribute their goods into the UK, Irish and European markets, with a high level of interest in locating this facility at Wirral Waters regeneration project at West Float Dock.
- (3) Welcomes data in Liverpool City Region's latest Economic Review revealing:
 - Further economic growth (Gross Value Added - GVA);
 - Improvements in levels of educational attainment;
 - Rises in levels of business start ups;
 - Declining level of worklessness and;
 - A growing working age population.

That the City Region's Low Carbon, SuperPort, Knowledge Economy and Visitor Economy Action Plans forecast the potential to create over 128,000 jobs in the next 10 years. This compares to 50,600 new jobs created (net) in Liverpool City Region from 1999 to 2008.

- (4) Welcomes data from the Expedia Group, which describes Wirral as a 'vibrant urban location' and shows that Wirral has seen a greater year on year increase in hotel searches than more established destinations such as St Ives, Belfast and Weston-Super-Mare and believes this is testament to the work of officers to promote Wirral as a place to Play, Eat and Stay.
- (5) Therefore believes that Wirral is well positioned to benefit from a range of measures to help strengthen its economy to provide jobs and prosperity for local people and requests that officers continue their excellent work to continue

to strengthen Wirral's economy and calls on Wirral's MPs and the Council's Cabinet members to continue to lobby Government ministers on Wirral's behalf.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Jean Stapleton

Seconded by Councillor Anne McLachlan

Delete the final paragraph and replace with the following:

- (5) Council is concerned that the coalition Government's decision to increase VAT will severely damage the prospects of the retail sector. Locally, the axing of 1300 local authority jobs and the reduction in Wirral Council's grant by £51m will be a massive blow to the local economy.
- (6) Council recognises that the one scheme which the Liberal Democrats are trying to claim the credit for amidst huge economic misery, i.e. Wirral Waters, was commenced during a Labour-led Administration.

The amendment was put and lost (22:39)

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

Resolved (unanimously) – That this Council:

- (1) **Welcomes the Government announcement to create a Local Enterprise Zone at Wirral Waters and believes this has the potential to act as a catalyst to start the economic transformation of the Borough and will help to accelerate positive opportunities to attract new business into the Wirral.**
- (2) **Welcomes the recent announcement by Peel that they are seeking to locate a Trade Centre in excess of 1 million square feet that would enable up to a 1,000 separate companies from China, India, Korea and other emerging economies to exhibit, sell, assemble and distribute their goods into the UK, Irish and European markets, with a high level of interest in locating this facility at Wirral Waters regeneration project at West Float Dock.**
- (3) **Welcomes data in Liverpool City Region's latest Economic Review revealing:**
 - **Further economic growth (Gross Value Added - GVA);**
 - **Improvements in levels of educational attainment;**
 - **Rises in levels of business start ups;**
 - **Declining level of worklessness and;**
 - **A growing working age population.**

That the City Region's Low Carbon, SuperPort, Knowledge Economy and Visitor Economy Action Plans forecast the potential to create over 128,000 jobs in the next 10 years. This compares to 50,600 new jobs created (net) in Liverpool City Region from 1999 to 2008.

(4) Welcomes data from the Expedia Group, which describes Wirral as a 'vibrant urban location' and shows that Wirral has seen a greater year on year increase in hotel searches than more established destinations such as St Ives, Belfast and Weston-Super-Mare and believes this is testament to the work of officers to promote Wirral as a place to Play, Eat and Stay.

(5) Therefore believes that Wirral is well positioned to benefit from a range of measures to help strengthen its economy to provide jobs and prosperity for local people and requests that officers continue their excellent work to continue to strengthen Wirral's economy and calls on Wirral's MPs and the Council's Cabinet members to continue to lobby Government ministers on Wirral's behalf.

