

CABINET

Thursday, 14 October 2010

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	JE Green (Chair)	Finance and Best Value
	Councillors	S Holbrook C Blakeley S Clarke D Elderton G Gardiner A Hodson I Lewis R Moon L Rennie	Corporate Resources Housing and Community Safety Children's Services & Lifelong Learning Culture, Tourism and Leisure Environment Regeneration and Planning Strategy Community and Customer Engagement Social Care and Inclusion Streetscene and Transport Services
<u>In attendance:</u>	Councillors	P Davies G Ellis S Foulkes	J Hale G Watt

158 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C Blakeley declared a personal interest in Item No. 26 on the agenda - Community Asset Transfer - Overton Community Centre (Minute No. 184 refers) by virtue of his involvement through his employment with Ester McVey MP for Wirral West who would be involved in the consultation process and as he had spoken to Mr Adams who operated the nursery on the premises. He also declared a personal interest in Item No. 28 on the agenda - The Sail Project (Minute No. 160 refers) again by virtue of his employment with Ester McVey MP.

Councillor S Clarke declared a personal interest in Item No. 7 on the agenda - Joint Working with her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) (Minute No. 165 refers) by virtue of her previous employment with HMRC working in Human Resources.

159 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 23 September 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

Councillor J Green left the room whilst the next item of business was under consideration.

Councillor S Holbrook in the Chair.

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management informed the Cabinet of the current position with regard to "The Sail" project in West Kirby and sought approval to conclude negotiations with the proposed developer. The report set out the background, the present position and additional information.

Councillor G Ellis apologised to the Cabinet for the quotes attributed to him in the local press that had stated that the Cabinet would not proceed with the project. He informed that he actually said he very much hoped that the Cabinet would reject it.

Councillor Ellis then went on to make representations over the loss of car parking spaces that would result in West Kirby if the project was to go ahead and the resulting traffic chaos that was expected. He indicated that he was in favour of development in Wirral and for a hotel in West Kirby but not on the site identified for the Sail Project. The people who lived in the area were totally and utterly opposed to it.

Councillor J Hale also made representations against the Sail Project. He raised concerns over the loss of car parking income that would result if the project went ahead and the adverse effect there would be on the local economy if car parking space was lost. He considered that independent consultations should have been carried out and that it was wrong to strip away parking spaces.

A letter dated 14 October 2010 from Mr R Holmes, Chairman of the Merseyside Partnership addressed to Councillor J Green was circulated informing of the Partnership's support, in principle, for another quality hotel in Wirral because it would attract investment and bring significant benefits to the tourism offer in Wirral.

Councillor G Gardiner informed the Cabinet that she would prefer to see the proposed developers given more time to resolve the parking problems.

Councillor S Holbrook moved the following Motion and it was seconded by Councillor G Gardiner:

"The Cabinet reaffirms that the purpose of this project is to secure a world class sailing school and supporting facilities for the West Kirby Marine Lane, and that a Hotel development on the Dee Lane car park is an enabling development to bring about that goal.

That, in view of the primacy of securing world class facilities for the Lake, Cabinet notes the views of Lake Users on the use of the spur for shared parking and accepts that shared use of the spur for car parking is not a viable solution.

Cabinet notes in particular that consideration of parking and traffic issues needs to be set in the broader context of the requirements of West Kirby as a whole.

Without prejudice to the planning process, Cabinet reaffirms its support in principle for an enabling hotel development. However, Cabinet requires, as a matter of urgency, that a transport assessment is completed (setting out the best possible proposals for minimising the net loss of car parking) and the Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement Plan is revised, all to the satisfaction of Council

Officers; and that this is completed by no later than 31 December 2010. Cabinet authorises the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources, the Deputy Chief Executive (Interim Chief Executive, designate) and the Director of Technical Services) to finalise Heads of Terms for the Development Agreement once this has all been done, or to terminate the project if the deadline is not met.

Cabinet notes that Carpenter Investments no longer have exclusivity in relation to this development and indicates the willingness of the Council to enter into discussions with other interested parties and potential developers on any alternative plans which they might have to provide world class sailing school facilities.

A further report be brought to Cabinet on 13 January 2011.”

