

COUNCIL

Monday, 18 October 2021

Present: The Civic Mayor (Councillor George Davies) in
the Chair
Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor Jeff Green)

Councillors	T Anderson	P Gilchrist	S Mountney
	B Berry	E Gleaves	Y Nolan
	J Bird	H Gorman	C O'Hagan
	M Booth	K Greaney	C Povall
	A Brame	EA Grey	L Rennie
	D Brennan	P Hayes	J Robinson
	D Burgess-Joyce	S Hayes	L Rowlands
	H Cameron	A Hodson	T Smith
	I Camphor	K Hodson	C Spriggs
	K Cannon	J Johnson	P Stuart
	C Carubia	AER Jones	Jason Walsh
	P Cleary	C Jones	Joe Walsh
	W Clements	T Jones	S Whittingham
	M Collins	M Jordan	I Williams
	H Collinson	S Kelly	KJ Williams
	C Cooke	B Kenny	S Williams
	T Cottier	I Lewis	J Williamson
	T Cox	M McLaughlin	G Wood
	S Foulkes	J McManus	A Wright
	S Frost	P Martin	
	A Gardner	D Mitchell	

Apologies Councillor S Jones

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Civic Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed the Council that the Constitution and Standards Committee had at its meeting on 30 September, 2021, granted a dispensation to all Members so that any interests Members might hold, relating to the National Health Service and the reorganisation into Integrated Care Systems (NHS and ICS) did not need to be declared.

Having then asked for any declarations of interest, no such declarations were made.

41 **CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

One apology for absence was received from Councillor Sharon Jones.

The Civic Mayor then invited the Council to stand and observe a minute's silence following the sad passing of Councillor Andy Corkhill and former Mayor and Councillor, Alderman Gerry Ellis and also for Sir David Amess, MP, recently murdered whilst undertaking his constituency work.

The Council stood in silent tribute to their memories.

Councillor Allan Brame then, at the invitation of the Civic Mayor, addressed the Council and paid a moving tribute to Councillor Andy Corkhill.

Councillor Tom Anderson also paid tribute to Councillor Andy Corkhill and also to Alderman Gerry Ellis.

Having first suggested changing the order of business, to enable Motion No. 2 to be considered as the next agenda item, which the Civic Mayor declined to do, Councillor Andrew Hodson then moved that Standing Order 9 be suspended, so that no guillotine was imposed during the course of the meeting. Having been duly seconded, the motion was put to the vote and lost (27:34).

Councillor Janette Williamson, at the invitation of the Civic Mayor, then made a statement to the Council in light of the recent horrific murder of Sir David Amess, and spoke of the need for civility, decency and compassion in public life and for the need for Members to respect each other and Council officers. She thanked all MPs and particularly the four local Wirral MPs for their service to the Borough.

42 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 6 September, 2021 had been circulated to Members.

Councillor Pat Cleary requested an amendment to minute 39, 'Motion – Creating Low Traffic Streets and Neighbourhoods Across Wirral', as it was he, not Councillor Harry Gorman who had moved the motion.

On a motion by the Mayor, duly seconded it was –

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting be approved and adopted as a correct record, subject to the above amendment.

43 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The Civic Mayor informed the Council that five questions had been received from members of the public, in relation to Hoylake beach with one member of the public present to ask their question.

The first question was from Sam Coleman to the Leader of the Council, and the Director of Law and Governance read out the question. Councillor Janette Williamson agreed to supply a written response to Mr Coleman.

Three further questions were then put to the Chair of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, which were read out by the Director of Law and Governance from Wayne Verkade, Nicola Verkade and Keith Randles.

Councillor Elizabeth Grey agreed to supply written responses to each question.

The Civic Mayor then invited Charlotte Smith to put her question to the Leader of the Council. Councillor Janette Williamson responded accordingly.

In response to a supplementary question, Councillor Williamson stated that it was for individual Councillors to respond as to actions they may be taking to help the environment.

44 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

The Civic Mayor reported that no statements were to be received.

Councillors Alison Wright, Tony Cox and Andrew Gardner presented a petition regarding Hoylake Beach.

Councillor Allan Brame presented a petition regarding flooding at Nursery Close, Oxtan.

