

Amendment – Leader’s, Executive Members’ and Chairs Reports

A. Cabinet Portfolio Summary Report (Item 6A)

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Council notes that the Foreword to the Annual Report refers to the original purpose of the Report as giving.....*"open, honest appraisals"* of the Council's *"progress"*.

The document states *"We're also continuing to get the basics right "* (page 4), an impression that is not shared by the public who are able to see, first hand, daily, the weeds and potholes and neglected appearance of their communities.

The key performance indicators referred to in the 2017 MORI survey of Wirral's residents referenced some decline in the satisfaction with local government but clearly stated that ...

"Although Wirral's drop in key measures follows the national trend, it should be noted that, across the board, performance indicators are significantly lower compared to its peers." (Ipsos MORI North, page 11)

The Liberal Democrat Group's concern over 'getting the basics right' was reported in the Wirral Globe on 21 February 2018 (page 30).

The Annual Report for 2016/17 (page 25) promised that in 2017/18.....
".....we will redouble our efforts to improve the public realm....."

The current Annual Report also states.....

"we will redouble our efforts to improve the public realm....." (page 35)

What has doubled is the size of the documentation, from 28 to 56 pages, when residents look for practical action rather than words.

The belated recognition of the need to tackle the state of Wirral is welcome, as set out in the priorities of the 2018/19 Delivery Plan (page 3). The general thrust of the policies and concerns as set out is worthy. It should be noted, though, that:

- (i). the need to place Children's Services on a *'solid'* foundation flows from failings that were not recognised in the 2016 Annual Report;
- (ii). the 2017 Annual Report declared that the Leader was confident that residents would, as a result of the Growth Company, see *"spades in the ground"* ..*"within the next twelve months"*;
- (iii). the Major Project on *"Stronger and more sustainable services"* assures Council that the administration will *"find the most appropriate, sustainable model to deliver parks, leisure libraries and cultural services"*.
It is a year since pre-decision scrutiny was promised at the Call In held on 19 June 2017. There was substantial expenditure on consultants' reports which were only made public after repeated requests.
- (iv). the Key Project 'Keep Wirral Moving' refers to the investment in *"improving"* potholes. Council is anxious that the new in-house arrangements will tackle

this issue. The public simply want the potholes mended with a common sense logical approach.

- (v). the Major Project "creating jobs driving regeneration" refers to the Celtic Manor Golf Resort. Council places on record that it remains sceptical over this project and calls for the publication of all exempt material relating to it.

Council fully understands the uncertain financial climate under which the Council is operating. References to the removal of the Revenue Support Grant and the removal of 'core' grant reinforce the need to work with the Local Government Association to establish a respected and fairer grant funding system. The 'Major Project' does not refer to the consultation undertaken by the Secretary of State on the new funding formula. Council remains anxious that every opportunity should be taken to secure replacement funding.