

AREA FORUM (LEASOWE, MORETON AND SAUGHALL MASSIE)

Tuesday, 8 June 2010

Present:

Councillor	S Mountney (Chair)
Councillors	RL Abbey C Blakeley I Lewis □ S Williams
Community Representatives	Rob Seddon
Lead Officer	Carolyn Curr (Head of Corporate Policy)
Community Safety	Milke Collins
Area Service Co-ordinator	Tracey Smith
Merseyside Police	Inspector Peter Kolokotroni
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service	Ian Maxwell
NHS Wirral	Martin McEwan
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Amanda Farrell
Council Officers	Sarah Risnes (Minute Taker)

1 **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

Councillor Simon Mountney opened the meeting and welcomed 20 members of the public to the meeting. He introduced and welcomed Aidan Ryan a Youth Representative to the meeting and forum members agreed Aidan Ryan would join the forum members and attend the next meeting.

Minute decision: Resolved that Aidan Ryan will become an Area Forum member and attend the next forum.

2 **AREA CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT - MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

Tracey Smith informed the forum that the area co-ordinators report included the minutes of the last meeting and partner updates. She asked if there were any proposed amendments or matters arising – None were raised and the minutes were agreed as a true record.

Tracey advised the forum that Streetscene have £18,200 to spend on dropped kerbs, road signs and cycle paths as part of the new Integrated Transport Model questionnaire which gives residents a chance to say what they would like in their area. She invited forum attendees to fill in the questionnaire at the back of the room after the meeting and responses would be returned to Streetscene.

Tracey also advised that due to bad weather conditions over the winter each area forum now has £5000 to spend on grit bins and if any of the attendees have suggestions for locations of the new grit bins they should fill in the form and return it at the end.

Minute decision: Resolved that the Area coordinator be thanked for her report and the minutes be accepted as a true record.

3 UNITED UTILITIES UPDATE

The Chair welcomed Gaynor Kenyon, Scott Bear and Simon Chadwick from United Utilities to the forum, to give a presentation on the recent water problems in the Moreton / Wallasey area.

Scott Bear started the presentation by thanking the forum for giving United Utilities this opportunity to attend and explain the issues which have arisen during recent weeks. Scott apologised for the inconvenience caused and explained that there were 3 incidents which lead to the problems in Wirral but that they were still conducting ongoing investigations.

The first issue involved the planned work in Reeds Lane on 20th-21st May to fix a 21inch leak in the water main, which all 11,500 residents affected were notified in writing in advance of the work commencing. Scott explained that when the excavation began the scale of the leak was more than they had originally anticipated and that normally they would abort the job at that point. The split in the pipe was getting worse and at this point they had no choice but to continue the work. They admit that residents were not notified of this extension to the repair work but this was because they were still confident that they would have the leak repaired by 6am. At 4am they realised it was going to take longer than expected but that most residents were restored to the water supply by 12pm. United Utilities was liaising with the local media all morning to inform residents of their return to the water supply and were confident that everything was back to normal.

On the Friday afternoon some residents were still reporting no water or low pressure in the Wallasey / Liscard area. United Utilities did not know why this was as all computer reports were showing that the pipe in Reeds Lane was fully repaired. United Utilities then decided to retrace the problem back along the water supply and found another isolated incident by the M53 which was a broken 36inch water valve.

United Utilities found it very difficult to fix this problem quickly as there were several overhead electricity cables directly above the ground where the valve was and this meant they had to Liaise with the electricity company to ensure there was no power around when excavation and repair began, as the valve was 36inches long the excavation for this repair was huge. Scott showed some photos in the presentation which highlighted the scale of the challenge faced by the company. The repair on the valve took one week in which time was the hottest weekend of the year so far. This

caused more problems as the levels of water in the reservoir dropped. This meant that water pressure was low and affected all of the North East of the Wirral for the whole of Sunday. United Utilities continued to monitor this situation and dispatched water bottles to residents. The normal procedure would have been to pump water straight into the mains but due to the broken valve this could not happen. This repair work was a hugely complex procedure for United Utilities and they did try to communicate with residents but they acknowledge they could have done more.

Investigations have shown that the valve which caused the majority of problems was installed 30 years ago and it had a defect which meant instead of moving in a circular motion to let water pass it had become stuck. Now United Utilities will be checking the area to ensure any other valves which were installed at the same time do not contain the same defects.

