

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP – BUDGET AMENDMENTS:

AMENDMENT 1

PEOPLE'S DIVIDEND:

Proposed by: Councillor Tom Harney

Seconded by: Councillor Dave Mitchell

That the Budget proposed by Cabinet 21 Feb be amended as follows;

Delete at page 1, paragraph 7:

“A rebate equivalent to a 3% cut in the Council Tax. With a commitment to work in future years to make this permanent”

and replace with:

This year, the Council has a one-off sum of money that has been released from reserves, based on reports from the Director of Finance and agreed by Cabinet on 21 February. This is money that was put aside for specific purposes, is no longer needed for those purposes and is currently sitting in the Council's bank account. This money was collected from, and belongs to Wirral households and we should give it back. Therefore, the sum of £4million is to be redistributed (with no impact on the overall financial position of the Budget 2012/13 proposed by Cabinet on 21 February) and paid in the form of a one-off council tax rebate payment, as a **'People's Dividend' of £30 to all Wirral households**. Council recognises that this can have a real and positive impact as a stimulus to the local economy and will be distributed in a way that will proportionately benefit those in lower Council Tax bands the most.

No rebate will be payable in respect of empty properties or second homes. Any other applied discounts will also apply to the value of the rebate.

Council Tax levels will also be set to ensure that there is **no overall increase in Council Tax** by absorbing the precept increases from balances in 2012/13 at a cost of £740,000. It should be noted that the Cabinet proposal of 21 February was for a 0.48% increase in Council Tax.

It also be noted that this represents an effective progressive rebate in Council Tax for 2012/13 as shown in the table below.

Table: Comparison of effect of the 'People's Dividend' amendment.

Council Tax Band	Council Tax (inc. precepts) in Cabinet budget	Cabinet rebate	Net Cabinet Council Tax	Council Tax (inc. precepts) in Lib Dem amendment	Lib Dem rebate 'People's Dividend'	Net Lib Dem Council Tax	Difference between Cabinet and Lib Dem proposals
A	£980.79	£22.00	£958.79	£976.14	£30.00	£946.14	£12.65
B	£1,144.24	£25.67	£1,118.58	£1,138.82	£30.00	£1,108.82	£9.76
C	£1,307.72	£29.33	£1,278.39	£1,301.51	£30.00	£1,271.51	£6.88
D	£1,471.18	£33.00	£1,438.18	£1,464.20	£30.00	£1,434.20	£3.98
E	£1,798.11	£40.33	£1,757.78	£1,789.58	£30.00	£1,759.58	-£1.80
F	£2,125.04	£47.67	£2,077.37	£2,114.96	£30.00	£2,084.96	-£7.59
G	£2,451.97	£55.00	£2,396.97	£2,440.34	£30.00	£2,410.34	-£13.37
H	£2,942.35	£66.00	£2,876.36	£2,928.40	£30.00	£2,898.40	-£22.04

Note: 9 out of 10 households are Bands A, B, C or D and benefit more from these proposals in comparison with the Cabinet proposals.

Any requirement of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 to consider reports be dispensed with on the grounds that, in the opinion of the Council, the matters are urgent.

That for the financial year 2012/13 the Council will ensure that no pensioner household over 70 will have any increase in Council Tax liability, including the consequences of any police and fire increases. This applies where:

(i) the Council Tax payer pays Council Tax in Wirral as their main home and all individuals in the household that are counted as resident for Council Tax purposes are aged 70 or over on 1 April 2012 (but where the qualifying age criterion is met after 1 April 2012 eligibility will be effective from the relevant birth date only);

(ii) this reduction will be calculated after deduction of all other Council Tax discounts and reliefs;

(iii) application must be made for the reduction where it is not currently in payment or the potential claimant is not in receipt of Council Tax Benefit;

No pensioner household in receipt of full Council Tax Benefit will qualify for the reduction.

It be noted that, at its meeting on 8 December 2011 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for 2012/13 as 106,058 in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, under Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the 'Act').

The following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2012/13 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act.

- (a) £818,095,900 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act;.
- (b) £685,924,900 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (c) £132,171,000 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) exceeds the aggregate at (b), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year;.
- (d) £1,246.22 being the amount at (c) divided by the Council Tax Base, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

Wirral Services

Valuation Bands

A	£830.82	B	£969.28	C	£1,107.75	D	£1,246.22
E	£1,523.16	F	£1,800.10	G	£2,077.04	H	£2,492.44

being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular

valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings in Valuation Band D, calculated in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings as listed in different valuation bands.

It is noted that this equates to 0.6% Wirral Council Tax reduction.

