



Area Forum (Oxton and Prenton)

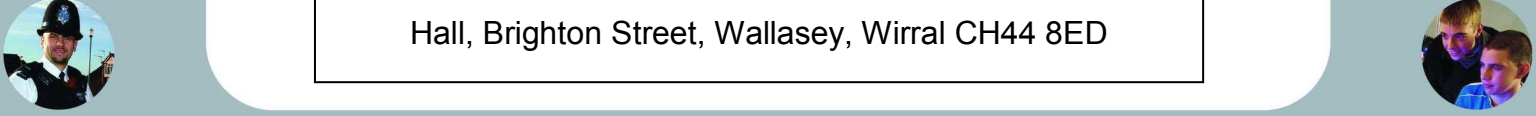
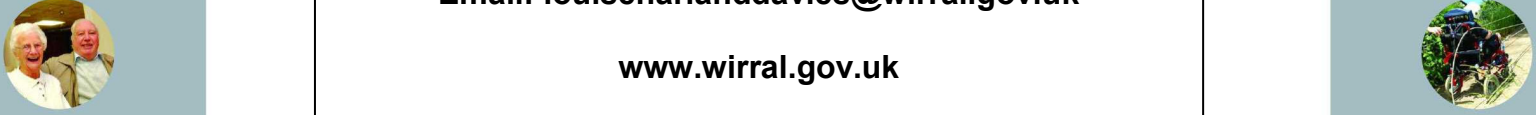
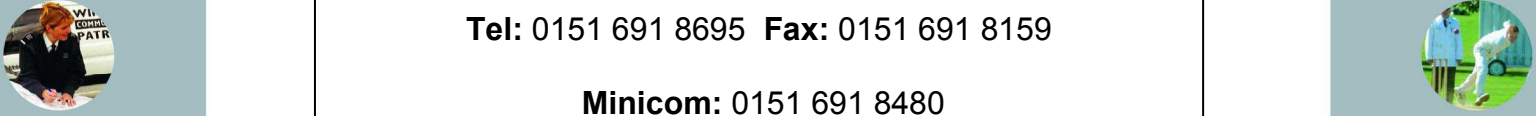
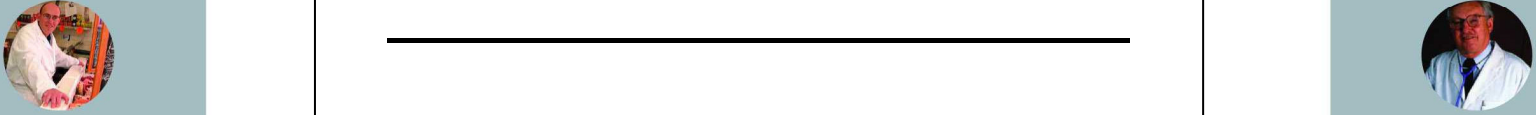
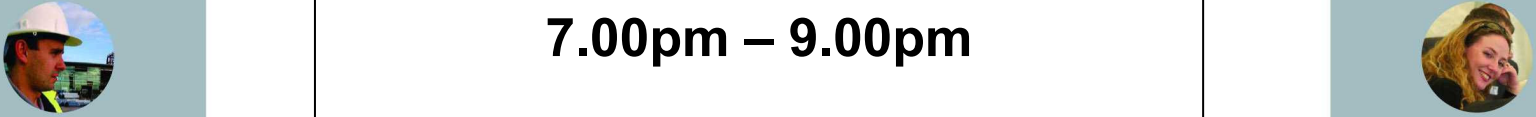
Date:	Tuesday, 3 February 2009
Time:	7.00 pm
Venue:	Tranmere Rovers FA, Prentonian Suite, Belmont Room, Borough Road, Birkenhead CH42 9PY

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AGENDA

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES
2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM OCTOBER 2008 FORUM
3. AREA CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT (Pages 1 - 28)
4. INTEGRATED TRANSPORT BLOCK
5. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME
7. PARTNER ORGANISATION UPDATE
 - Merseyside Police/Community Safety
 - Fire Service
 - Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
 - NHS Wirral
 - Older Peoples Parliament
8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date and venue to be confirmed



**Oxton and Prenton
Area Forum**

Papers for the forum meeting

Tuesday 3 February 2009

Tranmere Rovers FC
Prentonian Suite, Belmont Room
Borough Road, Birkenhead
CH42 9PY
7.00pm – 9.00pm

(drop in session 6.30pm - 7pm)

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**Community Engagement Team, Corporate Services, Town
Hall, Brighton Street, Wallasey, Wirral CH44 8ED**



Code of Conduct for Area Forum Meetings

Indicate to the Chairperson when you would like to speak

Let invited speakers finish what they have to say

Respect others right to be heard

Do not use abusive or offensive language

Do not make any discriminatory remarks

Do not have private conversations while meeting is in progress

Oxton and Prenton Area Forum

Tuesday 3 February 2009
7pm – 9pm

**Tranmere Rovers FC
Prentonian Suite, Belmont Room
Borough Road, Birkenhead
CH42 9PY**

(Drop in session 6.30pm – 7pm)

AGENDA

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies
2. Minutes and matters arising from October 08 forum
3. Area Co-ordinator's Report
4. Integrated Transport Block
5. Local Development Framework
6. Public Question Time
7. Partner updates
8. Future meetings: Date and venue to be confirmed

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Introduction: Membership of the area forum

Area Forums involve local ward councillors, Merseyside Police, Wirral Primary Care Trust, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service representatives, along with nominated local community representatives and officers from various departments of the Council, who regularly attend to support the work of the forum.

Oxton and Prenton Councillors all belong to the Liberal Democrat Party

Councillor Simon Holbrook

(Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group)
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Councillor Ann Bridson

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Councillor Mrs Patricia Williams (Chair)

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Louise Harland-Davies

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Alan Stennard

Chief Officer Director of Regeneration,
responsible for housing, regeneration,
regulation and cultural services in the
borough. **0151 691 8395**

Rob Beresford

Lead Officer - Robert Beresford is Head of
Regulation and has responsibility for
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Standards and Community Safety in the
borough. **0151 691 8208**

Patrick Toosey

Community Representative, Oxton
Oxton Society

Sarah Goulding

Community Representative, Oxton
Friends of the Arno and Oxton Fields

Robbie Bell

Community Representative, Prenton
Devonshire Park Resident's Association

Alan Dollery

Community Representative, Prenton
Chair of Prenton Tenants & Residents
Association, Chair of the Prenton
Partnership, Member of Wirral Federation of
Tenants & Residents Association

Inspector Paul Harrison (Oxton)

0151 709 6010

Inspector Brian Griffiths (Prenton)

0151 709 6010

Merseyside Fire and Rescue

Birkenhead Fire Station

0151 296 5325

All Ward Councillors can be contacted by post or via their email. They represent all residents regardless of political persuasion. You can write to your local councillor at Wallasey Town Hall, Brighton Street, Wallasey, Wirral, CH44 8ED

Section One

Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes – Area Forum (Oxton and Prenton) – 7 October 2008

Present

Chair	P M Williams
Ward Councillor	F Doyle, SA Holbrook, S Kelly, P Southwood.
Community Representatives	Robbie Bell (Devonshire Park Residents' Association), Sarah Goulding (Friends of The Arno and Oxton Fields).
Lead Officer	Alan Stennard, Director of Regeneration.
Area Service Co-ordinator	Louise Harland-Davies
Wirral Primary Care Trust	Dr Andy Lee. Paul Edwards.
Street Scene Manager	Garry Cummings
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.	Gary Docherty
Merseyside Police	Inspector Graham Bell.
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service	Ben Ryder
Council Officers	Simon Fitzpatrick, Community Safety Team, Paul Roberts Wirral's DAAT, Mark Smith (Head of Service, Streetscene and Waste) [part item 2 only].
Apologies	Cllr A Bridson, Patrick Toosey, Jack Cuffe, Insp Paul Harrison, Insp Brian Griffiths, Alan Dollery.