Resolved – That the petitions be noted and referred to the appropriate Chief Officers in accordance with Standing Order 11.2.

45 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Councillor Chris Cooke asked a question of the Chairs of the Economy, Regeneration and Development and Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committees regarding the Active Travel Forum. Councillor Tony Jones, responded on both his and Councillor Liz Grey's behalf accordingly and assured Councillor Cooke that the Members' Active Travel Working Group would be holding its first meeting in November.

Councillor Stuart Kelly asked a question of the Chair of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee regarding the removal of a street bench in Oxtun ward. Councillor Grey responded accordingly, stating that limited resources were available for maintaining the council's benches and wherever possible they were repaired and repainted in their location. A bench would unfortunately be removed if it was damaged beyond repair. In those cases, benches would be replaced with a new bench in the original location as soon as resources allowed and no benches should be removed and not replaced at all.

46 **MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL OR CONSIDERATION BY THE COUNCIL**

In accordance with Standing Order 2(x) three matters had been submitted for approval by the Council (see minutes 47 to 49 post).

47 **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME**

The first item requiring approval was in relation to a referral from the Constitution and Standards Committee at its meeting of 30 September, 2021 and the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendation to amend the Members' Allowance Scheme for the Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

On a motion by Councillor Phil Gilchrist, seconded by Councillor Paul Stuart, it was –

Resolved – That the Members' Allowance Scheme be amended to include a Special Responsibility Allowance for the Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

48 **CAPITAL MONITORING QUARTER 1 2021/22**

The second item requiring approval was in relation to a revised capital programme.

Councillor Janette Williamson moved and Councillor Yvonne Nolan seconded the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee of 1 September, 2021 with regard to the Capital Programme.

Councillor Tom Anderson moved and Councillor Lesley Rennie seconded an amendment as an addition to the recommendation, as follows:

'(3) While Council notes the Community Bank has not yet launched and no expenditure has been incurred, given the anticipated external assurance reviews for the capitalisation directive, Council believes it is no longer appropriate to allocate £5,000,000 to the Community Bank in the Capital

Programme.

Council therefore resolves to remove the following allocations from the Programme: £185,000 in 2021/2022, £575,000 in 2022/2023 and £4,240,000 in 2023/ 2024.'

At 7.12pm the Civic Mayor adjourned the meeting to enable copies of the amendment to be circulated to all Members.

The meeting resumed at 7.27pm.

Following a debate on the amendment, the amendment was put and lost (23:41).

After a short debate on the motion, and Councillor Janette Williamson having replied, the motion was put and it was -

Resolved (64:0) – That the recommendations contained within minute 51 of the Policy and Resources Committee of 1 September, 2021, be agreed and that the following be approved:

- (1) additional funding for the schemes referred to in section 3.5 of the report;**
- (2) a revised Capital Programme of £79.7 million for 2021-22, including the virements referred to in Appendix 3 of the report.**

49 **WIRRAL YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN 2021/22**

The third item requiring approval was in relation to the Wirral Youth Justice's Service Strategic Plan 2021/22, as recommended by the Children, Young People and Education Committee at its meeting of 13 September, 2021.

On a motion by Councillor Wendy Clements, seconded by Councillor Kate Cannon, it was –

Resolved – That the Wirral Youth Justice Service's Strategic Plan 2021/22, be approved.

50 **DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING**

The Civic Mayor introduced the minutes of the various Committees which had met from 1 to 23 September, together with the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board meetings from 31 March, 2021 and the Decision Review Committee meetings of July and August. He then asked for questions to Committee Chairs on any of the minutes being received.

Councillor Stuart Kelly asked a question of Councillor Helen Cameron, in respect of minute 27 of the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee, regarding the ongoing closure of the Williamson Gallery on Sundays. In response Councillor Cameron commented that the Williamson was still in need of further work regarding Covid health and safety measures and there had been staffing issues, she would ask officers to look again at re-opening on Sundays and try and get a response on this.