Councillor A Hodson moved the following Amendment which was seconded by Councillor D Elderton:

“Cabinet recognises that:

- (a) the primary purpose of the Sail Project has always been the re-provision of the existing Sailing School in a high quality building that responds to the regional and national importance of the Marine Lake;
- (b) Carpenter Investments have worked diligently to develop a scheme that would deliver this outcome through enabling development consisting of a high quality boutique hotel on the Dee Lane Car Park, which would bring in excess of £5m of inward investment and create over 50 jobs;
- (c) economic circumstances beyond the control of either Carpenter Investments or the Council would lead to a revised development scheme which created a significantly increased net loss in car parking in the vicinity; and
- (d) the development has become highly controversial within the local community, which would lead to Carpenter Investments being asked to develop a Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

Cabinet considers that;

- (a) despite the endeavours of Carpenter Investments there appears to be little realistic prospect of a resolution of the car parking issues to our satisfaction;
- (b) making further efforts to resolve this issue may be likely to delay the possible improvement of the Sailing School;
- (c) in these circumstances, it would not be reasonable or appropriate to expect Carpenter Investments to expend further monies on striving to resolve this issue; and
- (d) similarly, it would not be reasonable to require Carpenter Investments to refine and implement its Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

Accordingly, the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be instructed:

- (a) to express the Cabinet’s sincere appreciation and thanks to Carpenter Investments for their considerable commitment to the Sail Project since 2007, but to inform them that the Council will not proceed further with this development; and

- (b) following consultation with the Director of Technical Services and the Director of Corporate Services, to report back to a future Cabinet meeting with options for securing the future enhancement, or re-provision, of the Sailing School, without involving any material net loss of public car parking in the vicinity.”

The Amendment was put to the vote and carried 6:3. It then became the Substantive Motion and was put to the vote and carried 6:3.

RESOLVED: (6:3) That Cabinet recognises that:

- (a) the primary purpose of the Sail Project has always been the re-provision of the existing Sailing School in a high quality building that responds to the regional and national importance of the Marine Lake;
- (b) Carpenter Investments have worked diligently to develop a scheme that would deliver this outcome through enabling development consisting of a high quality boutique hotel on the Dee Lane Car Park, which would bring in excess of £5m of inward investment and create over 50 jobs;
- (c) economic circumstances beyond the control of either Carpenter Investments or the Council would lead to a revised development scheme which created a significantly increased net loss in car parking in the vicinity; and
- (d) the development has become highly controversial within the local community, which would lead to Carpenter Investments being asked to develop a Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

Cabinet considers that;

- (a) despite the endeavours of Carpenter Investments there appears to be little realistic prospect of a resolution of the car parking issues to our satisfaction;
- (b) making further efforts to resolve this issue may be likely to delay the possible improvement of the Sailing School;
- (c) in these circumstances, it would not be reasonable or appropriate to expect Carpenter Investments to expend further monies on striving to resolve this issue; and
- (d) similarly, it would not be reasonable to require Carpenter Investments to refine and implement its Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

Accordingly, the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be instructed:

- (a) to express the Cabinet’s sincere appreciation and thanks to Carpenter Investments for their considerable commitment to the Sail Project since 2007, but to inform them that the Council will not proceed further with this development; and

- (b) following consultation with the Director of Technical Services and the Director of Corporate Services, to report back to a future Cabinet meeting with options for securing the future enhancement, or reprovision, of the Sailing School, without involving any material net loss of public car parking in the vicinity.

161 BUDGET PROJECTIONS 2011 - 2015

The Director of Finance reported that the projected budgets for the years from 2011 to 2015 had been updated in line with the decision of HM Treasury to undertake a four year Spending Review.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the budget projections be kept under review; and
- (2) further efficiencies be delivered.

162 SUPPLY AND DELIVER OF STATIONERY, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONSUMABLES AND COPIER PAPER

A report by the Director of Finance informed the Cabinet of the award of a contract to the most economically advantageous tenderer for the supply and delivery of stationery, Information Technology Consumables and copier paper.