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- Minute 2 - Minutes and matters arising from June forum
- Minute 3 - Area Co-ordinator's report
- Minute 4 - Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)
- Minute 5 - You Decide Results
- Minute 6 - Public Question time
- Minute 7 - Partner Updates.

Minute 8 – Next meetings: Tuesday, 3 February 2009, venue to be confirmed.

Minute 1 - Welcome, introductions and apologies

The Chair, Councillor Williams, welcomed area forum members and 40 members of the public to the meeting in Oxton.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Bridson, Patrick Toosey, Jack Cuffe, Paul Harrison, Brian Griffiths and Alan Dollery.

Minute 2 - Minutes and matters arising from June forum

Matters arising:

Mark Smith (Head of Service, Streetscene and Waste) responded to the action points on Traffic Management/Parking Services outlined on page 10 of the Area Co-ordinator's report.

Resolution i. Mark Smith to send a written response on residents' parking scheme policy to Andrew Taylor, and to all those who requested this at the meeting.

Update: At a further meeting with Mr Taylor, the Parking Services Manager had discussed issues about enforcement in some detail. Mr Taylor has confirmed that the matters have been resolved to his satisfaction.

Resolution ii Mark Smith to report back on traffic improvements planned for the area around Asda and Palmwood Close.

Update: A Section 106 Agreement is in place whereby the developer will fund a new traffic signal system at the junction. This will allow vehicles leaving the Asda car park to turn either left or right. The location has given rise to road safety concerns in the past and to address these concerns the slip road leading from the motorway will be the subject of a Council improvement scheme.

Resolution iii Mark Smith to pick up the issue of traffic problems raised by John Wallace in Osmaston Road at the site meeting.

Update: A meeting on site had taken place, attended by about 20 residents. Residents in Woodchurch Road had brought some additional factors to light and after a fairly lengthy discussion, it was agreed that conventional traffic regulations would not be the way forward. Agreement had been reached that the solution would be to consult the residents of Osmaston Road on whether they would be willing to make a financial contribution of £75. There was about 80% support for the scheme and about half of those were willing to pay a contribution to the scheme.

Mark Smith responded to comments from a member of the public about the level of the charge, and the fact that many residents had not completed the proforma because they did not understand it. He explained that the Head of Service had made it clear to those who attended that the Council would need to draw up a scheme but would have to cover its costs. At that stage, a broad estimate had been given of what the costs to residents might be. The actual figure has arisen from the precise cost of the scheme.

A brief questionnaire and proforma had been drawn up and sent to Mr Bird as community representatives for his comments. Mr Bird had responded in an extensive email with detailed comments on how the documentation should be improved. The revisions suggested by Mr Bird had been incorporated into the documents sent to residents.

It had been accepted at the meeting that many of the concerns about parking had arisen because of Aldi's etc presence in the area. There had been discussion about the practicalities of approaching organisations when looking at residents' parking

schemes. Officers had agreed to contact Aldi to bring concerns to their attention. A letter had been sent some time ago.

Resolution iv. Mark Smith to look into the problem of speeding traffic along Prenton Dell Road.

Update: The area would not qualify for traffic calming, but perhaps Prenton could be included in the Accidents to Zero initiative. Mr Taylor was keen to see a report to the Members on the subject and a report is going to Cabinet on 16 October. The report will be in the public domain in the next few days.

Woodchurch Road has been re-surfaced and a scheme for improved road markings has been drawn up in conjunction with Accidents to Zero. It is understood that there is a commitment by the Police to do more enforcement in the area.

Minute 5 Partner Information:

Minute decision (vi). Area Co-ordinator to update at forum meeting regarding tree replacement at Mendip Road/Mount Road.

Update: [Area Co-ordinator]: Fencing to be erected along the top of the bank, and investigations on going on how to repair the retaining wall in the slip road. No trees will be planted.

Resolution (vi) Tina Long to raise issue with NHS Trust on its policies and plans for tackling dementia and to report back on this.

Update: Copies of an update by Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust were available at the Area Forum meeting.

Minute decision: Resolved that

- i) Mark Smith, Technical Services be thanked for reporting back to the forum on parking issues raised at the last area forum.
- ii) Paul Edwards, Wirral PCT to establish link with the Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust in order to provide information at future forum meetings.

Minute 3 - Area Co-ordinator's report

The Area Co-ordinator presented her report under the three main headings – Section one – minutes and matters arising from previous meeting; Section two – Local Updates, and Section three – Funding.

The Area Co-ordinator drew attention to the information on page 33 of her report on a new and exciting way of giving money to the community.

The Oxton and Prenton Area Forum has been chosen as one of three area forums in Wirral to take part in a national pilot scheme for Participatory Budgeting [PB]. The first PB event was held in July in Wallasey Town Hall. This year, people who applied for funding from the Community Initiatives Fund were invited to give a short presentation on their project and state why it should be funded. The applicants themselves then voted on each other's project to decide which ones should be funded.

The sum of £7,000 CIF funding has not yet been allocated, and a contribution of £2,500 has been received from Wirral PCT under the Small Grants Programme. The availability of funding will be advertised and applicants will be invited to a similar event to present their ideas in December.

A progress report on previously awarded monies [to 2006/07] was included on pages 35/37 of the Area Co-ordinator's report.

Additional information was available at the Area Forum meeting on –

- The Highway Structural Maintenance Programme 2009/2010 – Limited resources are available for footway reconstruction and carriageway resurfacing schemes. The Area Forum is invited to identify roads and pavements in Prenton/Oxton that are in need of repair or reconstruction. Projects submitted will be prioritised depending on need and budget availability.
- A report on the Older People's Parliament
- An update on Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service.

The Chair announced that Mike Walker is retiring. She added that she was full of praise for the work that he has done for Wirral, including introducing CCTV cameras. She paid tribute to Mike as a hard-working and resourceful Council Officer for many years.

Minute 4 - Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)

Simon Fitzpatrick, Community Safety Team, explained that the Drug and Alcohol Action team (DAAT) is part of Wirral Joint Community Safety Team, which is comprised of staff from a number of agencies including, the Police, Local Authority, Probation Service, Fire Service and voluntary and community organisations.

Young people are one of three key priorities in Wirral's Harm Reduction strategy. This evening, along with Paul Roberts, he proposed to give a presentation on Wirral's Young Persons Alcohol Intervention Programme, and to focus on three themes in Wirral's Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy –

- Young people's alcohol misuse
- Alcohol related identification and treatment
- Alcohol related crime disorder in the community.