Councillor Lesley Rennie asked a question of Councillor Yvonne Nolan, in respect of minute 16 of the Health and Wellbeing Board, regarding the proposed Integrated Care Systems and the need for commissioning of services at place level. Councillor Nolan responded that she did agree that the Health and Wellbeing Board needed to maximise its involvement as this was the main route for retaining local democratic accountability and would hope the Board would play a very significant role as part of the local partnership with health partners and voluntary sector. It was the intention to meet the requirements of the Cheshire and Merseyside integrated care board but that it was considered that Wirral would receive full control of the local budget at place to enable Wirral's provider collaborative to determine what services would be offered on Wirral.

Councillor Chris Cooke asked a question of Councillor Wendy Clements, in respect of minute 23 of the Children, Young People and Education Committee, regarding the data on youth offending. In response Councillor Clements commented that the data which had been used in the report to the Committee was drawn from national data of the Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice and was the most recent available. The next set of data would be published in December, 2021 giving data for December 2020. Future performance reports to the Committee would include the most up to date available figures.

Councillor Ivan Camphor asked a question of Councillor Yvonne Nolan, in respect of minute 16 of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the critical role the Board would play in driving local arrangements. Councillor Nolan responded that she did agree that the Board would play a critical role in driving local arrangements. With regard to the Motion to be debated later in the meeting that did refer to the Health and Social Care Act and the overarching national changes proposed.

With the consent of the Civic Mayor, Councillor Harry Gorman asked a question of the Councillor Julie McManus, Chair of the Housing Committee in respect of the Afghan resettlement programme and assistance provided to refugees. Councillor McManus responded and welcomed the acknowledgement of the importance of Wirral's participation in the Afghan and other resettlement programmes which had seen 134 people welcomed to the Borough. Wirral had pledged to accept 12 individuals under the Government's Afghan relocation and assistance policy and officers alongside voluntary and

faith sector bodies were working to ensure a smooth resettlement for these families. She would be happy to consider a report on the matter to a future committee at the next Chair and Party Spokespersons meeting.

Councillor Simon Mountney asked a question of Councillor Yvonne Nolan, in respect of minute 4 of the Health and Wellbeing Board on the key leadership role the Board would be taking as part of an integrated care partnership. Councillor Nolan responded that she did agree with the minutes as mentioned in responses to previous questions.

51 **MOTIONS ON NOTICE**

Five motions had been submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.1 and were determined as detailed in minutes 52 to 56 below.

52 **MOTION - OPPOSE INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEMS IN THE ENGLISH NHS**

Councillor Brian Kenny moved and Councillor Kate Cannon seconded a motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.

In moving the motion, Councillor Kenny confirmed that he was happy to accept the Liberal Democrat Group amendment, which was moved by Councillor Phil Gilchrist, and seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell as follows:

'Insert after point 7 (under 'Council notes -')...

8. the Health and Care Bill received its second reading in the House of Commons with a substantial Conservative Majority on 14 July 2021 despite widespread concern over its contents.

9. the contents of the proposals have been under critical examination at sittings of the Commons Health and Care Committee in order to understand its full impact, with sittings planned through to 2 November 2021.

Insert after point 5 (under 'Council believes -')...

6. That in August and September Councils, the Clinical Commissioning Groups and many bodies were sent guidance on *'the development of place based partnerships as part of statutory integrated care systems'*.

The latter specifically states that, *'where decision making affects communities, groups or specific services, these arrangements...should fully engage those affected, including populations, people who use services and carers across health and social care'*

This Council pledges to make sure that will be the case.

Insert after 'mean...' on the penultimate line in point (1) (under Council therefore resolves to)...

- (2) request that the guidance “*working together at scale*’ issued in August which states that NHS Trusts, when seeking to ‘*reduce unwarranted variation*’ and ‘*inequality in health outcomes*’ is accompanied by clarity over the movement of resources;
- (3) request that Wirral is given a clear explanation of the implications of the plans to ‘*ensure that specialisation and consolidation occur where this will provide better outcomes and value*’
- (4) request a financial forecast of the full context that Wirral will face as Edward Argar MP has stated ‘*local systems will be informed of their resource envelope at the start of the year and will be required to agree a plan that matches, or is within, that envelope*’

Following a debate, and Councillor Kenny having replied, six Members rose to request a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was then taken and the Council divided as follows:

For the motion (41) - Councillors J Bird, A Brame, D Brennan, K Cannon, C Carubia, P Cleary, H Collinson, C Cooke, T Cottier, G Davies, S Foulkes, S Frost, P Gilchrist, E Gleaves, H Gorman, K Greaney, E Grey, S Hayes, AER Jones, C Jones, T Jones, S Kelly, B Kenny, D Kenny, P Martin, M McLaughlin, J McManus, D Mitchell, Y Nolan, C O’Hagan, J Robinson, T Smith, C Spriggs, P Stuart, Jason Walsh, Joe Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, J Williams, J Williamson and G Wood.

