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COUNCIL

Monday, 15 July 2019

Present: The Civic Mayor (Councillor Tony Smith) in the Chair
Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor George Davies)

Councillors	T Anderson	K Greaney	D Mitchell
	B Berry	JE Green	C Muspratt
	J Bird	EA Grey	Y Nolan
	C Blakeley	P Hackett	T Norbury
	A Brame	P Hayes	J Robinson
	D Burgess-Joyce	S Hayes	L Rowlands
	H Cameron	A Hodson	C Spriggs
	K Cannon	K Hodson	S Spoor
	C Carubia	J Johnson	P Stuart
	P Cleary	AER Jones	M Sullivan
	W Clements	C Jones	T Usher
	M Collins	S Jones	J Walsh
	C Cooke	T Jones	G Watt
	A Corkhill	M Jordan	S Whittingham
	T Cox	S Kelly	I Williams
	WJ Davies	B Kenny	KJ Williams
	S Foulkes	A Leech	S Williams
	S Frost	I Lewis	J Williamson
	A Gardner	M McLaughlin	G Wood
	P Gilchrist	J McManus	A Wright

19 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.

20 CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Civic Mayor noted that apologies had been received from Councillors Tony Cottier, Cherry Povall, Lesley Rennie and Jean Stapleton.

The Civic Mayor informed Council of a number of activities he and the Lady Mayoress had attended in recent months, these included:

- The Great Get Together in Birkenhead, meeting diverse communities, sharing their experiences and also to celebrate the life of Jo Cox, MP.

- The Arc Light Project, run by the Reverend Nelson and his colleagues, acknowledging the work of volunteers in support of the night shelter programme, providing accommodation for the homeless in the cold months of January to March 2019.
- Bookstart Week at West Kirby Library, a wonderful opportunity to see young babies and toddlers begin their reading journey, supported by parents, librarians, workers, and volunteers.

21 **ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

The Civic Mayor introduced the item on the Environment and Climate Emergency for which one motion and two amendments had been submitted.

MOTION

Councillor Elizabeth Grey moved and Councillor Tony Norbury seconded the following Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 7 -

“Wirral Council declares an Environment and Climate Emergency.

Further, following pressure from this and other Councils, Wirral welcomes Parliament’s UK Climate Emergency Declaration of May 1st.

Council also welcomes the UN Climate Action Summit planned for September this year following the IPCC and IPBES reports (Note 1) and recognises overwhelming scientific consensus that to avoid more than a 1.5°C rise in global warming, global emissions would need to fall by around 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero by around 2050.

Council notes with alarm that, conducted at the highest international scientific level, these reports warn that *during the lifetime of our children* catastrophic ecological disaster will unfold with the extinction of circa one million life-forms, many of which are essential to human species survival - unless OUR generation reverses it.

Council believes much can also be achieved not only through reduced emissions but also through greater Central and Local Government support for reforestation, sustainable agriculture, waste reduction, re-cycling, less use of non-recyclables and finite resources and greater awareness of healthier life-style choices.

Council celebrates the fact that six of the nine winners of the 2019 Echo Environment Awards were from Wirral. Wirral Council also notes and welcomes the City Region’s announced aims:

- To produce more low carbon energy
- Greater energy efficiency and lower energy poverty
- Improved air quality
- Rapid transition to low carbon transport/industry/housing

Further, Wirral Council calls on Cabinet to:

- Support and increase efforts to meet Climate Change targets to achieve net zero emissions before 2050 by supporting and setting ambitious, short-term targets for the roll-out of renewables and low carbon energy and transport, and to move swiftly to capture economic opportunities and green jobs in a low carbon economy;
- protect Wirral's natural environment and develop a circular, zero waste economy;
- manage risks for workers currently reliant on carbon intensive sectors;
- explain to the public what this Climate Emergency declaration means and promote understanding and action;
- request regular updates from the Council Leadership on progress being made to act on this declaration; and
- call on Westminster to provide the powers and the funding to make this locally possible.

