

COUNCIL

Monday, 14 December 2015

Present: The Civic Mayor (Councillor Les Rowlands) in the Chair
Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor Pat Hackett)

| | | | |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Councillors | RL Abbey | S Foulkes | C Povall |
| | T Anderson | L Fraser | D Realey |
| | B Berry | P Gilchrist | L Reecejones |
| | C Blakeley | JE Green | L Rennie |
| | E Boulton | R Gregson | D Roberts |
| | A Brighthouse | P Hayes | J Salter |
| | P Brightmore | A Hodson | T Smith |
| | D Burgess- | K Hodson | W Smith |
| | Joyce | T Johnson | C Spriggs |
| | C Carubia | AER Jones | J Stapleton |
| | P Cleary | C Jones | M Sullivan |
| | W Clements | B Kenny | J Walsh |
| | M Daniel | A Leech | G Watt |
| | A Davies | AR McLachlan | S Whittingham |
| | G Davies | M McLaughlin | J Williamson |
| | P Davies | C Meaden | I Williams |
| | WJ Davies | B Mooney | KJ Williams |
| | P Doughty | C Muspratt | P Williams |
| | D Elderton | S Niblock | S Williams |
| | G Ellis | T Norbury | |
| | S Foulkes | M Patrick | |

Apologies Councillors J Crabtree T Pilgrim
J Hale A Sykes
D Mitchell

72 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

All Labour Councillors declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 11(iv) – Notices of Motion – ‘Trade Union Bill’ by virtue of their political affiliation to Trade Union Membership via their membership of the Labour Party (see minute 93 post).

Councillor Jeff Green declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 11(iv) – Notices of Motion – ‘Trade Union Bill’ by virtue of his membership of a Trade Union (see minute 93 post).

Councillors Jean Stapleton, Denise Roberts, Steve Niblock and Leslie Rennie declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 10(A) – Matters Referred from Policy and Performance Committees – ‘Proposal for a Fire Station on Green Belt Land in Saughall Massie’ by virtue of their membership of the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (see minute 89 post).

73 **CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Civic Mayor noted that apologies were received from Councillors Jim Crabtree, John Hale, Dave Mitchell, Tracey Pilgrim and Adam Sykes.

Prior to the Civic Mayor's announcements, Council was entertained by music and songs performed by young people from the Wirral Youth Theatre. Following the performance Jackie Wise, the Civic Mayor's Chaplain led the Council in prayer.

The Civic Mayor welcomed Members to the final meeting of Council taking place before the Christmas and New Year break. He informed that:

- enquiries had commenced to consider the re-establishment of the post of Honorary Forrester, with a view to renewing heritage links associated with past Wirral. He informed that the holder of the honorary title (a staff member) would be chosen annually from nominations supplied by colleagues who worked in such areas of the Council that included Wardens, Parks & Gardens, and School Groundskeepers. He asked that officers look into this position and progress its implementation; and
- as a result of the success and support from staff regarding the recent Charity Tea Dance held in the Civic Hall he had requested the establishment of a Civic Mayor's Charity Giving Page, where staff and public donations to the charity could be made electronically, and where the Civic Mayor could express his thanks to contributors and supporters.

74 **PETITIONS**

In accordance with Standing Order 21, the Mayor received petitions submitted by –

Councillor Christine Muspratt on behalf of 1031 signatories requesting Fairer Access to Spital Railway Station for members of the community with disabilities and mothers with young children who have to negotiate access with prams.

Councillor Adrian Jones on behalf of 490 signatories demanding that the government reverse its unfair cuts that have resulted in Wirral Council worker's jobs being lost and a subsequent impact on street litter, weeds and fly tipping.

Resolved –That the petitions be noted and referred to the appropriate Chief Officer in accordance with Standing Order 34.

75 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Ms Kim Nowell, having given the appropriate notice in accordance with Standing Order 11, submitted a question on the subject of the proposal to site a Fire Station on Green Belt land in Saughall Massie.