The report outlined the procurement process undertaken by the Procurement Team in partnership with the Merseyside Collaboration Procurement Group. The lead authority was Knowsley Council.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) of a contract for the supply and delivery of stationery, Information Technology Consumables and copier paper be awarded commencing 1 October 2010 for a period of two years with an option to extend for up to a further two years be agreed;
- (2) the adoption of a rationalised product list, including limited availability of branded products, be approved; and
- (3) all those involved in this procurement process be congratulated on their work that will bring efficiencies and ensure best value across the sub region.

163 ICT STRATEGIC REVIEW

A report by the Director of Finance informed the Cabinet that a report had been commissioned from Socitm Consulting (the Society of IT Management) into the technologies and organisation of Information Technology (IT) Services and the recommendations contained within the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the recommendations set out in the report be implemented;**
- (2) as agreed by the Cabinet on 18 March 2010, a further report be prepared on business continuity and disaster recovery;**
- (3) consultation be undertaken on the provision of enhanced out of hours support and any proposals to be reported back to the Cabinet;**
- (4) as agreed by Cabinet on 15 April 2010, ITIL and SFIA be developed possibly with initial assistance from external trainers;**
- (5) the suitability of the Oracle CRM and Documentum systems be reviewed as part of the current exercise; and**
- (6) SOCITM be requested to agree to the public release of the report.**

164 CONSULTATION ON THE IMPACT OF BUSINESS RATE REVALUATION

The Director of Finance reminded the Cabinet that at its meeting on 22 July 2010, it had considered a report on the impact of the 2010 Non Domestic Rates Revaluation upon the level of rates paid by Wirral businesses compared to the amount paid in 2009-10. The Cabinet had requested that officers consult with representatives of the local business community on the impact of the increases and possible options to assist those most affected. The report detailed the result of those consultations and the Cabinet was requested to decide if any extra help should be provided.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Cabinet welcomes the extension of Small Business Rate Relief from 1 October 2010 and that this has significantly reduced the number of small businesses facing an increase of more than 3.5% in their business rates following adjustments; and**
- (2) Cabinet draws attention to the fact that the option of Hardship Relief exists for any business with particular difficulties.**

165 JOINT WORKING WITH HER MAJESTY'S REVENUES AND CUSTOMS (HMRC)

A report by the Director of Finance detailed the proposed move of Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) face-to-face enquiry office for Wirral to the Birkenhead One Stop Shop in the Conway Centre, Conway Street from February 2011. Members were requested to agree that this example of public sector joint working should be progressed.

RESOLVED:

That the relocation of the HMRC Enquiry Office to the Conway Centre One Stop Shop be agreed.

166 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE FORMULA GRANT DISTRIBUTION - CONSULTATION PAPER**

A report by the Director of Finance informed the Cabinet of the consultation paper issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 28 July 2010 regarding the local government finance formula grant distribution and the response to the consultation which had been submitted. The appendix to the report detailed the questions that were asked along with the implications for Merseyside.

RESOLVED:

That the consultation paper and the responses as set out in the appendix to the report be noted.

167 **VALUE FOR MONEY EFFICIENCIES 2010-11**

A report by the Director of Finance recommended the approval of the submission of the 2010/11 estimate of the Value for Money Gains National Indicator 179 (NI179) which was required by the Department for Communities and Local Government by 22 October 2010.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Value for Money Gains National Indicator 179 cumulative estimate for 2010/11 of £36.7 million for submission to the DCLG be approved; and**
- (2) a further report be brought to the Cabinet in June 2011 setting out the final NI179 position at 31 March 2011 due for submission to the DCLG in July 2011.**

168 **PERSONAL BUDGETS**

A report by the Director of Adult Social Services sought the Cabinet's agreement to roll out an offer of personal budgets to all eligible Wirral residents from October 2010. The matter involved a key decision, first identified in the Forward Plan dated October 2009.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

- (1) reaffirms its support for the principle of Personal Budgets which seek to promote greater independence, flexibility and choice in the way social care is delivered to vulnerable people;**
- (2) agrees to Phase 3 roll out of personal budgets as a universal offer to new customers;**
- (3) believes that there is insufficient financial information contained within the report to enable it to set a £ per point figure for the Resource Allocation System at this time; and**

- (4) **requests that a seminar is arranged for all Members of the Council on the Resource Allocation System so that they obtain an understanding of how it works.**

The next two items of business were considered together.