Against the motion (23) – Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, M Booth, D Burgess-Joyce, H Cameron, I Camphor, W Clements, M Collins, T Cox, A Gardner, J Green, P Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, J Johnson, M Jordan, I Lewis, S Mountney, C Povall, L Rennie, L Rowlands, S Williams and A Wright.

The substantive motion, as amended, was therefore –

Resolved (41:23) –

Council notes –

- 1. The NHS in England is rapidly being reorganised into 42 regional Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), while the Covid pandemic still rages. These ICSs may strengthen the role of private companies, including US health insurance corporations, in the health and care system.**
- 2. Government is in the process of passing new legislation to make ICSs into statutory bodies.**

- 3. ICSs are supposed to operate as partnerships between the NHS, local authorities and others, but the plans, which make ICS systems accountable nationally to the Secretary of State, may actually sideline local authorities, threatening the future integrity of social care and reducing local accountability. Meaning that health and care services in Wirral are controlled by Cheshire and Merseyside ICS**
- 4. Despite claiming to ‘integrate’ health and social care services for the benefit of patients, ICSs are actually adapted from a model from the United States, which aims to reduce spending on health and care through increasing costs to people using the services**
- 5. ICSs will operate with fixed annual budgets for a wide range of health and social care services, which could lead to a diminishing focus on place-based priorities for Wirral.**
- 6. Some 83 corporations and businesses, including 22 from the US, are already getting heavily involved in developing ICSs and could even sit on their boards, thus putting profit making companies in a position to influence decisions on health and care at a Wirral and regional level.**
- 7. ICSs will be accountable to the Secretary of State, and ICS plans will be binding. They could mean more private contracts, more down-skilling and outsourcing of NHS jobs, reduced services (partially replaced by ‘digital’ options and volunteers) and significant spending cuts.**
- 8. The Health and Care Bill received its second reading in the House of Commons with a substantial Conservative Majority on 14 July 2021 despite widespread concern over its contents.**
- 9. The contents of the proposals have been under critical examination at sittings of the Commons Health and Care Committee in order to understand its full impact, with sittings planned through to 2 November 2021.**

Council believes –

- 1. There has been little opportunity for adequate consultation or explanation of this legislation and its consequences for Wirral residents.**

2. The introduction of Integrated Care Systems could threaten patient care, jobs, working conditions and the integrity of the NHS as a public service.
3. After 30 years of marketisation, it is time to restore the NHS to a fully accountable public service, which is provided free to all at the point of use.
4. Government should commit to a separate, collaborative, publicly funded Social Care Service.
5. Genuinely integrated services should take into account the wider determinants of health, such as housing, employment and environment. This would involve *more* input from local authorities.
6. That in August and September Councils, the Clinical Commissioning Groups and many bodies were sent guidance on '*the development of place based partnerships as part of statutory integrated care systems*'. The latter specifically states that, '*where decision making affects communities, groups or specific services, these arrangements...should fully engage those affected, including populations, people who use services and carers across health and social care*'

This Council pledges to make sure that will be the case.

Council therefore resolves to –

- (1) request the Leader and Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State for Health & Social Care and ask for an extended and meaningful consultation with the public, so that the residents of Wirral are fully aware of what the changes will mean;
- (2) request that the guidance "*working together at scale*" issued in August states that NHS Trusts, when seeking to '*reduce unwarranted variation*' and '*inequality in health outcomes*' is accompanied by clarity over the movement of resources;
- (3) request that Wirral is given a clear explanation of the implications of the plans to '*ensure that specialisation and consolidation occur where this will provide better outcomes and value*';
- (4) request a financial forecast of the full context that Wirral will face as Edward Argar MP has stated '*local systems will be informed of their resource envelope at the start of the year and will be required to agree a plan that matches, or is within, that envelope*', and demand

an immediate halt to the rollout of ICSs until such a consultation and explanation has taken place; and

(5) promote the introduction of legislation to bring about universal, comprehensive and publicly provided NHS and a Social Care System fit for the 21st century.

