

COUNCIL

Monday, 14 March 2016

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

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

Apologies: Councillors C Carubia J Hale
J Crabtree S Niblock
M Daniel

104 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.

Councillor Anita Leech declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 – Notices of Motion (vi), ‘Supporting Victims of Domestic Violence’ by virtue of her being Chair and fundraiser for the Freedom Programme, a domestic violence programme for women.

105 **CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor noted that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chris Carubia, Jim Crabtree, Matt Daniel, John Hale and Steve Niblock.

The Mayor thanked those Councillors who would not be standing at the forthcoming election and offered his best wishes to:

Councillor Rob Gregson – 4 years' service
Councillor Leah Fraser – 9 years' service
Councillor Jim Crabtree – 12 years' service
Councillor Steve Niblock – 14 years' service
Councillor John Salter – 14 years' service

He gave a special thanks to Councillor Pat Williams who would be retiring from the Council after 29 years' service and presented a bouquet of flowers.

The Mayor also announced that the recipient of the Andy Day Memorial Cup for 2015/2016, an award which was presented annually in memory of a former councillor to confer recognition on a member of the Council who, in the Mayor's opinion, had demonstrated the qualities of dedication and selflessness possessed by the late Councillor, was Councillor Bruce Berry.

During the course of this item, the Leader of the Council moved that Standing Order 17 be suspended to allow debate of Notice of Motion (iii) – Girtrell Court, this was seconded by Councillor Jeff Green and it was –

Resolved (unanimously) – That Standing Order 17 be suspended to allow debate on Notice of Motion (iii) – Girtrell Court.

The Leader of the Council commented that this was the last Council meeting to be presided over by the Mayor. He thanked both the Mayor and Mayoress for all the work they had undertaken during the year, and for the fundraising they had undertaken for three charities during their mayoral year.

The Leader of the Conservative Group associated himself with the remarks made by the Leader of the Council and on behalf of his group thanked the Mayor and Mayoress for carrying out over 500 engagements during the mayoral year. The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group also associated his group with the remarks made and thanked the Mayor and Mayoress.

In response, the Mayor thanked everyone for their kind words and stated that he was immensely proud to have been Mayor for this municipal year.

106 **PETITIONS**

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

Councillor Chris Blakeley on behalf of 5,006 Wirral signatories calling on the Council to halt the closure of Girtrell Court.

Councillor Adrian Jones on behalf of 1,787 signatories requesting that Seacombe Ferry terminal remains open.

Councillor Leah Fraser on behalf of 38 signatories requesting the investigation of the problem of speeding traffic and parking in St Nicholas Road, Wallasey.

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

107 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No public questions had been received.

108 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 3 March, 2016 had been circulated to Members and, it was –

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

109 **LEADER'S, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' AND CHAIRS REPORTS**

The Mayor introduced the summary reports from the Leader, Cabinet Members and Policy and Performance Committee Chairs and asked for questions on any of the reports.

Councillor Blakeley asked questions of the Chair of the Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee, the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Members for Housing and Communities, Resources: Finance, Assets and Technology and Transport, Technology Strategy and Infrastructure.

In response, comments included:

Councillor McLaughlin

- The Families and Wellbeing Budget Scrutiny workshop had been well attended with 13 Members out of 15 in attendance, all of whom had contributed to the discussion which she stated had not been curtailed.

Councillor George Davies

- 680 new homes would need to be built each year on brownfield sites per year over the next five years.
- The Local Development Plan would be published before the end of the year.

Councillor Adrian Jones

- In respect of the timetable for the disposal of Foxfield School he would respond in writing.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham

- A written response would be provided in respect of the Liverpool City Region 'pipeline' of transport schemes and whether the Town Meadow station was one of the 19 schemes put forward for consideration in the assessment process.

Councillor Phil Davies

- With regard to the proposed closure of Girtrell Court he stated that he did not believe it would remove choice. The issue was that all the funding for respite was tied up in one building whereas one size did not fit all. This was about offering people greater choice.

Councillor Jeff Green asked a question of the Leader of the Council.

Councillor Phil Davies' comments in response, included:

- The 2020 pledges had been agreed by every member of the Council and the Council was working on the basis that everyone was signed up to those pledges.
- The Council was absolutely focussed on delivering the outcomes of the 2020 Plan, protecting the most vulnerable, driving economic growth and improving the local environment.
- He had no need to apologise for the recent publication of the LGA Peer Review, the final version of which had only just been agreed.
- An action plan had also been provided outlining the action being taken to address the points raised in the peer review.
- The Peer Review report and Action Plan would be considered by the Policy and Performance Coordinating Committee at its meeting on 23 March, 2016.