Each strand of the programme has a Young People's Alcohol Action Plan. The Young People's Alcohol Action Plan is a key priority for a range of partners, particularly the Children & Young People's Department, the Police and the Hospital Trust and PCT. Wirral DAAT plays a key co-ordination role with partners in tackling issues associated with young people and alcohol. The DAAT team visits schools and gives talks and advice on drug and alcohol issues. Trading Standards Officers are also involved with DAAT, and they deal with complaints about under-age drinking and take action against adults who purchase alcohol for young people.

Mrs Buckley drew attention to alcohol related problems in Balfour Road and in the car park attached to the Art Gallery, where empty bottles are left lying around. Children playing football in the car park is becoming a major problem.

Reply: [CYPD] Although funding is available some young people don't want to get involved. There are tremendous facilities but direct connection is needed with children. Respect Ice cream van can be used to make a connection, for example to get them to play football in the Sports Centre.

Graham Bell introduced himself as Inspector for the neighbourhood and stated that police listen to what people are saying and to see what we can do. There is always an issue of boys and girls getting involved in anything that they see as 'organised' by people in authority or parents. What we are striving to do is get young people to take some responsibility for the organisation of sport or cultural things. We want them to tell us what they want and what they will take responsibility for.

Member of public: The church in Balls Road?

Chair: It is currently being refurbished.

Cllr Kelly: We have just heard the story of what is available and the work that is going on in general. Would it be possible for us as a Forum to say to the service providers and services involved 'Here is a problem that has been identified

over the last 12 months'. Is it something we can monitor and say to the service providers we would like to see a report back to us at the next meeting on what you have done in terms of the children, the services available to address this particular problem in this area. To report back to us and see what the approaches and ideas presented are on the ground and if they satisfy residents in the area in general, not just Balfour Road, but Slatey Road etc., as well. We have heard reports in the past about crime, anti social behaviour and burglaries in Slatey Road. Do a case study on Slatey Road. What have we done specifically between now and February to monitor and see what has been done.

Insp. Bell: We have had a clear request to see how successfully we are operating in this area and we can probably feed back at the February meeting about the activities they have been engaged in.

Cllr Kelly: We understand the resources have to go to 'hot spots' but within a reasonable period of time between now and February for you to demonstrate that when the resources are available you are able to do certain things. I would like to see interventions, but understand about priorities and resources etc.

Alan Stennard: The work by the Police and other agencies is driven by the biggest problem and problems tend to move around areas. Between now and February I think we could at least understand the current level of the problem and come back to you in terms of reporting back in February a) what we have been able to achieve, and give you a feel of what else we have been dealing with in the area, and b) what we have been able to deploy to the area and what is on offer.

The Chair thanked Simon Fitzpatrick and Paul Roberts for a most interesting presentation, adding that everyone has learned something about the serious problems we have, and she expressed admiration for people's determination to try and tackle those problems.

Minute decision: Resolved that:

i) Alan Stennard to liaise with Inspector Bell regarding anti-social behaviour in and around Slatey Road and Balfour Road and report back to forum in February on any developments.

Minute 5 - You Decide Results

Wirral Council has allocated £250,000 new money to be spent on extra council services in Wirral's 11 area forums through a new project called 'You Decide'. To ensure everyone had the chance to take part, a Borough-wide survey was conducted in September asking residents additional council services they would most like to spend the money on. The survey identified four key areas --

- Environmental works (eg new trees)
- Additional litter bins
- Sport and Youth Activities e.g. sports or training nights

Each area forum has been given an allocation £20,000 of new money to spend on extra council services. The Chair reported that Councillors and community representatives from this Area Forum had met last week to look at the results of the survey.

The top priority was cleanliness and litter bins. A decision had been made to devote £5,000 to that priority.

In addition to more litter bins, the group wished to encourage litter picking. The Friends of The Arno and Oxtan Fields are organising another litter picking session on

29 November. The group is keen for individuals as well as other groups to be involved.

Other priorities were sport and youth activities. A decision had been made to allocate £10,000 to employ a part-time community sports officer and £5,000 for environmental works.

Following a technical and financial appraisal of the viability of the proposals, a report will be presented to Cabinet in December outlining how best to use the money that is available.

The results of 'You Decide' will be published for all eleven area forums in February 2009, with a press release and detailed presentations at area forum meetings.

Minute 6 - Public Question time

Q The Council's litter picking team do a good job, but as soon as they have gone the roads, especially The Wiend, are full of litter again, and the biggest culprits are from Prenton High School. Someone should go and give them a lecture

A (Street Scene Manager): I will take the details at the end and get someone to come along and see what we can do to educate them.

Q: Are you doing a consultation on Integrated Care?

A (Paul Edwards): There are two issues with regards to emergency and unplanned care. There have been a number of reports which have prompted the PCT to take action. My suggestion is at the next meeting, I bring a full report and address some of the issues.

In terms of Integrated Care at Home Programme. There has been a real drive to get as much care as possible in people's homes. Again it might be worthwhile giving you an update. We have put significant investment in that, about integrated care, community matrons etc.

Q: I was born in Prenton, and I have lived and worked in Prenton for a long time. Woodchurch Road concerns me terribly. I am saddened to see it lacking in TLC, shops with shutters closed down, and the possibility of parking restrictions. I know it is a route for emergency vehicles, as is Prenton Dell Road, but why are we stopped from parking by the shops? The shops are dying. Prenton is losing its place on the Wirral. It is shared by Oxton and Prenton, on two sides of the road. Odd Bins has left. Prenton and Oxton needs input. It needs litter bins, bollards, hanging baskets outside the shops.

A (Chair): I walked along Woodchurch Road with Councillor Bridson, both sides, the Prenton side and the Oxton side, and the concrete planters were planted with plants as a result.

Q You can't park in Curzon Road and Cambridge Road at peak times. You can't park and you can't stop.

Q Why are there parking restrictions on Prenton Hall Road?

Q (Chair): Can I ask you to make a list of all those concerns?

Cllr Holbrook: I will try to address some of the questions. Parking and traffic issues in and around your area have been an issue with one group in one street and getting the balance right in terms of what you do and don't do is difficult. There is some evidence that some of the side roads without parking restrictions are used as a 'park and ride' to commute to Liverpool.

I understand that Woodchurch Road is the second busiest road in the Borough, the other being the A41, and this is an area with shops and I believe having traffic restrictions does encourage short stay rather than long stay, and that is the right way in terms of Woodchurch Road. In the side roads, people complain about access-

clogging on their street and there are lots of different conflicting and different pressures in that area.

Perhaps the Council can do more in terms of Woodchurch Road shopping centre but I would like to see the traders do more. We have two really big traders as anchor stores for the whole of the area –Sainsbury and Aldi. Surely companies of this size and stature could take a leading role in supporting the smaller traders in getting the business community to work with us. It is not always the Council that as to fund this kind of thing, but perhaps the Council could take a bigger role in encouraging these shops to do something.

Q Parking has become a problem since Sainsbury put a three-hour limit on their car parking.

Q Residents who leave their cars in front of their own houses will have a fine.

Q I was reliably informed that the site of the former petrol filling station is to be a car park. Sainsbury don't mind if people park on it but people park near the store and the bus stop.

Q Throughout the Prenton area, traffic will not keep its speed down. One of the worst is Prenton Lane, right along. Pine Walks is used as a high speed cut through and Reservoir Road North, but you don't see anyone.