The Civic Mayor then adjourned the meeting at 9.12pm.

The meeting resumed at 9.20pm.

53 **MOTION - SPARTINA ANGLICA RISKS TO THE NORTH WIRRAL FORESHORE**

Councillor Tony Cox moved and Councillor Andrew Gardner seconded the following motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.1.

‘Council recognises the current condition of Hoylake beach, but also recognises that the *Spartina anglica*, once isolated from the rest of the North Wirral Foreshore, has now spread to Meols beach.

Council is concerned that with the current speed of the spread of this invasive species, it is soon likely to be seen in Moreton and then Leasowe.

Further to correspondence with Natural England, Council understands that there has never been a moratorium on raking at the Hoylake beach location, rather that raking of ALL North Wirral Foreshore would not be supported, which is wholly different.

Furthermore, page 60 of Natural England’s publication: *Spartina anglica and its management in estuarine Natura 2000 sites: an update of its status and monitoring future change in England (IPENS041)* contains a *Spartina anglica* management flowchart which should be followed when dealing with this species. Council is concerned that this guidance is not being adhered to.

Therefore, Council requests the Director of Neighbourhoods to engage with Natural England, as a matter of urgency, to ascertain whether the continued spread of *Spartina* grasses could jeopardise the SSSI status of the North Wirral Foreshore and to determine whether the spread of these invasive grasses could be detrimental to the wellbeing of migratory wading birds (as described in section 2.1 of *Spartina anglica and its management in estuarine Natura 2000 sites: an update of its status and monitoring future change in England (IPENS041)*).

Council instructs the Environment, Climate Emergency & Transport Committee, as part of its work programme, to consider the findings from the discussions with Natural England regarding the impact of the spread of

Spartina grasses as soon as practicably possible and certainly no later than the Committee's first meeting in 2022 (17th January 2022).'

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9.1, the Council did not debate this matter.

The motion was put and lost (23:41).

54 **MOTION - PROTECTING RESIDENTS FROM FLOOD RISK**

Councillor Allan Brame moved and Councillor Jason Walsh seconded a motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.

In moving the motion, Councillor Brame confirmed that he was happy to accept the Labour Group amendment, which was moved by Councillor Elizabeth Grey, and seconded by Councillor Steve Foulkes as follows:

'In paragraph 2, delete last four words, and insert, '....improve flood risk management.'

In first bullet point, amend wording to read, '....2015 and subsequent Flood Investigation reports have been acted upon.'

In second bullet point delete the words, '(Council and United Utilities maintained)' and delete, '...prone to...' and replace with '.... at greater risk of...'

Delete the third bullet point.

In fifth bullet point, delete '.... necessary....' and replace with '....Government grants are available....'

In fourth paragraph, first line, delete '...flood defences....' and '.... should be' and insert before '...designed...' insert, '...was not....'

At the end of fourth paragraph, insert:

'Council notes that all new infrastructure should be as resilient as necessary to cope with expected future increased rainfall caused by climate change and that existing infrastructure should be improved wherever there is the means to do so, and that property owners should be reminded of their duties in this regard.'

In the fifth paragraph, first line, insert after '.....programme...', '... and any sources of outside funding available....'

In the fifth paragraph, delete all after, ‘...aimed at...’ and insert, ‘...reducing flood risk and adapting to climate change.’

After fifth paragraph, insert new paragraph:

‘Council further requests that Planning and Communications officers review the need for greater levels of communication with and education of residents regarding the dangers of flooding and the precise requirements and recommendations regarding removal of front garden green spaces and extension/creation of driveways with a view to reducing the “urban creep” associated with this and the serious flood risk posed.’