Councillor Adrian Jones informed that he personally had not received prior notice of the question, and stated he would look into the matter and respond back to Ms Nowell.

Mr John Brace, having given the appropriate notice in accordance with Standing Order 11, submitted a question on the subject of Members expenses.

Councillor Adrian Jones responded accordingly.

In accordance with Standing Order 10, Mr Brace asked a supplementary question and Councillor Jones replied.

76 MINUTES

The minutes of two Council meetings held on 12 October and 19 November, 2015 had been circulated to Members.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham informed that he had expressed a personal interest under minute item 41 declarations of interest, by virtue of him being a Board member of Magenta Living, and this had not been recorded in the minutes of the meeting held 12 October, 2015.

Subject to this correction, it was

Resolved – That the minutes be approved and adopted as a correct record.

77 LEADER'S, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' AND CHAIRS REPORTS

The Leader of the Council presented his summary report upon matters relevant to his portfolio. He responded to questions from Councillor Jeff Green and made a number of comments including –

- Information that all budget options were to be scrutinised by the relevant Policy and Performance Committees during January 2016 prior to the matter being reported to Cabinet in February 2016.
- Adult Social Care (ASC) the 2% precept to be levied as a result of the Chancellor's autumn statement must be spent on ASC. There was a fundamental unfairness that the 'grey tax' would generate £800 million nationally, when £2 billion was needed. The figure required in Wirral was £8.4 million. Wirral's elderly population and low tax base placed an unfair burden on local tax payers for an important service that should be funded by central government, not creating a 'pay as you go' type service.
- With regards to making savings through staff cuts in specific areas, the duties of the officer concerned included work on the 2020 Vision / Wirral Plan in addition to continued work involving the Joint Authority.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Ann McLachlan on her Transformation and Improvement Portfolio Report and her response to questions from Councillor Janette Williamson included the following comments:

- The Transformation Programme included 80 initiatives e.g. 'Wirral Evolutions' a pioneering service for adults with learning disabilities.
- Information on the development of an ongoing strategy and a 5 year budget plan.

Questions were then invited for Councillor George Davies on the Housing and Engagement Portfolio Report. No questions were posed.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Pat Hackett on the Business and Tourism Portfolio Report and his responses to questions from Councillors Chris Blakeley and Alan Brighthouse included the following comments:

- Work was continuing on the development of an International Trade Centre (the Leader also informed that although no specific timescale has been confirmed and the matter was commercially sensitive, members would be notified as soon as negotiations were complete).
- Additional work was going on behind the scenes with regard to proposals to transform Birkenhead.

Questions were invited for Councillor Adrian Jones on the Finance, Assets and Technology Portfolio Report and his responses to questions from Councillors Chris Blakeley and Chris Carubia included the following comments:

- ICT access issues: cyber security remained a key priority for Wirral, and although other Local Authorities might appear to have less restrictive access for those working remotely, some had suffered high cost penalties as a result i.e. hacking or system failures. More information about the recent system outage was awaited.
- Access to the Council Website: Following initial measurements were encouraging with a 9.6% fall in bounce rate in November (this measures the number of visits where people come straight in and out of the site without looking at another page). People were now looking at more content in less time, and in November people looked at 8% more pages in 13% less time, compared to the six months between April and September (the new website went live on 6 October, 2015).

Questions were then invited for Councillor Chris Jones on the Adult Care and Public Health Portfolio Report. No questions were posed.