The forum then asked United Utilities the following questions:

Member of the public: Will residents be given compensation and how much?

United Utilities: Yes compensation will be given to those affected; the amount will be determined by the scale of problems each individual household experienced as some residents were back to the water supply sooner than others. Customers who are in credit on their bill will receive a cheque and those who are in arrears on their bill will receive credit on their bill. Letters have been sent out to all affected households and residents should expect to receive them next week. If anyone wishes to dispute the level of compensation given they may appeal by contacting United Utilities directly.

Member of the public: Informed the forum that she was one of those affected by the water problems and that she had no notification from United Utilities that any work was being carried out.

United Utilities: We apologise for this however letters were distributed to 11,500 households and unfortunately sometimes letters can get mixed up between newspapers and junk mail. This feedback will be taken back to the relevant department within the company and United Utilities are open to other forms of communication if any resident have suggestions of how this can be done better.

Member of the Public: Has Reeds Lane opened yet?

United Utilities: Yes Reeds Lane is now fully open and operating as normal.

Jane McLear: What did United Utilities do to ensure that vulnerable groups such as the elderly were not as affected by the problems as a lot of older people in her area were not notified and did not know what to do when the problems occurred? Also small businesses in the area were not able to operate and have therefore lost money due to these problems.

United Utilities: Simon Bear explained that all residents should have been notified but understands there seems to have been some error after hearing of people's experiences in the area. The bottled water given out to residents at the stage when United Utilities knew they would not be able to fix the problem for the hot weekend

was given to vulnerable groups first but United Utilities admit they need to get better at identifying where the most vulnerable people live.

Carolyn Curr suggested that United Utilities link up to the council's and NHS vulnerable people database and ensure that both lists within United Utilities and the council match to ensure a coherent response to this type of situation should it ever happen again.

Cllr Ian Lewis also agreed with this action as he was concerned about the shortage of a comprehensive vulnerable people list within United Utilities.

Simon Bear also explained that any businesses who feel they have lost out due on income due to these problems can apply for compensation by writing to United Utilities and listing the details of how they were affected.

Minute decision: Resolved that United Utilities be thanked for attending and if anyone has any questions there are forms which can be filled in at the back of the room.

4 **YOU DECIDE - PRESENTATION BY CAROLYN CURR - HEAD OF POLICY, WIRRAL COUNCIL**

Lead officer Carolyn Curr gave a presentation to the forum on You Decide. She explained to the attendees that this was the 3rd year of You Decide and that this time around the process has been changed. Previously You Decide was a questionnaire for residents to fill in, now it is a small selection card for residents to tick which options they would like to see in their area. It is hoped that this new approach will make the process more pro-active and quicker.

Each area forum has £20,000 to spend on additional services in their area, and the top 5 choices out of all the responses would be funded. The public should think of locations of some of the services listed and write them on the slip where possible.

Carolyn advised the forum that some of the options need long term community involvement and to think of the feasibility of this before selecting this as a choice.

The following questions were raised by the forum:

Member of the public: how will CCTV law affect the selection of CCTV in the You Decide process?

Carolyn Curr: The CCTV and Alley gate options are subject to public consultation and therefore any area which applies for it would have to be in agreement before it could go ahead.

Member of the public: How are the options in You Decide additional services, this is what the council should provide as part of its day to day services.

Carolyn Curr: The options given are additional services which are above and beyond what the council already provides. This is for local areas to choose what they have in their area as some people may have different opinions on what they would like to see in their area.

Member of the public: Why doesn't the council just take the money and decide what to spend it on?

Chair: There are many people who want to see the council's elected members spend the money but there are just as many people who want to have a say on what additional services are provided in their area. This process is a middle ground between the two options.

Member of the public: Will people who have not attended the forum be able to have a say in the You Decide process for example Moreton Umbrella group – youth meeting is tonight so they are unable to attend.

Carolyn Curr: Yes, there are plenty of You Decide selection cards which can be taken away and given to people who want to participate for them to fill in and send back to the Area Forum team.

Member of the public: How will this get the youths off the streets?

