

Appendix 4 – Proposals including within the Public Budget Consultation

Children, Young People & Education Committee		
<p>Children’s Services in Wirral have made considerable improvements in recent years after being rated “inadequate” back in 2016. The improvements are in part because the authority made the decision to invest in the service and because of the hard work and dedication of those who work there.</p> <p>A family’s history should not and will not impact on the ambition of children in Wirral. We are focussed on breaking the cycle of poor outcomes and low ambition, raising the aspirations of every child in Wirral – regardless of where they live or their background. Our job is to encourage, and inspire, and we are relentless in pursuit of that goal. We will enable families to bring up children in safe, happy and secure environments.</p>		
OPTION	VALUE	NARRATIVE
Explore reduction in Youth Provision	£200,000	Activities for young people can help with educational outcomes and prevent child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation and anti-social behaviour. We are looking at exploring a reduction in Youth Provision, which would result in a potential saving of £200,000
Modernisation & Social Care combined: Staff Efficiency Savings	£102,000	Children's Services includes preventative and support services that are both statutory and non-statutory and which support each other and are closely integrated. Their work includes ensuring vulnerable children who are being harmed or abused are protected and kept safe and families get the help they need. We are looking at combining the Modernisation & Social Care offer, which would result in a potential saving of £102,000
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee		
<p>As a council we are supporting active travel networks that work for all, increased recycling and reduction in the overall collected general waste (non-recycling) per household. We are focused on increased our own energy efficiency in Council-owned buildings and look to increase in the number of wildflower verges in Wirral.</p> <p>The council’s budget situation means all services which are not legally required to be provided are being reviewed to find savings. It may be that not all the options being put forward will be taken up, but it is vital we look at everything we do to ensure the council is fit for the future.</p>		

OPTION	VALUE	NARRATIVE
Review of the Neighbourhood Services Directorate	£350,000	To carry out a fundamental review of the newly created Neighbourhood Services Directorate, to drive efficiencies and realign service provision and deliver the objectives of the Wirral Plan. The existing Directorate provides a wide range of services and functions, some of which are statutory. However, there is a need to bring services together in order to sharpen focus and develop a blended and combined approach to create and protect an environment our residents can be proud of. The review will generate better, more focused and aligned Neighbourhood Services to residents, as services are brought together to provide joined-up service provision. It is expected this could lead to a potential saving of £350,000.
Additional and increased parking charges: Whole scale car parking review	£1,000,000	It is vital the council maximises its income where possible to ensure frontline services can be delivered. Furthermore, parking charges can help control car use in busy locations, contributing to the council's climate emergency declaration outcomes by encouraging active travel and public transport alternative transport modes, and potentially help address inequality across the borough by not unduly benefitting car owners. It is proposed that a wide ranging and review of car parking charges looking at the options to increase parking charges and add charges where appropriate. It is anticipated this would provide additional income to the council of £1,000,000.
Stopping School Crossing Patrols	£276,300	The School Crossing Patrol Service is not a statutory council function – i.e. the council is not legally obliged to provide this service. By ceasing the School Crossing Patrol Service the council would save £276,300.
Reduction in grass cutting and maintenance of roadside verges and all Parks and Open Spaces	£250,000	A reduction in grass cutting and maintenance of roadside verges and all parks and open spaces would mean changes such as on roadside verges a reduction in the cutting and maintenance schedule, only edge cuts would be carried out at suitable grass panels/verges which are over 200sqm. Operators would only cut around pathways and alongside roads leaving the middle/centre to grow long. There would also be a significant enlargement of the wildflower meadows. For all parks and open spaces

