

CONSERVATIVE GROUP – BUDGET OBJECTION 2020/21

Date of Budget Council: Monday 2nd March 2020

Proposed by: Cllr. Ian Lewis

Seconded by: Cllr Lesley Rennie

It is now 12 years since Labour crashed the economy, causing the rate of increase in overall public spending to slow.

It is 10 years since the Coalition Government requested councils to play their part in restoring economic growth and, in return, retain the benefits of that growth in the Council Tax base and Business rates.

During that time, every single budget presented by the Labour Group has failed to adapt to these changes and, instead, used 'austerity' as an excuse to virtue signal to their base support.

It is almost one year since the Labour Group changed its Leader, but it has yet to change its rhetoric or its approach on how it spends the taxes it collects.

Wirral's Conservative Councillors believe the costs of the Chief Officer Team and Senior Directors (as listed on www.wirral.gov.uk) are an excessive burden on the Taxpayer, costing £2,338,455 in 2019/20

Under Reg 3(1) of The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (as amended), Wirral's Conservative Councillors therefore object to the Labour Cabinet's Budget Recommendations because there are:

- No proposals to invest in new council housing to start to meet the needs of 8,810 families on the housing waiting list.
- No proposals to tackle the problem of dog fouling across the Borough, almost 12 months after Labour's contract with Kingdom was ended.
- No proposals to re-entering the 'market' for children's care during 2020/21 by direct provision of children's homes, to reduce cost pressures from private providers and improving the standard of care provided.

We therefore seek to have the Cabinet's Budget Recommendations rejected and request Cabinet to submit fresh proposals reflecting these priorities to Council, within no more than five working days.

We welcome the work undertaken by the Audit & Risk Management Committee to identify weak internal financials control – as demonstrated by £28.9 million spent during April – September 2019 without proper authorisation – and look forward to further work by the Committee during the next financial year.