Cllr Kelly: I have listened to the discussion, and it raises three issues –

1) The environment, and the congestion in the area from Sainsbury to the Halfway House. That is something we could possibly pick up in the meeting next Tuesday evening to see if we can put in place further environmental improvements for other parts of the area and consider these with the “You Decide” allocation.

2) Parking restrictions. My understanding is we are not talking about side roads, but the main road from where the urban clear way finishes to the Halfway House, raising concerns about the type of restrictions in place. What I would like to ask the Forum to do to ask Mark Smith to show a map showing exactly what the restrictions are and whether and why they are necessary on that main road. Look at the restrictions at the next meeting. If he cannot justify to our satisfaction, eg it can impact on the commercial viability of the area, then ask him to go away and consider other options. If he can justify that, we will have to accept that.

3) The issue of speeding. Mark Smith had referred to the Accidents Down to Zero initiative. That is currently in place in Oxton Village, but it is now leaving Oxton Village and will move around. I cannot promise it will go in the roads you suggest, but I suggest that the roads you have suggested are put forward to see if the scheme, or another campaign of that nature would be effective.

Q Storeton Road is used as a cut through. Motorists try to beat the lights at the top of the Mount Estate. A major issue at Mellor Road, they keep speeding along Mellor Road and there are children playing out. People have been brought up but nothing will be done until someone is killed.

Q Speeding cars on Borough Road, from the junction of Mount Road, Borough Road to Tranmere Rovers.

A (Inspector Bell) We prioritise the places where traffic enforcement is introduced by the number of accidents. Some roads were mentioned two years ago. I said I would go back and I did and carried out some enforcement. I will do the same again.

Chair The Community Speed Watch Initiative is working with the Police and Highways. Anyone may volunteer to be involved in that.

Q I went to ring Upton Police Station and told it is now back in Well Lane. Brian Griffiths was commissioner for the past four years and thank him for all his help and support.

A (Inspector Bell): The Police Station has only moved to Well Lane for part of the Prenton area. Parts are still at Upton Police Station.

Robbie Bell: In the past there was a neighbourhood watch scheme where communities took responsibility for their area. Speed watch is a good way and there should be more things like that where the community takes responsibility for itself. Any other initiatives to help the community help itself is useful, and I think money should be diverted in that direction. There should be major investment in refurbishment. I would suggest that Home and Bargain, local traders, should have some responsibility for keeping the area smart, it should not be the Council's responsibility. At some point or other, people in Prenton have to take the initiative to do things on their own, residents' associations.etc.

Q Prenton do have a Tenants and Residents Association. It is mentioned in the Area Co-ordinator's report.

Robbie Bell You have to start to use Alan Dollery. You can't keep expecting the Council to solve everything. June gets things done on the Mount Estate. Her involvement in the community is recognised.

Q Local community groups play a really important role, but it is not their responsibility to do the Council's job. The environment is one of the Council's responsibilities, and this area is going downhill. You are failing the community in not bringing in new businesses. Sainsburys spends millions on their site and they contribute an enormous amount to WBC in business taxes. It is a joint thing, a partnership.

Chair We could do with a representative of local business on this area forum.

Q Outside Lloyds bank there is an area that could be converted to a short stay car park. You could park six cars at an angle.

A (Cllr. Holbrook): You would have to reverse into Curzon Road, but we will look at that and have an update at the next meeting.

Q Has anything been done about parking at Swan Court?

A (Cllr Holbrook): We have approval for double yellow lines but I don't know when those lines will be painted.

Q There is a problem with people stopping to use the hole in the wall outside Sainsbury. HSBC and HBS, and in some cases driving vehicles on the pavement to use it.

Chair: There is also a problem in Oxtan Village with people parking close to the machine and blocking the bus stop, so you cannot get on as bus to Woodchurch Road. Double yellow lines does not deter people.

Minute decision: Resolved that:

- i) Request Mark Smith, Technical Services to produce a report showing parking restrictions and reasons for these on Woodchurch Road.
- ii) Inspector Bell to investigate speeding traffic on Mount Road, Borough Road to Tranmere Rovers.
- iii) Area Co-ordinator to liaise with Parking Services regarding parking outside Lloyds Bank.

- iv) Garry Cummings, Streetscene Manager to consider environmental improvements in the Woodchurch Road area.
- v) Garry Cummings to liaise with Prenton High School and offer advice on waste and recycling in school.
- vi) Paul Edwards, Wirral PCT, to provide a full report at the next area forum around Integrated Care.

Minute 7 - Partner Updates.

Inspector Bell: There is an increasing level of auto crime at the moment, especially in the Oxton area. Those who are members of associations please take back to your members in relation to security of vehicles and keep things hidden away. People still leave Sat Navs on show. They should be discouraged from doing that, even in locked cars.

Minute decision: Resolved that

- i) Inspector Bell be thanked for his update

Minute 8 - Next meeting Tuesday, 3 February 2009, venue to be confirmed.

In closing, the Chair thanked everyone for coming to an interesting and productive meeting.

Matters arising

- **Parking restrictions, Woodchurch Road: Report from Technical Services**

WAITING RESTRICTION REVIEW WOODCHURCH ROAD, PRENTON

A request has been received from the Oxton and Prenton Area Forum meeting on 7th October 2008 to review the waiting restrictions on Woodchurch Road between the traffic lights at Storeton Road and the start of the Urban Clearway order. It has been requested that the review be completed in time to report back to the next meeting of the Forum on 3rd February 2009.

This stretch of Woodchurch Road is classified (A552) and is part of the Strategic Network and identified within the Councils Network Management Plan as the only route on Wirral that, along with 10 other routes in Merseyside, inform the national congestion target NI167. As such, it is important that any proposals with the potential to impact on traffic flow and congestion on this route are carefully considered.

The width of the carriageway varies, but is generally approximately 15 metres, comprising of two lanes in each direction. There are various shops each side of the road and a number of side roads join along its length. There is a Puffin crossing near to Curzon Road and pedestrian facilities in the traffic signal controlled junction at Duck Pond Lane.

Restrictions prohibiting waiting during hours of peak traffic flow and allowing limited waiting between those peaks were introduced in 1968. There have been a number of alterations to those restrictions since their introduction in 1968, but the general effect of prohibiting waiting during peaks and allowing limited waiting between remains in place.

From the taking of traffic surveys recently it is clear that the road is close to its theoretical capacity, if not above it at certain times. The restrictions prohibiting waiting during peak hours do assist to reduce the potential for increased congestion and delay by making available to traffic all four lanes of the road at those times.

Any relaxation of the existing restrictions, particularly if it were to allow parking during time of peak traffic flow, would adversely impact on the capacity of the road by reducing the available carriageway width. This would be likely to increase congestion and delay on this route and would adversely affect NI168, which would be contrary to the Council's Network Management Plan and its duties under the Traffic Management Act.

It is also observed that pedestrians wishing to cross the road and meandering through parked vehicles puts themselves and others in danger.

The allowable kerbside parking in the area is one element in supporting local trade alongside good off street facilities at the local larger retail outlets and the fact that the area is well served by public transport.

Taking all into consideration the officers are unable to recommend changes to the current situation at the present time.