In the sixth paragraph, insert after ‘...risk...’, the word ‘...management...’ and after the word, ‘...therefore...’ insert, ‘... commits to following current Government guidance on nature-based solutions to flood defence and...’

Insert new paragraph after penultimate paragraph:

Accordingly, Council asks Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee to set up a working group to look at how Wirral can better implement the Tree Strategy pledges on tree protection, working with the Tree Strategy Advisory Board and Wirral Initiative on Trees before the end of this calendar year and also to urge the Government to undertake a review of the whole TPO system to better protect all trees with a new system that assumes protection for all mature trees unless permission is granted for works or removal.’

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9.1, the Council did not debate this matter, and having agreed to the Labour amendment, the substantive motion, as amended, was put and it was –

Resolved (64:0) –

Council places on record its thanks to everyone involved in the response to 9 September 2021 flooding incident, including the emergency services, local businesses, Council officers and members of the community.

Council notes that work is currently underway by the Council to produce a Section 19 Flood Investigation Report as required by the Flood & Water Management Act 2010. Council appreciates that partners such as the Environment Agency, United Utilities and other agencies will have an important role in understanding why the flooding was so severe and what possible measures might be taken to improve flood risk management.

Council recognises that the Flood Investigation Report will take time to prepare but seeks assurances from officers in particular with regard to:

- **how lessons learned from the 2015 and subsequent Flood Investigation reports have been acted upon;**
- **the current schedules of gully and roadside drainage cleansing and whether these need to be more proactive, especially in areas which may be at greater risk of flooding;**
- **the steps needed to reduce the incidence of flooding on our key highway network;**
- **the provision, in partnership with other agencies, of practical advice and help, including hydrosacks and, where Government grants are available, financial aid for businesses and residents to make their homes and premises more flood resilient;**
- **the way in which our roads are resurfaced and whether more appropriate methods need to be considered;**
- **the need to condition and enforce permeable/porous surfaces when homeowners are installing new driveways.**

Council believes that Wirral's infrastructure was not designed to cope with the much greater volumes of rainfall given the evidence of new volatility in weather conditions due to climate change. Council notes that all new infrastructure should be as resilient as necessary to cope with expected future increased rainfall caused by climate change and that existing infrastructure should be improved wherever there is the means to do so, and that property owners should be reminded of their duties in this regard.

Accordingly, Council requests a review of the capital programme and any sources of outside funding available by the Director of Resources to bring forward schemes to the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee aimed at reducing flood risk and adapting to climate change.

Council further requests that Planning and Communications officers review the need for greater levels of communication with and education of residents regarding the dangers of flooding and the precise requirements and recommendations regarding removal of front garden green spaces and extension/creation of driveways with a view to reducing the "urban creep" associated with this and the serious flood risk posed.

Council recognises that trees and green space should be at the heart of flood risk management and climate adaptation strategies and, therefore, commits to following current Government guidance on nature-based solutions to flood defence and restates its commitment to preserve our

existing stock of healthy trees and for increased strategic tree planting as part of this infrastructure.

Accordingly, Council asks Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee to set up a working group to look at how Wirral can better implement the Tree Strategy pledges on tree protection, working with the Tree Strategy Advisory Board and Wirral Initiative on Trees before the end of this calendar year and also to urge the Government to undertake a review of the whole TPO system to better protect all trees with a new system that assumes protection for all mature trees unless permission is granted for works or removal.

Council recognises that investment to prevent flooding in the first place is a better use of taxpayers' money than the huge financial and human costs involved in dealing with the aftermath of flooding.

55 **MOTION - EQUAL PAVEMENTS PLEDGE**

Councillor Harry Gorman moved and Councillor Pat Cleary seconded a motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.

In moving the motion, Councillor Gorman confirmed that he was happy to accept the Labour Group amendment, which was moved by Councillor Elizabeth Grey, and seconded by Councillor Yvonne Nolan as follows:

'Add at end of the second bullet point, '.....and outline what is already happening in Wirral, for example, working with disability campaigners such as Ellis Palmer, to make real improvements to access for disabled residents and visitors to footpaths and cycle-paths across the borough.'

Add at end of the third bullet point, '...as part of a wider, co-produced programme to improve disabled access to all Council resources and services and how the Council could reduce pavement clutter and make them accessible.'