122 COUNCIL TAX FREEZE

Proposed by Councillor Steve Williams

Seconded by Councillor Don McCubbin

- (1) Council welcomes the Progressive Partnership's budget which froze Council Tax levels in Wirral. Council believes that the rise in Council Tax – more than doubling under Labour – hit working families and those on fixed and low incomes – and therefore welcomes the commitment to review Government finance referred to in the Coalition Agreement.
- (2) Council also welcomes the Administration's commitment to protect the discount for over 75s and welcomes the additional publicity being given to this initiative.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Steve Foulkes

Seconded by Councillor Ron Abbey

Delete everything and replace with the following:

- (1) This Council recognises that the decision to freeze Council Tax had nothing to do with the so-called 'progressive partnership's budget', but is more a result of the one-off grant offered by the Government to Councils if they froze the Council Tax. It is therefore not surprising that the vast majority of Councils have chosen to freeze Council Tax for 2011/12.
- (2) Council welcomes the Administration's decision to continue Labour's policy of providing discounts for the over 75s, however, it condemns the utter hypocrisy of the coalition Government's decision to cut the Winter Fuel Allowance for elderly people.

The amendment was put and lost (22:39)

The motion was put and carried (39:22)

Resolved (39:22) – That:

(1) Council welcomes the Progressive Partnership's budget which froze Council Tax levels in Wirral. Council believes that the rise in Council Tax – more than doubling under Labour – hit working families and those on fixed and low incomes – and therefore welcomes the commitment to review Government finance referred to in the Coalition Agreement.

(2) Council also welcomes the Administration's commitment to protect the discount for over 75s and welcomes the additional publicity being given to this initiative.

123 TRANSFER OF PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSIBILITIES

Proposed by Councillor Brian Kenny

Seconded by Councillor Pat Glasman

(1) Council notes that provisions in the Health and Social Care Bill which relate to the transfer of responsibilities for Public Health from the Health Service to Local Authorities specifically excludes responsibility for children up to five years old.

(2) Council believes that this exclusion is a reflection of Central Government's lack of trust in Local Government and shows that their much publicised belief in Localism is not borne out in their actions when it comes to devolving real control to local bodies.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Bob Moon

Seconded by Councillor Ann Bridson

In paragraph (1) after 'excludes responsibility for' insert 'commissioning services for'.

Delete existing paragraph (2) and replace with:

(2) Council notes that services such as health visiting, including leadership and delivery of the Healthy Child Programme for under fives, and the Family Nurse Partnership, will initially be commissioned on behalf of Public Health England by the NHS Commissioning Board.

Add new paragraph (3):

(3) Council understands that, in the longer term, it is expected that health visiting will be commissioned locally, representing the opportunity to ensure that this service for the under fives is joined up effectively with other existing services, such as Sure Start Children's Centres, maternity services and children's social care.

The amendment was put and carried (39:22)

The motion , as now amended, was put and carried (39:22)

Resolved (39:22) –

(1) Council notes that provisions in the Health and Social Care Bill which relate to the transfer of responsibilities for Public Health from the Health Service to Local Authorities specifically excludes responsibility for commissioning services for children up to five years old.

(2) Council notes that services such as health visiting, including leadership and delivery of the Healthy Child Programme for under fives, and the Family Nurse Partnership, will initially be commissioned on behalf of Public Health England by the NHS Commissioning Board.

(3) Council understands that, in the longer term, it is expected that health visiting will be commissioned locally, representing the opportunity to ensure that this service for the under fives is joined up effectively with other existing services, such as Sure Start Children's Centres, maternity services and children's social care.

124 EXTRA POTHOLE REPAIR FUNDING

Proposed by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Seconded by Councillor Stuart Kelly

Council:

- (1) Welcomes the announcement in the Budget on 23rd March 2011 that councils in England will be given extra money, on top of the £100 million announced in February, to spend on repairing potholes, meaning an extra £625,931 will now be available in this year's council budget for pothole repairs in Wirral.
- (2) Notes the significant investment already made this year to improve road safety and maintain Wirral's highways infrastructure, including a £1.6m capital investment programme and continuation of the policy to introduce 20mph speed restrictions in non-major routes in residential areas throughout Wirral.
- (3) Instructs officers to present options to speed up the identification and repair of pot holes with reports from residents and condition surveys to be used to ensure that these funds are applied in an efficient and cost effective manner, with a view to ensuring that the defects and deteriorating roads are tackled at the earliest opportunity. Information to be published on the Council's website by 30 September 2011 showing where this extra money has been spent.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Ann McLachlan

Seconded by Councillor Harry Smith

Delete everything and replace with the following:

- (1) Council welcomes any additional funding which will ensure drivers in the Borough can travel safely on Wirral roads, avoiding accidents and damage to their vehicles. However, Council recognises that £625,931 is a drop in the ocean when it comes to the cost of repairing the many miles of ruined carriageway resulting from the severe winter weather conditions.
- (2) Council also notes that the additional highways capital investment programme was put in place to prevent the damage done by a reduction in Government allocations for the Local Transport Plan which would have reduced the finance available to maintain Wirral's highways.
- (3) Council further notes that this capital investment was an addition to the Capital Programme, increasing the Council's borrowing, at a revenue cost of £160,000 a year over 25 years, at a time when this Government is preaching about reducing levels of debt.
- (4) While Council welcomes any interaction with local residents, Council believes it should be made clear that the repair of potholes will be carried out using impartial assessments and measures of priority, regardless of the level of complaints received, or the area from which they are received.

The amendment was put and lost (22:39)

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

Resolved (unanimously) - That Council:

- (1) Welcomes the announcement in the Budget on 23rd March 2011 that councils in England will be given extra money, on top of the £100 million announced in February, to spend on repairing potholes, meaning an extra £625,931 will now be available in this year's council budget for pothole repairs in Wirral.**
- (2) Notes the significant investment already made this year to improve road safety and maintain Wirral's highways infrastructure, including a £1.6m capital investment programme and continuation of the policy to introduce 20mph speed restrictions in non-major routes in residential areas throughout Wirral.**
- (3) Instructs officers to present options to speed up the identification and repair of pot holes with reports from residents and condition surveys to be used to ensure that these funds are applied in an efficient and cost effective manner, with a view to ensuring that the defects and deteriorating roads are tackled at the earliest opportunity. Information to be published on the Council's website by 30 September 2011 showing where this extra money has been spent.**

125 **ESTABLISHING A FOODBANK FOR WIRRAL**

Proposed by Councillor Phil Davies

Seconded by Councillor Steve Foulkes

- (1) Council notes that a group of representatives of public, private, voluntary and faith organizations have got together under the auspices of 'Churches Together in Wirral' in order to consider establishing a foodbank for Wirral.
- (2) Council notes that a foodbank stores or 'banks' food donated by the community and can be drawn on by people in crisis. It is a simple and unique concept designed to help individuals in crisis by providing free emergency food for three days (10 balanced meals). Three days is the period assessed as the minimum time it takes for the appropriate agencies to be in a position to assist. Volunteers collect food from the public at supermarkets, from churches and through local groups and schools and this is 'banked' in a store. Food is drawn from vouchers which are issued to people in crisis as a result of referrals from registered care professionals such as social workers, health visitors, probation officers, church pastoral workers, schools and others working in the front line of poverty.
- (3) Council further notes that as well as providing recipients with food, the foodbank can also offer 'one-stop' access to agencies such as CAB, debt counselling, advocacy etc. There are currently 90 foodbanks operating throughout the UK under the auspices of The Trussell Trust, a registered charity which works in partnership with local communities to launch life-changing, sustainable, community-based projects undertaken from a Christian perspective.
- (4) Council requests that a report be prepared for a future Cabinet meeting which sets out what practical assistance the Council could provide to assist this initiative.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Denis Knowles

Seconded by Councillor Peter Kearney

At the end of paragraph (4), add: "following discussion with community, voluntary and faith organisations supporting the Foodbank".

The amendment was put and carried unanimously.

The substantive motion was put and carried unanimously.

Resolved (unanimously) – That:

- (1) Council notes that a group of representatives of public, private, voluntary and faith organizations have got together under the auspices of 'Churches Together in Wirral' in order to consider establishing a foodbank for Wirral.**

(2) Council notes that a foodbank stores or 'banks' food donated by the community and can be drawn on by people in crisis. It is a simple and unique concept designed to help individuals in crisis by providing free emergency food for three days (10 balanced meals). Three days is the period assessed as the minimum time it takes for the appropriate agencies to be in a position to assist. Volunteers collect food from the public at supermarkets, from churches and through local groups and schools and this is 'banked' in a store. Food is drawn from vouchers which are issued to people in crisis as a result of referrals from registered care professionals such as social workers, health visitors, probation officers, church pastoral workers, schools and others working in the front line of poverty.

(3) Council further notes that as well as providing recipients with food, the foodbank can also offer 'one-stop' access to agencies such as CAB, debt counselling, advocacy etc. There are currently 90 foodbanks operating throughout the UK under the auspices of The Trussell Trust, a registered charity which works in partnership with local communities to launch life-changing, sustainable, community-based projects undertaken from a Christian perspective.