169 **CARE QUALITY COMMISSION INSPECTION REPORT - IMPROVEMENT PLANS UPDATE**

A report by the Director of Adult Social Services provided details of progress towards addressing the service issues raised by the Care Quality Commission's Inspection of Adult Social Services in May 2010, and informed that a second improvement plan would be provided to Care Quality Commission by 19 October 2010.

Councillor I Lewis informed that the Department of Adult Social Services was actively involved and service users were being encouraged to take part in consultation.

Councillor J Green thanked those who had been involved in putting the report together. He informed that the Cabinet would be accountable for putting right what was clearly wrong. The Cabinet would provide support as the action plan was taken forward and the Council as a whole would put policies in place to support the improvements being made.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) **the report on progress in the First Improvement Plan for Safeguarding and Services to Adults with a Learning Disability be noted; and**
- (2) **the Second Improvement Plan be approved for submission to Care Quality Commission by 19 October 2010, with any final amendments being agreed by the Interim Chief Executive.**

170 **COMMITTEE REFERRALS - AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - 28 SEPTEMBER 2010**

A report by the Director of Adult Social Services which had been considered by the Cabinet on 2 September 2010 had also been considered by the Audit and Risk Management Committee at its meeting on 28 September 2010 (Minute No. 109 refers). The report was in relation to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Report, following its Service Inspection of Adult Social Care undertaken in May 2010. The focus of the review had been on safeguarding adults, making a positive contribution for adults with a learning disability and increased choice and control for adults with a learning disability.

The Committee had

"RESOLVED: That

- (1) **the report be noted;**
- (2) **the Cabinet receive a report to each meeting in relation to progress to date against the actions contained within the improvement plan; and**

- (3) an update report be presented to the January 2011 meeting of the Committee.”

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the recommendations of the Audit and Risk Management Committee be accepted; and
- (2) the Audit and Risk Management Committee be thanked for its referral and for its assistance with regard to the Care Quality Commission’s Report on Safeguarding and Adults with a Learning Disability.

171 **WIRRAL STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT UPDATE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING VIABILITY ASSESSMENT - KEY FINDINGS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR WIRRAL**

A report by the Director of Corporate Services requested Members to:-

- (1) approve the key findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update and Affordable Housing Viability Assessment undertaken by Fordham for Wirral;
- (2) approve the use of the findings to inform the preparation of the Council’s Housing Strategy Statement and the Council’s Local Development Framework;
- (3) recommend to Council that the findings of the Assessment and Viability Report be approved as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of planning applications; and
- (4) approve the use of Fordham Research Dynamic Viability Model to test the viability of sites within the Borough on an annual basis.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Report and the Affordable Housing Viability Study be approved;
- (2) the initial policy implications identified under section 5 of the report be noted;
- (3) the findings be used to inform the preparation of the Council’s Housing Strategy Statement;
- (4) it be noted that the findings are being used as part of the consultation process for the Core Strategy Development Plan Document which Cabinet approved on 23 September 2010;
- (5) the Cabinet recommends to Council that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Report and the Affordable Housing Viability Study be approved as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of planning applications;

- (6) it remains the ambition of the Cabinet to see a target of 40% affordability in new housing redevelopment reinstated as soon as market conditions make it viable; and
- (7) the use of Fordham Research Dynamic Viability Model to test the viability of sites within the Borough on an annual basis be approved.

172 **DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY**

The Director of Corporate Services presented a report that provided Members with an overview of the draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026; and sought approval for the draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 to be published for public consultation.

RESOLVED:

That the draft Housing Strategy 2011–2026 be approved for public consultation.

173 **WIRRAL'S HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2010-11**

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate sought Cabinet's approval to Wirral's Housing Investment Programme for 2010-11 and to Officers exploring the potential that a Community Housing Trust might offer Wirral.

It was reported that the opportunity now presented itself to link in with Registered Social Landlords and bring homes back into use.

