

Council – 9 October 2023

Motions

The following motions have been submitted in accordance with the notice required by Standing Order 13.1 and are listed in accordance with Standing Order 13.2.

1. RESPONDING TO RESIDENTS' CONCERNS REGARDING CONSULTATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF 20MPH ZONES

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie

Council notes the Secretary of State for Transport allocated the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority a £710 million, five-year City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) in April 2022. Schemes funded by the CRSTS are developed by the Combined Authority.

Council further notes the funding for 20 MPH zones is via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Transport Plan (Integrated Transport Block) which should fulfil Objective 5 of the Combined Authority Transport Plan: *To secure a transport network that is well maintained, safe and resilient.*

Council recalls the introduction of 20 MPH zones followed a Notice of Motion at Council calling for the introduction of 20mph speed limits on residential roads across the Borough with a view to making progress with their introduction.

Council notes, if struck by a vehicle:

- at 40 mph there is a 90 percent chance a pedestrian will be killed.
- at 35 mph there is a 50 percent chance a pedestrian will be killed.
- at 30 mph there is a 20 percent chance a pedestrian will be killed.
- at 20 mph there is a 2.5 percent chance a pedestrian will be killed.

Council believes that pedestrians have a shared responsibility with motorists and all other road users for road safety and should take measures to protect their own safety, including using the road safety measures put in place by the Council and following the updated Highway Code.

Council notes the disappointing response to the proposed 20MPH speed limit scheme Phase I consultation, reported to Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee on 30th January 2023, whereby only 728 responses had been received from a whole Wirral population of 320,000.

Council welcomes that since the rollout of Phase I - 20MPH schemes in Wirral, public awareness of road safety has increased dramatically.

Council therefore requests that the Director of Neighbourhoods and the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee:

1. reviews the all-encompassing criteria of 'all residential areas'

2. reviews the public's responses (giving priority to impacted local residents) to the Phase I implementation and considers whether a further consultation and scheme amendment is required
3. with the exception of outside schools, pauses all activity on Phase II, whilst the review requested in 1 and 2 above is undertaken
4. publishes the baseline data, by ward, showing the numbers killed or seriously injured over the last 10 years.

Furthermore, Council requests the Director of Law and Governance to provide a report to Policy and Resources Committee, which reviews the Council's consultation timings, approach and mechanisms as a matter of urgency.

2. NEW DEAL FOR WORKING PEOPLE

Proposed by Councillor Brian Kenny
Seconded by Councillor Julie McManus

This Council recognises that there must be a fundamental change in our economy, and for this to happen the world of work must be fundamentally changed, to the benefit of all working Wirral residents.

Council therefore agrees that there must be a New Deal for Working People. Council notes with concern that the Government wants to continue with insecure and exploitative employment eg Zero hours contracts, resulting in many Wirral residents suffering.

Council affirms that Wirral residents need to have a new partnership with employers and trade unions, to create jobs and build a society where everyone is entitled to fair pay, job security and dignity at work.

To achieve this, all Wirral workers must have a comprehensive set of rights and protections with trade unions empowered to organise, bargain and win for working people.

Council agrees that fair and decent work that provides security, improves national productivity, increases economic opportunity, and protects health is what all Wirral residents deserve.

Council affirms that it is entirely possible to have a future economy that rebalances wealth and power to serve the needs of working people.

Council is adamant that all Wirral residents need and deserve improved living standards and economic security.

Council therefore agrees to request the Council Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions – Mel Stride MP, to insist that a New Deal for Working People is agreed and introduced, as soon as possible.

3. CLEAN AIR FOR A HEALTHIER WIRRAL

Proposed by Councillor Ewan Tomeny
Seconded by Councillor Ed Lamb

Health inequalities on Wirral are substantial, deeply rooted, and in many cases, worsening.

The *2022/2023 Wirral Plan Refresh* underscores that health inequalities within our borough remain 'stubbornly persistent', and outlines addressing them as a key priority for the upcoming year.[1]

Health inequalities are caused by a web of many complex factors. One such factor is poor air quality, as recognised in the *Wirral 2023 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)* published this June.[2] The report additionally recognises how air pollution disproportionately affects the most vulnerable in our communities, including children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing heart and lung conditions. Considering our commitment to reducing the significant health inequalities on Wirral, it is vital that we proactively pursue strategies able to mitigate contributing factors to these disparities.

In *Bidston St James, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead & Tranmere*, and *Seacombe* the number of deaths from respiratory diseases is over twice the expected rate based on national data.[3] On Wirral, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), a respiratory condition linked to both air pollution levels and income,[4] is more prevalent compared to the rest of England. However, the Wirral COPD burden is not spread evenly, with the rate of emergency hospital admissions in Seacombe five times higher than in Heswall.[5]

Last year, Wirral Council undertook monitoring of the pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) at 56 sites across the borough.[2] These monitoring sites encompassed roadside and kerbside detection, and sensors outside of seven schools. At one-third of the 43 sites with comparative data from 2021, NO₂ levels had increased, while just one of the 56 sites met World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guidelines (10 µg/m³ for annual average NO₂ levels).[6] Four out of five sensors placed at schools also showed an increase in NO₂ levels compared to 2021. Furthermore, PM_{2.5} (particulate matter which causes a range of diseases) has seen no overall reduction between 2018 and 2022 and remains above WHO guidelines.[6]

Currently, the 'Wirral Plan 2022/23 Refresh' document does not make any explicit mention or reference to air quality.

Council therefore requests the Chief Executive to include air quality considerations in the refreshed Wirral Plan to be presented to P & R in November 2023, taking into account the recommendations and priorities detailed in the *Wirral Air Quality Annual Status Report*.

Furthermore, in alignment, with the Council's commitments to reduce health inequalities and safeguard against the adverse effects of air pollution, Council supports the World Health Organization Air Quality Guidelines as long-term targets,

and requests that the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee consider the adoption and implementation of these as part of its work programme.

1: <https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50091567/Enc.%20%20for%20Wirral%20Plan%20Update.pdf>

2: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/wbc036-wirral-air-quality-annual-status-report-2023.pdf>

3: <https://www.localhealth.org.uk/>

4: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31285306/>

5: <https://wirral.communityinsight.org/>

6: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240034228>

4. THE UNACCEPTABLE COST OF CHILD PLACEMENTS

Proposed by Councillor Chris Carubia

Seconded by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Council notes that the number of children in need of support nationally from Local Authorities is now at its highest level since before the pandemic.

Council further notes that the funding announced in the Government's Children's Social Care Implementation Strategy falls way short of addressing the £1.6 billion shortfall required each year simply to maintain current service levels.

Council believes that there needs to be significant additional funding for all Local Authorities, not just for those chosen for the DFE's pilot and pathfinder schemes, so it can be wisely invested in stabilising the current system to ensure strong foundations on which to build future reform.

The number of Wirral's children in care fluctuates around eight hundred, the cost of which in 2022/23 was £27.952m. The current average cost of a care placement for Wirral is £5,887.83 per week. With the cost for Wirral's children with more complex needs being many times higher.

Council therefore requests that the Leader of the Council writes to The Secretary of State for Education, the Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP to highlight the need to implement regulations to prevent private companies setting exorbitant fees for childcare placements, and from benefiting from huge profits made off the backs of our most vulnerable children in care.