Councillors Janette Williamson, Phil Gilchrist and Chris Spriggs asked questions of the Cabinet Member for Resources: Finance, Assets and Technology.

Councillor Adrian Jones' comments in response, included:

- Any Authority needed to have reserves in place to deal with unexpected events, such as extreme weather events, and it would be neglectful of the Council not to do so.
- Most Councils around the country also had short term investments which yielded a return for the Authority.
- With regard to Acre Lane, Morris Homes had undertaken site investigations and officers were negotiating the final position with the developer and full details of the negotiating position would be made available.
- He provided an outline of the issues which had led to the IT outage which had occurred across the Council network on Thursday, 10 March, 2016.

Responding to comments from Councillors Geoffrey Watt, Phil Gilchrist and Eddie Boulton, Councillor Stuart Whittingham's comments included:

- The list of street lights for repair had been updated for March on the Council's website.
- He thanked the staff of the Council and BAM Nuttall for all their work on the street lighting scheme.
- He provided details of the four stage process involved in the selection of the Liverpool City Region 'pipeline' of transport schemes.
- In respect of the number of licences granted to utility companies to dig up roads in the last year, he would provide a written response.

Responding to comments from Councillor Pat Cleary, Councillor George Davies' comments included:

- The Selective Licensing programme was working well in Wirral and although he couldn't put a timeframe on it he hoped that the programme would be extended within the next two years.

Responding to comments from Councillor Lesley Rennie, Councillor Chris Jones' comments included:

- She would provide in writing details of the integrated care agenda.
- With regard to Members' visits to Care Homes the Chair of the Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee was responsible for this and she was looking into the matter.

Resolved – That

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

110 MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL BY THE COUNCIL

In accordance with Standing Order 5(2), six matters were submitted for approval by the Council (see minutes 111 to 116 post).

111 **PAY POLICY 2016/17**

The first matter requiring approval was in relation to the Pay Policy Statement 2016/17 and the recommendations from Cabinet of 25 January, 2016 (minute 67 refers).

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 Cabinet, be agreed.

112 **CAPITAL MONITORING 2015/16 QUARTER 3 (TO DECEMBER 2015)**

The second matter requiring approval was in relation to the revised Capital Programme of £46.9m and the recommendations from Cabinet of 22 February, 2016 (minute 96 refers).

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 96 of Cabinet, be agreed.

113 **ENFORCEMENT POLICY - SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

The third matter requiring approval was in relation to an amendment to the Council's Scheme of Non-Executive Delegation of Functions to Officers and the Enforcement Policy and the recommendations from Cabinet of 7 March, 2016 (minute 112 refers).

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 112 of Cabinet, be agreed.

114 **EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The fourth matter requiring approval was in relation to the revised terms of reference of the Employment and Appointments Committee and the recommendations from Cabinet of 7 March, 2016 (minute 106 refers).

Councillor Gilchrist then moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor Alan Brighouse and asked that his amendment be circulated to all Members.

The Leader of the Council then requested that the matter be deferred until later in the proceedings to enable an adjournment for the amendment to be considered by each Group.

This was agreed by the Council.

115 **QUARTER 3 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The fifth matter for consideration was in relation to the Quarter 3 Corporate Plan Performance Management Report and the recommendations from Cabinet of 7 March, 2016 (minute 107 refers).

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

Resolved (60:0) (One abstention) – That minute 107 of Cabinet be noted.

116 **DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR THE 2016/17 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The sixth matter requiring approval was in relation to the draft Calendar of Meetings for the 2016/17 Municipal Year and the recommendations from Cabinet of 7 March, 2016 (minute 111 refers).

In response to a comment from Councillor Jeff Green, the Head of Legal and Member Services stated that there was no restriction on the Council agreeing to hold meetings prior to the European Referendum, the restriction was on the issue of the nature of business to be conducted.

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 111 of Cabinet, be agreed.

117 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

No questions had been received.

118 **MATTERS REFERRED FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE**

At the meeting of the Council held on 12 October, 2015 (minute 51 refers) the Mayor had referred a Notice of Motion 'Better Planning to Facilitate Cycling' to the Planning Committee. The motion was duly considered at the meeting of the Committee on 21 October 2015 (minute 98 refers).

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (5) the Council was invited to consider the recommendation of the Planning Committee which had resolved (unanimously), that –

“The Council be advised that the Planning Committee supports the Notice of Motion, ‘Better Planning to Facilitate Cycling’.

On a motion by Councillor Anita Leech, seconded by Councillor Denise Realey, it was –

Resolved (59:0) (Two abstentions) – That the resolution of the Planning Committee be agreed.