Cabinet has recently approved a Speed Limit and Traffic Regulation Order Review for the whole borough in line with Department for Transport guidelines and this is to be completed by 2011. This area of Woodchurch Road will reassessed in line with that mandate.

- **Environmental Improvements on Woodchurch Rd:** Following a meeting with Streetscene Manager, Kay Crook contacting Chief Executive for further discussions.
- **Prenton High School:** A litter DVD and school pack has been sent to school and the area will be monitored for litter.
- **Speeding traffic on Mount Road/Storeton Road area:** Enforcement in this location has been carried out in the past couple of months. Some officers and PCSO,s are trained in the use of the hand held speeding enforcement cameras and will be looking again at this location during the month of February.
- **Wirral PCT Integrated Care:** Report currently being compiled and will be delivered at the next round of area forum meetings.
- **Anti-social behaviour in Slatey Road:** Over September and October 08 only two incidents had been reported to the police connected to this location and only one of these was potentially related to anti-social behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour team have advised they can arrange for a 'letter' drop of 'It's Your Call' cards to encourage residents to report incidents.

Section Two

Local Updates

Area forums provide an opportunity for people who live or work in Wirral to have a greater say on local issues and be more active in decision making and shaping local services.

They involve local ward councillors, police, Wirral Primary Care Trust, fire safety representatives along with community representatives and officers from various departments of the council. Forums also provide information about current services, how they can be accessed and ultimately raise awareness of local council initiatives.

This section covers relevant news under the Council's Sustainable Communities Strategy themes *strong local economy, sustainable appropriate housing, life chances for children and young people, health and well being and living and working environment.*



The Fire Service on Wirral is delivered through 6 community fire stations located at Birkenhead, Bromborough, Heswall, Upton, West Kirby and Wallasey.

We are committed to innovative and imaginative change in order to help make our communities safer and stronger. We are also committed to integrated working with other authorities, agencies and the voluntary sector to improve public safety and well being.

We have an **Integrated Risk Management Plan** which is a local strategic plan that outlines the measures intended to be taken to continue the modernisation and improvement of services to the people of Merseyside. Past and current I.R.M.P can be viewed online at www.merseyfire.gov.uk or copies of the latest plan are available at local community fire stations across the district, public libraries and One-Stop shops.

There were a number of public consultation meetings held at fire stations across the district and we would like to thank all those that attended for their input. This input will be considered as part of the consultation process before a final draft is published. The subsequent document will inform you of any new responsibilities that the service and the authority must comply with and will also demonstrate how we intend to provide compliance and any effects that it will have on the Service, its partners and our community.

Community engagement remains the cornerstone of our proactive activities, in particular the delivery of the **Home Fire Safety Checks** and the provision of free smoke detectors where necessary. We continue to improve our effectiveness by utilising intelligence led targeting of **HFSCs**. Unfortunately there are still some vulnerable groups within the communities we serve which have proven difficult to access. To ensure all efforts are made to reach these targeted properties, MFRS has developed a collaborative strategy with partner agencies to access these groups throughout the coming year.

The Service has set challenging performance targets and we are pleased to report that Wirral stations regularly achieve and exceed these targets.

During the last quarter the Fire Service visited nearly **6,000** homes on Wirral to complete Home Fire Safety Checks.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has set a goal to become an environmentally regenerative service. We will carry out investigations to reduce our carbon footprint with the ultimate aim of becoming carbon positive. The aim of which is to leave the climate in better shape at the end of each year. This goal will take a sustained effort over a number of years and will require radical change in how we operate as a business, whilst we maintain our high levels of service, intervention and response to the people of Merseyside.

The Fire Service are committed to working in partnership to achieve strategic objectives within the Local Area Agreement.

The Fire Service has been working with partners to develop facilities at Wallasey Fire station as part of an integrated healthier lifestyle project. Work is nearing completion on a new **Lifestyle Centre** which will incorporate a Wirral HeartBeat gym and new

community meeting and welfare facilities. It is envisaged that this will be available for use early 2009.

Another such initiative, utilising forum funding, is the development of a **Beacon Programme** running out of Birkenhead Fire Station. This is run 1 day a week for 12 weeks and is designed for children aged 11-16yrs. This is a partnership project to engage young people at risk of exclusion from mainstream education and involvement in arson related crime. The course participants are given a learning experience outside the school environment to build their confidence and self-esteem. The course combines practical drill ground and scenario based training with classroom centred activities and workshops-including community fire safety.

In conjunction with Merseyside Police and other partners we are working towards reducing road traffic accidents across the district through the development of an educational training package, which is to be delivered to students by FS personnel. Fire Support Network volunteers will also be utilised in the overall strategy to assist in reducing speeding and other contributory factors of road traffic collisions.

Fire Support Network is a non-profitable registered charity which works in partnership with the Fire Service on Merseyside to promote fire safety to the local communities through volunteers and partner organisations. Volunteer roles vary from working directly with the fire-fighters, leafleting and replacing batteries in smoke detectors to providing an after fire care service and fund raising. Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer can register online at www.firesupportnet.org.uk or contact via telephone on 0151 296 4600.

The **F.S.N** are currently developing campaigns targeted towards the older people in the community and working with other relevant agencies to publicise further the facilities available to older people and the need to maintain fire safety in the home.

We are currently working closely with Wirral PCT on the **Smoke Free Homes Campaign**, the aim of which is to encourage smokers to make a pledge not to expose their family and friends to second hand smoke in their homes and cars, this will also assist in the reduction of accidental fires in properties and vehicles due to smoking related material. This scheme is currently being rolled out across the district, half of which is now included with the other station areas to follow shortly.

Community Fire Stations

- **Birkenhead:** Exmouth Street. Birkenhead.CH41 4AX. 0151 296 5325
- **Bromborough:** Dock Road South. Bebington.CH62 4SQ 0151 296 5925
- **Heswall:** Telegraph Road, Heswall, CH60 OAF. 0151 296 5805
- **Upton:** Arrowe Park Road. Upton.CH49 OUF. 0151 296 5895
- **West Kirby:** The Concourse. West Kirby. CH48 4HX. 0151 296 5955
- **Wallasey:** Mill Lane. Wallasey. CH44 5UE. 0151 296 6180

For a FREE Home Fire Safety Check, including FREE smoke alarm installation if required please contact Fire Service Direct on FREEphone 0800 731 5958

Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team (ASB)

September 2008 – January 2009

In addition to ongoing enforcement action against the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour, specific activity has included:

- **Graffiti busting campaign given green light (September 2008)**

A new anti-graffiti campaign was launched as part of Wirral's strategy to tackle anti-social behaviour and improve the environment and quality of life for local residents. This new approach saw a partnership between the Council's Streetscene service, Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Together Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder based in Tranmere; working closely with Wirral Youth Offending Service and Probation Services and supported by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service. This wider service for the first time allows homeowners, tenants and small business to have general graffiti removed for free. The Council's tough stance on removing racist and other offensive graffiti within 24 hours remains. A key element of this new approach is a detailed strategy that focuses not only upon the prompt and effective removal of graffiti, but also gathering intelligence on the perpetrators and taking robust enforcement action, coupled with strengthening preventative work in schools targeting the peak age group for committing graffiti of 14-17 years old. Information campaigns and reward schemes will also feature as part of the new approach.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour Advice Surgeries**

