

# **AREA FORUM (HESWALL AND PENSBY & THINGWALL)**

Wednesday, 13 June 2012

## Present:

Councillors	A Hodson P Johnson M Johnston D McCubbin L Rowlands M Sullivan
Council Leader	P Davies
Older People's Parliament	Sandy Cameron
Consultation Manager	Tracey Smith
Lead Officer	Jim Lester
Merseyside Police	Inspector Mick Blease
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service	Sarah Patterson
In attendance	Jayne Robinson (Minute Taker)
Apologies	David Armstong (Lead Officer)

## **1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair, Councillor Andrew Hodson welcomed the Forum members and 62 members of the public to the Heswall, Pensby & Thingwall Area Forum held at Pensby Primary School, Pensby.

The Minutes having been read were agreed as a true record.

There were no matters arising raised at the meeting. Tracey Smith has responded to any individual items raised prior to this meeting.

## **2 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE ON YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR ECONOMY**

Tracey Smith gave an update and feedback on the Neighbourhood Plans.

The areas in the consultation process included:

Your Economy

Your Health

Your Family

Your Neighbourhood

Tracey's update focused on 'Your Family' and 'Your Neighbourhood'. An information handout was available for people to read.

Some of the points raised were:

### **Finding Employment**

- Not enough jobs in the area, not knowing where to get information about jobs, a lack of skills and qualifications. A need to tackle the benefits system as it often pays more than working and expensive child care.
- More information given on where to find jobs. Not all people have access to the internet. Information is required in libraries, One Stop Shops and Children's Centres. Try to make the Job Centres less intimidating.
- Provide either free or less expensive childcare. Also provide better transport within the area to enable people to get work.

### **Training and Skills**

- Need to organise training schemes, provide advice and training to assist those who genuinely want it. Offer training courses at a reasonable cost or provide local 'back to work' or how to retrain courses free.
- Encourage and give incentives to local businesses to offer work experience and part time work to young people. Have work experience projects for people on job seekers allowance, so they can get experience of recent work
- Encourage apprenticeships within the Council and provide coaching to improve self esteem and provide advice and training through secondary education. Volunteering is also a good opportunity to gain experience.

### **What is the Council doing to help?**

- The Council has invested in improving people's skills, including the apprenticeship scheme, which has supported well in excess of 300 local people. There are free courses available which include specific courses on CV writing and Interview Skills. More information is available on line [www.wirral.gov.uk/lifelonglearning](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/lifelonglearning) or by telephone 0151 630 3486.
- The Council has also invested in the Connexions Service for young people to get free impartial advice through One Stop Shops and other Council facilities.
- Help can be provided for childcare through the Family Information Service – [www.wirral.gov.uk/fis](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/fis) or 0800 085 8743. It can help parents find affordable childcare locally and also provide financial advice.
- The Council are also encouraging local businesses to come to the area.
- Helping businesses succeed and create jobs for local people is a big priority for the Council.

- For more details see handout

### **Services for Children and Young People**

- More after school learning facilities, a better quality of education especially around road safety and personal responsibility and parent education
- More recreational facilities and team building for teenagers along with more places for them to go. More after school activities and in school holidays and evenings.
- More free facilities for young people and teenagers
- Youth Clubs that are in the area need to be open at the weekend and in the evenings and offer a safe environment with good facilities and sports activities.
- Improve playgrounds as current facilities are poor.

### **Services for Older People**

- A way to signpost vulnerable people to agencies that can help them
- More support for people who are housebound and visits to elderly and ill people. To keep them from growing lonely, also to increase the amount of home help.
- A buddy scheme to help those in sheltered accommodation and better transport facilities so they can get out and about.
- More attention on older people keeping active.
- Raise awareness of the services that are available and provide information on who to contact using newsletters, the local radio and newspapers and council buildings

### **What is the Council doing to help?**

- There is extra funding this year for the Sure Start Centres and we have a target to make sure at least 80% of children aged 5 and under are registered with the local centre.
- There is also extra funding available to continue the work with the anti-social behaviour team.
- Most of the Youth services are either free or heavily subsidised and the opening hours are generally decided according to demand. All of the Youth Hubs are open evenings and weekends already.
- There is money in the budget for the maintenance and clean up of play areas throughout the Borough and have doubled the size of the dog fouling enforcement team this year.
- There are excellent facilities throughout the Borough for local residents. It is agreed that these need to be advertised and publicised more.
- There is a new website launched [www.wirralwell.org](http://www.wirralwell.org) working together with colleagues in the voluntary sector.
- For more information, see handout or if anyone has any issues please contact Tracey Smith
- 

Tracey explained that an Action Plan is being written for each theme raised from the Neighbourhood Plans. There is funding of £53,500 available for the following initiatives:

- Improving Community Safety
- Improving Community Life
- Improving Training & Skills
- Improving Regeneration

Applications for the funding are available from 2<sup>nd</sup> July – 17<sup>th</sup> August 2012. A funding pack is available here at the Forum or from the Wirral Website or by telephone.