119 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). Local Government Funding - To be debated.
- (ii). Regeneration and Economic Growth - To be debated.
- (iii). Girtrell Court - To be debated.
- (iv). Support for our Armed Forces - To be debated.
- (v). Backing our Coastal Communities - To be debated.
- (vi). Supporting Victims of Domestic Violence - To be debated.
- (vii). Tackling Female Genital Mutilation - To be debated.
- (viii). Setting Clear Targets for Wirral Waters – to be referred to the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee.
- (ix). Seeking Fairness in Purchasing - to be referred to the Policy and Performance Transformation and Resources Committee.
- (x) Reducing Pedestrian Casualties in Wirral – to be referred to the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee.

Prior to the first debate it was agreed that Standing Order 7(2) be suspended and the Girtrell Court Notice of Motion be considered first.

Resolved – That

- (1) The Notice of Motion, 'Setting Clear Targets for Wirral Waters' be referred to the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee.
- (2) The Notice of Motion, 'Seeking Fairness in Purchasing' be referred to the Policy and Performance Transformation and Resources Committee.
- (3) The Notice of Motion, 'Reducing Pedestrian Casualties in Wirral' to be referred to the Policy and Performance Regeneration and Environment Committee.

120 **MOTION - GIRTRELL COURT**

Proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley
Seconded by Councillor Bruce Berry

Council notes that the Leader of the Council has previously stated that he wants his Administration to be open, transparent and fair with the people of Wirral. Council welcomes this approach.

Council therefore believes that the future of Girtrell Court must be decided in public and not under delegation to the portfolio holder, in conjunction with the Director of Adult Social Services.

Council further believes that the families of those using Girtrell Court, the staff, trade unions and residents and users must be given every opportunity to influence the future of Girtrell Court through a clear and transparent decision making process.

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 Davies
Seconded by Councillor Chris Jones

Insert new paragraph at start of motion:

'Council believes that it is important to offer service users and their families a choice of respite care provision. People want the ability to choose the type of care and support which is right for them. At present they are unable to do this. This is not about a building or provider, it's about the person.'

Delete paragraph 2 and replace with the following:

‘Council notes that a detailed debate on Girtrell Court took place at Budget Council on the 3rd March and a clear way forward was agreed. This involves statutory consultation with service users and their families followed by a clear new service offer and events for carers and cared for people to meet potential new providers. Services will be commissioned to meet all of the identified needs at that stage. Authority will be delegated to the Director, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member, to make decisions in order to avoid undue delays which would prolong uncertainty. We are not imposing deadlines on when this process will be complete and, in the meantime, Girtrell Court will remain open.’

Second amendment

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Alan Brighouse

Add new paragraphs after paragraph 3:

‘Notwithstanding the decision of Council of 3rd March, Council believes that the rights of Members to scrutinise the decision remain available for their exercise under Part 3, Schedule 4A and 4B of the Constitution.

In view of the concerns of the families and users of Girtrell Court, any ‘decision’ of the Council Officer/Cabinet Member shall be set out, together with all background and supporting material and published for such examination and scrutiny.’

During the course of the debate the Mayor, in accordance with Standing Order 16(1), asked a member of the public to leave the gallery due to him causing a disturbance, the Mayor then adjourned the meeting for 5 minutes whilst the person left, at 7.20pm.

The Council reconvened at 7.25pm.

Following a debate and Councillor Chris Blakeley having replied, and prior to the vote on the first amendment, Councillor Jeff Green and five Conservative Members rose to request a ‘card vote’.

A ‘card vote’ was then taken on Councillor Phil Davies’ amendment and the Council divided as follows:

For the amendment (36) Councillors R Abbey, P Brightmore, A Davies, G Davies, P Davies, W Davies, P Doughty, S Foulkes, R Gregson, P Hackett, T Johnson, A Jones, C Jones, B Kenny, A Leech, A McLachlan, M McLaughlin, C Meaden, B Mooney, C Muspratt, T Norbury, M Patrick, D Realey, L

Reecejones, D Roberts, J Salter, PA Smith, W Smith, C Spriggs, J Stapleton, M Sullivan, J Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, KJ Williams and J Williamson.

Against the amendment (24) Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, A Brighthouse, D Burgess-Joyce, P Cleary, Mrs W Clements, D Elderton, G Ellis, L Fraser, P Gilchrist, J Green, P Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, D Mitchell, T Pilgrim, C Povall, L Rennie, A Sykes, G Watt, Mrs P Williams and S Williams.

One abstention – Councillor L Rowlands.