A six-month programme of advice surgeries for residents in the private sector suffering with anti-social behaviour concluded in October 2008. This saw the Anti-Social Behaviour Team's Respect Bus taken into communities and staffed with Enforcement Officers who took complaints directly from the public and provided comprehensive advice.
- **Community Mobile Police Station relocated to Birkenhead (October 2008)**

The station, a 40 x 12 x 10 foot converted shipping container, was relocated to north Birkenhead to tackle anti-social and criminal behaviour. The specially made unit is equipped with a public enquiry desk and a wide range of literature for community safety, support groups and local activities and is a partnership between Wirral Council and Merseyside Police. The unit is managed by a Community Development Officer, who is based within Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team, and whose role it is to co-ordinate multi-agency activity within the deployment area.
- **Parents 4 Parents support group launched (October 2008)**

A new support group run by parents for parents with children engaged, or at risk of engaging, in anti-social behaviour, was launched with the support of Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team. The group provides a friendly non-judgemental atmosphere for parents to share experiences and be given support; offering a ear to listen or a shoulder to cry on if needed. The group specifically offers a weekly drop-in service; speakers on relevant topics; signposting to services and one-to-one and group discussions. The group is run by four committed parents who have come together, with the support of Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team's parenting service, to provide a route for parents who want help and support from other parents who understand the

difficulties of dealing with difficult behaviour by children and young people. Parents 4 Parents can be accessed by contacting Bobbie Crawford (Parenting Co-ordinator) or Alison Sendall (Parenting Support & Intervention Worker) on 606 5773 or 606 5757.

➤ **'Sportsmobile' launched to tackle anti-social behaviour in hot spot areas (October 2008)**

The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Sports Development Unit launched an exciting new project aimed at preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour; the 'sportsmobile'. The vehicle is equipped with sporting equipment, staffed by Sports Development Workers, and deployed into hot-spot areas to divert young people from anti-social behaviour. A lighting rig on the roof allows for dark and poorly lit spaces to be floodlit. Seventeen young people, who were successful in winning a photograph competition run by Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team at last year's Wirral Show, were adorned on the vehicle.

➤ **Wirral Family Intervention Project celebrated a year's successful operation (November 2008)**

Launched in 2007, the Family Intervention Project (FIP) was created to work with the most problematic families engaged in anti-social behaviour, by both challenging unacceptable behaviour and providing and co-ordinating support and interventions to address the underlying causes of their behaviour. In the last year, more than 30 families have been referred and more than 80% of the families allocated to Project Workers have engaged with the service. Complaints of anti-social behaviour across the families has reduced by 71%. School attendance has also improved. The project has recently recruited for additional Project Workers due to the demand for the service. The FIP is delivered on behalf of the Council by registered charity Action for Children (formerly NCH). The project delivers support to families through outreach work in their homes and through dispersed tenancies.

➤ **Respect Watch Scheme for Bidston Rise (November 2008)**

Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team, in partnership with Merseyside Police and landlord Wirral Partnership Homes, has designated the Bidston Rise area of Birkenhead as a Respect Watch Scheme area. The initiative is designed to protect residents who have already suffered at the hands of anti-social individuals and includes a Local Lettings Agreement with residents. The scheme will run for 12 months and covers over 400 properties within this area.

➤ **New powers to tackle anti-social behaviour (December 2008)**

Community safety partners in Wirral received significant new powers to tackle anti-social behaviour. New Closure Order powers came into force nationally that enable a property where persistent disorder is reported to be closed temporarily. The powers work in a similar way to current 'Crack House' Closure Order powers that allow premises, where the misuse of Class A drugs is causing serious disorder to local residents, to be closed for a period of time. The new Closure Order powers for persistent nuisance or disorder allow for any premises to be closed for a three month period where there is significant and persistent disorder or persistent serious nuisance to a community. The powers, which are available to both police and local authorities, are tenure-neutral and therefore apply to any tenure, including owner-occupied properties. Premises can also include residential properties, common areas adjacent to properties, factories, shops, pubs and clubs, public buildings, community centres or halls and car parks. Properties closed can remain

sealed for a further three months, up to a maximum of six months, but other interventions will be used alongside the power to resolve the problem in the longer-term.

Community Safety

Introduction

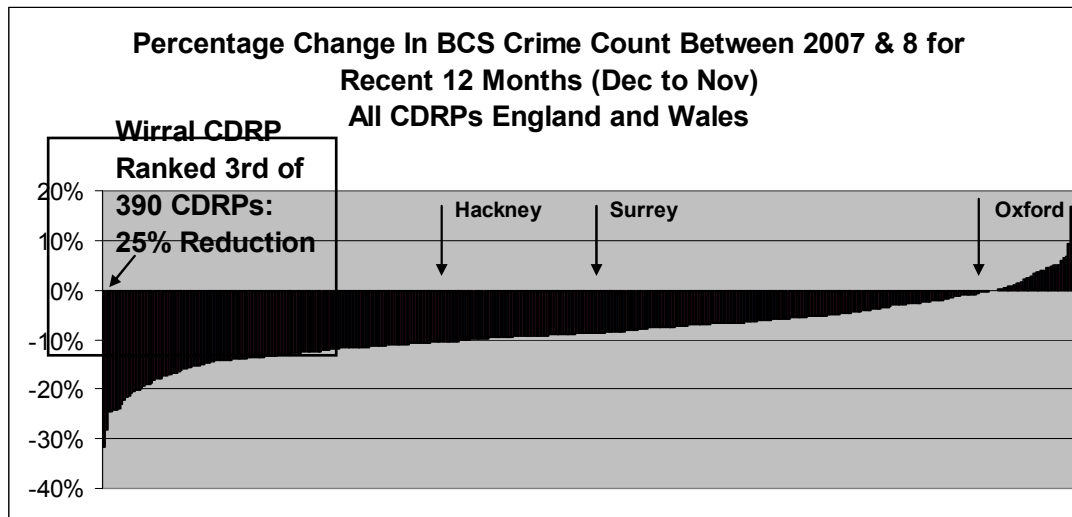
Assessment of Wirral Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

The Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) framework was introduced in April 2008 and applies to all police forces in England and Wales. It covers key services delivered by the police working on their own or in partnership, complementing (but not substituting) performance arrangements being developed by other partners. These are used to assess and monitor performance to the public and, critically, to help partners in England and Wales deliver and improve performance against national and local priorities.

Crime rates can change as a national trend due to environmental factors such as improved security. It has therefore been increasingly important to measure performance against other areas using the same criteria with data which is as recent as possible.

Local Area Agreements have been made between Wirral Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and Government Office. Local measures, as well as the '198 National Indicator' measures have been used to monitor and ensure improved performance. Overall performance is monitored by APACS measures

British Crime Survey Comparator Crime is a measure taken from a basket of crime categories. Although this is no longer a target, it is still monitored in Wirral as it reflects the trends measured nationally by the British Crime Survey. Government Office targeted reductions of 20% by March 2008 were met and surpassed.