		across the borough there would be reduction in the grass cutting frequencies and where appropriate and possible at the grass interface with suitable boundaries for example areas of woodland the grass would be allowed to grow and effectively re-wild or be cut at a much reduced capacity. This option could lead to a saving of £250,000 .
Amenity space and grass verge maintenance cessation	£100,000	Ceasing maintenance (grass cutting and litter removal) at 45 amenity green spaces and 85 grass verge sites, possibly planting of trees, re-wilding or where appropriate creating new allotments. Sites have been identified where reduced maintenance would have the least impact on the local area. Stopping amenity space and grass verge maintenance could lead to savings of £100,000 .
Closure of Public Conveniences	£142,000	The council maintains nine public convenience sites at mainly in coastal areas. These include Harrison Drive New Brighton, Moreton Common, Moreton Cross, West Kirby Marine Lake, West Kirby Concourse (outside), Parade Gardens Hoylake, Meols Parade, New Ferry and Thornton Hough. Closure of these would lead to a saving of £142,000 .
3 weekly collection of general rubbish	£180,000	Reducing the collection frequency of green general rubbish bins from once every two weeks, to once every three weeks while maintaining the grey recycling bin collection at every two weeks. This proposal could lead to a requirement to collect additional packaging (e.g. plastic pots, tubs and trays, tetra pack type cartons and aerosol cans) to be permitted in the grey recycling bin and/or a separate food collection to deal with the reduction in general waste disposal capacity. The option could mean a saving of £180,000 .
Contract Efficiency Savings with BIFFA	£75,000	The refuse collection and street cleansing contract the Council has with Biffa has been in place for over 10 years and following a contract extension will run until 2027. Over the course of the contract a significant amount of efficiencies have been taken, particularly at the time of the extension. However, a specific requirement of the terms of the extension was for both parties to pursue further efficiencies. It is estimated this could result in a saving of £75,000 .

Income generated from establishing targeted and discretionary environmental enforcement	£150,000	The Council's Enforcement Policy was amended to remove the zero-tolerance approach but it is possible to re-establish this robust approach. Environmental crime has increased during the Covid-19 lockdown. The return to zero tolerance would involve education and engagement with residents and targeted to high profile locations where there has been significant anti-social behaviour and environmental crime. Establishing targeted and discretionary environmental enforcement could lead to an income of £150,000.
Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee		
<p>The culture and visitor economy is a valuable source of income to the Wirral economy, however, supporting it is not a legal duty of the council. The work we do helps support local employers to succeed, to win more business and grow – creating more jobs and opportunities for local people. We will help make sure our residents have the skills and education they need to secure their best possible futures.</p> <p>We aim to develop strategic facility plan for Wirral that is fit-for-purpose - right activities in the right places that are accessible and meet the needs and aspirations of the people they serve.</p>		
OPTION	VALUE	NARRATIVE
Culture and Visitor Economy savings	£620,000	A major reduction in the council's culture and visitor economy service achieved through staff savings and deleting the events budget. A small resource would remain within the regeneration team to deliver the culture elements of the regeneration programme, plus marketing resource will be re-allocated to the corporate communication team to manage the upkeep of visitor economy website and marketing, including involvement in the Liverpool City Region joint work on visitor economy. Savings of £620,000 could be achieved in the council budget by reducing this service.
Close Europa Pools	£640,000	Birkenhead is about to undergo major regeneration which will include looking at the best options for future leisure provision. The saving which would be achieved by closure of Europa Pools – which requires one of the highest levels of support of the borough's leisure centres, would be £640,000.

Pause re-opening of Woodchurch Leisure Centre	£322,000	Some of our leisure centres are being used for Covid vaccinations, while refurbishment can only be done while they are closed. Woodchurch is one of the smaller Leisure Centres with one of the lower levels of usage with the second highest level of financial support. Delaying the re-opening of Woodchurch Leisure Centre would save the council £322,000.
Review of 4 Golf Courses	£273,000	The Council operates four golf professional courses, which is a non-statutory service and there are a number of private courses throughout the Borough. In recent years, significant work has been undertaken to identify alternative delivery models for golf provision, however none of these solutions were pursued. Interest remains from private sector operators to run and operate Council owned courses under a lease arrangement. A review of options around the provision of council owned courses will be carried out. Potential closure/transfer of council operated golf courses could save £273,000
Review of Museums Service	£327,500	This option is for a full review of the council's museum service provision which includes the Williamson Art Gallery & Museum. A separate exercise would be required to establish the residual cost of maintaining any buildings mothballed by this proposal and a decision taken as to what to do with the historic collections. Retaining the collections will attract an annual maintenance cost of approximately £50,000 per annum. Closure of the museums service would save £327,500 from the council budget per year.
Royden Park Commercial Development - Phase 1	£80,000	This proposal would develop elements of Royden Park with income generating services, providing significant environmental and social outcomes. The main element is a high ropes aerial park which will be situated adjacent to the new overspill car park. An external partner will be sought to fund, design, plan, construct, and operate the park on a turnover share/lease agreement. Phase 1 will include a self serve dog wash unit be in partnership with the local 'friends of' group and funded via lottery grant. This option could see income to the council of £80,000.