Moving onto the Leisure and Culture Portfolio report, questions were then invited for Councillor Chris Meaden. Her responses to questions from Councillor Alan Brighouse included the following comments:

- A written response would be provided to Cllr Brighouse's question asking 'if a bid was to be submitted for heritage status for Birkenhead Park, and if the Cabinet Member would actively support it'.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Bernie Mooney on her Environment Protection Portfolio Report and her responses to questions from Councillor Pat Cleary included the following comments:

- Much research had already been undertaken on the matter of recycling, and a report on Wirral Council's Waste Management Strategy containing 3 primary recommendations was due for consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on 17 December, 2015.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Tony Smith on his Children and Families Portfolio Report and his responses to questions from Councillors Wendy Clements and Louise Reece-Jones included the following comments:

- An Ofsted inspection was expected shortly, and the Council's schools continue to prepare themselves. Changes to the inspection framework had introduced challenges, and having spoken with other local authorities given the continued re-organisations over the past three years as a result

of the framework change 'outstanding' and 'good' evaluations were extremely difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. That said: the Council was hopeful that its efforts to engage and adapt would achieve a good outcome.

- School transport for those with special needs: the Council had to look at those services for the most vulnerable on an individual basis. The protection of mandatory services would take priority, but the savings targets of £20 million would present a most difficult future.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Stuart Whittingham on his Highways and Transport Portfolio Report and his responses to questions from Councillors Brian Kenny, Geoffrey Watt and Alan Brighouse included the following comments:

- L.E.D. street lighting: where units had been introduced feedback had been good, with positive comments regarding the quality of light.
- Street lighting - general: night-time audits continued to form part of the process, prioritising junctions and areas with pedestrian crossings. A figure on the number of outstanding repairs would be provided and reported back to Members.
- With regards to car parking and under-utilised facilities, the Council had reduced its fees last year in an effort to encourage off-street parking.

Questions were then invited for the Policy and Performance Committee Chairs on their report. No questions were posed, and it was then –

Resolved – That

- 1) each of the Cabinet Portfolio Summary reports be noted; and**
- 2) the report of the Policy and Performance Committee Chairs be noted.**

78 MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL BY THE COUNCIL

In accordance with Standing Order 5(2), seven matters were submitted for approval by the Council (see minutes 79 to 85 post).

79 CAPITAL MONITORING 2015/16 QUARTER 2

The first matter requiring approval was in relation to the Capital Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 2 and the recommendation made by the Cabinet at its meeting on 5 November, 2015 (minute 65 refers) to approve the revised Capital Programme of £50.2 million.

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

Resolved (60:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within minute 65 of the Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 2, be approved.

80 **BUDGET COUNCIL ARRANGEMENTS**

The second matter requiring approval was in respect of proposed arrangements for Budget Council and the recommendation made by the Cabinet at its meeting on 5 November, 2015 (minute 67 refers) as detailed in the report and to support the recommendations as listed therein.

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

Resolved (60:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within minute 67 of the Cabinet – Budget Council Arrangements, be approved.

81 **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING - DEVONSHIRE PARK**

The third matter requiring approval was in relation to the Devonshire Park Neighbourhood Development Plan and the recommendation made by the Cabinet at its meeting on 5 November, 2015 (minute 69 refers) to approve the Neighbourhood Development Plan and that it be formally ‘made’ under Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

On a motion by Councillor Pat Hackett, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, it was –

Resolved (60:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within minute 69 of the Cabinet – Neighbourhood Planning Devonshire Park, be approved.

82 **DRAFT STATEMENT OF POLICY UNDER THE GAMBLING ACT 2005**

The fourth matter requiring approval was in relation to the Draft Statement of Policy (revised) and the recommendation made by the Licensing Act 2003 Committee at its meeting on 28 October, 2015 (minute 11 refers) to approve the Statement of Policy (as amended).

On a motion by Councillor Bill Davies, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, it was –

Resolved (60:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within minute 11 of the Licensing Act 2003 Committee – Statement of Policy under the Gambling Act 2005, be approved.

