

**What
Really
Matters?**

**PLEASE RETURN BY
31st January 2013**

Budget Options from the Chief Executive

“I offer these options for consideration by Councillors, residents and staff according to the overriding principle that we should spend less on ourselves – taking savings first from our ‘back office’ and so reducing as much as possible the impact on services to residents, particularly our poorest and most vulnerable.”

Graham Burgess, Chief Executive of Wirral Council

You can complete this questionnaire online at www.wirral.gov.uk/whatreallymatters, or hand it in at any Council One Stop Shop, Library, Children's Centre or Leisure Centre. You can also post it back to: What Really Matters, Wallasey Town Hall, Brighton Street, CH44 8ED

Dear Resident

I was appointed as Chief Executive to improve the way in which Wirral Council operates. My first task is to ensure we address the unprecedented budget challenge before us. Unprecedented cuts to Council funding from central Government, combined with unfunded increased demand for social care in particular, mean that we have no choice but to cut around a third of our net budget over the next three years.

These are tough times – for our staff, Councillors, and most importantly the people who we serve. We have some tough decisions to make over the coming months.

Today I publish my options for where savings might be found for Councillors, Partners, staff and the public to consider. I have sought to offer these options according to the overriding principle that we should spend less on ourselves, taking savings first from our ‘back office’ and so mitigating as much as possible the impact on services to residents particularly our poorest and most vulnerable.

You will see from the chart on the next page, we have been largely successful in developing these options to reduce the impact on residents as much as is possible. I guarantee that will always be our overriding principle as we strive to make the savings we are being forced to make.

These options also represent around 25% more than we need to save in this first year. That is to make sure that our Councillors, when they consider these options alongside your feedback, have the opportunity to make choices as they take these extremely difficult decisions. These savings are proposed as part of a three year drive, which will see the Council building firm foundations for the future of the borough by transforming the way we work and provide services.

I am therefore firstly proposing to reduce our Senior Management costs by around a third. I am also consulting on reducing other staffing costs such as car mileage and phone bills.

In addition I am bringing forward options to make better use of our buildings and Information Technology. Importantly I am reviewing the amount of money spent on Agency Staff, Consultants, marketing and all other non essential spending.

Given the size of the budget gap this will not however be enough. The further options I put before you are not easy ones. Council services must change – there is no other way of finding the massive amount of money we need.

My pledge is that I will consult with staff, residents, community, voluntary and faith groups and businesses in order that we make the tough decisions we need to - taking your views and opinions into account.

Graham Burgess,
Chief Executive.

Your details

Please provide your e-mail address if you would like Wirral Council to send you updates about Council services and future consultations. Your information will be managed in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy and will never be passed on to any unauthorised third party.

Your email address: _____

If you don't have an email address please provide your postal address:

Your name: _____

Your address: _____

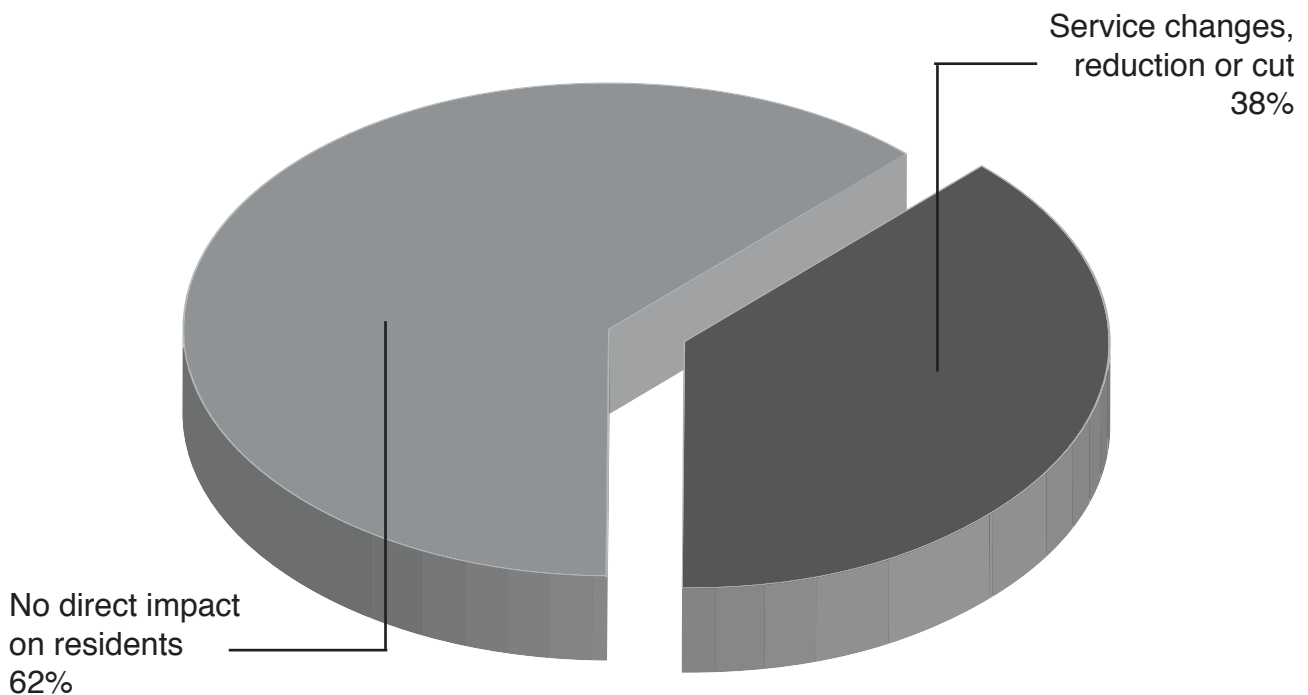
_____ Postcode: _____

What is your relationship to Wirral Council? *(please tick all that apply)*

- Resident Member of staff Local business
 Partner agency/organisation Voluntary/community organisation

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation please tell us its' name:

Where the savings come from



You will see that this questionnaire is split into four sections:

Section A: **Transformation and Resources**

Section B: **Regeneration and Environment**

Section C: **Families and Wellbeing**

Section D: **About You**

There are quite a lot of options, and questions, within this document. All questions have choices to best describe your view. Please tick one box for each option.

Please feel free to complete either as much or as little as you would like – every response, no matter how small, will be counted.

These budget options have been developed by Council Officers and, as much as possible; we have tried to develop them to follow what you told us in the first stage of this consultation.

For each of the options summarised in this report, you can find much more detailed information as to what likely impact they will bring by visiting our website at www.wirral.gov.uk/whatreallymatters, calling into any One Stop Shop or Library, or calling us on 0151 606 2030.

Section A: Transformation and Resources

REDUCING COUNCIL MANAGEMENT

Wirral Council has around 4800 employees. Some of the structures in departments, and services, are no longer fit for purpose and could be updated and reduced, to achieve major savings. This option involves a total restructure and significant reduction in middle and senior management layers across the entire Council.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

WORKFORCE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The Council's current salary costs are £102 million. Another £6 million is spent on salary enhancements based on national and local conditions of service. This option is designed to reduce this expenditure by £4 million through making changes to employees' terms and conditions, including car mileage, phones, unpaid leave and single time working.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

PROCUREMENT

The Council is looking to make savings and increase income through the way it pays for goods and services, through starting to charge schools for work it does and also through paying some invoices and bills through an online system.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

The way the Council manages its cash flow and borrowing could also be significantly improved to bring in major savings. The Council will fund road repairs, building investments and other works through internal funds rather than borrowing, which will save around £1.7m.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

CIVIC SERVICES (THE MAYOR OF WIRRAL)

The Mayor undertakes a range of civic and fundraising duties throughout their term of office. The option here is to make a saving through re-designing the service to offer better value for money.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