Economy Regeneration & Development Committee

Our plans for economic growth are about encouraging inclusive growth, where the benefits are felt by every resident, creating opportunities for local people, and inspiring ambition. Prosperous communities are happier, healthier and better places to live. People want the chance to get a good job, and live in a nice home on a clean, safe street. A successful local economy – built on these inclusive principles – helps deliver that. Attracting investment to our borough creates good jobs for our residents. It helps people improve their skills, improve their prospects and raise the aspirations of their whole family. It's about helping everyone in the borough to become better off and live more comfortably.

The work we do helps support local employers to succeed, to win more business and grow – creating more jobs and opportunities for local people. We will help make sure our residents have the skills and education they need to secure their best possible futures. We work side-by-side with the independent traders who keep our high-streets alive, helping them adapt to modern trends.

OPTION	VALUE	NARRATIVE
Birkenhead Market Restructure	£240,000	Restructuring staffing arrangements to better serve delivery will ensure Birkenhead Market can drive forward its redevelopment. It is proposed staffing is reduced over 2/3 years in tandem with the development and relocation of the market to the temporary site. A restructure of Birkenhead Market could result in savings of £240,000 .
Budget Allocation for DDA	£200,000	The majority of public buildings within the Authority's portfolio are Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant. As a result the works allocated to the budget for building works in relation to people with a disability accessing council buildings over the last few years has greatly reduced. If future works are required these will be covered by the general building code. The removal of this budget will not have any detrimental effect on access to council building for people with a disability as any unforeseen works will be covered within the property code. This proposal could save £200,000 .

Housing Committee

For most people, the thing which is most important to them is what they see when they open their front door. They want to see a clean street, which is well maintained and attractive. They want to live in a place which is free of anti-social behaviour and crime, and to be able to take an active role in making their community a better place to live.

Our job is to help make this happen. The everyday services people want the most – street cleaning, tackling dog-fouling, road

maintenance, streetlights, grass-cutting – will be delivered to the best possible standard. Almost as importantly, we will be responsive: if a resident asks us something, we will answer – quickly, clearly and with empathy. We'll also tackle the growing problem of rough sleeping and homelessness. In Wirral, people will never have to spend a second night outside. We will redouble our efforts in working with these vulnerable people and we will keep them safe. We will ensure people have a good standard of housing.

OPTION	VALUE	NARRATIVE
Cease Support for Community Alarms	£500,000	The Community Alarm Service offers a low level support service to aid independent living and reduces the burden on social care and health services. The option proposes the removal of an annual programme of support used to meet the shortfall for low income and older people households, which could result in a saving of £500,000

Adult Care and Health Committee

In Wirral we want all our residents to have a good quality of life. Good health and wellbeing is key to this and achieving that is more than about health services. A good start in life, education, decent work and housing, the environment in which we live and strong and supportive relationships all play a part.

We're proud of our reputation that people tell their story once, to one healthcare professional, and they will design a personalised care package to meet those needs. Our system is easier to access, it is better value, and it provides better care.

Wirral is a place where older people are treated with dignity and respect, and where having a disability is never a barrier to leading a full and fulfilling life. We are an accessible borough, which welcomes diversity and champions inclusion and social cohesion. Where people need extra help to stay healthy, we commission outstanding services to help people live more healthily.

OPTION	VALUE	NARRATIVE
Wirral Evolutions review of day services for people with Learning Disabilities	£500,000	This option relates to a service review with the aim of modernising the current operating model and reduce the associated operating costs of delivering day services for people with Learning Disabilities. The review's aim is to manage the cost of current provision by service changes that could lead to savings of £500,000

Policy and Resources Committee

The Policy & Resources Committee oversees all the council committees and its membership includes chairs of the other key committees on the council which oversee specific service areas. Options for savings specifically overseen by the P&R

Committee include Resources & Law/Governance Directorates and Council-wide options.

