

COUNCIL

Monday, 4 April 2016

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

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

Apologies Councillors J Crabtree P Williams
J Hale S Williams
A Leech

129 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

No such declarations were made.

130 CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Civic Mayor indicated that he had been notified of three petitions to be submitted in accordance with Standing Order 21, and that as one of those

related to Girtrell Court he would allow all three of the following petitions to be submitted by -

Councillor Cherry Povall on behalf of 163 Wirral signatories calling on the Council to resurface correctly, Beechway, Bebington, Wirral.

Councillor Cherry Povall on behalf of 96 Wirral signatories calling on the Council to prepare a Residents' Parking Scheme for roads adjacent to Spital Station

Councillor Wendy Clements submitted an additional 30 Wirral signatories calling on the Council to halt the closure of Girtrell Court.

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

131 NOTICE OF MOTION - GIRTRELL COURT

Prior to consideration of the item Councillor P Davies stated that as the submitted Notice of Motion in relation to Girtrell Court contained no material changes to the information previously considered he would move that the Council only hear the Movers and Seconders and then move immediately to the vote, this was seconded by Councillor A McLachlan.

Councillor J Green and Councillor P Gilchrist expressed their dissatisfaction at the proposed motion to curtail the debate.

Prior to consideration of the motion, Councillor Jeff Green and five Conservative Members rose to request a 'card vote' on the proposed Motion from Councillor P Davies.

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

For the motion (35) Councillors R Abbey, P Brightmore, A Davies, G Davies, P Davies, W Davies, P Doughty, S Foulkes, P Hackett, T Johnson, A Jones, C Jones, B Kenny, A McLachlan, M McLaughlin, C Meaden, B Mooney, C Muspratt, S Niblock, 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 (23) Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, A Brighthouse, D Burgess-Joyce, C Carubia, 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 and G Watt.

One abstention – Councillor L Rowlands.

Resolved (35:23) (One abstention) –

That as the submitted Notice of Motion in relation to Girtrell Court contained no material changes to the information previously considered that the Council only hear the Movers and Seconders and then move immediately to the vote.

Proposed by Councillor Chris Blakeley
Seconded by Councillor Bruce Berry

Council recalls that, at the Council meeting on the 14th March, 2016, the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health gave assurances that there was no timetable for closure of Girtrell Court.

Council noted this included a promise that Girtrell Court would remain open until such time as acceptable and alternative respite provision could be provided for users of Girtrell Court and that the Cabinet Member stated that no decision on Girtrell Court would be made until all the statutory 'one to one' consultations had been completed.

Council is therefore deeply puzzled and disappointed that 48 hours later, in the Wirral Globe online version, the Cabinet Member announced that Girtrell Court will close at the end of August.

Council resolves that any budgetary decision about Girtrell Court is made in the public arena by Council as required by the Constitution of Wirral Borough Council.

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 Chris Jones
Seconded by Councillor Phil Davies

Delete paragraphs 3 and 4. Insert the following new paragraphs:

- (3) Council notes that Girtrell Court has been debated on two separate occasions by Council in the past month.
- (4) Council notes that there are no material changes to the position since the issue was last debated by Council on the 14th March. The Director of

Adult Social Services is considering the outcome of the statutory one-to-one consultations with service users and their families. An event will take place during April where alternative models of respite care, which have been requested, will be showcased. Following this event, the Director, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, will consider arrangements for re-providing respite care. Once again, we reiterate that we are not imposing any deadlines.

- (5) Council reiterates that this issue is primarily about increasing choice and extending the reach of respite care. At present, the Council cannot meet demand from service users and their families for greater choice in the type of respite care provided because the entire budget for this service is tied up in one model. The aim is that any alternatives will be equal to or better than existing provision. Council reiterates that no one who currently receives respite care will have this withdrawn.
- (6) Council recognises that pending the outcome of the process described above, no decision will be made about the future of Girtrell Court. Bookings will continue to be taken until the end of August to enable carers to make their holiday arrangements.
- (7) Council refutes the assertion by the Conservatives that in the Wirral Globe online version the Cabinet Member 'announced' that Girtrell Court will close at the end of August. The article contained no such announcement. The headline was the Editor's interpretation of the article.
- (8) Council calls on the Conservative Group to apologise for wasting Council Tax payers' resources by requisitioning an extraordinary Council meeting in a cynical attempt to politicise this issue. Council also once again highlights the hypocrisy of the Conservatives who, when they were in control of the Council in 2010, closed five residential homes providing respite care, which in our opinion followed totally inadequate consultation, in favour of alternative provision in the independent sector.