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) the Housing Investment Programme 2010-11 for Wirral, summarised in the table below and in Appendix 1, be agreed:

<u>Funding be allocated</u>	<u>£,000</u>
Birkenhead Clearance	6,147
Rock Ferry Clearance	430
Tranmere Clearance	800
Wallasey Clearance	1,300
Private Sector Home Improvements	3,251
Living Through Change	888
Staffing and Resources	1,727
Relocation Loans	520

- (2) approval be given for officers to explore the potential that a Community Housing Trust might offer for Wirral; and
- (3) an early report be brought to the Cabinet on how to take forward Housing Trusts and a possible partnership between all Registered Social Landlords in Wirral with the Council acting as a catalyst.

174 **MERSEY HEARTLANDS GROWTH FUND**

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services informed the Cabinet that funding of £920,243 had now been received by the Council from the New Growth Point fund for 2010/11. The Cabinet was requested to agree revisions to the Programme of Development projects for 2010/11.

The funding would be used to support the housing market in Inner Wirral and help to deliver additional homes before 2016/17. Members were aware that the Council's Planning Committee had resolved to grant planning permission for over 15,000 new homes in Wirral Waters but progress had been hindered by the current lack of strength in the housing market.

The Mersey Heartlands Growth Fund was overseen by a Member-level Executive Group, jointly with Liverpool City Council, which endorsed recommendations to Wirral's Cabinet. The Cabinet was asked to nominate three Members to the Executive Group.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the variations in the Programme of Development project schedule, as set out at Appendix 1 to this report be agreed, subject to variation due to re-prioritisation within Liverpool or Wirral being considered by the Steering Group, and that re-prioritisation be reported to the next available meeting of the Executive Group for their endorsement and recommendation to Wirral's Cabinet;**
- (2) the revised Wirral projects be incorporated within the relevant Council revenue or capital programmes; and**
- (3) Councillors S Holbrook, A Hodson and C Blakeley be nominated to serve on the joint Growth Point Executive Group with Liverpool City Council.**

175 **ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY AND GUIDELINES - WIRRAL'S PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION ASSISTANCE POLICY**

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services updated Members on the progress being made towards a new policy and guidance on environmental responsibility linked to support provided under the Council's Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy (referred to as "the Assistance Policy"). The draft policy sought to encourage environmental responsibility amongst both beneficiaries of assistance and contractors implementing associated works. Beneficiaries would be encouraged to participate in the *CRed Wirral* initiative, and contractors asked to demonstrate their commitment to environmental good practice.

Members were requested to agree the draft policy as detailed in the report and note that work would continue on the associated guidelines. Both the policy and the guidelines would be introduced following the next review of the Assistance Policy, due to take place early in 2011.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a new policy on environmental responsibility in relation to the support provided through the Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed;**
- (2) supporting guidance for the Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy be approved in due course by delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Housing; and**
- (3) the full policy with amendments be presented to the Cabinet in early 2011.**

176 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR WIRRAL - EVIDENCE BASE - APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS TO CARRY OUT A WATER CYCLE STUDY

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services sought the Cabinet's approval to commission external consultants to carry out a Scoping and Outline Stage Water Cycle Study for Wirral and Liverpool. The Cabinet was asked to agree that Wirral would be the commissioning authority, and the study would be jointly funded to a maximum cost of £50,000, to be divided between Wirral Council and Liverpool City Council on a 50:50 split basis.

The study was deemed necessary to provide an up-to-date evidence base for the preparation of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document, future site-specific land allocations and to comply with the conditions of the designation of the Mersey Heartlands New Growth Point. External consultants were required because of the specialist nature of the commission. A joint approach with Liverpool City Council was proposed to achieve economies through joint commissioning and in view of the City Council being a partner in the Mersey Heartlands New Growth Point. The Study would assess the available physical and environmental capacity in water supply and wastewater infrastructure. It would also identify wider impacts relating to flooding and wildlife habitats, together with recommendations to resolve any constraints and an evaluation of the implications for future growth.

RESOLVED:

That the commissioning of a joint Water Cycle Study with Liverpool City Council, on the terms set out in the report be agreed.

177 EXTENSION OF WIRRAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

A report by the Interim Director of Corporate Services set out a proposal to extend the Wirral Apprentice Programme aimed at creating new jobs for young people in the area and updated Members on the project to date.