It be noted that for the year 2012/13 the major precepting authorities have stated the following amounts of precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Fire		Valuation Bands					
A	£44.91	B	£52.39	C	£59.88	D	£67.36
E	£82.33	F	£97.30	G	£112.27	H	£134.72

Police		Valuation Bands					
A	£100.41	B	£117.15	C	£133.88	D	£150.62
E	£184.09	F	£217.56	G	£251.03	H	£301.24

Having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts for Wirral services and the Fire and Police precepts, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts of council tax for the year 2012/13 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:-

Wirral Council		Valuation Bands					
A	£976.14	B	£1,138.82	C	£1,301.51	D	£1,464.20
E	£1,789.58	F	£2,114.96	G	£2,440.34	H	£2,928.40

It is noted that this equates to a 0% overall increase in Council Tax.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AMENDMENT

SUMMARY OF GENERAL FUND ESTIMATES

	BASE ESTIMATE 2011/12 £	CURRENT ESTIMATE 2011/12 £	BASE ESTIMATE 2012/13 £
EXPENDITURE			
Departmental budgets	266,426,900	273,337,000	264,389,500
Merseytravel	28,817,000	28,817,000	29,060,000
Local Pay Review	956,300	545,900	545,900
Contribution to Fund EVR/VS Scheme	5,794,700	0	0
EVR / VS Scheme 2012 Savings	0	0	(910,000)
Net budget	301,994,900	302,699,900	293,085,400
Potential Overspends	0	2,000,000	0
Council Tax Reimbursement	0	0	4,000,000
Contribution from Balances	(7,165,900)	(9,688,300)	(10,344,500)
BUDGET REQUIREMENT	294,829,000	295,011,600	286,740,900
INCOME			
Revenue Support Grant	37,498,000	37,498,000	(471,100)
National Non Domestic Rate	121,312,000	121,312,000	145,208,200
Council Tax Freeze Grant	3,285,000	3,285,000	6,572,800
Local Support Services Grant	0	1,482,600	1,804,900
Council Tax Income	131,434,000	131,434,000	132,171,000
Collection Fund Surplus	1,300,000	0	1,455,100
TOTAL INCOME	294,829,000	295,011,600	286,740,900
STATEMENT OF GENERAL BALANCE			
General Balance at 1 April	14,070,600	14,070,600	18,405,300
Adjustment (following 2010/11 outturn)	0	1,000,000	0
Contribution from Capitalisation	0	2,600,000	0
Budgeted Contribution	(7,165,900)	(9,688,300)	(10,344,500)
Release of Housing Benefit Reserves	0	5,000,000	0
Release of Other Reserves and Provisions	0	5,423,000	0
GENERAL BALANCE AT 31 MARCH	6,904,700	18,405,300	8,060,800

AMENDMENT 2

AREA FORUMS:

Proposed by: Councillor Tom Harney

Seconded by: Councillor Dave Mitchell

In the 'Your Neighbourhood' section, 'Investing in the people's priorities', add a new section:

Council welcomes the additional resources devolved to area forums and the removal of further barriers to the local determination of spending and notes that the total amount allocated for 2012/13 is over £1.1million.

Council believes that the 'one size fits all' model is unsustainable and resolves to reallocate the total budget between the forums based on equal shares, plus an assessment of relative need (with no impact on the overall financials). Therefore, Council instructs that 70% of current Area Forum funding be allocated on the basis of equal shares, and 30% allocated on the basis of IMD, as these indices are broadly recognised as the best indicator of relative need.

Each Area Forum will be required to set out their own Budget, using the Neighbourhood Plans as the initial basis for prioritisation of Area Forum resources. As well as the devolution of funding to Area Forums, the Local Democracy Working Party is requested to give urgent consideration (as an embedded part of any new committee structures brought forward) to giving Area Forum Councillors delegated authority for agreeing the allocation of Area Forum budgets.

Chief Officers are also requested to review and identify devolvable budget lines and make recommendations as to the fairest method of distribution.

AMENDMENT 3

TRADE UNIONS:

Proposed by: Councillor Tom Harney
Seconded by: Councillor Dave Mitchell

That the Budget proposed by Cabinet 21 Feb be amended as follows;

Trade Union contribution:

Under 'Cutting the cost of Council administration', delete "For the next twelve months we will fund this activity from the Council's efficiency budget and conduct a full review to ensure Wirral's Trades unions can effectively represent their members if the payment for full time officers is withdrawn."

and replace with:

For the next twelve months we will fund this activity from the Council's efficiency budget whilst we conduct a full review. Council believes that the scale of investment in these services should be a reflection of workforce numbers and the duties required for adequate representation and that work to establish this should be undertaken as part of this review. We will give a commitment to ensure that sustainable arrangements are in place for appropriate funding in future years at the conclusion of the review.

AMENDMENT 4

COMMUNITY JUSTICE AND LOCAL SHOPPING AREAS

Proposed by: Councillor Tom Harney
Seconded by: Councillor Dave Mitchell

Anti Social Behaviour:

Under 'Investing in the people's priorities' add to end of paragraph on Anti-social behaviour; "This review will include the implementation of community justice in this vital area."

Helping our local shopping areas and Free After Three:

Under 'Your Economy', insert additional paragraph after the paragraphs on 'helping our local shopping areas' and 'free after three' parking;

- A thorough evaluation of the results and economic impact of the measures included in the Budget to assist our local shopping areas will be reported to an appropriate Cabinet meeting in order to help inform future targeting of resources. £20,000 to be allocated from the Efficiency Investment Budget to carry out this evaluation.