(4) Council requests that a report be prepared for a future Cabinet meeting which sets out what practical assistance the Council could provide to assist this initiative following discussion with community, voluntary and faith organisations supporting the Foodbank.

126 GREEN GROWTH

Proposed by Councillor Stuart Kelly
Seconded by Councillor Simon Holbrook

Council:

- (1) Recognises the importance of environmental sustainability to future business growth and the development of the Borough's economy, not just the Green economy.
- (2) Recognises that aligning resource efficiency, sustainable procurement, waste reduction strategies, commercial waste infrastructure, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources are common across all sectors of the economy and key to long term success and sustainability.
- (3) Notes the ENWORKS report 'Making an impact in the Liverpool City Region' and the excellent resource efficiency support that this organisation has offered to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), making businesses stronger through better use of resources.
- (4) Instructs officers to review the Council's economic regeneration policies to ensure that businesses in Wirral can access appropriate information and

support tools to enable them to benefit from increased profitability, productivity and sustainability through improved energy and resource efficiency.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor George Davies

Seconded by Councillor Jean Stapleton

Add new paragraphs (5) and (6):

- (5) Council recognises the green value of Wirral's Home Insulation Programme, set up under the previous Labour/Liberal Democrat administration and continued by the present administration, which will benefit Wirral householders, increase employment opportunities and reduce the Carbon Footprint of the Borough.
- (6) Council believes that there is real potential for the development of emerging Green technologies on Wirral and asks the Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee to investigate and draw up a report for Cabinet on the best ways to create and support a "cluster" of companies to lead the way in driving a Green economy on Wirral and across the country.

The amendment was accepted by the movers of the motion as a friendly amendment.

The motion, as now amended, was put and carried unanimously.

Resolved (unanimously) - That Council:

- (1) Recognises the importance of environmental sustainability to future business growth and the development of the Borough's economy, not just the Green economy.**
- (2) Recognises that aligning resource efficiency, sustainable procurement, waste reduction strategies, commercial waste infrastructure, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources are common across all sectors of the economy and key to long term success and sustainability.**
- (3) Notes the ENWORKS report 'Making an impact in the Liverpool City Region' and the excellent resource efficiency support that this organisation has offered to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), making businesses stronger through better use of resources.**
- (4) Instructs officers to review the Council's economic regeneration policies to ensure that businesses in Wirral can access appropriate information and support tools to enable them to benefit from increased profitability, productivity and sustainability through improved energy and resource efficiency.**
- (5) Recognises the green value of Wirral's Home Insulation Programme, set up under the previous Labour/Liberal Democrat administration and continued by**

the present administration, which will benefit Wirral householders, increase employment opportunities and reduce the Carbon Footprint of the Borough.

(6) Believes that there is real potential for the development of emerging Green technologies on Wirral and asks the Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee to investigate and draw up a report for Cabinet on the best ways to create and support a “cluster” of companies to lead the way in driving a Green economy on Wirral and across the country.

127 **MINIMUM PRICING OF ALCOHOL**

Proposed by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Seconded by Councillor Ann Bridson

This Council:

- (1) Expresses its concern about the serious issues for the health, safety and wellbeing of young people that the Alcohol Scrutiny Review report raises, in particular, data from The Local Alcohol Profiles for England, published by the North West Public Health Observatory in September 2010, which ranks Wirral as 323 out of 326 local authority areas for alcohol-specific hospital admissions for under-18s.
- (2) Welcomes the Cabinet decisions that tackling alcohol misuse is a priority for Wirral, both in the Corporate Plan and the Council Budget.
- (3) In particular, gives support for the Scrutiny Review Panel’s recommendation F:
- (4) “Minimum unit pricing for alcohol - The Review Panel supports the principle of minimum unit pricing for alcohol. Council is requested to engage positively in the process to introduce a regional minimum price for alcohol in the Merseyside region.”
- (5) States its commitment to the principles of minimum pricing for alcohol and pledges to work together with other agencies, as appropriate, to secure minimum pricing for alcohol in the Merseyside region, set at an appropriate level to deter young drinkers.
- (6) Welcomes the measures proposed by Government to set a minimum price for alcohol at ‘duty plus VAT’ as a step in the right direction, but believes there is more that should be done.
- (7) Therefore, in light of the above, requests the Licensing, Health, Safety and General Purposes Committee reconsider the issue of alcohol minimum pricing at its next meeting.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Bill Davies