ELECTIONS

The Council currently operates a system of three elections every four years, with Councillors elected for a four-year term. The option here would be to hold 'all-out' elections every four years, where all Members would be up for election for a four-year term.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

REDUCING THE COST OF DEMOCRACY

The Council currently operates a model of governance known as Strong Leader, which involves a Cabinet and five Overview and Scrutiny Committees, plus a number of other committees, who work to set Council policy, make and scrutinise decisions and set the Council budget. This option would involve a review of the Council's constitution and number of committees, and related meetings, to bring savings and a reduction in staff.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICE

The Council invests funds in its computer equipment, which is used by thousands of Council employees on a daily basis. This option involves centralising, and significantly reducing, the funding spent on providing computers, printers and other IT equipment to Council, including reducing the number of employees required to service the equipment.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING

The Council's communications and engagement division is responsible for promoting Wirral as a place, the Council's services, consultation activity and public relations and media activity. There are a number of options in this area, including a reduction in the core marketing budget of 50%, stopping the sponsorship of Tranmere Rovers Football Club,

which would bring a saving of £135,000 and removing the funding which is used to subsidise tourism and visitor events throughout the borough.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

AREA FORUM FUNDING

The Council invests funding each year into its programme of Area Forum events. This funding is available for communities to pay for additional Council services or to pay for community or voluntary groups to perform projects and activities. The option here is to cancel the currently frozen allocation of Forum funding, and to further remove the funding from the Council budget in future years, to be replaced by a new method of engaging and working with communities.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

BETTER USE OF BUILDINGS

The Council owns an extensive and varied number of buildings, from which it delivers services and provides back office support. This option involves closing the Acre Lane and Municipal Buildings and relocating staff elsewhere.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

TRANSFORMING BUSINESS SUPPORT

The Council has a range of administration staff throughout the Council, who provide support to departments. The option here is to bring together administration into three business units to support each new Council area, to ensure reduced costs and higher efficiency.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

RESTRUCTURE OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT DIVISION

This Council department is responsible for a number of functions, covering Council buildings, human resources and legal services. This option proposes restructuring and reducing the division as well as investigating the outsourcing of part of the department.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

Is there anything you would like to say about the savings options being proposed under Transformation and Resources?

Section B: Regeneration and Environment

PARKING

Car Park charges vary extensively across Wirral. It is much more expensive, for example, to park in Birkenhead than in West Kirby. The proposal here is to standardise car parking charges across the borough, and reduce the 'all day' charge to a competitive rate of £2.50, and bring in annual and seasonal permit rates in outer Birkenhead car parks. This would also involve reducing staffing across the service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION

Garden waste is at the moment collected free of charge from Wirral residents. The option here is to stop the free kerbside collection of waste and begin charging for the service. On average, Councils who charge for this service charge in the region of £35 per year.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTION

The 'ERIC' service is available for people to have items of large household waste collected and disposed of. The current charge for this service is £20 per collection; this option would involve raising this charge to £26.50 per collection.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

PRE-PLANNING ADVICE

The Council currently provides pre-planning application advice free of charge, many other Local Authorities across Merseyside charge. The option here is to introduce a fee for all pre-planning advice.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

APPRENTICE PROGRAMME

The Council has for the past few years funded 167 people to complete Apprenticeships, with a further 114 positions available during the current financial year. There are 2 options available here, the first is to remove the budget for this programme, which would end the Wirral Apprentice Programme in its current form; and the second is to reduce the budget to this programme, and explore opportunities to develop a Liverpool City Region Apprentice scheme. Please tell us which your preferred option is:

- Remove the budget for this programme
 - Reduce the budget for the programme and develop a Liverpool City Region scheme
-

HANDYPERSON SCHEME

The Council runs a handyerson scheme, which is open to all residents and means people can request maintenance on their homes for a relatively cheap price. The option here is to redevelop this service, meaning it is targeted more effectively at people who have recently been discharged from hospital, and reducing the service available to the general public.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