Note 1. IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) and IPBES' (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services."

AMENDMENT 1

Councillor Allan Brame moved and Councillor Andy Corkhill seconded an amendment to the Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12 such that -

After the existing motion, add the following:

"Council recognises the need to support the Climate Emergency Declaration with practical local action. Over the coming years, this will involve a wide range of measures but, at this meeting, Council supports these initiatives:

- 1) In order to progress a meaningful response to reforestation and to the development of sustainable agriculture, Cabinet is requested to ask that the Government, as part of the forthcoming Spending Review, provides additional funding for schemes that will bring this about.
- 2) Council therefore requests that, as a significant practical step to slow the build-up of CO₂ in the atmosphere, Cabinet is requested to ask officers to initiate a major tree-planting initiative, ensuring that they...
 - discuss the opportunities for additional tree planting in Wirral with the major landowners

- identify land for tree planting to create a range of sites and wildlife corridors to tackle climate change and
 - add to the biodiversity of Wirral and involve local schools.
- 3) Further, Council requests that officers work with local landowners, agents and the farming community to increase the scope for the Environmental Land Management contracts suggested by the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP to the Oxford Farming Conference in January 2019.
 - 4) Council supports a drive to localise food production and asks Cabinet to support the uptake and maintenance of allotments, offering advice and support to residents who lack the confidence or expertise to take on an allotment.
 - 5) Recognising the need to progress the switch to electric powered cars, Council urges Cabinet to work with large employers, the Chamber of Commerce and other organisations to promote and secure the provision of more charging points for electric vehicles in the Borough.
 - 6) Council recalls that at its meeting on 18 March 2019, members voted unanimously to ask Cabinet to explore the possibility of building its own solar farm, either in the Borough or elsewhere. In reaffirming support for this proposal, Council asks for an update on progress to be given at its next meeting.”

AMENDMENT 2

Councillor Pat Cleary moved and Councillor Chris Cooke seconded a second amendment to the Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12 such that -

“After the existing motion, add the following:

Specifically, Council requests the Cabinet to:

Set senior leadership responsibilities across all departments reflecting that the climate emergency relates to all aspects of the council's activities.

Prioritise the climate emergency as part of a wider partnership ensuring the Cool Wirral initiative has clear reporting links with other strategic partners.

Implement a long-term climate emergency communication programme including a dedicated web site and a dedicated mailing list to build a network of interest groups.

Adopt appropriate decision making tools supported by a staff and member training programme. This to include:

- the reintroduction of environmental impacts in committee report templates
- the reinstatement of carbon budget reports
- robust carbon/sustainability appraisals for all significant plans and strategies

Establish a cross - department task group to draw up a council climate emergency action plan.”

Following a debate, the amendment to the Motion was accepted by Councillor Elizabeth Grey as mover of the Motion with the agreement of Council being given by general assent.

The substantive Motion, moved by Councillor Elizabeth Grey, was put to the vote and carried (61:0) (One abstention).

It was therefore -

Resolved (61:0) (One abstention) – That

Wirral Council declares an Environment and Climate Emergency.

Further, following pressure from this and other Councils, Wirral welcomes Parliament’s UK Climate Emergency Declaration of May 1st.

Council also welcomes the UN Climate Action Summit planned for September this year following the IPCC and IPBES reports (Note 1) and recognises overwhelming scientific consensus that to avoid more than a 1.5°C rise in global warming, global emissions would need to fall by around 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero by around 2050.

Council notes with alarm that, conducted at the highest international scientific level, these reports warn that *during the lifetime of our children* catastrophic ecological disaster will unfold with the extinction of circa one million life-forms, many of which are essential to human species survival - unless OUR generation reverses it.

Council believes much can also be achieved not only through reduced emissions but also through greater Central and Local Government support for reforestation, sustainable agriculture, waste reduction, recycling, less use of non-recyclables and finite resources and greater awareness of healthier life-style choices.