83 **AMENDMENT TO SCHEME OF DELEGATION - OBJECTIONS TO HIGHWAYS PROPOSALS**

The fifth matter requiring approval was in relation to changes to the Scheme of Delegation to the Council's Constitution as detailed in the report and the recommendations made by the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee at its meeting on 23 November, 2015 (minute 10 refers), and the recommendations made by the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee at its meeting on 2 December, 2015 (minute 27 refers), to approve the changes to the Scheme of Delegation in the Council's Constitution.

On a motion by Councillor Bill Davies, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, it was –

Resolved (60:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within minute 10 of the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee, and minute 27 of the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee – Constitutional Changes, be approved.

84 **SUMMARY OF THE WORK AND PROPOSALS OF THE STANDARDS AND CONSTITUTIONAL OVERSIGHT WORKING GROUP**

The sixth matter requiring approval was in relation to a series of proposed changes to the Council's Constitution as detailed in the report and the recommendations made by the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee at its meeting on 23 November, 2015 (minute 11 refers) to approve the changes to the Council's Constitution.

A motion to agree the changes to the Council Constitution was put to Council by Councillor Bill Davies, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies.

Three amendments which had been circulated in advance of the meeting were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

First amendment

Proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley
Seconded by Councillor Gerry Ellis (in John Hale's absence)

Reference: **Amendment 4** in appendix 1 of Minute 11:

"Council believes that in the interests of openness, transparency and consistency that all Notices of Motion should be voted on in the Council Chamber, with no referrals to scrutiny committees."

Second amendment

Proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley
Seconded by Councillor Gerry Ellis (in John Hale's absence)

Reference: **Amendment 10** in appendix 1 of Minute 11:

Delete all proposed changes to the Call In procedure and replace with:

"Council believes that the current Call In rules (standing order 35) as set out in annexe A should remain in force."

Third amendment

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist
Seconded by Councillor Alan Brighthouse

Reference: **Amendment 10** in appendix 1 of Minute 11:

Add to item 2) under "Resolved: That" (ends ".....set out at Appendix 1 to this report be agreed)

, with the exception of proposed revision 2 (page 216). Council believes that the ability to place a Minority Report before Council should be retained to give a final democratic safeguard. Council believes that this rarely invoked facility has not been abused and should be kept to allow an open and transparent discussion on an issue of public concern."

Council agreed that Standing Order 12(10) be suspended for this item, so that all three amendments could be considered together.

It was moved by Councillor Phil Davies and duly seconded in a number of places that no speeches be received, and that Council progress straight to voting on the amendments.

The first amendment was put and lost (20:37) (One abstention).

The second amendment was put and lost (17:37) (One abstention).

The third amendment was put and lost (20:37) (One abstention).

The original motion to approve the changes to the Council's Constitution was then put to the vote and carried (37:22) (One abstention).

Resolved (37:22) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within minute 11 of the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee, and minute 27 of the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee – Constitutional Changes, be approved.

85 **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The seventh matter requiring approval was in relation to the Social Media Policy as detailed in the report and the recommendations made by the Policy and Performance Transformation and Resources Committee at its meeting on 3 December, 2015 (minute 25 refers). Council was recommended to approve the Social Media Policy.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, it was –

Resolved (59:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within minute 25 of the Policy and Performance Transformation and Resources Committee - Social Media Policy, be approved.

86 **MATTERS FOR NOTING**

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

Resolved (59:0) (One abstention) – That minute 64 (Cabinet – 5 November, 2015) – Revenue Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 2 (to September 2015), be noted.

87 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Councillor Phil Gilchrist, having given the appropriate notice in accordance with Standing Order 10(2) (b), submitted a question addressed to Councillor Stuart Whittingham, in respect of spraying of footways and roadside kerblines to combat weeds and the impact of recent weather conditions and organisational factors.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham responded accordingly.

88 **MATTERS REFERRED FROM POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEES**

Three matters had been referred to the Council by three Policy and Performance Committees, in accordance with Standing Order 7(5) (see minutes 89 to 91 post).