The first amendment was therefore carried (36:24) (One abstention).

The second amendment was then put and lost (4:56) (One abstention).

Prior to the vote on the substantive motion, as amended, Councillor Jeff Green and five Conservative Members rose to request a 'card vote'.

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

For the motion (36) Councillors R Abbey, P Brightmore, A Davies, G Davies, P Davies, W Davies, P Doughty, S Foulkes, R Gregson, P Hackett, T Johnson, A Jones, C Jones, B Kenny, A Leech, A McLachlan, M McLaughlin, C Meaden, B Mooney, C Muspratt, T Norbury, M Patrick, D Realey, L Reecejones, D Roberts, J Salter, PA Smith, W Smith, C Spriggs, J Stapleton, M Sullivan, J Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, KJ Williams and J Williamson.

Against the motion (24) Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, A Brighthouse, D Burgess-Joyce, P Cleary, Mrs W Clements, D Elderton, G Ellis, L Fraser, P Gilchrist, J Green, P Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, D Mitchell, T Pilgrim, C Povall, L Rennie, A Sykes, G Watt, Mrs P Williams and S Williams.

One abstention – Councillor L Rowlands.

Resolved (36:24) (One abstention) –

- (1) Council believes that it is important to offer service users and their families a choice of respite care provision. People want the ability to choose the type of care and support which is right for them. At present they are unable to do this. This is not about a building or provider, it's about the person.**
- (2) Council notes that the Leader of the Council has previously stated that he wants his Administration to be open, transparent and fair with the people of Wirral. Council welcomes this approach.**

(3) Council notes that a detailed debate on Girtrell Court took place at Budget Council on the 3rd March and a clear way forward was agreed. This involves statutory consultation with service users and their families followed by a clear new service offer and events for carers and cared for people to meet potential new providers. Services will be commissioned to meet all of the identified needs at that stage. Authority will be delegated to the Director, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member, to make decisions in order to avoid undue delays which would prolong uncertainty. We are not imposing deadlines on when this process will be complete and, in the meantime, Girtrell Court will remain open.

(4) Council further believes that the families of those using Girtrell Court, the staff, trade unions and residents and users must be given every opportunity to influence the future of Girtrell Court through a clear and transparent decision making process.

121 **MOTION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

Proposed by Councillor Phil Davies

Seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan

This Council notes the continued inequity of the Government's approach to local authority funding.

It further recognises the Government's failings to give a fair deal for Wirral through the recently announced 'Transitional Fund'

Council is disappointed that despite the Secretary of State claiming the fund is "To help Councils transform from dependence on central government grants to greater financial autonomy" more than 83% of the £300million fund was sent to Conservative controlled authorities.

Is disappointed that, of the 36 English Metropolitan boroughs representing 22% of the population, only 2 received any support, and they were the only two Conservative controlled authorities of Trafford and Solihull, and while Surrey, Oxfordshire and Cheshire East received millions in support, Wirral and the rest of the Liverpool City Region, received nothing.

Council is further dismayed to learn that the Conservatives locally offered no support to help address the imbalance of funding, to lobby their Westminster colleagues, or to stand up for local residents.

Therefore, Council recommends that the Leader of the Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer requesting an immediate review of local government funding, the deployment of the Transitional Fund and for Wirral to

receive a fair assessment and settlement to help off-set the £29million cuts he has forced upon the borough in 2016/17.

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 Dave Mitchell

Add new paragraph after paragraph 6:

'Council notes that in the announcement of the Settlement 8 February 2016, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government set out 'indicative figures'.

Council understands that the idea was and is that councils should apply for a four year budget, extending to the end of the Parliament. Further, it appears that councils have until 14 October 2016 to respond to this. As part of this process, councils were either asked or expected to translate the 'certainty' of a four year settlement into 'efficiency savings'.

Council, therefore, requests officers to establish, through the Local Government Association and SIGOMA, what this means and what process is being followed.

The Secretary of State also stated that *"Many councils felt that too much time has passed since the last substantial revision of the formula which assesses a council's needs, and the costs it can be expected to incur in delivering services."*

He went on to say that *"On the needs formula itself, it is nearly 10 years since the current formula was last looked at thoroughly. There is good reason to believe that the demographic pressures affecting particular areas – such as the growth in the elderly population – have affected different areas in different ways, as has the cost of providing services. So I can announce that we will conduct a review of what the needs assessment formula should be in a world in which all local government spending is funded by local resources not central grant, and use it to determine the transition to 100% business rates retention."*

Council requests that...