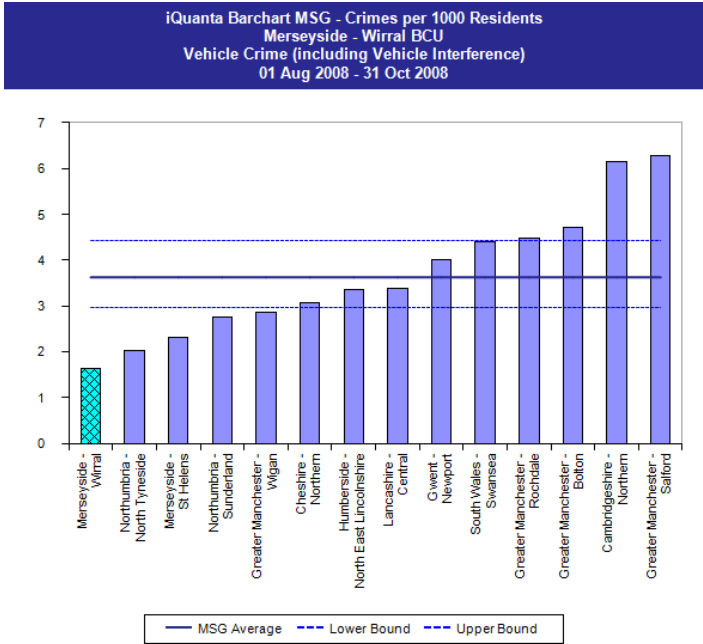
Theft of a Vehicle

Despite being a stretch target, performance has been sufficiently dramatic that the Partnership is confident the target of 941 car thefts in 2009/10 will be easily met.

Success in reducing the rate of car theft has meant that the forecast for 2008/9 is to be less than 600 crimes. This equates to a 75% drop in the annual number of thefts from vehicles in the three years since the target baseline.

Comparable statistics are not available for theft of a vehicle, but when measured together with **Theft From A Vehicle** and **Vehicle Interference** and compared to demographically similar areas:

Wirral has the lowest vehicle crime rate per population in our most similar family;



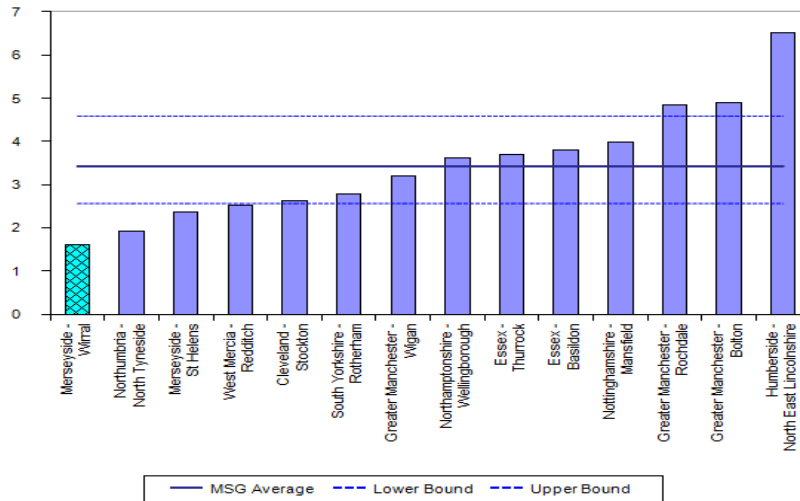
Burglary

This stretch target is for domestic burglary. Performance has been consistently beyond targets every year since they were set. The target for 2008/09 is 1500 burglaries whilst the year end projection is only 837. This means that the final target of 1205 burglaries in 2009/10 will also be achieved. This has meant the rate of burglaries for Wirral has been reduced 67% over four years from 2539 to 837.

Compared to demographically similar areas:

Wirral has the lowest domestic burglary rate per population in our most similar family;

**iQuanta Barchart MSG - Crimes per 1000 Households
Merseyside - Wirral CDRP
Domestic Burglary
01 Aug 2008 - 31 Oct 2008**



Domestic Violence

There are two LAA Stretch targets for domestic violence. The first is to increase the number of crimes reported to the Police, and the second to reduce the number of victims reporting abuse who have previously reported in the past twelve months. These two targets are specifically aimed to promote reporting this ‘hidden’ crime and thus enable victims to access support more easily. The support is provided as a package by a wide range of agencies coordinated to reduce the likelihood of repeated victimisation. One of the difficulties in combating domestic violence has been the high incidence of under-reporting and hence the cycle of abuse being allowed to continue.

The LAA target is to increase the number of domestic violence victims reporting to the Police from 3325 in 2006/07 to 5522 that is projected to be achieved by 2008/09.

- This is a 66% increase in two years.

The LAA target to decrease the victims reporting to the Police who have reported in the previous 12 months is also forecast to be achieved by the end of 08/09. This achievement would mean repeat victimisation is reduced from 43% to 26%.

These two LAA targets have been met through the dedication of a wide range of agencies increasing their commitment and care for victims, focussed and coordinated through the MARAC process.

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

REVIEW OF ALLOCATION OF INTEGRATED TRANSPORT FUNDING TO AREA FORUMS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report is at the request of the Council's Cabinet, which met on 4th September 2008. It invites your Area Forum to give comment as to whether or not it wishes to receive de-centralised funding in 2009/10 of a proportion of the Local Transport Plan Capital Budget known as the Integrated Transport Block.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 At the Cabinet meeting held on 12th June 2008, a report was considered on the de-centralisation of Integrated Transport funding to Area Forums. Cabinet subsequently agreed to continue the allocation of funding to the two Forums for Heswall/Pensby/ Thingwall and Bromborough/Eastham for the current year 2008/09.

2.2 The success of this initiative piloted in 2007/08 in these two Area Forums, was also reported upon with the Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transport Services welcoming the positive feedback.

2.3 Cabinet resolved (inter alia).

- the positive consultation feedback from the two pilot Forums and strong support for the continued de-centralisation of funding in future years be noted; and
- officers be requested to consult the remaining nine Forums in the next cycle of meetings to determine if they wish to receive de-centralised funding for 2009/10 based on the success of this pilot initiative.

3.0 REPORT

3.1 For the Heswall, Pensby and Thingwall Forum, the improvements introduced in 2007/08 were as follows:

- a pedestrian refuge at Barnston Road near to its junction with Border Road.

3.2 For the Bromborough and Eastham Forum, the improvements introduced in 2007/08 were as follows:

- contribution to a Traffic Calming scheme at Winstanley Road, New Ferry;
- direction signing at the junction of Bebington Road/Howell Road;
- lowered kerb crossings at Tarvin Road, Kelsall Avenue and Delamere Avenue.

3.3 For the remainder of the Integrated Transport allocation apportioned between the remaining nine Forums, a variety of highway improvements were introduced focusing on improved pedestrian facilities and speed reduction measures as set out in the Walking and Cycling Capital Programme 2007/08 approved by Cabinet on 28th June 2007 (Minute 93 refers).

3.4 The total budget for the Integrated Transport block is £180,000. Apportioned across the eleven Area Forums this would equate to around £16,300 per Area Forum. This is the value of the budgets this financial year which both Heswall, Pensby and Thingwall and Bromborough and Eastham are allocating to schemes similar to those carried out in 2007/08. Officers will report verbally on these schemes at your meeting.

3.5 This funding and the rationale behind its use is not to be confused with the "You Decide" initiative. The Integrated Transport Block is a composite part of the Local Transport Plan Capital Fund and can only be used to bring about

improvements to the movement of traffic and pedestrians and to assist in enhancing road safety.