Council celebrates the fact that six of the nine winners of the 2019 Echo Environment Awards were from Wirral. Wirral Council also notes and welcomes the City Region’s announced aims:

- **To produce more low carbon energy**

- **Greater energy efficiency and lower energy poverty**
- **Improved air quality**
- **Rapid transition to low carbon transport/industry/housing**

Further, Wirral Council calls on Cabinet to:

- **Support and increase efforts to meet Climate Change targets to achieve net zero emissions before 2050 by supporting and setting ambitious, short-term targets for the roll-out of renewables and low carbon energy and transport, and to move swiftly to capture economic opportunities and green jobs in a low carbon economy;**
- **protect Wirral's natural environment and develop a circular, zero waste economy;**
- **manage risks for workers currently reliant on carbon intensive sectors;**
- **explain to the public what this Climate Emergency declaration means and promote understanding and action;**
- **request regular updates from the Council Leadership on progress being made to act on this declaration; and**
- **call on Westminster to provide the powers and the funding to make this locally possible.**

Council recognises the need to support the Climate Emergency Declaration with practical local action. Over the coming years, this will involve a wide range of measures but, at this meeting, Council supports these initiatives:

- 1) **In order to progress a meaningful response to reforestation and to the development of sustainable agriculture, Cabinet is requested to ask that the Government, as part of the forthcoming Spending Review, provides additional funding for schemes that will bring this about.**
- 2) **Council therefore requests that, as a significant practical step to slow the build-up of CO2 in the atmosphere, Cabinet is requested to ask officers to initiate a major tree-planting initiative, ensuring that they...**
 - **discuss the opportunities for additional tree planting in Wirral with the major landowners**
 - **identify land for tree planting to create a range of sites and wildlife corridors to tackle climate change and**
 - **add to the biodiversity of Wirral and involve local schools.**
- 3) **Further, Council requests that officers work with local landowners, agents and the farming community to increase the scope for the Environmental Land Management contracts**

suggested by the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP to the Oxford Farming Conference in January 2019.

- 4) Council supports a drive to localise food production and asks Cabinet to support the uptake and maintenance of allotments, offering advice and support to residents who lack the confidence or expertise to take on an allotment.
- 5) Recognising the need to progress the switch to electric powered cars, Council urges Cabinet to work with large employers, the Chamber of Commerce and other organisations to promote and secure the provision of more charging points for electric vehicles in the Borough.
- 6) Council recalls that at its meeting on 18 March 2019, members voted unanimously to ask Cabinet to explore the possibility of building its own solar farm, either in the Borough or elsewhere. In reaffirming support for this proposal, Council asks for an update on progress to be given at its next meeting.”

Specifically, Council requests the Cabinet to:

Set senior leadership responsibilities across all departments reflecting that the climate emergency relates to all aspects of the council's activities.

Prioritise the climate emergency as part of a wider partnership ensuring the Cool Wirral initiative has clear reporting links with other strategic partners.

Implement a long-term climate emergency communication programme including a dedicated web site and a dedicated mailing list to build a network of interest groups.

Adopt appropriate decision making tools supported by a staff and member training programme. This to include:

- **the reintroduction of environmental impacts in committee report templates**
- **the reinstatement of carbon budget reports**
- **robust carbon/sustainability appraisals for all significant plans and strategies**

Establish a cross - department task group to draw up a council climate emergency action plan.

Note 1. IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) and IPBES' (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

22 THE FUTURE OF CELTIC MANOR

The Civic Mayor introduced the item on The Future of Celtic Manor for which two motions (no amendments) had been submitted.

MOTION 1

Councillor Geoffrey Watt moved and Councillor Tony Cox seconded the following Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 7 -

“Council notes the change in the numbers of seats held by the respective parties since May 2nd and the not unconnected Cabinet decision not to invest up to £26 million in the Celtic Manor resort (previously branded as the ‘Hoylake Golf Resort’).