89 **PROPOSAL FOR A FIRE STATION ON GREEN BELT LAND IN SAUGHALL MASSIE - COMMITTEE REFERRAL**

At the meeting of Council held on 6 July, 2015 (minute 31 (iii) refers) the Civic Mayor had referred a Notice of Motion 'Proposal for a Fire Station on Green Belt land in Saughall Massie' to the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee. The motion was duly considered at the meeting of the Committee on 15 September, 2015 (minute 11 refers) and on 2 December, 2015 (minute 24 refers).

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (5) the Council was invited to consider the recommendation of the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee which had agreed a motion (For 8: Against 5).

Proposed by Councillor Mike Sullivan
Seconded by Councillor Mathew Patrick

That

"The Council acknowledges that the devastating cuts to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority put the Authority in an incredibly difficult situation.

Whilst the Council expresses strong disapproval of the Conservative Government's decision to cut 38% from the Fire Authority's grant, it acknowledges that there is a lack of time to force the Fire Service to find alternatives.

Council impresses upon the Cabinet to:

Support Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority in its obligations to balance the budget and ensure that a decision is not unnecessarily delayed.

The Council also recognises that the Planning Committee will be responsible for the planning aspect. It further recognises that the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will also have to agree with the development's appropriateness."

An amendment which had been circulated in advance of the meeting was submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

Proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley

Seconded by Councillor Bruce Berry

Council acknowledges the challenges faced by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority, like all taxpayer-funded organisations.

Council notes that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service has provided operational cover to West Wirral residents in the last 18 months from the Upton Fire Station within the 10 minute response guidelines and congratulates all those involved in maintaining this level of service.

Council notes that Wirral's Planning Committee will be responsible for deciding on any planning application and notes that the Authority, in its published, written response to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority, stated: **"in the light of your fall-back scenario of being able to redevelop the fire station at Upton within the urban area and with no impact on the Green Belt, very special circumstances will not exist. In which case, planning permission is not likely to be granted."**

Cabinet is therefore asked to support Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority in identifying a suitable site that is not within Wirral's precious greenbelt, while maintaining the safety and security of Wirral residents and calls for further discussions on how best the additional £2.8 million granted by the Government can be used for this purpose.

Councillor Mike Sullivan formally moved the motion. Councillor Chris Blakeley spoke to his amendment and the amendment was put and lost (21:34) (One abstention).

At the request of the Councillor Jeff Green, the Conservative Group member's votes were recorded.

Resolved (34:21) (Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, D Burgess-Joyce, W Clements, D Elderton, G Ellis, L Fraser, J Green, P Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, C Povall, G Watt and S Williams voting against) (One abstention, Councillor Rennie) - That

The Council acknowledges that the devastating cuts to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority put the Authority in an incredibly difficult situation.

Whilst the Council expresses strong disapproval of the Conservative Government's decision to cut 38% from the Fire Authority's grant, it acknowledges that there is a lack of time to force the Fire Service to find alternatives.

Council impresses upon the Cabinet to:

Support Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority in its obligations to balance the budget and ensure that a decision is not unnecessarily delayed.

The Council also recognises that the Planning Committee will be responsible for the planning aspect. It further recognises that the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will also have to agree with the development's appropriateness."

Councillors Jean Stapleton, Denise Roberts, Steve Niblock and Leslie Rennie having earlier declared a non-pecuniary interest in the agenda item by virtue of their membership of the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority did not take part in any debate, or vote upon the matter.

90 **SUPPORTING WIRRAL'S PART IN OUR NUCLEAR INDUSTRIES - COMMITTEE REFERRAL**

At the meeting of the Council held on 12 October, 2015 (minute 59 (v) refers) the Civic Mayor had referred a Notice of Motion 'Supporting Wirral's Part in our Nuclear Industries' to the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee. The motion was duly considered at the meeting of the Committee on 2 December, 2015 (minute 25 refers).