Seconded by Councillor John Salter

Delete all after paragraph (1) and insert:

- (2) Council recognises that high priority has to be given to tackling alcohol misuse on Wirral.
- (3) Council believes the measures proposed by Government to set a minimum price for alcohol at “duty plus VAT” will, in reality, set the minimum cost so low as to have little effect on the problem.
- (4) Council therefore agrees with the Review Panel support for the principle of minimum unit pricing for alcohol as a means of reducing alcohol consumption and the harm done by that consumption.
- (5) Council believes that minimum unit pricing for alcohol, set at an appropriate level, should be a cross party decision which is applied nationally in order to avoid any distortions to local trade.
- (6) Council believes that every effort should be made regionally to set a reasonable pricing policy, which deters young drinkers, on a voluntary basis.
- (7) However, Council is concerned that any use of by-laws across the Region compelling minimum unit pricing could severely disadvantage local traders by driving customers across local authority borders to purchase alcohol, and the goods they would otherwise have purchased at the same time, in a neighbouring authority without the by-laws. Council further believes that Wirral would be particularly vulnerable geographically to this effect.
- (8) Council is also concerned that there could be an increase in illicit trading in alcohol to avoid the by-laws with the associated danger of increasing criminality.
- (9) Council therefore requests officers to draw up a detailed and considered report for Cabinet, setting out the advantages and disadvantages, both social and economic, of using by-laws to set a regional minimum price per unit, before proceeding any further.

The amendment was put and lost (22:39)

The motion was put and lost (13:48)

128 **PUBLIC HEALTH IS COMING HOME**

Proposed by Councillor Simon Holbrook

Seconded by Councillor Bob Moon

This Council:

- (1) Welcomes proposals set out in the January 2011 Health and Social Care Bill, Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS, to return the Public Health function to the local authority family.

- (2) Is pleased to note that discussions are taking place to prepare for this transition and establish Public Health in Wirral as an integral part of the Council in shadow form.
- (3) Believes that there are many opportunities to help improve and protect the overall health of Wirral's population through integrating Public Health with existing council responsibilities such as environmental health, emergency planning, social care, early intervention, research, information and needs assessment.
- (4) Instructs the Chief Executive to bring forward proposals for consultation with elected members for how public health will affect the organisational and governance structure of the council.
- (5) Instructs the Chief Executive to ensure that the topic of how Public Health should work in local government be included as part of the issues paper that will form next year's 'Wirral's Future' public consultation for consideration by the Task Forces.
- (6) Understands that funding for the Public Health function will be determined by a Department of Health formula and instructs the Director of Finance, the Chief Executive and Director of Public Health to engage with the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government to ensure the best possible financial settlement for public health in Wirral which takes proper account of the gross inequalities in health outcomes and life expectancy in the Borough.
- (7) Calls on Wirral's MPs and the Council's Cabinet members to continue to lobby Government ministers on Wirral's behalf.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Brian Kenny

Seconded by Councillor Pat Glasman

Delete everything and replace with the following:

Although in principle Council welcomes the decision to move public health back under the control of local Councils, it must be recognised that this is merely one element of the Health and Social Care Bill which, if enacted unamended, will lead to the destruction of the NHS as we know it.

Council would remind the Liberal Democrats that it is not possible to 'cherry pick' those parts of the Bill which they find acceptable while rubbishing the rest. Rather than have a pause for the coalition to consult further, Council believes that the Government should listen to the widespread opposition to this Bill and agree to scrap the existing plan and work with other parties to ensure that the NHS is kept intact.

The amendment was put and lost (22:39)

The motion was put and carried (39:22).

Resolved (39:22) – That this Council:

(1) Welcomes proposals set out in the January 2011 Health and Social Care Bill, Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS, to return the Public Health function to the local authority family.

(2) Is pleased to note that discussions are taking place to prepare for this transition and establish Public Health in Wirral as an integral part of the Council in shadow form.

(3) Believes that there are many opportunities to help improve and protect the overall health of Wirral's population through integrating Public Health with existing council responsibilities such as environmental health, emergency planning, social care, early intervention, research, information and needs assessment.