RESTRUCTURE OF THE REGENERATION, HOUSING AND PLANNING DIVISION

This option involves a service restructure in the Regeneration, Housing and Planning division, as a result of some significant changes which have led to a reconsideration of the work of the department.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

KENNELS SERVICE

The Council operates a kennels service, which serves to re-home abandoned and stray dogs. This option would involve closing the specific Wirral service and instead providing a joint service with partners across Merseyside. This would mean residents would have to travel to Halewood to collect their dogs.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

HOME INSULATION

The Warmer Wirral programme provides free or reduced cost home insulation for Wirral residents.

- Remove the budget for the programme
 - Reduce the budget for the programme, allowing for some energy efficiency and fuel poverty work to continue
-

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Environmental Health team perform a wide range of duties related to the health, wellbeing and safety of the borough. This option involves developing a partnership with Cheshire West

and Chester to put a mutual organisation together to deliver the service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

TRADING STANDARDS

Within the Trading Standards team there are a number of officers who are responsible for providing support to vulnerable customers. This budget option involves reducing this service by a number of officers.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

PEST CONTROL

The Pest Control service provides a treatment service to residents and companies. The option in this area involves reducing the department by one member of staff.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

The Council has a contract in place to cover all highway maintenance, which is soon going to be re-tendered. This option would reduce the proactive maintenance of roads, footways, signage and street furniture, and mean the Council would focus most resources on maintenance where there is a direct safety issue.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

STREET LIGHTING

The Council operates a scheme whereby people perform lighting inspections at night. This option would involve stopping these night-time inspections and also, where it is safe to do so, switching off lighting either completely or for part of the night.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

HIGHWAYS DRAINAGE

The Council performs regular maintenance work across drainage inspections on the highways, ensuring that risk of flooding is brought as low as possible. This option would reduce the service, and mean focusing the activity on targeted inspections at problem sites.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

STREET CLEANSING

The Council, through its contractor, invests a significant amount of resources in collecting litter and cleaning the streets. This option would involve reducing that investment, and working with the community to improve levels of street cleanliness. If successful, this reduction would be rolled out across other areas.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLS

The Council provides school crossing patrol sites across the borough. This option would involve inviting schools to pay for the crossing

patrol service and removing the cost to the Council. If schools are not prepared to pay for the service then it may be removed.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REMOVAL OF THE MAINTENANCE OF PARKS

Wirral has over 200 sites which are classified as being 'parks and open spaces', which are a mixture of large and local parks, general green spaces, beaches and bowling greens. This option would involve stopping maintenance on a number of parks, green spaces, beaches and grass verges and working with community organisations and 'friends of parks' groups to ensure the service was maintained.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REDUCTION IN THE MAINTENANCE OF PARKS

This further option relating to parks involves the reduction of maintenance whereby some areas will be cut every three weeks, rather than two, a reduction in bedding displays and the pre-planned maintenance programme. Rural grass verges would also be left for wildlife and only cut where there is a road safety issue. The Council would work with community organisations and 'friends of parks' groups to ensure the service was maintained.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

HOUSING SUPPORT FOR BME COMMUNITIES

Part of the Council's supporting people team is a small service which helps to provide support for people from black and minority ethnic communities to live independently. The option here is to remove this service, as other services both from the community and public sectors, including the Citizen's Advice Bureau, could potentially fill the gap.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

SUPPORTING PEOPLE

The supporting people programme delivers services to around 5,500 Wirral residents; making sure that those people with housing related needs are supported. This option would involve reducing this budget through renegotiating contracts, tendering services, remodelling services and closing services.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

INVESTING IN WIRRAL'S BUSINESSES

Wirral Council runs a service called Invest Wirral, which is designed to provide a wide range of business support services. The option here would be the reduction in support to businesses through a number of avenues, including business investments, grants and other funds. These funds may be replaced regionally. This option would also reduce duplication with other services by removing the Invest Wirral events budget and social enterprise support.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