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (5) the Council was invited to consider the recommendation of the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee which had resolved –

That the COUNCIL BE ADVISED that this Committee supports the Motion in respect of Wirral's part in providing students with the skills required to play a part in the future of our Nuclear Industries i.e.

"Council notes many Wirral residents work in our major nuclear power and defence industries, both directly (in companies such as Urenco, Cammell Laird and CNS) and indirectly, in the supply chain.

Council believes these highly-skilled, well paid advanced engineering jobs offer opportunities for residents and welcomes the skills and apprenticeship training at Wirral Metropolitan College for young people entering the industry.

Council agrees with the Leader of the Council that Wirral has a strong track record in manufacturing for the nuclear industry and calls on the Administration to play an even greater part in providing students with the skills required to play a full part in future manufacturing and production.”

Resolved (58:1) (One abstention) – That the resolution of the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee be agreed.

91 **OPEN GOVERNMENT? - COMMITTEE REFERRAL**

At the meeting of the Council held on 12 October, 2015 (minute 59 (i) refers) the Mayor had referred a Notice of Motion ‘Open Government?’ to the Policy and Performance Transformation and Resources Committee. The motion was duly considered at the meeting of the Committee on 3 December, 2015 (minute 24 refers).

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (5) the Council was invited to consider the recommendation of the Policy and Performance Transformation and Resources Committee which had resolved (14:0) that –

“Committee acknowledges that the number of complaints upheld by the ICO total 1.19% of all FoI requests and that the Council is committed to working towards improving how it responds to Fols and recommends a further ‘task and finish’ review is undertaken.”

Resolved (59:0) (One abstention) – That the resolution of the Policy and Performance Transformation and Resources Committee be agreed.

92 **NOTICES OF MOTION**

Notices of Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 7(1) were reported to the Council. The Civic Mayor having considered each motion, in accordance with Standing Order 7(4) had decided that they would be dealt with as follows:

- (i) Hamilton Square – Effective Scrutiny of Controversial Scheme - The matter be referred to Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee.
- (ii) Investing in our Constituencies - The matter be referred to the Cabinet.
- (iii) A Strong, Stable Economy and Benefits for Wirral Residents - To be debated.

- (iv) Trade Union Bill - To be debated.
- (v) Wirral Youth Zone - To be debated.
- (vi) CSR and Autumn Statement - To be debated.

Prior to the first debate it was moved by Councillor Bill Davies and seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, that –

“Standing Order 5(4) be suspended and that the Trade Union Bill Motion (iv) be dealt with first followed by the Motions – A Strong Stable Economy and Benefits to Wirral Residents, followed by Wirral Youth Zone, followed by CSR and Autumn Statement.”

On a motion by Councillor Bill Davies, duly seconded it was agreed that, “Standing Order 9 (Conclusion of Council meeting) come into force during the next item, only movers and seconders be heard, and that Standing Order 9 be applied at 8.30pm.”

Councillor Phil Gilchrist informed that his group would not be supporting these proposals, and a vote was taken.

The motions were jointly put and carried (54:5) (One abstention).

Resolved – That

- 1) the Notice of Motion, ‘Hamilton Square – Effective Scrutiny of Controversial Scheme’, be referred to the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee;**
- 2) the Notice of Motion, ‘Investing in our Constituencies’, be referred to Cabinet; and**
- 3) Standing Order 9 be applied and matters shall be dealt with by being moved and seconded without discussion and put to the vote.**

93 MOTION - TRADE UNION BILL

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."

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9 the Council did not debate the matter, and having been moved and seconded, the motion was put to the vote.

One abstention – Councillor Les Rowlands.

Resolved (42:17) (One abstention) – That the motion be approved.

94 **MOTION - A STRONG STABLE ECONOMY AND BENEFITS FOR WIRRAL RESIDENTS**

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."