- 3.6 The “You Decide” initiative however can be used as community-based funding to a current financial ceiling of £20,000 per Area Forum. This means that should each Area Forum choose to have their own individual share of £16,300 as previously mentioned, the “You Decide” monies could be added to the Integrated Transport Block allocation making a total allocation of £36,300. This level of funding would clearly enable schemes of a greater degree of complexity and cost to be introduced.
- 3.7 Where any identified traffic management engineering schemes cross Area Forum boundaries, neighbouring Forums could combine their funds together to facilitate an even larger scale scheme, for example $2 \times £36,300 = £72,600$, which would fund a large area speed reducing scheme or possibly a set of traffic signals.
- 3.8 In arriving at a decision on the way in which the Integrated Transport Block is distributed, it must be borne in mind that there is no guarantee of the “You Decide” initiative funding being available in subsequent years.

4.0 SUMMARY

- 4.1 During the last financial year and being similarly piloted this year, two of the eleven Area Forums decided that they would prefer to benefit locally by having part of the LTP Integrated Transport Block decentralised and put at their disposal for consideration of local schemes. This arrangement was reached based on a similar consultation exercise to this held in 2006.
- 4.2 It has been accepted by the Council that this initiative has proved popular and that officers now consult with the remaining nine Area Forums to determine if they wish to receive decentralised funding for 2009/10.
- 4.3 The sum of money is in the region of £16,300 per Area Forum and can typically be used to provide lowered kerb crossings, modest local signposting and road lining schemes. In some instances depending upon physical constraints it may be possible to provide for a central road island to help people cross the road and/or introduce pedestrian safety barriers.
- 4.4 Should you Area Forum decide that it wishes to go along with this approach, this will be reported back to the Cabinet.
- 4.5 The alternative to not decentralising the funding is for it to be administered centrally as now and for larger, more expensive schemes to be put in on a Borough-wide basis based on a priority assessment so some areas will benefit but others would not.
- 4.6 Those two Area Forums currently holding their own budget receive officer input to guide them in their decision making process and this would be made available if the initiative was expanded to cover all Area Forums.
- 4.7 Should Area Forums decide to have their own de-centralised share of Integrated Transport funding, there is no restriction of neighbouring Area Forums combining funding or providing match funding from “You Decide” or other sources.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The overall works, estimated to cost in the region of £180,000, will be financed from the 2009/10 Transport Capital Programme. The decision to be taken is whether or not each Area Forum wishes to have a one-eleventh share of around £16,300.

6.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no additional financial or staffing implications arising directly from this report. Staff will assist in any decision-making process. Future maintenance costs will be met from the Highway Maintenance Revenue Budget.

7.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None directly from this report, however some schemes can have a positive effect on assisting disabled, visually impaired persons and persons with prams and pushchairs to cross the road.

8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Introducing traffic calming features will ensure that vehicle speeds are moderated at all times.

8.2 Typical schemes in the programme are designed to support the Council's endorsement of the Local Transport Plan.

9.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None arising directly out of this report.

10.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific planning implications arising directly from this report.

11.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific human rights implications arising directly from this report.

12.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no specific anti-poverty implications arising directly from this report.

13.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no specific social inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

14.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

14.1 This report has implications for all Wards.

15.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 No specific background papers have been used in preparation of this report other than Cabinet minutes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Area Forum is requested to:

- (i) Note the type of traffic management schemes which can be funded through the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block allocation;
- (ii) Provide views as to whether or not it wishes to receive a decentralised one-eleventh share of the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block Allocation equating to approximately £16,300 per Area Forum to carry out scheme(s) of a traffic management/road safety nature in the local area.

Equality and Diversity

Events

The Council's first staff diversity event took place on Thursday 6th November 2008 in the Civic Hall, Wallasey Town Hall, as part of National Diversity week.

The Deputy Mayor of Wirral, Councillor Andrew Hodson opened the event along with Jim Wilkie Deputy Chief Executive, Wirral Council.

We were fortunate to be visited by Carole Eniffer from the Home Office who made a special trip from London to be with us. She attended in support of the Hate Crime promotion campaign that is currently underway. Andy Pownall from Government Office North West (GONW) also attended the event.



The Equality Watch team are delighted to report that over 400 people visited the town hall throughout the course of the day. Over 50 volunteers helped by staffing stalls and over 20 artistes performed.

The Equality Watch team would like to thank **EVERYONE** who took part and all those who took time out of their working day to visit the event.

The layout of the civic hall embodied the six equality strands. Community groups and council sections shared tables to reflect this. Some services that are 'cross cutting' were also in attendance:

Sexual Orientation - Wirral LGB&T forum (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender) and Terrence Higgins Trust

Age- Age Concern, Connexions and POPIN (Promoting Older People's Independence Network)

Gender - Trans Wirral, Women's Enterprise Breakthrough and Men's Health Group

Disability - WIRED (Wirral Information Resource for Equality & Disability) Access Improvements (Corporate Services/Technical Services), WIRED also arranged for PSS, Advocacy in Wirral and Merseyside Society for Deaf People to be in attendance.

Religion or belief - Merseyside of Council Faiths

Race - BRM Partnership (Black & Racial Minority), Irish Community Care Wirral Change, Wirral Multicultural Organisation, BME Supporting People

Cross cutting services – Streetscene, Human Resources, Staff Diversity Forums, Pensions, Customer Services (including One Stop Shops and Call Centre) Unison, Hate Crime, Child Support Agency (CSA)

A huge variety of activities took place with a whole host of performances throughout the day including demonstrations of tai chi and yoga, chinese lion dance, bag piper, service users from several of our day centres performing 'sign-along', Bengali musician, multi cultural band, cultural food, Indian dancers and our very own Tony Excell as DJ and Brian Jones as master of ceremonies!!

Equality Watch Scheme Consultation

The Council's Equality Watch Team want your views on the draft 2009 – 2012 Action Plan. A public consultation process is now underway for people to have their say on Wirral Council's Equality Watch Scheme 2009 – 2012. The Equality Watch Scheme is the Council's equality and diversity action plan for the period April 2009 to March 2012, covering all six equality strands, also taking into consideration multi-forms of discrimination

The Equality Watch Scheme details the actions that will be taken across the whole Council to eliminate any discriminatory practices and to promote equality and recognise diversity within employment and service delivery. The scheme will also provide the framework for the Council achieving the different levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

The Equality Watch Scheme replaces the Council's Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes. However, this proposed scheme does take into account the Council's statutory equality duties under the Race Relations Act 1976, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Equality Watch Scheme also gives appropriate regard to the forthcoming Single Equality Act relating to sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

The Equality Watch Scheme will be co-ordinated by the Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator, who will be supported by the Corporate Equality Watch Team and Departmental Equality Lead Officers. The Council will also work in partnership to actively promote involvement of external stakeholders, including voluntary and community sector projects and peers within other public sector organisations. An Equality Watch Review Group will be established made up of members from a variety of stakeholders.

The three year action plan is split into four sections and will be reviewed on an annual basis. More information can be found at www.wirral.gov.uk or contact the Equality Watch Team on **0151 691 8064** or email equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk

The deadline for comments is 27 February 2009