Council thanks those who have raised their concerns over this agreement for their views and the hard work of Phil Simpson and colleagues to ensure that £26 million of public money will be put to better use.

Council now seeks clarity, transparency and openness on the next intended steps by the Cabinet and asks that the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee is kept fully up to date.”

MOTION 2

Councillor Allan Brame moved and Councillor Andy Corkhill seconded an amendment to the Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12 such that -

“This Council believes that...

- (i) the special meeting of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 27 June 2019, along with the briefing session held prior to that, gave elected Members beyond the Cabinet their first complete overview of this project;
- (ii) the information recently made available to Members has added considerably to their knowledge and the findings of the Call-In held on 7 December 2016, published Cabinet reports of 7 November 2016 and 18 December 2017;
- (iii) the decision of the Council made on 25 February 2019 which resolved by 32:29 with two abstentions that...‘Council believes it would be inappropriate to make a decision on this scheme before we have the full facts’ ...was based on the information available to Members at that time.

Having regard to the issues raised above, Council recognises the ongoing Development Agreement but welcomes the decision of Cabinet made on 8 July 2019 concerning finance. Given the history of this project, Council expects Members, beyond Cabinet, to be kept fully informed of any further discussions with the developer about their intentions.”

Following the debate, the Mayor then moved to the voting on each Motion in turn.

The Motion (1), moved by Councillor Geoffrey Watt, was put to the vote.

In accordance with Standing Order 12, a number of Members rose to request a ‘card vote’.

A recorded vote was then taken on the Motion (1) and the Council divided as follows:

For the motion (32): T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, A Brame, D Burgess-Joyce, H Cameron, C Carubia, P Cleary, W Clements, M Collins, C Cooke, A Corkhill, T Cox, B Davies, A Gardner, P Gilchrist, J Green, P Hayes, S Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, J Johnson, M Jordan, S Kelly, I Lewis, M McLaughlin, D Mitchell, L Rowlands, M Sullivan, G Watt, S Williams, A Wright.

Against the motion (29): J Bird, K Cannon, G Davies, S Foulkes, S Frost, K Greaney, E Grey, P Hackett, AER Jones, C Jones, S Jones, T Jones, B Kenny, A Leech, J McManus, C Muspratt, Y Nolan, T Norbury, J Robinson, C Spriggs, S Spoor, P Stuart, T Usher, J Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, J Williams, J Williamson, G Wood.

Abstentions (1): Councillor T Smith (Civic Mayor).

It was therefore -

Resolved (32:29) (One abstention) – That

Council notes the change in the numbers of seats held by the respective parties since May 2nd and the not unconnected Cabinet decision not to invest up to £26 million in the Celtic Manor resort (previously branded as the ‘Hoylelake Golf Resort’).

Council thanks those who have raised their concerns over this agreement for their views and the hard work of Phil Simpson and colleagues to ensure that £26 million of public money will be put to better use.

Council now seeks clarity, transparency and openness on the next intended steps by the Cabinet and asks that the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee is kept fully up to date.

The Motion (2), moved by Councillor Allan Brame, was put to the vote and carried (61:0) (One abstention).

It was also therefore -

Resolved (61:0) (One abstention) – That

This Council believes that...

- (i) the special meeting of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 27 June 2019, along with the briefing session held prior to that, gave elected Members beyond the Cabinet their first complete overview of this project;**
- (ii) the information recently made available to Members has added considerably to their knowledge and the findings of the Call-In held on 7 December 2016, published Cabinet reports of 7 November 2016 and 18 December 2017;**
- (iii) the decision of the Council made on 25 February 2019 which resolved by 32:29 with two abstentions that...'Council believes it would be inappropriate to make a decision on this scheme before we have the full facts' ...was based on the information available to Members at that time.**

Having regard to the issues raised above, Council recognises the ongoing Development Agreement but welcomes the decision of Cabinet made on 8 July 2019 concerning finance. Given the history of this project, Council expects Members, beyond Cabinet, to be kept fully informed of any further discussions with the developer about their intentions.