As part of the Council Budget for 2010/11, a policy option of £500,000 had been made available to extend the Wirral Apprenticeship Programme;

Members had requested that officers investigate all relevant sources of finance to ensure this programme continued to grow, working in partnership with Wirral businesses, giving new opportunities to Wirral's young people and maximising any

opportunities provided by the two major schemes for digital infrastructure and for extensive home insulation.

The funding would increase the total number of apprenticeships under the successful Wirral Apprentices Scheme to a minimum of 200, doubling the original target of 100 apprentices. Councillor A Hodson expressed his delight and placed on record his thanks to Wirral Invest for all their efforts on this.

RESOLVED:

That the extension of the Wirral Apprentice Programme, as set out in the attached report, be approved.

178 THIRD MERSEYSIDE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN - PREFERRED STRATEGY AND PROPOSED WORKSHOP

A report by the Director of Technical Services detailed the draft version of the third Merseyside Local Transport Plan's Preferred Strategy and sought the Cabinet's comments and endorsement.

The Cabinet was also requested to approve the proposal to hold an LTP3 Member/Senior Officer Workshop, to be held in November 2010 and to consider Wirral's transport priorities within the context of the overall strategy.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Preferred Strategy for the third Merseyside Local Transport Plan be endorsed; and**
- (2) a Member/Senior Officer Workshop, be held in November 2010 to consider Wirral's transport priorities within the context of the overall strategy.**

179 WINTER MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS 2010/11

A report by the Director of Technical Services advised Members of the proposed Winter Maintenance Arrangements for 2010 / 2011.

RESOLVED:

That the Winter Maintenance Arrangements for 2010/11, as detailed in the attached report, be approved.

180 CHANGE PROGRAMME

A report by the Director of Finance reminded the Cabinet that on 22 July 2010, it had agreed to the terms of a report detailing revised governance and programme management arrangements for the change programme. He presented a further report detailing the budget virements to enable the previous report to be implemented.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) £200,800 in 2010-11 and £300,800 in a full year be vired from the Finance Department to Technical Services Department; and**
- (2) £42,800 of the Efficiency Investment Budget be used to fund a post of Principal Auditor.**

181 INTERIM MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

A report by the Deputy Chief Executive informed Members that on 18 October 2010 the Council would be invited to confirm his own appointment as Interim Chief Executive for a period of up to nine months.

The Deputy Chief Executive expressed the view that the Council faced a number of challenges that must be speedily addressed, as it was clearly essential that the £106 million budget deficit which currently existed be tackled over the next four years. The Strategic Change Programme was an important element of this and sufficient support had to be put in place to ensure its successful delivery.

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that, at a time of significant change, he considered that it had never been more important to communicate with, consult and engage with the residents, businesses, voluntary sector and community groups of Wirral. It was considered even more important to ensure that the Authority act on the results of the information received. He proposed that immediate measures be put in place to ensure that resources were targeted towards the services most important to the people the Authority served. This would necessitate changes to the Council's Policy and Corporate Planning processes, in addition to changes to the Council's structure.

The Deputy Chief Executive, therefore, recommended that a number of interim staffing arrangements be put in place to enable change to be delivered speedily and effectively pending a permanent management re-structure and the appointment of a Chief Executive on a permanent basis.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the interim management arrangements as detailed in the report, be endorsed.**
- (2) The Council be recommended to delegate to the Interim Chief Executive powers to appoint the Interim Head of Corporate Planning, Communications and Engagement and all such other interim appointments (and to approve any interim terms and conditions) beneath Chief Officer level as he considers to be in the best interest of the Council and local people; and**
- (3) the Cabinet's thanks for the outstanding work on Wirral's future by the Communications Team be placed on record.**

182 **CENTRALISATION OF FINANCIAL SERVICES**

A report by the Director of Finance recommended the extension of the principles of centralisation across the Council. It was proposed that this should be considered in conjunction with the report by the Deputy Chief Executive on Interim Management Arrangements (Minute No. 181 refers).