COMMUNITY PATROL AND DOG FOULING

Wirral Community Patrol consists of more than 20 officers who work towards improving the security and safety of Wirral Council properties but also making Wirral a safe place to live, work and visit. The Council also provide a Dog Fouling Enforcement Team which aim to improve and protect the Wirral environment by reducing dog fouling. The option is to stop paying enhanced salaries for evening and weekend work for Community Patrol, except for bank holidays, and also to reduce the size of the dog fouling enforcement team.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

MODERNISATION OF LEISURE

Currently, Leisure Centres across Wirral have periods where usage is extremely low, compared to the number of staff working at the sites. The option in this area is to make a number of changes to pool operating times and working practices, including closing Europa Leisure Pool and Guinea Gap Pool during less busy times, and reducing the staff requirements for the sauna operation at Guinea Gap Leisure Centre among others.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

Is there anything you would like to say about the savings options being proposed under Regeneration and Environment?

Section C: Families and Wellbeing

COMMUNITY MEALS

The Council provide an outdated, but appreciated, meals-on-wheels service. This service charges people £2.68 per meal. The proposal here is to increase this charge by 79p per meal to a total charge of £3.47 per meal – which is what the service costs the Council.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

The Council provides a range of technology which is installed in people's homes to enable them to be more independent, such as bed occupancy sensors, property exit sensors, pull chords, flood detectors and falls detectors. These devices are installed and monitored 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, free of charge. The proposal here is to implement a weekly fee for this service of £3. This charge would only be applied to those people who could afford it.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

CHARGING FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Wirral Council's charges for adult social care services are among the lowest in the region. Many Councils charge 100% of a person's disposable income, Wirral currently charges 75%. The proposal here is to bring our charges in line with other North West Councils and charge 100% of a person's total disposable income.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

TARGETED SUPPORT THROUGH NHS CONTRACTS

The Council works closely with the NHS to provide a whole range of services for vulnerable adults; including nursing care, residential care and reablement (where a person is supported back to full health following an illness) among others. In this area the Council will work with colleagues in the NHS to reduce the use of higher cost services such as nursing and residential care to focus on community based alternatives such as Assistive Technology, intermediate care and reablement.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

EXTRA CARE HOUSING

The Council provides over 200 extra care housing units across the borough, which is a form of sheltered housing and residential care. The option here is to re-tender those contracts and look to provide the same level of service at a lower cost.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

RESIDENTIAL AND RESPITE CARE

The Council owns 3 residential care homes which provide short breaks for people with learning disabilities and mental health difficulties. The option here is to reduce the number of facilities from 3 to 1, while still providing the same service. More people will then benefit from supported living arrangements rather than residential care.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

DAY CARE AND DAY SERVICES TRANSFORMATION

The Council owns a number of Day Centres which support people with Learning Disabilities, Physical Disabilities and Mental Health difficulties. All of these centres need, to different extents, substantial investment and, due to younger people choosing to use other services, demand is substantially reducing. This option would involve investment in some centres, and the closure of others, while at the same time transforming the service to ensure it offers a modern and quality service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REVIEW OF SUPPORT FOR CARERS

When a carer is assessed for support, a “carer’s budget” is identified and allocated to the person. This option would involve changing this system and replacing it with an annual grant, which would be based on a banding system currently

used by other Councils. This would be based on the carer’s role and requirement for support, and would mean some carers receiving less financial support, but some receiving more according to their need.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

TRANSPORT POLICIES

The Council provides transport for over one thousand people across the borough every day to travel to Council facilities and schools among other places. This option would involve a full review of that transport, with a view to stopping providing transport to some or all Council facilities and schools. This would require people using the transport to either contribute towards the cost of the service or find other ways to travel to the service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