Carolyn Curr: There are several You Decide options which if chosen would enable young people to become involved in other activities. Such as the Youth Sports night and the work of the Sports Development Officer.

Member of the public: Looking at the logistics of placing bins in parks etc should not be done by the public this should be done by the council when designing the park from the start. The placement of bins outside fast food restaurants should also be part of the planning application process.

Carolyn Curr: Litter bins are a requirement of planning applications and fast food restaurants must put this in to be approved?!

Member of the public: The planting of new trees should be taken in caution as spreading roots can cause problems later on.

Chair: Thanked the member of the public for this comment and said this would be taken on board for future reference.

5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following questions / issues were raised:

Member of the public: Has there been a planning application submitted for the re-opening of Sorellas in Moreton with a music license until 12am weekdays and 1am Friday and Saturday?

Chair: Yes there has been a planning application submitted as Tesco have applied to build a new store on the current site where the Plough Inn stands the owners have decided to open 'Cross Bar' on the old Sorella's site. The license request is for music and alcohol to be served until 11.30pm on a weekday and 12.30pm at weekends. If any residents have concerns and wish to object to the application a letter must be given in writing to the council by the 1st of July to the licensing committee. A letter will

be distributed to the surrounding residents this week to ask for their views on the application.

Member of the public: Will supersaver be closed as part of the new Tesco site?

Chair: No, Supersavers will not be affected by the Tesco site.

Member of the public: Residents in Sunningdale flats in Moreton received a visit from Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS) insisting the building must be sterile and everything must be removed from the hallways, including small pot plants. Why is this all of a sudden?

MFRS: Incidents nationally which have led to deaths has prompted the review of certain policies and MFRS have advised Wirral Partnership Homes (WPH) who own Sunningdale flats to carry out a risk assessment on the flats. WPH must have deemed the potted plants to be a risk on the assessment and this is why they will have been removed. If residents still have issues with this they must ask WPH to re-do their risk assessment of the building and maybe downgrade the level of risk attributed to small pot plants.

Member of the public: There was a drain cleaning machine on Hoylake Road during the early hours and the machinery made huge amounts of noise disturbing residents in the area. No notification was given and neither United Utilities nor Wirral Council will admit to sending the machine.

Carolyn Curr: This issue will be taken back to the Streetscene department and an update will be provided at the next meeting.

Member of the public: Why do kids who do bad things get rewarded with treats to try and get them to become good kids when kids who don't do anything wrong don't get anything?

Inspector Peter Kolokotroni: A few years ago all the funding given to the Police to treat kids was for the children who were on the brink of offending but now there is also funding out there to reward good kids who haven't done anything wrong. The money is used in hotspot areas for both good children and children on the verge of offending.

Member of the public: The pigeon droppings previously reported outside Sayers in Moreton has not been dealt with and it is still there.

Tracey Smith: Will follow up with Streetscene and report back at the next meeting.

Member of the public: There is a grid missing by Moreton station and it could cause an accident as a small child's foot could easily get stuck down the gap.

Response: There was a phone number left by United Utilities for issues like this to be flagged up so this will be done as soon as possible.

Member of the public: The parks and play areas around Leasowe and Moreton always get refurbished and then vandalized again by the teenagers who rip up the rubber surface. What can be done about this?

Response: The Parks team is to meet with the Councilors to see if a solution can be reached and explore the possibility of using a different type of material for the surface of the play areas. Also, if any particular community groups have anything they would like to do to the play areas they can put a bid into the area forums via the Community Initiatives Fund.

Member of the public: There are too many children playing on the War Memorial Cenotaph in Moreton cross and it should be fenced in.

Response: The area is an open public space and unfortunately a favourite spot of free-runners due to its height. It is seen as a gathering area.

Member of the public: In the winter when the snow and ice was causing huge problems there was no gritting around the Sunningdale flats and shopping area, as this is for elderly residents this was extremely dangerous.

Tracey Smith: Explained to the area forum about the yellow slips which they had received to allocate the £5,000 for grit bins to be placed in certain areas, and that this was most certainly one of the locations that had been mentioned in the Moreton area. Tracey advised the group to make their selections and hand back the slips at the end of the meeting.