- a) urgent work is undertaken to find out what is meant by the 'review of the needs assessment formula' referred to;
- b) compilation of the information necessary to submit a case for a fair assessment of Wirral's needs is undertaken. This shall, amongst other

issues, address the difficulties in achieving the growth in the 'New Homes Bonus' and 'Business Rates' in the timescales being specified;

- c) officers submit a formal request for a meeting with the Secretary of State, requesting that he meet with a Wirral delegation to discuss the realistic appraisal of Wirral's needs.'

Following a debate and Councillor Phil Davies having replied, the amendment was put and carried (41:19) (One abstention).

The substantive motion, as amended, was then put and carried (41:19) (One abstention).

Resolved (41:19) (One abstention) –

- (1) This Council notes the continued inequity of the Government's approach to local authority funding.**
- (2) It further recognises the Government's failings to give a fair deal for Wirral through the recently announced 'Transitional Fund'**
- (3) Council is disappointed that despite the Secretary of State claiming the fund is "To help Councils transform from dependence on central government grants to greater financial autonomy" more than 83% of the £300million fund was sent to Conservative controlled authorities.**
- (4) Is disappointed that, of the 36 English Metropolitan boroughs representing 22% of the population, only 2 received any support, and they were the only two Conservative controlled authorities of Trafford and Solihull, and while Surrey, Oxfordshire and Cheshire East received millions in support, Wirral and the rest of the Liverpool City Region, received nothing.**
- (5) Council is further dismayed to learn that the Conservatives locally offered no support to help address the imbalance of funding, to lobby their Westminster colleagues, or to stand up for local residents.**
- (6) Therefore Council recommends that the Leader of the Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer requesting an immediate review of local government funding, the deployment of the Transitional Fund and for Wirral to receive a fair assessment and settlement to help off-set the £29million cuts he has forced upon the borough in 2016/17.**

- (7) Council notes that in the announcement of the Settlement 8 February 2016, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government set out 'indicative figures'.
- (8) Council understands that the idea was and is that councils should apply for a four year budget, extending to the end of the Parliament. Further, it appears that councils have until 14 October 2016 to respond to this. As part of this process, councils were either asked or expected to translate the 'certainty' of a four year settlement into 'efficiency savings'.
- (9) Council, therefore, requests officers to establish through the Local Government Association and SIGOMA what this means and what process is being followed.
- (10) The Secretary of State also stated that *"Many councils felt that too much time has passed since the last substantial revision of the formula which assesses a council's needs, and the costs it can be expected to incur in delivering services."*
- (11) He went on to say that *"On the needs formula itself, it is nearly 10 years since the current formula was last looked at thoroughly. There is good reason to believe that the demographic pressures affecting particular areas – such as the growth in the elderly population – have affected different areas in different ways, as has the cost of providing services. So I can announce that we will conduct a review of what the needs assessment formula should be in a world in which all local government spending is funded by local resources not central grant, and use it to determine the transition to 100% business rates retention."*
- (12) Council requests that,
- a) urgent work is undertaken to find out what is meant by the 'review of the needs assessment formula' referred to;
 - b) compilation of the information necessary to submit a case for a fair assessment of Wirral's needs is undertaken. This shall, amongst other issues, address the difficulties in achieving the growth in the 'New Homes Bonus' and 'Business Rates' in the timescales being specified;
 - c) officers submit a formal request for a meeting with the Secretary of State, requesting that he meet with a Wirral delegation to discuss the realistic appraisal of Wirral's needs.

Prior to consideration of the next motion, the Leader of the Council requested an adjournment for 10 minutes to enable Members to consider the amendment submitted by Councillor Gilchrist in respect of the Cabinet recommendations on the Employment and Appointments Committee Terms of Reference.

The Mayor then adjourned the Council at 8.55pm.

The Council reconvened at 9.05pm.

122 **EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Further to minute 114, it was moved by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan that –

“The recommendations contained within Cabinet minute 106 be approved”.

It was moved as an amendment by Councillor Phil Gilchrist and seconded by Councillor Alan Brighthouse –

‘That paragraph 1 be amended to read as follows:

(7) To consider and recommend to Council changes to the Council’s senior management structure proposed by the Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service.’

The amendment was put and lost (23:35) (One abstention).

The motion was put and carried (54:5) (One abstention).

Resolved (54:5) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within Cabinet minute 106, be approved.

123 **MOTION - REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

The Leader of the Council proposed, and it was agreed, that with Standing Order 9 (Conclusion of Council meeting) due to come into force during the next item, only movers and seconders be heard for this matter to be debated.

Proposed by Councillor Pat Hackett
Seconded by Councillor Jean Stapleton

This Council notes the continuing opportunity for Birkenhead to play a major part in the economic growth of both Liverpool City Region and the ‘northern powerhouse’.