AREA TEAMS FOR FAMILY SUPPORT

Area Teams provide preventative services for vulnerable children and families. This option would involve reducing the number of teams from 11, to 4, and require the teams to re-focus their work based on need.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

SCHOOLS MUSIC SERVICE

The music service has for many years received a subsidy from the Council. This option removes that subsidy and requires the service to bring in enough income to break even.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

OAKLANDS OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

This service provides outdoor recreation and education activities, primarily for schools. The service also receives a subsidy from the Council, and this option would involve removing that funding and requiring the service to break even.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

EDUCATION PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

The Council provides an educational psychology service, which helps all children with special educational needs. The proposal in this area is to reduce this service and have a more targeted approach, whilst continuing to meet statutory requirements.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

FOUNDATION LEARNING

This is a programme offered to schools to support vocational learning for young people who are at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

The proposal in this area is to remove this funding and instead provide support through the careers education information, advice and guidance service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

COMMISSIONING OF PARENTING SERVICES

The Council invests money with organisations in the community and voluntary sector to provide parenting and family support, and the proposal in this area is to target a reduced service at those families most at risk of poor outcomes.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

SCHOOLS BUDGET

The Council has a budget for schools maintenance and also contributes towards a 27-year Private Finance Initiative agreement. The proposal in this area is to transfer the costs currently met by the Council to the schools budget.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND INCOME FROM SCHOOLS

The Council provides a number of services to schools, some of which are provided free of charge as part of the Council's legal obligations, some which are charged back to schools and some which are provided for no cost, or a cost which is lower than it costs to deliver. The option in this area is to reduce the level of free services the Council provides for schools and increasing the income from those services provided to Academy schools.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REVIEW OF VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR GRANTS

The voluntary, community and faith sector provide a number of services such as luncheon clubs, advocacy support and day care with funding provided by the Council. The proposal is that the Council reviews these services as part of a wider Council approach to ensure more targeted and cost effective services, based on early intervention and prevention.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

ASSESSMENT AND CARE MANAGEMENT

The Council is reviewing its assessment and care management process working closely with the NHS to improve the experience of care service users and make quicker the process from referral to support plan. The proposal is that through making the process more efficient, it would be possible to respond to financial pressures by reducing the number of social

workers and assessment support workers, although it is accepted that this would potentially negate improvements made through redesign.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REVIEW OF RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES

Many Councils have changed their services for learning disabilities, and developed supported living opportunities as an alternative to residential care. The option in this area is to develop supported housing arrangements for people with learning disabilities as an alternative to residential care.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REVIEW OF EQUIPMENT AND EMERGENCY DUTY

The Council provides equipment for people such as wheelchairs and also provides an emergency out of hours care management system. The proposal here is to review both services and investigate a shared service with the NHS to save money.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

YOUTH AND PLAY SERVICES

The Council provides and maintains 6 play schemes and 14 youth facilities, as well as extensive outreach projects. The option here is to review the number of play schemes, reduce the outreach service and integrate all youth clubs into the main four youth 'hubs'.

This would involve centralising all of the youth services within the main four hubs, and investing in a new Youth Zone for Central Birkenhead.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

YOUTH CHALLENGE

The Council also funds services around risk taking behaviour (alcohol and drugs) as well as positive activities such as drama and arts. The option here is to reduce the budget of those services and ensure that the budget is used to target the most vulnerable.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

CHILDREN'S CENTRES AND SURE START

The Council has 16 Children's Centres, as well as a number of satellite children's centres. The option here is to reduce universal services from children's centres, to transfer provision of day-care to Private, Voluntary or Independent providers and to charge for most universal services which are provided. This would also include the release of a number of satellite children's centres, and a reduction in the Sure Start budget.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

HELP AND ADVICE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

The Council provides an optional service for people who are over 65, which provides support and advice about benefits and how to access other voluntary and Council services. The option in this area is to remove this service, and instead use existing contracts with a number of voluntary and community organisations to provide it on our behalf.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

