

CONSERVATIVE GROUP – BUDGET OBJECTION 2019/2020

Date of Budget Council: Monday 4th March 2019

Proposed by: Cllr. Ian Lewis

Seconded by: Cllr Lesley Rennie

The political rhetoric contained in the Cabinet's Budget resolution is, as usual, meaningless and nothing more than a weak and pathetic attempt to curry favour among the increasingly extreme elements within the ruling Labour Party.

The Labour Cabinet has, once again, taken the easier option of raising taxes, charges and fees while continuing to spend money on projects that have little public benefit.

Under Reg 3(1) of The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (as amended), Wirral's 21 Conservative Councillors therefore submit the following objections to the Labour Cabinet's Budget Recommendations:

- Wirral's 21 Conservative Councillors believe the costs of the Chief Officer Team and Senior Directors are an excessive burden on the Taxpayer, costing £1,645,135 in 2018/19.
- The Cabinet has failed to ensure that highly paid management consultants, costing £2,270,670 in 2018/19, are appointed in a transparent and open manner.
- The Cabinet's Budget proposals, once again, fail to reflect the concerns of the public with ongoing, unquestioned support for vanity projects such as the failing Wirral View newspaper, costing £554,300 to date, the Hoylake Golf Resort and the speculative acquisition of assets of questionable value, most recently demonstrated by the purchase of the Vue Cinema.

Reducing these costs will enable revenue and capital to be released, instead, to support the following objectives:

- **Improve Road Safety:** by repairing more streetlights, fixing potholes and recruiting school crossing patrols.
- **Providing Cleaner Streets:** by increasing the frequency of street cleaning and dog fouling prevention, without resorting to the draconian and unacceptable measures of a PSPO which only helps Kingdom to generate fines and does nothing to tackle dog fouling near shops, schools or residential areas.
- **Supporting local businesses:** by working with businesses to develop a coherent plan to support them, and to attract business and trade to Wirral through enhanced cultural offers, while reversing punitive policies on car parking charges and Fixed Penalty Notices for shops and small businesses

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.