It further recognises the work the local business community, the chamber of commerce and council officers are doing to promote Wirral as a place for employers to invest and businesses to thrive.

Council also supports the Leader of the Council in his new role as portfolio lead Economic Development for Liverpool City Region Combined Authority as a strong advocate for continued investment and growth in Wirral.

Council applauds the news that in 2016 at least £150million of new investment projects will begin and reaffirms its 2020 pledge to attract £450million in inward investment.

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 Steve Williams
Seconded by Councillor Andrew Hodson

Insert new paragraph 3:

‘Council also recognises the significant contribution Government has made to Wirral and the wider City Region to support the Region’s ongoing recovery. This support has taken a variety of forms, a snapshot includes:

- Mersey Waters Enterprise Zone Designation
- Devolution
- £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’

Second amendment

Proposed by Councillor Pat Cleary
Seconded by Councillor Alan Brighthouse

Insert new paragraph after paragraph 1:

‘Council believes that the prospects for the regeneration of Birkenhead will be strengthened if proposals are developed through an open and meaningful consultation with local residents, if the Constituency Committee is consulted at the earliest stages of any projects and that effective, timely and widespread

consultation is undertaken about future investment plans. Officers are requested to develop mechanisms to establish this for consideration.'

Retain original paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 as new paragraphs 3, 4 and 5.

Following speeches by the movers and seconders and Councillor Pat Hackett having waived his right of reply, the first amendment was put and lost (23:36) (One abstention).

The second amendment was then put and carried (59:0) (One abstention).

The substantive motion as amended was put and carried (59:0) (One abstention).

Resolved (59:0) (One abstention) –

- (1) This Council notes the continuing opportunity for Birkenhead to play a major part in the economic growth of both Liverpool City Region and the 'northern powerhouse'.**
- (2) Council believes that the prospects for the regeneration of Birkenhead will be strengthened if proposals are developed through an open and meaningful consultation with local residents, if the Constituency Committee is consulted at the earliest stages of any projects and that effective, timely and widespread consultation is undertaken about future investment plans. Officers are requested to develop mechanisms to establish this for consideration.**
- (3) It further recognises the work the local business community, the chamber of commerce and council officers are doing to promote Wirral as a place for employers to invest and businesses to thrive.**
- (4) Council also supports the Leader of the Council in his new role as portfolio lead Economic Development for Liverpool City Region Combined Authority as a strong advocate for continued investment and growth in Wirral.**
- (5) Council applauds the news that in 2016 at least £150million of new investment projects will begin and reaffirms its 2020 pledge to attract £450million in inward investment.**

124 **MOTION - SUPPORT FOR OUR ARMED FORCES**

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie

On the 25th anniversary of the First Gulf War, Council pays tribute to the thousands of servicemen and women who fought in the conflict, in particular, the 47 British servicemen and women who gave their lives during the campaign, and whose names are dedicated at the Gulf War Memorial within St Paul's Cathedral.

Council welcomes the series of commemorative events hosted by the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers; the Queen's Royal Irish Hussars Association and the participation of more than 500 Staffordshire Regiment veterans and soldiers in the Mercian Regiment.

Council expresses its support for the many Wirral residents who are serving in our Armed Forces, the loved ones they leave behind and the tremendous contribution they make to defeating terror; challenging aggressors and dictators and defending our national security.

Council also welcomes the active participation of many UK firms in ensuring our Armed Forces are better equipped than ever before, including manufacturers and those in the supply chain located in Wirral.

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

Resolved (58:0) (Two abstentions) – That the motion be approved.

125 **MOTION - BACKING OUR COASTAL COMMUNITIES**

Proposed by Councillor Geoffrey Watt

Seconded by Councillor Jeff Green (in the absence of Councillor John Hale)

Council welcomes the support given by HM Government to develop more than 100 radical plans to boost growth, jobs and prosperity in the United Kingdom's coastal communities and supports the inclusion of New Brighton in this programme.

Council notes that more than 11 million people live in coastal communities, from major cities to seaside villages. The tourism industry alone accounts for the employment of 250,000 people across 150 seaside resorts, and contributes £4 billion to the UK economy.

Council believes this Government support for 'local coastal community teams' to help revive towns and, last year, the creation of 118 Coastal Community Teams.

Council notes the £120 million Coastal Communities Fund, established in 2012, has money going to projects in every region and country of the United Kingdom, creating nearly 14,000 new jobs and more than 10,000 training

places and, in December, support to illuminate New Brighton's iconic lighthouse.