6 PARTNER UPDATE

NHS Wirral

Martin McEwan advised the forum that NHS Wirral have provided a full report in the meeting pack. Highlights include a new patient group in Wallasey in which patients can become directly involved in decision making about how services should be run in the area. There is also a new Minor Injuries Clinic at Victoria Central Hospital so Martin advised the forum if they have any minor injuries such as sprains etc they should attend this clinic rather than arriving at Accident and Emergency.

Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Amanda Farrell advised the forum that there is a full report in the meeting pack. The forum was informed of a brand new facility for people having operations which has been open for 2-3 weeks and that feedback on the new facility was extremely positive. The new facility is a relaxed and open environment with separate areas for men and women to use before their operations and it is light and bright and right next to the theatre ward.

A member of the public raised an issue about his experiences at both Arrowe Park Hospital and Clatterbridge Hospital. He felt there was a distinct lack of communication between himself and Arrowe Park Hospital which led to having an unpleasant experience at Arrowe Park, whereas the experience and communication at Clatterbridge Hospital was excellent.

Amanda Farrell welcomed this feedback and said she would pass this through to the relevant people to see how they can learn from this feedback. Amanda pointed out that Arrowe Park and Clatterbridge were different types of hospital but that if one hospital had good practices then the other hospital may be able to use some of these to improve its services.

Hazel Kelly advised the forum that she was a governor for Arrowe Park Hospital and attends all meetings on behalf of patients and if anyone would like to raise anything they can contact her at the membership office at Arrowe Park Hospital

Merseyside Police

Inspector Kolokotroni would like to pass on his condolences for John Cooper who died of a heart attack after an incident of Anti-social behaviour in Moreton.

Inspector Kolokotroni also advised the forum that there is a newsletter from the Police on their chairs. There is a new and reformed resident's group taking place soon called 'have your say'. The monthly meetings are for each ward and are with the Neighbourhood Policing Teams. Details of the meetings can be found in the newsletter.

All crime is down by 144, burglary and ASB is down 75 offences and vehicle crime is down 65 offences. There has been an increase of 3 in violent crimes. There were 6 robberies in the Wallasey area within a short space of time for things such as mobile phones and Ipods and 5 people were arrested 3 of which are now serving jail terms.

The forum was advised there would be an increased police presence in the area during the world cup tournament to try and discourage and ASB or disorder. This would also be the case during the summer around the park areas to dispose of alcohol. 80 bottles of alcohol were confiscated in May.

The forum was also advised that Moreton Police Station would be opening on a Saturday on a trial basis from 9am-5pm.

Cllr Ian Lewis thanked Inspector Kolokotroni for his prompt update on John Cooper and also the community helpers thanked him for his hard work and the improved links with the community.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

Ian Maxwell advised the group that there was a newsletter at the back of the room. On pg.17 there is a section on Home Fire Safety Checks which have helped to reduce the number of fires over the last few years and levels of people who haven't had one are really low. If anyone would like one done for there home please contact them on the Freephone number 0800 731 5958.

The forum was advised that Wallasey Fire Station had become too big for just the Fire Service to use so it is also being used for the new Wallasey Youth Hub.

More community patrols will be around during the next couple of months to help tackle small fires which occur in summer.

Member of public: If a smoke alarm is damaged can they be replaced.

A: Yes free of charge just contact the Freephone number 0800 731 5958.

Older Peoples Parliament

An update on the older Peoples Parliament can be found on pages 38-39 of the area coordinators report. There is a new campaign in Wirral directed at residential and care homes inviting people to attend the away day at Arrow Part to discuss older people at home.

The Older People's Parliament has over 850 members now and if anyone over 50 would like to join please contact Brian Christian on 666 2220.

Community Safety

The forum was advised that the respect bus would be in the Sandbrook area on 11th & 25th June from 6pm – 9pm to ask any questions about Anti Social Behaviour.

Moreton Umbrella Group advised that they need volunteers for a fundraising day on 21st August; they are raising money to spend on children's activities in the area. If anyone would like to help please come and ask for more details at the end of the meeting.

7 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chair advised the forum that he would be resigning as Chair of this area forum with immediate effect and that another chair would be appointed by the forum.

Councillor Chris Blakely nominated Councillor Ron Abbey for the position of chair and this was seconded by a member of the public.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending, informed the forum that the next meeting would be held on 4th October 2010 and closed the meeting at 9:00pm.