

Council – 14 December, 2015

Motions

The following motions have been submitted in accordance with the notice required by Standing Order 7(10) and are listed in the order received.

1. Hamilton Square – Effective Scrutiny of Controversial Scheme *(the Civic Mayor to refer to Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee)*

Proposed by Councillor Alan Brighthouse

Seconded by Councillor Pat Cleary

Council notes that a public consultation was recently carried out regarding the redesign of the access to Hamilton Square, Hamilton Street and the area in front of Birkenhead Town Hall.

Council is aware that many principled objections have been raised to this scheme, with concerns around the re-introduction of unnecessary traffic and noise, the removal of the expensive landscaping and paved areas introduced by the Hamilton Quarter and the overall purpose of the scheme.

Given the Council's limited financial resources, it is important that this project is tested against the 2020 Vision. Before an investment of £1.1 m is committed, the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee is requested to examine, in detail, the criteria used to justify this investment.

Council, therefore, suggests that the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel is not the most appropriate forum for this fundamental study and requests that the project be the subject of full consideration by the Policy and Performance Committee.

2. Investing in our Constituencies *(the Civic Mayor to refer to Cabinet)*

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Council:

- a. notes the Capital receipts position reported to Cabinet on 5th November 2015.
- b. observes that the incoming receipts have been projected as £15m in 2016/17 and £10.5m in 2017/18 and is especially anxious to hear of the progress on obtaining the receipt from the sale of land at Acre Lane.

Council believes that the Cabinet should recognise that:

- (i) the receipt from Acre Lane will be one of the most substantial receipts received since the Borough was created.
- (ii) Constituency Committees, to date, have operated on modest devolved budgets and their ability to invest in capital schemes has been hampered by limited resources.

Council therefore suggests that:

1. Cabinet should place a sum of £4 million from the sale of Acre Lane into a fund to be accessed by the Constituency Committees and that this should be regarded as a dowry to give them resources to make a greater impact with their work.
2. Cabinet should consider allocating £1m from this asset sale into each Constituency Committee; in line with the 2020 vision and in the spirit of devolution to Constituency Committees, they should be enabled to determine the use of these funds.
3. **A Strong, Stable Economy and Benefits for Wirral Residents** *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green

Seconded by Councillor Leslie Rennie

Council notes that there are two million more jobs in the country since 2010 - the highest rate of employment on record.

Council further notes that over 31 million people up and down the country are in work, receiving a regular pay packet for themselves and their families.

Council congratulates the Conservative Government and the predecessor Coalition Government on the successful delivery of their long term economic plan to date.

Council realises that a strong and stable economy is vital to pay for the services that all our residents deserve and expect.

Council welcomes the tangible benefits that are being realised in Wirral from a strong and stable economy; Cammell Laird's has recently announced that it has secured the contract to build a £200 million polar research ship for the Government-funded Natural Environment Research Council (NERC).

Council is delighted that this project will secure around 500 local jobs and further contribute to the brighter economic outlook Government policies have secured.

Council notes that the Conservative Government has not only developed sound economic policies to guarantee economic recovery but has also committed significant investment across the City Region including:

£250 million for the New Alder Hey Hospital
£470 million for The Mersey Gateway Crossing
£429 million for the new Royal Liverpool Hospital
£232 million for the City Region's Growth Deal
£400 million for the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund
£50 million to support Transport for the North
£150 million to support the delivery of smart and integrated ticketing across local transport and rail services in the North

Council therefore welcomes the commitment within its 2020 Plan to increase employment opportunities for Wirral residents and the refreshing of its Regeneration Strategy to support the achievement of this objective.

Council calls upon all Members to do all that we can to ensure the opportunities provided by the Government's long-term economic plan and Northern Powerhouse are taken and not squandered to benefit Wirral families.

4. Trade Union Bill *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Janette Williamson

Seconded by Councillor Treena Johnson

That this Council recognises the positive contribution that trade unions and trade union members make in our workplaces. This Council values the constructive relationship that we have with our trade unions and we recognise their commitment, and the commitment of all our staff, to the delivery of good quality public services.

This Council notes with concern the Trade Union Bill which is currently being proposed by the Government and which would affect this Council's relationship with our trade unions and our workforce as a whole. This Council rejects this Bill's attack on local democracy and the attack on our right to manage our own affairs.

This Council is clear that facility time, negotiated and agreed by us and our trade unions to suit our own specific needs, has a valuable role to play in the creation of good quality and responsive local services. Facility time should not be determined or controlled by Government in London.

This Council is happy with the arrangements we currently have in place for deducting trade union membership subscriptions through our payroll. We see this as an important part of our positive industrial relations and a cheap and easy to administer system that supports our staff. This system is an administrative matter for the Council and should not be interfered with by the UK Government.

This Council resolves to support the campaign against the unnecessary, anti-democratic and bureaucratic Trade Union Bill.

This Council further resolves to seek to continue its own locally agreed industrial relations strategy and will take every measure possible to maintain its autonomy with regard to facility time and the continuing use of check-off.

5. Wirral Youth Zone *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Phil Davies

Seconded by Councillor Jean Stapleton

This Council welcomes the recent ground breaking ceremony to mark the start of the construction of the Wirral Youth Zone next to Birkenhead Fire Station. This £6m facility, designed by young people from Wirral, will provide world class sport and recreation facilities for young people throughout Wirral and is an excellent example of a successful public-private partnership.

Council recognises that the evidence shows that where Youth Zones have been built, anti-social behaviour has reduced massively, levels of ill-health have fallen and young people engaging in Youth Zones have developed good social skills, and improved their self-esteem and confidence.

Council looks forward to the opening of Wirral Youth Zone at the end of 2016 and agrees to write to John Syvret, CEO of Cammell Laird and Chair of the Wirral Youth Zone Board, and offer our congratulations to everyone involved in this excellent facility.

6. CSR and Autumn Statement *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Phil Davies

Seconded by Councillor Ann Maclachlan

Council notes:

- During the Comprehensive Spending Review and Autumn Statement the Chancellor performed embarrassing U turns on his plans to remove tax credits to hard working families and to cut the police budget for Merseyside.

Council recognises:

- The Government saw the error of its ways in light of strong campaigns, lobbying and protest from the Labour Party, local residents and even the House of Lords, but is dismayed to hear the Government's commitment to slash services in local authorities wasn't similarly tempered.
- While we await the final local government allocation, the indications are that a further £126million will be lost from Wirral's coffers this Parliament, on top of the £151million lost in the previous 5 years.
- The example set by Conservative Leader of Oxford County Council who set the Prime Minister straight when he told him "I cannot accept your description of a drop in funding of £72m... as a 'slight fall' and the Conservative Chair of Local Government Association who said the Spending Review was "a knockout blow to cherished local services".

Council Resolves:

- To condemn these cuts which mean Wirral residents and businesses will have seen a quarter of a billion pounds pinched from their pockets by this Government between 2010 and 2020.
- To write to the 4 Wirral MPs to ask them to lobby government for a fairer deal for Wirral residents.