Council welcomes the additional £1 million coastal revival funding that will be available in 2016 to 2017 for further projects.

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 Bernie Mooney

Seconded by Councillor Pat Hackett

Delete paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 5 and add the following:

'Council welcomes any support given to develop and boost growth, jobs and prosperity in our local coastal communities. Council recognises that during the floods of December 2013 the authority had to find emergency funds to assist New Brighton with repairs and recovery of £250K from its own budget. The Government offered initial support through a grant system and also the Bellwin Scheme, but later said that the nature of the assets damaged meant that the Council could not utilise these grant schemes.

Government (DCLG) did eventually allocate a Repair and Renewal Grant of £88K for New Brighton but this left a significant short fall for the Council of £162K. Also, at the end of August 2015, 100 homes in Wirral were flooded, with some of them being part of coastal communities, but once again the Government refused to allow any of these households to apply retrospectively to the £50m Flood Relief Grant made available to households in Cumbria, saying that the Wirral floods did not justify widening the scope of the Flood Relief Fund.

This shows that once again this Conservative Government says one thing and does the complete opposite.

Council believes that we should support our coastal communities, but the Government has failed to give the coastal communities of Wirral a fair and equal opportunity.'

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

The amendment was put and carried (40:19) (One abstention).

The substantive motion, as amended, was put and carried (40:19) (One abstention).

Resolved (40:19) (One abstention) –

- (1) Council notes that more than 11 million people live in coastal communities, from major cities to seaside villages. The tourism industry alone accounts for the employment of 250,000 people across 150 seaside resorts, and contributes £4 billion to the UK economy.**
- (2) Council welcomes any support given to develop and boost growth, jobs and prosperity in our local coastal communities. Council recognises that during the floods of December 2013 the authority had to find emergency funds to assist New Brighton with repairs and recovery of £250K from its own budget. The Government offered initial support through a grant system and also the Bellwin Scheme, but later said that the nature of the assets damaged meant that the Council could not utilise these grant schemes.**
- (3) Government (DCLG) did eventually allocate a Repair and Renewal Grant of £88K for New Brighton but this left a significant short fall for the Council of £162K. Also, at the end of August 2015, 100 homes in Wirral were flooded, with some of them being part of coastal communities, but once again the Government refused to allow any of these households to apply retrospectively to the £50m Flood Relief Grant made available to households in Cumbria, saying that the Wirral floods did not justify widening the scope of the Flood Relief Fund.**
- (4) This shows that once again this Conservative Government says one thing and does the complete opposite.**
- (5) Council believes that we should support our coastal communities, but the Government has failed to give the coastal communities of Wirral a fair and equal opportunity.**

126 **MOTION - SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Proposed by Councillor Lesley Rennie

Seconded by Councillor David Burgess-Joyce

Council welcomes the cash being given to Wirral by HM Government to support more victims of domestic violence.

Council congratulates those involved in the successful bid, including Wirral Women and Children's Aid, which will enable the appointment of two new specialist support officers, to offer support on issues such as mental health and substance misuse; and six new units of safe accommodation will be made available to victims.

Council also welcomes the additional role that will include helping young people who may not recognise the symptoms of domestic abuse.

Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to Communities Minister, Baroness Williams of Trafford, inviting her to Wirral to meet with representatives of the organisations involved in tackling domestic violence and supporting victims.

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 Janette Williamson

Seconded by Councillor George Davies

Delete last paragraph and replace with:

‘Council recognises the hard work of our officers and the staff of Wirral Women’s and Children’s Aid in successfully securing funding from central Government for helping victims of domestic abuse, and Council fully supports Wirral’s pledge of zero tolerance to domestic abuse and its recent Lover not Fighter campaign which is aimed at raising awareness around domestic abuse and its effect on children. Council welcomes the recent government defeat in the Court of Appeal over their attempts to restrict access to Legal Aid to victims of domestic abuse. However, Council notes with grave concern the continued and sustained reduction in Local Government funding by the Conservative government together with cuts to the police and the third sector, and draconian Welfare Reforms, are having a deeply damaging effect on both victims of domestic abuse and the funding and delivery of services designed to help victims find support and independence. Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to Communities Minister, Baroness Williams of Trafford asking her to lobby her own government against subjecting Wirral Council to further cuts, and ask that further funding be given to develop and protect our vital domestic abuse services.’

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

The amendment was put and carried (40:19) (One abstention).

The substantive motion, as amended, was put and carried (40:19) (One abstention).