CAREERS, EDUCATION INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Through a contract, the Council provides a wide range of careers advice to young people. The option in this area is to reduce this service so it is targeted at those most in need.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

SHORT BREAKS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The Council provides funding for children with disabilities to go on short breaks, which provide respite for them and their families. The option here is to reduce the number and range of the short breaks which are provided, while still providing the service.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

This is a service which provides support for children with mental health needs. The option here is to reduce this service by one third, and target resources at those most in need.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

REVENUES AND BENEFITS

As Welfare Reform and Universal Credit is rolled out the workload in the Revenues and Benefits division will increase. Staffing levels will, however, be able to reduce to reflect the new arrangements. The option in this area is therefore to begin to reduce staff in this division as the new Universal Credit is implemented.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

INCREASING COURT COSTS

The Council at the moment charges non-payers of Council Tax £65. This is below the actual costs, which are around £87. The option here is to increase these charges to £75.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS AND EXEMPTIONS

There are a range of discounts and exemptions on Council Tax available to Wirral residents, including reductions for properties undergoing major repair and long term empty properties. The option in this area is to conduct a full review of these discounts with a view to increasing income from Council Tax.

- I support this under the circumstances
 - I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
 - I find this completely unacceptable
-

COUNCIL TAX PENSIONER DISCOUNT

Pensioners aged over 70 in Wirral currently receive a discount of 7.76% against their Council Tax. The option here is to reduce that discount or change the qualifying criteria.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY RELIEF

Wirral last year paid discretionary business rate relief for charities, voluntary, social, educational and sporting organisations for a total of over £1m. The option here is to review and potentially reduce the amount of businesses and funding which is used to help these businesses with their rates.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

LIBRARIES AND ONE STOP SHOPS

Wirral Council has a network of 13 One Stop Shops and 24 Libraries. The options in this area include: further merging of libraries and One Stop Shops, the reduction of opening hours, particularly around Christmas and New Year, and the increased use of volunteers in the running of the facilities. The option of community asset transfer will also be part of this option. The Council also propose to reduce the book fund, which libraries use to purchase new books.

- I support this under the circumstances
- I accept this if it is absolutely necessary
- I find this completely unacceptable

Is there anything you would like to say about the savings options being proposed under Families and Wellbeing?

Section D: About you

This section is all about you. It would be helpful when we analyse the results of this questionnaire for us to know a little bit about you.

The next few questions are optional – you don't have to complete them if you don't want to. None of the information you give us will be used for any other purpose than reviewing the results of the questionnaire, and will never be passed on to any third party.

Your gender:

- Male Female Prefer not to say

Your ethnicity:

Please tick a box or state your ethnicity:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other British | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other white background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other mixed background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background | <input type="checkbox"/> African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arab | <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy, Romany or Irish Traveller |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | |

Your religion or belief:

What is your religion?

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Christian | <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish | <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | | | |

Or, what is your belief?

- | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humanist | <input type="checkbox"/> Atheist | <input type="checkbox"/> Agnostic | <input type="checkbox"/> Pagan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other belief | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | | |

Your disability:

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

Please tick all the boxes which apply:

- Physical Disability Mental Health Sensory impairment
 Learning Difficulty Prefer not to say

Your age:

- Under 16 16-24 25-44 45-64
 65+ Prefer not to say

If you are under 16, please do not answer the remaining questions.

Marriage or Civil Partnership:

Are you currently:

- Married Single Divorced Widowed
 In a Civil Partnership None of the above Prefer not to say

Your sexual orientation:

Please tick one box -

- Heterosexual Lesbian or gay Bisexual Asexual
 Prefer not to say

Gender Reassignment:

Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

Thank you for your time and involvement - it will make a difference.

**www.wirral.gov.uk/whatreallymatters
engage@wirral.gov.uk
0151 606 2030**