(4) Instructs the Chief Executive to bring forward proposals for consultation with elected members for how public health will affect the organisational and governance structure of the council.

(5) Instructs the Chief Executive to ensure that the topic of how Public Health should work in local government be included as part of the issues paper that will form next year's 'Wirral's Future' public consultation for consideration by the Task Forces.

(6) Understands that funding for the Public Health function will be determined by a Department of Health formula and instructs the Director of Finance, the Chief Executive and Director of Public Health to engage with the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government to ensure the best possible financial settlement for public health in Wirral which takes proper account of the gross inequalities in health outcomes and life expectancy in the Borough.

(7) Calls on Wirral's MPs and the Council's Cabinet members to continue to lobby Government ministers on Wirral's behalf.

129 **TACKLING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCE REVIEW**

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist
Seconded by Councillor Stuart Kelly

(1) This Council:

- (i) Recognises that the step by step progress undertaken to prepare this year's budget has enabled the Council to protect and maintain services in a difficult financial climate and avoid compulsory redundancies.**

- (ii) Recognises that the two year settlement provided for local government has presented many Councils with difficult choices and that detailed work is required to ensure that this Council's Strategic Change Programme remains on course to achieve these changes and release further resources to maintain front line services.
 - (iii) Appreciates that the careful and efficient use and management of all our limited resources is crucial to maintaining a wide range of services and a balanced budget.
 - (iv) Believes that securing adequate resources is essential for a borough like Wirral with many pressing social problems.
 - (v) Is aware that the Local Government Resource Review is now under way and that this will set the pattern for a new scheme for financial assistance from 2013.
- (2) Council, therefore, requests Cabinet to draw together a report to highlight data on Wirral's underlying social problems, in particular highlighting how Wirral has benefited substantially from the redistribution of the business rates over the years, with the aim of securing a fair and rebalanced funding formula to tackle those underlying problems and provide adequate resources for local services.
- (3) This report be then used as part of a campaign involving SIGOMA, the Local Government Association and other councils in speaking up for local Councils and ensuring the Department for Communities and Local Government specifically understand local needs.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Councillor Steve Foulkes
Seconded by Councillor Phil Davies

Delete everything and replace with the following:

Council believes that the call by the Liberal Democrats for a review into local government resources is too little and too late. They had an opportunity to stand up for Wirral and submit an objection to Government for the massive £51m cut to the Council's budget. Instead they chose to go along with this settlement, making it more likely that the Government will inflict additional cuts on Wirral next year.

The amendment was put and lost (22:39)

The motion was put and carried unanimously.

Resolved (unanimously) –

(1) This Council:

(i) Recognises that the step by step progress undertaken to prepare this year's budget has enabled the Council to protect and maintain services in a difficult financial climate and avoid compulsory redundancies.

(ii) Recognises that the two year settlement provided for local government has presented many Councils with difficult choices and that detailed work is required to ensure that this Council's Strategic Change Programme remains on course to achieve these changes and release further resources to maintain front line services.

(iii) Appreciates that the careful and efficient use and management of all our limited resources is crucial to maintaining a wide range of services and a balanced budget.

(iv) Believes that securing adequate resources is essential for a borough like Wirral with many pressing social problems.

(v) Is aware that the Local Government Resource Review is now under way and that this will set the pattern for a new scheme for financial assistance from 2013.

(2) Council, therefore, requests Cabinet to draw together a report to highlight data on Wirral's underlying social problems, in particular highlighting how Wirral has benefited substantially from the redistribution of the business rates over the years, with the aim of securing a fair and rebalanced funding formula to tackle those underlying problems and provide adequate resources for local services.

(3) This report be then used as part of a campaign involving SIGOMA, the Local Government Association and other councils in speaking up for local Councils and ensuring the Department for Communities and Local Government specifically understand local needs.

130 VACANCIES

The Council was requested to deal with the following appointments:

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Health and Well Being O&S

Simon Wagener – co-opted member as Carers' representative

OUTSIDE BODIES

Corporate Resources

West Kirby Charities

Mr David Stevenson (to be appointed until 30 October, 2014)

Mrs Victoria Gawith (to be appointed until 18 April 2015)

Resolved – That the appointments be approved.

This page is intentionally left blank