

# COUNCIL

Monday, 14 November 2016

Present: The Civic Mayor (Councillor Pat Hackett) in the Chair  
Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor Ann McLachlan)

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

Apologies Councillors J Hale T Pilgrim  
A Hodson C Povall  
A Leech

## 73 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.

## 74 CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Civic Mayor noted that apologies had been received from Councillors John Hale, Andrew Hodson, Anita Leech, Tracey Pilgrim and Cherry Povall.

The Civic Mayor referred to the Tea Dance which would be taking place in the Town Hall, Wallasey on Wednesday, 7 December, 2016 from 1.30pm and encouraged Members to sponsor a ticket at £5 each for those elderly people who might struggle to afford a ticket.

75 **GIRTRELL COURT**

The Civic Mayor informed the Council that the Council agenda pack contained a copy of the requisition notice from the Conservative Group and a Notice of Motion.

**Proposed** by Councillor Chris Blakeley  
**Seconded** by Councillor Steve Williams

Following critical responses from users, carers, families and staff Council is concerned that the transitional arrangements put in place following the decision to close Girtrell Court do not appear to be providing the respect and dignity that was promised.

Council further notes that, while Girtrell Court is a 20 bed single floor bespoke respite centre which, according to the Director of Adult Social Care's latest description provides thirteen respite beds, two emergency beds and five placement breakdown beds the alternative provision will comprise a ten bed unit over three floors, providing, according to the Director of Adult Social Care, eight respite beds and two emergency beds with no provision for placement breakdown. Therefore Council does not believe this alternative is 'equal to or better' than that currently provided at Girtrell Court.

Council is also concerned that promises made to existing staff regarding the transitional arrangements are not being honoured and staff have been, and continue to be, left in a state of limbo.

Council therefore resolves to instruct officers to halt the closure programme for Girtrell Court and, instead, to invest the £1 million pound capital available to the Director in this excellent bespoke facility.

**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

*Amend the Motion by inserting the additional wording where shown in **BOLD***

Following critical responses from users, carers, families and staff Council is concerned that the transitional arrangements put in place following the decision to close Girtrell Court do not appear to be providing the respect and dignity that was promised.

**Council recalls that at the special meeting held on 4 April 2016, it was resolved that *"the aim is that any alternatives will be equal to or better than existing provision"*.**

Council further notes that, while Girtrell Court is a 20 bed single floor bespoke respite centre which, according to the Director of Adult Social Care's latest description provides thirteen respite beds, two emergency beds and five placement breakdown beds the alternative provision will comprise a ten bed unit over three floors, providing, according to the Director of Adult Social Care, eight respite beds and two emergency beds with no provision for placement breakdown.

**Council recognises that the Care Quality Commission carried out an unannounced inspection of the existing provision at Girtrell Court on 30 June 2016 / 28 July 2016, publishing their report on 9 September 2016.**

**This report makes it clear that the inspectors commented positively on the friendly and relaxed atmosphere, the individualised care plans, the variety of activities, the staffing levels that were sufficient to meet people's need, the quality of risk assessments, the training records of the staff and the proper induction of agency staff.**

**Council welcomes the fact that service users were communicated with *"in a kind manner with dignity and respect"*, with planning meetings so that likes and individual preferences were recorded and, most importantly, acted upon.**

**Council appreciates that the Inspection report made it clear that...  
*"The manager explained to us that it had been difficult to plan ahead and develop the service in an environment where staff and people have known for a long time that the home is closing. We found the manager to be positive and encouraging with people, offering reassurance to them if they were anxious and talking about new facilities in a positive manner."***

**Council believes that the replacement service commissioned, especially the building in Tollemache Road and the services planned to operate**

**from there, must be tested against this standard and must provide for continuation of all the positive qualities identified at Girtrell Court**

Therefore Council does not believe this alternative **provision, if viewed in isolation**, is 'equal to or better' than that currently provided at Girtrell Court

**Council expects the commissioned replacement services to meet these standards which users have a right to expect and wishes to establish how the users now perceive the replacement services being offered.**

Council is also concerned **at suggestions circulating** that promises made to existing staff regarding the transitional arrangements are not being honoured and staff have been, and continue to be, left in a state of limbo.

Council therefore resolves to instruct officers **to study the implications if Council sought** to halt the closure programme for Girtrell Court and, instead, to invest the £1million pound capital available to the Director in this excellent bespoke facility **and report back to Members.**

Following a debate and Councillor Blakeley having replied, the amendment was put and lost (6:54) (One abstention).

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

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

For the motion (18) Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, D Burgess-Joyce, P Cleary, Mrs W Clements, D Elderton, G Ellis, J Green, P Hayes, K Hodson, I Lewis, L Rennie, L Rowlands, A Sykes, G Watt and S Williams.

Against the motion (42) Councillors R Abbey, A Brighouse, P Brightmore, C Carubia, A Davies, G Davies, P Davies, W Davies, P Doughty, S Foulkes, P Gilchrist, T Johnson, A Jones, C Jones, T Jones, S Kelly, B Kenny, A McLachlan, M McLaughlin, J McManus, C Meaden, D Mitchell, B Mooney, C Muspratt, T Norbury, M Patrick, D Realey, L Reecejones, D Roberts, PA Smith, W Smith, C Spriggs, J Stapleton, P Stuart, M Sullivan, T Usher, J Walsh, W Ward, S Whittingham, I Williams, KJ Williams and J Williamson.

One abstention – Councillor P Hackett.

The motion was therefore lost (18:42) (One abstention).