Resolved (40:19) (One abstention) –

- (1) Council welcomes the cash being given to Wirral by HM Government to support more victims of domestic violence.
- (2) Council congratulates those involved in the successful bid, including Wirral Women and Children's Aid, which will enable the appointment of two new specialist support officers, to offer support on issues such as mental health and substance misuse; and six new units of safe accommodation will be made available to victims.
- (3) Council also welcomes the additional role that will include helping young people who may not recognise the symptoms of domestic abuse.
- (4) Council recognises the hard work of our officers and the staff of Wirral Women's and Children's Aid in successfully securing funding from central Government for helping victims of domestic abuse, and Council fully supports Wirral's pledge of zero tolerance to domestic abuse and its recent Lover not Fighter campaign which is aimed at raising awareness around domestic abuse and its effect on children. Council welcomes the recent government defeat in the Court of Appeal over their attempts to restrict access to Legal Aid to victims of domestic abuse. However, Council notes with grave concern the continued and sustained reduction in Local Government funding by the Conservative government together with cuts to the police and the third sector, and draconian Welfare Reforms, are having a deeply damaging effect on both victims of domestic abuse and the funding and delivery of services designed to help victims find support and independence. Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to Communities Minister, Baroness Williams of Trafford asking her to lobby her own government against subjecting Wirral Council to further cuts, and ask that further funding be given to develop and protect our vital domestic abuse services.

127 **MOTION - TACKLING FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION**

Proposed by Councillor David Burgess-Joyce

Seconded by Councillor Jeff Green

Council condemns the barbaric practice of female genital mutilation, regardless of where it takes place and among all cultures.

Statistics published in December showed that between July and September last year there were 1,385 newly recorded cases of FGM reported by healthcare professionals across England.

An estimated 20,000 girls are also identified as being most at risk from FGM in the UK.

Council, therefore, welcomes action, so far, by HM Government that includes:

- From 31 October 2015, the mandatory requirement for regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report visually confirmed or verbally disclosed cases of FGM in girls to the police.
- New legislation to grant victims of FGM lifelong anonymity from the time an allegation is made.
- The introduction of new civil orders designed to protect girls identified as being at risk of FGM.
- New legislation that will mean parents can be prosecuted if they fail to prevent their daughter being cut.

Council calls on those organisations in Wirral that are working in the communities most at risk of this unacceptable and barbaric action to work with schools, police, health services and others to raise awareness of the dangers and the consequences of such action.

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 Janette Williamson

Seconded by Councillor Treena Johnson

Add:

‘Council condemns all violence towards women and girls and acknowledges that 1,700 victims have been referred to specialist services since 2013.

Council notes that simply legislating against a cultural practice without acknowledging cultural sensitivities risks driving that practice underground.

Council supports working with the communities involved in FGM, through highly trained and professional practitioners and asks that funding be made available to Wirral to work collaboratively with the government in keeping our girls and women safe from FGM.’

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

The amendment was put and carried (59:0) (One abstention).

The substantive motion, as amended, was put and carried (59:0) (One abstention).

Resolved (59:0) (One abstention) –

- (1) Council condemns the barbaric practice of female genital mutilation, regardless of where it takes place and among all cultures.**
- (2) Statistics published in December showed that between July and September last year there were 1,385 newly recorded cases of FGM reported by healthcare professionals across England.**
- (3) An estimated 20,000 girls are also identified as being most at risk from FGM in the UK.**
- (4) Council, therefore, welcomes action, so far, by HM Government that includes:**
 - From 31 October 2015, the mandatory requirement for regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report visually confirmed or verbally disclosed cases of FGM in girls to the police.**
 - New legislation to grant victims of FGM lifelong anonymity from the time an allegation is made.**
 - The introduction of new civil orders designed to protect girls identified as being at risk of FGM.**
 - New legislation that will mean parents can be prosecuted if they fail to prevent their daughter being cut.**
- (5) Council calls on those organisations in Wirral that are working in the communities most at risk of this unacceptable and barbaric action to work with schools, police, health services and others to raise awareness of the dangers and the consequences of such action.**
- (6) Council condemns all violence towards women and girls and acknowledges that 1,700 victims have been referred to specialist services since 2013.**
- (7) Council notes that simply legislating against a cultural practice without acknowledging cultural sensitivities risks driving that practice underground.**
- (8) Council supports working with the communities involved in FGM, through highly trained and professional practitioners and asks that funding be made available to Wirral to work collaboratively with the government in keeping our girls and women safe from FGM.**

128 VACANCIES

The Council was requested to deal with the following matters in relation to appointments to an outside body:

The West Kirby Charity

- Victoria Gawith (be appointed until 18 April, 2019)
- Councillor Geoffrey Watt (be reappointed until 26 April, 2020)

Resolved – That the appointments be approved.