Second amendment

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Alan Brighthouse

Insert after paragraph 4...

Council notes that the Director of Adult Social Services has been making arrangements for a 'market event' for the users of Girtrell Court and their carers on 14 April 2016 at the Floral Pavilion. Council understands that this is intended to offer carers an opportunity to meet with potential providers and that it is intended to publish and share consultation findings and outcomes.

Council believes that the consultation findings should be circulated to Members and that, given the extended timescale offered for the continued operation of Girtrell Court, there should be a proper opportunity for the re-provision proposals to be tested in a due process of scrutiny.

Council believes that arrangements for this should be made with the relevant Spokespersons and that this process should hear from representatives of users and carers as to their opinions on the quality and sufficiency of the alternatives that have been developed or offered.

Following speeches from the movers and seconders and Councillor Blakeley having replied, the second amendment moved by Councillor Gilchrist was put and lost (23:35) (One abstention).

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 the first amendment moved by Councillor Chris Jones and the Council divided as follows:

For the motion (35) Councillors R Abbey, P Brightmore, A Davies, G Davies, P Davies, W Davies, P Doughty, S Foulkes, P Hackett, T Johnson, A Jones, C Jones, B Kenny, A McLachlan, M McLaughlin, C Meaden, B Mooney, C Muspratt, S Niblock, 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 (23) Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, A Brighthouse, D Burgess-Joyce, C Carubia, 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 and G Watt.

One abstention – Councillor L Rowlands.

The amendment proposed by Councillor Chris Jones was therefore carried (35:23) (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, as amended, and the Council divided as follows:

For the motion (35) Councillors R Abbey, P Brightmore, A Davies, G Davies, P Davies, W Davies, P Doughty, S Foulkes, P Hackett, T Johnson, A Jones, C Jones, B Kenny, A McLachlan, M McLaughlin, C Meaden, B Mooney, C Muspratt, S Niblock, 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 (23) Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, A Brighthouse, D Burgess-Joyce, C Carubia, 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 and G Watt.

One abstention – Councillor L Rowlands.

Resolved (35:23) (One abstention) –

- (1) Council recalls that, at the Council meeting on the 14th March, 2016, the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health gave assurances that there was no timetable for closure of Girtrell Court.**
- (2) Council noted this included a promise that Girtrell Court would remain open until such time as acceptable and alternative respite provision could be provided for users of Girtrell Court and that the Cabinet Member stated that no decision on Girtrell Court would be made until all the statutory 'one to one' consultations had been completed.**
- (3) Council notes that Girtrell Court has been debated on two separate occasions by Council in the past month.**
- (4) Council notes that there are no material changes to the position since the issue was last debated by Council on the 14th March. The Director of Adult Social Services is considering the outcome of the statutory one-to-one consultations with service users and their families. An event will take place during April where alternatives models of respite care, which have been requested, will be showcased. Following this event, the Director, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, will consider arrangements for re-providing respite care. Once again, we reiterate that we are not imposing any deadlines.**
- (5) Council reiterates that this issue is primarily about increasing choice and extending the reach of respite care. At present, the Council cannot meet demand from service users and their families for greater choice in the type of respite care provided because the entire budget for this service is tied up in one model. The aim is that any alternatives will be equal to or better than existing provision. Council reiterates that no one who currently receives respite care will have this withdrawn.**

- (6) Council recognises that pending the outcome of the process described above, no decision will be made about the future of Girtrell Court. Bookings will continue to be taken until the end of August to enable carers to make their holiday arrangements.**
- (7) Council refutes the assertion by the Conservatives that in the Wirral Globe online version the Cabinet Member ‘announced’ that Girtrell Court will close at the end of August. The article contained no such announcement. The headline was the Editor’s interpretation of the article.**
- (8) Council calls on the Conservative Group to apologise for wasting Council Tax payers’ resources by requisitioning an extraordinary Council meeting in a cynical attempt to politicise this issue. Council also once again highlights the hypocrisy of the Conservatives who, when they were in control of the Council in 2010, closed five residential homes providing respite care, which in our opinion followed totally inadequate consultation, in favour of alternative provision in the independent sector.**