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9.1, the Council did not debate this matter, and having agreed to the Labour amendment, the substantive motion, as amended, was put and it was –

Resolved (64:0) -

This Council notes:

- **the campaign of Transport for All calling on councils and transport authorities to sign an Equal Pavements Pledge.**
- **the majority of disabled people polled recently by Transport for All are worried that streets remain inaccessible with many lacking**

dropped kerbs to enable level access along pavements or to cross the street.

- disabled people are concerned at the risk of further barriers being presented – either from the way in which changes to streets are delivered, or from al-fresco dining being delivered without consideration for the need for clear access on pavements.
- Wirral continues to need investment and progress in making pavements fully accessible

that the Transport for All Equal Pavements Pledge outlines a need to:

- listen to disabled people, and act
- keep pavements clear
- reduce pavement clutter
- acknowledge and act to reduce the impact of waste removal on pavements
- audit pavements and install dropped kerbs where they are missing
- protect blue badge parking, with relocation kept to a minimum
- work with disabled experts, committing to co-production of schemes

Council therefore resolves to:

- support the Transport for All Equal Pavements Pledge.
- request the Leader of the Council writes to Transport for All to convey the Council's support and outline what is already happening in Wirral, for example, working with disability campaigners such as Ellis Palmer, to make real improvements to access for disabled residents and visitors to footpaths and cycle-paths across the borough.
- ask the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee to add this matter to its work programme to help determine how the Council can deliver on the Equal Pavements Pledge as part of a wider, co-produced programme to improve disabled access to all Council resources and services and how the Council could reduce pavement clutter and make them accessible.
- engage directly with organisations representing people with accessibility requirements.
- call on Central Government to better fund our efforts to make Wirral's pavements people friendly.

56 **MOTION - FUNDING CARING SERVICES TO MEET WIRRAL'S NEEDS**

Councillor Phil Gilchrist moved and Councillor Dave Mitchell seconded a motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 13.

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9.1, the Council did not debate this matter, and it was –

Resolved (64:0) -

Council notes that the Government has published 'Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care' and has also committed to publishing a new Adult Social Care white paper by the end of the year.

Council observes that funding is expected to come from a new 1.25% Health and Social Care levy based on National Insurance contributions. This will be paid by Wirral's residents and businesses who earn above the various thresholds.

The Local Government Association (LGA) has questioned the adequacy of the Levy to fund all of the Plan's Adult Social Care commitments. It is anxious to know what proportion of the Levy will reach Adult Social Care beyond the three-year period covered in the Plan.

The briefing issued by the LGA on 17 September 2021 says:

- it is '*alarmed*' that the Government's solution for tackling social care's core pressures appears to be the use of council tax, the social care precept and long-term efficiencies; later considering this '*deeply troubling*' and '*wholly unrealistic*'
- it is '*concerned*' that 'while the NHS is receiving funding to sort out the challenges it has here and now as well as in the future, *there is no funding from the Levy to address the current issues facing social care.*'
- it has '*serious concerns*' about what will happen to the funding beyond the three-year period' and asks how '*likely and realistic*' it is that funding for the NHS will be diverted to social care in future years.

Council, seeking the best long term solution for Wirral, endorses these concerns, observing that the Government's plan states:

"The Government will ensure local authorities have access to sustainable funding for core budgets at the Spending Review. We expect demographic and unit cost pressures will be met through council tax, social care precept, and long-term efficiencies; the overall level of local government funding, including council tax and social care precept, will be determined in the round at the Spending Review in the normal way."
(paragraph 36)

Council tax (and therefore the precept) raises different amounts in different parts of the country and the banding of properties for Council Tax in Wirral limits the resources that can be raised by the social care precept.

Council recognises and appreciates that the LGA has concluded that:

'The Spending Review must inject genuinely new funding, direct to local government, to both stabilise the system in the short-term and enable progress to be made in tackling unmet and under-met need, investing more in prevention, improving care worker pay and better supporting unpaid carers'.

In full recognition of all these issues, Council requests that the Group Leaders write to the Chairman of the Local Government Association to support the concerns expressed and that Wirral's Members of Parliament are made aware of this stance.