An amendment which had been circulated in advance of the meeting was submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist
Seconded by Councillor Pat Williams

“Insert at end of para 3 (ends “.....plan to date)

, noting that the plan was substantially revised and adjusted to cope with the uncertain state of the UK economy, the need to rebalance it and a recognition that there had to be a regional strategy.

Insert at end of para 4 (ends “.....and expect)

but remains wary of unrealistic assumptions that could rebound on and damage the Wirral economy and the nation's finances.

Delete in para 6 "and further contribute to the brighter economic outlook Government policies have secured."

Delete in para 7 "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:"

And replace with new para 7:

“Council notes that a number of significant capital projects are now in hand, some with long lead-in times over many years and begun under the Coalition Government. The recently announced projects are in their early stages and have arisen from consistent pressure to close the north south divide. These include:”

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9 the Council did not debate the matter.

The Liberal Democrat amendment was put and lost (4:53) (One abstention).

The Conservative motion was put and lost (17:40) (One abstention).

95 **MOTION - WIRRAL YOUTH ZONE**

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.”

Two amendments which had been circulated in advance of the meeting were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

First amendment

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia

“Insert after para (ends ”.....self-esteem and confidence”)

Council also recognises that the complex and emerging funding package for the Youth Zone requires a substantial contribution from the Council and remains anxious that the new Zone should not detract from the pattern of hubs established some years ago.

Council suggests that officers should examine, and report upon, how the development of the main facility in Oldham, The Mahdlo, led to the operation of youth services being taken on by that organisation yet was still expected to retain a co-ordinated offer to young people in the various communities.”

Second amendment

Proposed by Councillor Andrew Hodson

Seconded by Councillor Cherry Povall

“Insert new paragraph:

Council acknowledges the good existing youth service provision across the Borough and notes the value residents place on this service; 64.7% of respondents to the last public consultation rejected the changes proposed to Youth and Play. Therefore Council, while welcoming the new Youth Zone in Birkenhead, is absolutely clear that this development will enhance the Borough’s existing youth service and will not replace it.”

The proposer of the original motion, Councillor Phil Davies, agreed acceptance of both amendments and moved the vote, which was duly seconded by Councillor J Stapleton.

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9 the Council did not debate the matter.

Prior to the vote, Councillor Phil Davies and five Labour Members rose to request a 'card vote'.

A 'card vote was then taken on Councillor Phil Davies' motion and the Council divided as follows:

For the motion (59) Councillors R Abbey, T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, A Brighthouse, P Brightmore, D Burgess-Joyce, C Carubia, P Cleary, W Clements, M Daniel, A Davies, G Davies, P Davies, W Davies, P Doughty, D Elderton, G Ellis, S Foulkes, L Fraser, P Gilchrist, J Green, R Gregson, P Hackett, P Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, T Johnson, A Jones, C Jones, B Kenny, A Leech, A McLachlan, M McLaughlin, C Meaden, B Mooney, S Niblock, T Norbury, M Patrick, C Povall, D Realey, L Reecejones, L Rennie, D Roberts, J Salter, PA Smith, W Smith, C Spriggs, J Stapleton, M Sullivan, J Walsh, G Watt, S Whittingham, I Williams, KJ Williams, PM Williams, S Williams and J Williamson.

One abstention – Councillor Les Rowlands.

Resolved (59:0) (One abstention) – That

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 also recognises that the complex and emerging funding package for the Youth Zone requires a substantial contribution from the Council and remains anxious that the new Zone should not detract from the pattern of hubs established some years ago.

Council suggests that officers should examine, and report upon, how the development of the main facility in Oldham, The Mahdlo, led to the operation of youth services being taken on by that organisation yet was still expected to retain a co-ordinated offer to young people in the various communities.

Council acknowledges the good existing youth service provision across the Borough and notes the value residents place on this service; 64.7% of respondents to the last public consultation rejected the changes proposed to Youth and Play. Therefore Council, while welcoming the new Youth Zone in Birkenhead, is absolutely clear that this development will enhance the Borough's existing youth service and will not replace it.