OPTION	VALUE	NARRATIVE
Suspension of individual Member Ward Budgets	£250,000	Individual councillors in each ward in Wirral are able to allocate a share of the “ward member budgets” to support local objectives. The funds are allocated to local community organisations, charities, statutory bodies, and businesses to improve the well-being of the local area, its environment or economy. It is proposed to suspend this for the next financial year which will save £250,000 .
One Stop Shop Service Reduction	£98,000	Wirral’s One Stop Shop Network has reduced its staffing in recent years in line with a reduction in visitors. Since 2015/16 visitor numbers have reduced by over 40% across the network. This has coincided with an increase in e-citizen accounts which enable residents to access Council services online through mywirral.gov. A further One Stop Shop reduction could lead to a saving of £98,000 .
Restructure of Revenues & Benefits	£150,000	A review of the Revenues and Benefits service to identify savings through a new staffing structure. Efficiencies will be generated by reconfiguring teams within the service and staff reduction will be managed through natural wastage and deleting vacant posts. These efficiencies will be delivered through restructuring teams to optimise resources and there will be no direct impact on service provision. It could achieve a saving of £150,000
Business Change Service Reduction	£670,000	The Programme Management Office is responsible for defining, resourcing and implementing business change through a team of project management professionals deployed across the business. The team has also been providing significant capacity to the Council’s Covid 19 emergency response and recovery. This option would reduce the service budget by 15% resulting in reduced capacity to deliver business change. The proposed saving under this option would be £670,000 .
New Staffing Structure in IT Services	£618,000	Digital (IT Services) provides a number of services for Council including: Support and security of the IT infrastructure and all Council applications,

		management of the Council's data both physical and electronic formats, Records Management and Archives. This option provides a cost saving through a reduction of staff across Digital (IT Services) to contribute to the financial challenges currently being faced, and could result in a saving of £618,000
Centralised Print Process	£157,000	The Council currently has a managed print contract which provides the majority of printers across the council (approximately 200 devices). The option would remove all printers from across the Council and create a centralised print service to support any printing requirements. This centralised print service would be created by merging the Print Services team (currently a traded service) with Distribution Services. This could result in a saving of £157,000 .
Business Support Unit - Staffing Reduction	£237,000	The Business Support Unit provides a number of services for the council including: postal services, support of the revenues and benefit system, front desk services for some buildings, management of customer feedback and management of p-cards, mobile phones and travel loans. This option would reduce cost through reduction of staff across the Business Support Unit (BSU) resulting in a saving of £237,000
Hardship fund and reduction in bad debt provision	£1,000,000	As part of the government's support for Covid-19, Wirral received £3.9m Hardship Fund to support council tax payers. It has been used to credit working age Local Council Tax Support claimants with a discount on their 2020/21 Council Tax bill. As at 31st August 2020, £1.5m of the fund has been used, and is available to claim up to the end of March 2021, when the remaining balance will then be known. It is proposed to use the remaining balance to clear old outstanding Council Tax arrears. This will reduce the bad debt provision requirement, and therefore improve the estimated year end Council Tax position. It will save the council £1,000,000
Contract Management & Commissioning	£350,000	This option proposes reviewing the Council's commissioning and contract management model over the next 18 months in line with approaches that have been adopted in other authorities. LGA

		research/benchmarking have been considered and applied to Wirral's context and budget. It could result in a saving of £350,000
Apprenticeships	£148,000	This option proposes moving the Council's workforce strategy towards an Apprenticeship first model. This would mean that as new vacancies arise, there is a strong emphasis on using apprenticeships to fill these. This could lead to savings of £148,000
Traded Services Review	£270,000	A review is currently being undertaken to assess the effectiveness of Council delivered traded services to ensure they provide value for money. This option represents a target to deliver improved commercial activity, which could be realised through a variety of different approaches including cost efficiencies, modifying or ceasing services or marketing services in a revised manner, for example with package deals to improve take-up rates. This could result in a saving of £270,000