Q. How do you promote Youth Activities? It might be an idea to advertise in schools.

A. We are open to any suggestions in order to promote the activities. There is also a Contacta Bus which is regularly at Fishers Lane, so this is a good way to promote activities.

At Pensby Boys School on a Wednesday after school, 'Everton in the Community' run football courses. 4-5pm for ages 4-8 years and 5-6pm for ages 8-14 years

Q. We need a Skate/BMX Park as the roads are unsafe.

A. There is a park behind the Glegg Arms which is extremely popular and busy. There is also an initiative to convert Heswall Squash Club into a sports barn to cover all forms of sport.

Q. What is available for girls?

A. There are activities available, we just need to advertise and promote them better.

There is a newsletter available from the Wirral Older Peoples Parliament which lists all activities available for people in the local area.

### 3 ROAD SAFETY UPDATE - 20 MILE PER HOUR ZONES

Jim Lester explained about the new scheme of introducing 20mph zones in residential areas around Wirral.

There is a map to view and also cards with the plans on. There is a slight discrepancy on the card plans. They will need to be amended. There is £1.1m funding which was agreed at Cabinet in April 2012. This will be spent over a 2 year process.

The area will be split into 132 zones. The traffic department are assessing where the 20mph will be. A sign will be placed at the end of the roads.

The first stage will be implemented this autumn and the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage next year.

Q. Will the zones be time zoned?

A. It will be 24 hour.

Q. Will it be just signs or will there be speed bumps or chicanes and how are they going to enforce the 20mph speed limits.

A. There will only be signs at the end of the roads. If there are repeated reports of speeding, then there will be officers with speed guns issuing spot penalties.

Q. Could you clarify if these limits are enforceable?

A. Yes they are enforceable.

Q. Have there been any accidents on these roads?

A. None reported, but there is a speed issue on some residential roads.

Q. Will Pensby Road be included in the 20mph limit?

A. It will only be residential roads, so Pensby Road will not be included.

Q. There is a concern that there are too many signs on the roads.

A. Aware of this problem but it is for a safety measure.

This is an excellent idea to get speed limits reduced. This is moving in the right direction.

Jim Lester asked for everyone to complete the cards with everyone views on them.

## 4 PARTNER UPDATES

### Western Link

Diane Owen and Claire Duffy from Western Link Electricity gave a brief presentation on the renewable electricity cable which is to be routed through Wirral from Scotland to Wales. There has been a consultation process with residents over the last year discussing the route. A newsletter is available for people to see the route of the cable and plans for the area. These newsletters will be posted out to residents affected by the cable route.

Q. Why can't the cable be routed under the River Dee, rather than through Wirral?

A. The River Dee is a protected area and on investigation of this idea, it was found that the sea bed moves too much. This means that if the cable became uncovered then this would prove to be a risk to people. The cables also have to be set below a certain level.

Q. How do you get the cable from Wirral to Wales.

A. It will be a drill that directs it under the Dee.

Q. Did you consider the Wirral Way?

A. Yes, this was considered. Unfortunately at certain points it is not wide enough for the machinery and cable drums.

Q. What advantage to Wirral residents is this cable?

A. It will be fed into the network at Connahs Quay, which is all part of the National Grid. There have been talks with Community Groups on benefits for the area.

Q. Will you re-instate road surfaces and ensure that they are to a high standard?

A. Working along with the Council, the surface will be re-laid at a high standard.

Q. How long will the works take to complete?

A. The contractors have been recently appointed for the design work. Work will start 2013 and aim to be completed 2015.

Q. What about the archaeological site?

A. There is an Environmental Appraisal which is available to view on the website. There will be no impact to any archaeological areas.

Q. The A540 will be affected and Thingwall corner is a very busy part of the road. What provision is there if this area will be disrupted?

A. No roads will be closed, maybe temporarily when a lorry arrives with the cables. The drilling will be done under the trees and the roads. More consultations will take place before any actual work starts.

Q. If any areas are affected and roads not completed, how can residents contact the company?

A. There will be a helpline for people to contact if they have any issues or concerns.

### **Merseyside Police**

Mick Blease reported on the following:

In this Area:

- There has been a slight raise in burglary dwellings. 5 in the last month.
- A reduction in car crime – 19 reduced to 10 in the last year.
- This side of Wirral is a safe environment.
- Forgery and fraud is increasing, for example: People driving off at petrol stations, fraudulent claims (3 prosecutions) and also shop lifting.
- Olympics – Some resources will be leaving Wirral to help out at the Olympics.

Q. Have the Police cuts affected the increase in burglaries in Pensby.

A. There have only been 3 offences since 1<sup>st</sup> May 2012.

Q. There is a concern that the police cuts will affect this area.

A. This was discussed at the last meeting. The cuts have mainly been in the background and there has been no reduction in visible presence of police.

Q. Did the Pensby neighbourhood behave during the jubilee celebrations.

A. Yes.

Q. Is Heswall Police Station open?

A. No it is not open, but if there is anyone inside they will answer. However, there is a yellow phone box outside the police station you can use to contact the police.