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.

96 **MOTION - CSR AND AUTUMN STATEMENT**

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.”

An amendment which had been circulated in advance of the meeting was submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist
Seconded by Councillor Alan Brighouse

“Add the following after the two bullet points (under 'Council Resolves'):

- To work with Wirral’s MPs to challenge the assumptions and interpretations built upon the OBR’s ‘Economic and fiscal outlook’ and the forecast for ‘local authority self-financed expenditure’ as set out on Page 58 and 59 in the ‘Blue Book’ Spending Review and Autumn Statement.
- To take part in the consultation the DCLG offers on the settlement and to establish whether the settlement and formula have any relationship to the House of Commons Library Briefing Paper 7327 ‘Deprivation in English Constituencies’ published in October 2015.
- To highlight the practicalities of securing the growth in business rates given that part of that growth is already to be reinvested within the Enterprise Zone.
- To highlight the limited sums that can be raised based on the proportion of properties in lower bands compared to other areas and its implications for police funding.
- This time to take up the offer again made by the Liberal Democrat Group to assist and join in making representations and lobbying.”

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9 the Council did not debate the matter.

The proposer of the original motion, Councillor Phil Davies, agreed acceptance of the amendment and moved the vote, which was duly seconded by Councillor A McLachlan.

One abstention – Councillor Les Rowlands.

Resolved (41:17) (One abstention) – That

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.**
- **To work with Wirral's MPs to challenge the assumptions and interpretations built upon the OBR's 'Economic and fiscal outlook' and the forecast for 'local authority self-financed expenditure' as set out on Page 58 and 59 in the 'Blue Book' Spending Review and Autumn Statement.**
- **To take part in the consultation the DCLG offers on the settlement and to establish whether the settlement and formula have any relationship to the House of Commons Library Briefing Paper**

7327 'Deprivation in English Constituencies' published in October 2015.

- **To highlight the practicalities of securing the growth in business rates given that part of that growth is already to be reinvested within the Enterprise Zone.**
- **To highlight the limited sums that can be raised based on the proportion of properties in lower bands compared to other areas and its implications for police funding.**
- **This time to take up the offer again made by the Liberal Democrat Group to assist and join in making representations and lobbying.**

97 **VACANCIES**

The Council was requested to deal with the following matter in respect of appointments to outside organisations.

It was moved by Councillor Phil Davies (Leader) and seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan that:

Planning Committee - Councillor Treena Johnson to replace Councillor Matt Daniel (who will act as a deputy) and Councillor Mike Sullivan to replace Councillor Jim Crabtree (as a deputy).

Policy and Performance Families and Well Being Committee - Parent Governor Representative, Mr Mark Harrison to replace Mrs H. Shoebridge. Appointment until 28 October, 2019.

Policy and Performance Coordinating Committee - Parent Governor Representative, Mr Mark Harrison to replace Mrs H. Shoebridge. Appointment until 28 October, 2019.

Birkenhead Business Improvement District Board - Following formal establishment of the above, Councillor Jean Stapleton be appointed to the board, and Mr Alan Evans be appointed as an advisor.

Resolved – That

- 1) **Councillor Treena Johnson to replace Councillor Matt Daniel (who will act as a deputy); and Councillor Mike Sullivan to replace Councillor Jim Crabtree (as a deputy) on the Planning Committee;**

- 2) Mr Mark Harrison be appointed to the Policy and Performance Families and Well Being Committee as Parent Governor Representative until 28 October, 2019;**
- 3) Mr Mark Harrison be appointed to the Policy and Performance Coordinating Committee as Parent Governor Representative until 28 October, 2019; and**
- 4) Councillor Jean Stapleton be appointed to the Birkenhead Business Improvement District (BID) Board; and Mr Alan Evans be appointed as an advisor to the BID Board / Councillor Stapleton.**