RESOLVED: That

- (1) transfer of the management of the financial functions outlined to the Finance Department be agreed; and**
- (2). a further report be presented to the Cabinet in due course on the details of implementation.**

183 **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - HESWALL AND ALEXANDER HALL, HESWALL**

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management outlined the proposal made by the Heswall Halls Steering Group for Community Asset Transfer in respect of Heswall and Alexander Halls. It examined issues arising from the Business plan and recommended a way forward.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) in accordance with Members' instruction to offer Heswall Hall and Alexander Hall for Community Asset Transfer, the properties be transferred to the Heswall Hall Community Trust in accordance with the terms now reported;**
- (2) the Director of Finance be authorised to make the necessary budgetary adjustments; and**
- (3) following expiration of the proposed lease of Alexander Hall, the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be instructed to arrange for its disposal, with the sale proceeds to be dealt with in the manner described in the report.**

184 **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - OVERTON COMMUNITY CENTRE**

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management sought approval for a transfer by lease of Overton Community Centre, Upton, in accordance with the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

Cabinet Members received a copy of a letter from Mr D Adams of Parkside Day Nursery concerning the increased hire charges of a room within the Community Centre and the impact this was having on Parkside Pre School/Day Nursery.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a transfer by lease of the Overton Community Centre be agreed and the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to complete the necessary lease on the terms set out in the report; and
- (2) the necessary repair works, additional doorway and the transitional costs for the first two years of the business plan, be funded from the Community Fund.

185 **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - GROSVENOR BALLROOM AND LISCARD COMMUNITY CENTRE, WALLASEY**

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management sought approval for a transfer by lease of The Grosvenor Ballrooms Community Centre, Wallasey in accordance with the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a transfer by lease of the Grosvenor Ballroom be agreed and the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to complete the necessary lease on the terms set out in this report;
- (2) following vacation by the group, the Council accept a surrender of the existing interests in Liscard Community Centre and the adjacent garden area;
- (3) the agreed works and extension to the property, together with the transitional costs for the first two years of the business plan, be funded from the Community Fund, with the contribution to the costs of an extension not to exceed £350,000; and
- (4) the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to obtain possession of the garages as described in the report

186 **SCHEDULE OF RATES 2010/13 - TENDER REPORT**

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reminded Members that Schedule of Rates Contracts were maintained for the responsive day-to-day repairs and items of planned maintenance to various buildings owned by the Council, or in which the Council had an interest. They included operational buildings such as offices, community centres, libraries and leisure centres.

The contracts covered the period 2010/13, with the option to extend for a further two years, and were due to commence from 1 December 2010. The purpose of the report was to update and advise Cabinet Members of tenders received, and to seek approval to accept the most economically advantageous tender.

Details of the most economically advantageous tenders were included in the Financial Appendix to the report. The Financial Appendix contained exempt information which was commercially sensitive to the respective tendering parties.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the most economically advantageous tenders as indicated in the Financial Appendix to the report be approved for the 3 year period commencing on 1 December 2010, with the option to extend for a further two years based upon performance, subject to completion of contractual documentation; and**
- (2) based on the outcome of the tendering exercise, a saving of £0.2m per annum be agreed with effect from 1 December 2010 for expenditure through Schedule of Rates contracts.**

187 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That under section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

188 SALISBURY INDEPENDENT LIVING

The Cabinet received an oral report by the Head of Access and Assessment Branch, Adult Social Services, that set out developments in respect of Salisbury Independent Living and an outcome.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received;**
- (2) this matter be now publicised effectively; and**
- (3) the Head of Access and Assessment Branch be requested to circulate a briefing note on this matter to all Members of the Cabinet.**

189 ICT STRATEGIC REVIEW - APPENDIX - CONSULTANT'S REPORT

Further to Minute No. 163 the Cabinet considered the Appendix to the report. The Appendix considered in the presence of the press and public contained exempt information that if disclosed may provide personal information about individuals.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the Appendix containing exempt information that could not be considered in the presence of the press and public be noted.

190 **SCHEDULE OF RATES 2010/13 - TENDER REPORT - APPENDIX**

Further to Minute No. 186 the Cabinet received the Appendix to the report considered in the presence of the press and public.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the Appendix containing exempt information that could not be considered in the presence of the press and public be noted.