Q. HGV's are not to drive down Barnston Road, however they do still use the road. This has been reported to the police and nothing has been done to stop

them Residents have worked hard to get the ban of HGV's on this road, but the signs are being ignored. A resident complained to Morrison's who have since ceased using this road.

A. When a complaint is made to the police they have to prioritise the complaints by importance. This complaint will be re-iterated to the team.

Q. Can the registration numbers of the HGV's be given to the police

A. Yes, as a letter can be sent to the companies to re- educate them not to use this road.

Q. How long will Inspector Mick Blease and other officers be away from the area when the Olympics are on.

A. Inspector Mick Blease will be away for 3 weeks, 1 week and 2 weeks of his annual leave to work voluntary at the Olympics. The other officer will be away for the 3 weeks. There will be no courses running during this time, so the public should not see a difference.

### **Fire Service**

Sarah Patterson reported on the following:

- Last year there were 26 reported deliberate fires, this year only 1.
- Accidental dwelling fires have reduced
- The Fire Service is committed to maintain standards.
- There is a targeted approach for the vulnerable.
- To date there has been 1300 fire safety checks
- Fire Crews engage with the local communities and regularly attend local events.
- The Fire Service continues to work with partners, including Wirral Council's Road Safety Team.
- Plans have begun in the lead up to Bon Fire Night in November.

Q. Is the Fire Service still committed to the Beacons and the Dales.

A. Yes, and also the beaches. The Fire Service has quad bikes which can be used on these areas.

Q. If crews see any problems when visiting peoples houses, do you liaise with Social Services?

A. Yes, there is a referral pathway.

## **5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Q. When will it become public knowledge about the appointment of a Police Crime Commissioner?

A. This is independent from the police. Apparently there will be a public vote in November. No more information available at present.

Q. There is some difficulty getting through to Street Scene.

A. Jim Lester will take this back and report back.

- Q. Mr Paul Larkin thanked the members of this Forum for the help in the funding for his shop in Pensby. The company gives affordable help to families and carers with various needs, particularly Dementia. The company name is Inter-Niche and it is at 523 Pensby Road, open 10am – 6pm Monday to Saturday. There are leaflets available for anyone interested.
- Q. There is concern for the proposed new opening hours for libraries. Not everyone is happy about them.
- A. There has been a library consultation and amongst the proposals it suggests to open some libraries on a Wednesday but this would lose the late night opening for others. Pensby and Irby would close at 5pm or 6pm and West Kirby would remain open until 7.30pm.
- Q. People prefer the late opening for the local libraries in this area, particularly working people.
- A. There was a show of hands on who would prefer the opening hours to remain as they are. The majority showed they would prefer the 7.30pm. Councillor Don McCubbin will take this information back to the library meetings.
- Q. What is happening over the lack of Senior Officers in the Council.
- A. The Council Leader, Phil Davies explained that Jim Willkie, Chief Executive has been granted Early Voluntary Retirement. Mr Dave Green is on sick leave and the council is looking for someone to cover his role whilst he is off.
- Q. Old Wood Road, Pensby is full of pot holes and is horrendous. Is the Council going to do something about it?
- A. It will be reported back to Street Scene and report back.
- Q. The verges are a mess outside Bargain Booze from when the Lorries park on them when delivering stock.
- A. The plan is to put bollards on verges to stop people parking on them.
- Q. Is it illegal to park on pavements and verges?
- A. Lorries are allowed when they are loading or unloading. A maximum of 20 minutes and someone has to be in the vehicle.
- Q. The Council has spent money putting up signs on roads to stop vehicles parking. However, some are hidden in trees. (360 Pensby Road). The signs need moving or the trees cut back.
- A. This will be passed onto Street Scene.
- Q. Is there any chance that a pedestrian crossing be put on Pensby Road?
- A. There is a problem on this road due to the fact of so many driveways. This has been researched but unfortunately it's not a possibility.
- Q. There is a problem crossing the road by the Tesco Express.
- A. The Road Safety Team is doing a hazard assessment. Double yellow lines should ease the situation. Signs have gone up today with the proposals for the yellow lines. If anyone has any objections, then they should either contact their local Councillor or Street Scene.
- Q. How will this help to cross the road?



- A. It will make the road more visible when crossing the road.
- Q. The grass verge is ruined on the corner of Kings Drive and Cornelius Drive. It has been caused by the home owner parking his 4x4 on the verge.
- A. If there is no sign on the verge, then it is not possible to prosecute.
- Q. Would it be any idea for a Street Scene representative to attend these meetings?
- A. Jim Lester is from Technical Services and he will take all the issues raised and pass them onto Street Scene.
- Q. What will Street Scene do about the barrier around the footpath at Pensall and Fairview? The barrier has been there for a long while now.
- A. Tracey Smith will take the information to Street Scene and report back.

Councillor Andrew Hodson thanked everyone for attending and also thanked Kate Brown, Head Teacher for the use of this lovely new school.

6 **CLOSE**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at **6.30pm**

Heswall United Reform Church. Telegraph Road Heswall